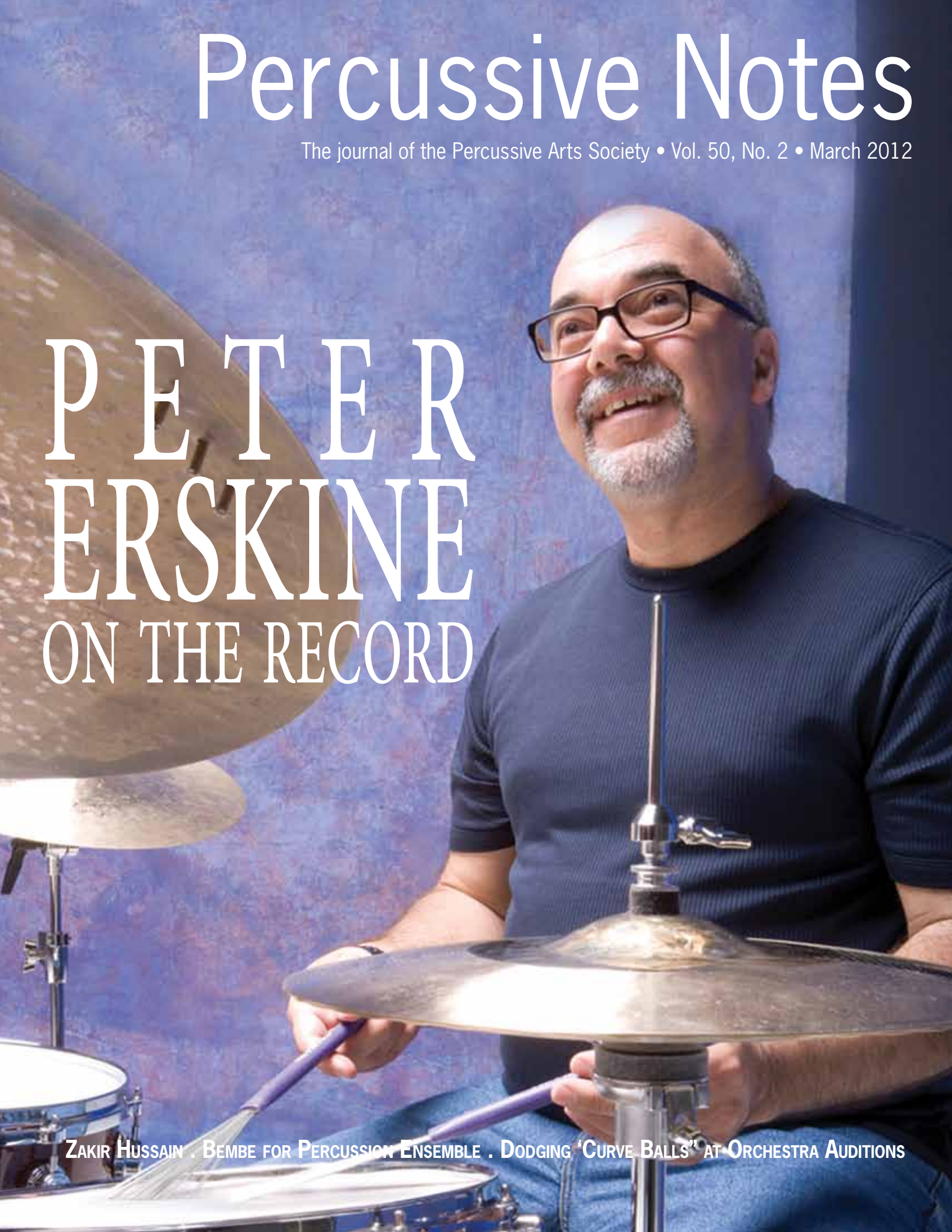
Percussive Notes

The journal of the Percussive Arts Society • Vol. 50, No. 2 • March 2012



PETER ERSKINE
ON THE RECORD

ZAKIR HUSSAIN . BEMBE FOR PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE . DODGING 'CURVE BALLS" AT ORCHESTRA AUDITIONS

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PASIC Logistics Team members work directly with some of the best drummers and percussionists in the world by helping to move gear and setup stages. Team members are eligible to win prizes from PASIC exhibitors and receive many complimentary rewards from the Percussive Arts Society.

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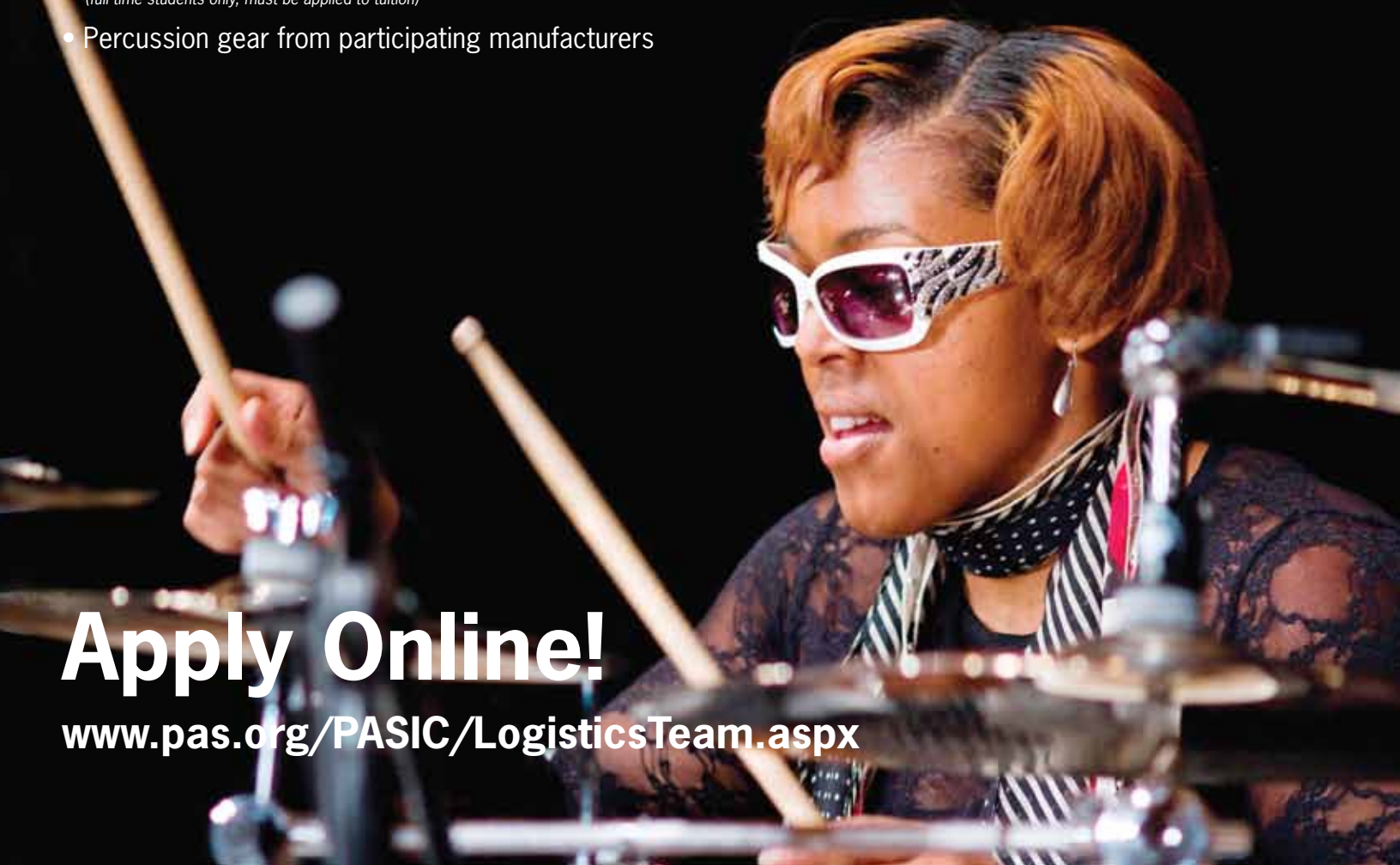

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www.pas.org/PASIC/LogisticsTeam.aspx

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Cover photo courtesy of DW Drums, photography by Tony Barbera

Jeff Crowell and PercTV: Civilization in the Frontier of Social Media, page 22

Web Extras

Video & Audio

Peter Erskine: On the Record

Audio

- Bembe for the Intermediate Percussion Ensemble
- Our Rudimental Drumming Heritage Re-Imagined: 'The Mixed-Up Downfall of Paris'
- Creating a Linear Drum Groove
- An Analysis of Basta's 'Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra'

Visit www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx

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HOURS Monday–Friday, 8 A.M.–5 P.M.

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Society Update

COMMITTEE CHAIR OPENINGS

The Percussive Arts Society Committee Chairs are appointments for three-year terms. At the conclusion of each term, applications are accepted from active PAS members interested in these important areas of percussion. Two committees currently have openings for committee chair: International Committee and Marching Committee.

These leadership positions provide opportunities to work with colleagues who are leaders in their fields and make an impact in advancing their respective areas of percussion.

Additional information about the PAS standing committees and the application process are available at www.pas.org/About/committees.aspx.

If you would like to apply for a chair position, please send a letter of intent, current resume or curriculum vitae and related experiences to the work of the committee to the PAS office no later than March 31 to:

Percussive Arts Society
Committee Chair Search
110 West Washington Street, Suite A
Indianapolis, IN 46204

PAS INTERNSHIP

Applications are now being accepted for the prestigious PAS internship program. The internship is a full-time, six-month position at the PAS offices in Indianapolis, Indiana and provides a wide range of duties and experiences for the serious student looking to start a career in the music industry. Learn how the PAS internship program has served past interns now established in their careers both in and out of the music industry at www.pas.org/experience/InternshipTestimonials.aspx.

Complete application information can be found at www.pas.org/experience/internship.aspx. Priority will be given to candidates whose applications are received on or before Friday, May 4, 2012.

PAS SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, PAS offers over $25,000 in scholarships and awards to help percussionists advance their education, through the generosity of the scholarship sponsors listed below. March 15 is the postmark deadline for the following scholarships:

Armand Zildjian Percussion Scholarship: $2,000. Open to collegiate students.

Remo, Inc./Fred Hoey Memorial Scholarship: $1,000. Open to graduating high school students.

Sabian Ltd./Larrie Londin Scholarship: $3,000. Open to drumset students in two categories: ages 17 and under and ages 18–24.

Yamaha Terry Gibbs Scholarship: $1,000. Open to collegiate jazz vibraphonists.

Hudson Music Drumset Scholarship: $1,000. Open to collegiate-level drumset students.

Meredith Music Publications PASIC Grant: $1,000. Open to a non-percussionist band director to provide financial assistance to attend PASIC and further the band director's knowledge of percussion instruments and their use in school ensembles.

Eligibility and application information for all scholarships and grants is available online at www.pas.org/experience/grantsscholarships.aspx.

PASIC REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

It is not too early to plan for PASIC 2012, to be held in Austin, Texas Oct. 31–Nov. 3. Registration is now open for PASIC 2012, and you can register online and make your hotel reservation.

If you are interested in participating in any of the Marching Festival activities, you will want to sign up early to reserve your spot. Individual, Small Ensemble, and Drumline registration is open, and slots in all categories are filling up quickly.

Exhibitor packets for the International Drum and Percussion Expo are also available, and booth reservations are being accepted. To get complete information on PASIC 2012, visit the website at www.pas.org/PASIC.aspx and register today.

2012 PAS INTERNATIONAL SOLO MARIMBA COMPETITION

The postmark deadline for this prestigious competition is April 15. Four finalists will be invited to compete at PASIC 2012 in front of a live audience. Entrants must be college-level students who are current PAS members, 18–25 years of age at the time of entry. The contest includes cash awards for the finalists. For more information including required repertoire, visit www.pas.org/Libraries/PASIC_Archives/2012SoloCompetition.sflb.ashx.

PAS COMPOSITION CONTEST

Now in its 39th year, the PAS 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 past contest winners are now considered staples of modern percussion literature. Cash awards totaling $4,500 are distributed each year to the winning composers.

The categories for 2012 are,
Category I: Unaccompanied Solo Marimba
Category II: Drumset Soloist with Medium Percussion Ensemble (5–8 players)

For complete information and application, visit www.pas.org/experience/contests/compositioncontest.aspx.

PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

Mission Statement

The Percussive Arts Society® (PAS®) is a music service organization promoting percussion education, research, performance and appreciation throughout the world.

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

The Percussive Arts Society wishes to express its deepest gratitude to the following businesses and individuals who have given generous gifts and contributions to PAS over the years.

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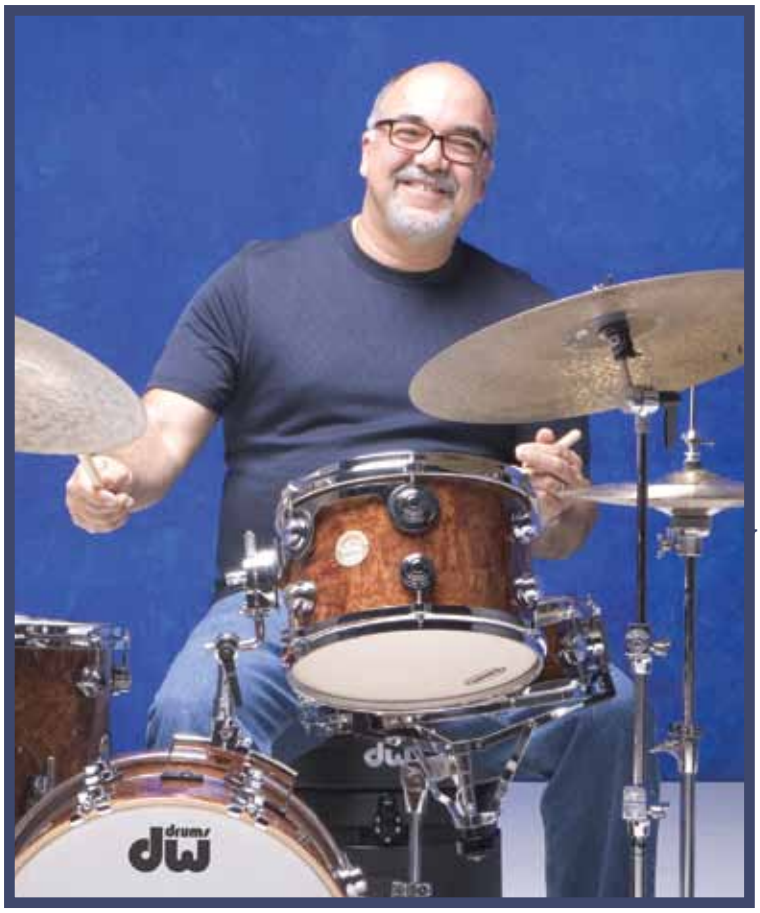
PETER ERSKINE ON THE RECORD

"When listening to music, whether of my own making or someone else's, I find myself looking for those distinguishing moments and features that describe the music (and musician) as coming from some particular place," says Peter Erskine midway through his book *The Drum Perspective*. "That language of the musician, *music*, conveys each musician's own history."



Visit http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx to hear audio files and see videos.

Web Extras

The music Erskine has been making in recent years is certainly informed by Peter's rich history as a musician. Stories he has told about himself over the years imply that he was somewhat of a precocious drumming prodigy, and while his youthful years might not quite match those of the Vaudeville child-star "Traps, the Drum Wonder" (aka Buddy Rich), not many drummers can boast of landing a major gig at age 18, as Peter did when he joined the Stan Kenton Orchestra.

But several big bands in the early 1970s were gobbling up young musicians who were willing to go on the road, and then spitting them out, never to be heard from again. And after three years with Kenton, Erskine seemingly vanished from the scene. When he re-emerged a year later with Maynard Ferguson, it was revealed that he had spent the intervening time studying percussion with George Gaber at Indiana University—which seemed at odds with the norm. Most people dropped out of college to take a gig; Erskine dropped out of the Kenton band to attend college.

Firmly established as a big band drummer by virtue of the Kenton and Ferguson gigs, Erskine proceeded to confound *Down Beat* readers everywhere by joining Weather Report. But he quickly proved that his membership in that band was no fluke, and of all the drummers who played with Weather Report over the years, Erskine holds the record for longevity.

Having proven himself in two very different musical arenas, and with solid grounding from his education at IU and, before that, the Interlochen Arts Academy, Erskine proceeded to explore a variety of musical environments. He lived in New York and played with bop musicians; he spent time in Europe playing with many of the distinctive artists who represented the "ECM sound." He moved to California and played with jazz groups and in studio sessions for everything from movie soundtracks to cereal commercials. He worked with artists outside the jazz community such as Boz Scaggs, Joni Mitchell, and Steely Dan. He performed with Nexus and with symphony orchestras, wrote incidental music for Shakespeare plays, and started his own record label, Fuzzy Music, on which he appeared with a variety of groups, from trios to big bands.

Obviously, to be able to handle all those different situations, the guy has his craft together. But if all he had was craft, he could have traveled all those musical roads without leaving any footprints. Instead, he has established an indentity in all those areas through sheer musicality. The deep well he draws from allows him to approach free playing with the sense of structure of one who knows how to hold a big band together, and to drive a big band with the looseness of a bebopper; to give a symphony orchestra a jazz-like sense of forward momentum, and to play drum solos that are as much informed by Edgard Varèse as by Elvin Jones; to drive a jazz band with rock-like power, and to color a rock tune with the most delicate of brush strokes.

"If you listen to the music, it will tell you what to play," Erskine often advises at clinics. Easy to say, not so easy to do—unless, like Peter, you have a wealth of previous musical experiences from which to draw, and the confidence to stay in the moment and be open to any possibility presented by the other players.

Here then is a sampling of the history conveyed in Erskine's playing. It's been a fascinating trip for him as well as for his listeners.

Stan Kenton Orchestra
"Daily Dance"
http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx

RM: *Looking at that Stan Kenton video of "Daily Dance," how would you analyze that drummer's performance?*

PE: This was March 1, 1973, so the drummer in that video—who is, of course, an 18-year-old me—had been on the band for eight months and is doing the best he can on a very fast tune. He's sitting in the midst of the Kenton band, which was a very loud band. I'm playing hard, with a lot of arm motion. I could kind of get away with it then; now I would use less arm motion, more wrist, and play more relaxed.

I played strong fills throughout; I was not navigating through that music with texture and subtlety. I was very young and powerful, and in my drummer's imagination, I was Steve Reeves portraying Hercules and battling seven-headed hydras at every new rehearsal marking in the chart, cutting off dragons' heads right and left [laughs].

My solo, with the exception of one little thing I cringe at, actually has some hip stuff, vocabulary-wise, and it is relatively succinct. There are some bop-drummer things that are Blakey-esque, but I'm also nailing all the big-band hits. Billy Cobham was an influence on me at the time. I had seen him play several times with the Mahavishnu Orchestra, and that had a very strong impact on me. It wasn't entirely suitable for a lot of the Kenton music, but being the young, longhaired, student-drummer poster child in terms of jazz education, young drummers dug it, and young musicians in general could identify with the longhaired kid. Young guys dig fast, muscular playing for the same reason they have posters of Ferraris in their bedrooms. They like fast.

Overall, it's good. It shows a good grasp of a lot of the vocabulary, and although it's probably more punchy and powerful than it needed to be, I'm proud of it.

RM: *Do I recall correctly that the cymbals you used in that band actually belonged to Kenton and the ride was 26 inches?*

PE: He actually had a 27-inch ride when I joined, but it was cracked, so Zildjian sent out a 26-inch replacement. The two crashes, on which

Peter Erskine with the Stan Kenton Orchestra

there was a lot of rolling with mallets, were 24 inches, and I had a 22-inch swish and 14-inch New Beat hi-hats. So those were big cymbals. With that much metal they were kind of dry sounding and it took something to get them going, although they did provide a lot of rebound, and they would project and cut through the band. So I needed a big stick, because a small stick wouldn't get them moving. Usually I was using 5B oak sticks, but if they broke I would go to a local music store and buy 2S sticks. I was probably holding the sticks too tightly, and I was hitting hard so I was breaking sticks. Nowadays, it's pretty rare for me to break a stick. But when I got that gig, I had to adapt and figure out how to survive.

It was odd, because I had grown up listening to a lot of Mel Lewis, Elvin, Grady Tate, and I always liked the flowing, legato, tasty kind of thing. But the Kenton band brought out another side of me, along with the Cobham influence. Whenever I'd hear Ed Soph playing, who I had known from him having taught me at a summer camp six years prior, I remember thinking, "That's what I want to be able to do when I grow up—play in a small group and swing."

Maynard Ferguson
"Give It One"
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1QO3nNs25E

RM: *Had the drummer on the Maynard Ferguson clip of "Give it One" learned anything after playing with Stan Kenton?*

PE: Yeah, I think he was a better drummer. Maynard's band was smaller—not necessarily softer or more subtle, but in some ways the band was lighter on its feet. "Give It One" is the tune we played to open concerts. The title is an English expression. It's very fast, and the influence Billy Cobham had on my drumming is still apparent.

RM: *After you left Kenton, you spent some time at Indiana University before you took the Ferguson gig.*

PE: Yeah, I went back to school after being on the Kenton band for three years. I remember that after one of the orchestra concerts, Professor George Gaber came up on stage, and he went up to Kenny Aronoff, who was playing timpani, and said, "Bravo, excellent job," and then

Professor George Gaber with Peter

Weather Report (left to right): Wayne Shorter, Peter Erskine, Joe Zawinul, Jaco Pastorius

he went up to Judy Moonert—who now teaches at Western Michigan University and plays in the Kalamazoo Symphony—and said, "Bravo, excellent job," and so on down the line. I had played temple blocks, and when Gaber got to me he said, "See me in my office first thing tomorrow." So I went to his office the next day and he said, "Why were you hitting those things so hard?"

As you can see in the Maynard clip, some of the lessons Gaber taught me didn't take hold right away [laughs]. Sometimes you learn something, but you're not quite ready to implement that knowledge. So it was still kind of percolating when I went on the road with Maynard, and I'm sure I formed any number of bad habits just trying to handle the gig, which consisted of producing relatively high volume on what was then a fairly small kit, and with very high-energy music. But I sure had a lot of fun, and it was thanks to the Maynard gig that I met Jaco Pastorius and got the Weather Report gig.

I got a lot of experience with Maynard, including some experience in the recording studio. The more experience you get, no matter what you're doing, it helps. Despite some of the musical excesses of that band, we did some good work.

Weather Report
"Young and Fine"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8VAb-UwCBQ&feature=related

PE: The clip of "Young and Fine" is only about a year later than the Maynard Ferguson clip. It was taken from a concert outside of Frankfurt, Germany. It was about a month before the band made the live recording, *8:30*. I like the way we played "Young and Fine" at that concert. It wasn't one of the more fiery or adventurous tunes, but it was fun to play, and we didn't do it that often.

Steve Gadd played drums on the album version of that song, and one of the first things I recorded with Weather Report was overdubbing hi-hat with Steve's drums because Joe [Zawinul] wanted an additional layer of rhythmic momentum, which he would often have me do on my own drum tracks. So I went in to do this hi-hat overdub, and I thought they would be paying pretty close attention to me. I finished the take and went into the control room, and instead of all eyes being on me, all eyes were on the World Cup soccer playoffs on TV. So I asked, "How was that?" and Joe says, "You tell me." I said, "I think it was good," and Joe says, "Okay then, watch the game." That's when studio time was somewhat less precious.

Of all the bands I've played with, Weather Report is the one I feel most honored to have been in. It wasn't always the most fun. If I had known then what I know now, could I have done it better? Maybe. But

life doesn't work that way, so I can't speculate. I did the best I could at the time, and we laughed a lot during all that.

RM: *You and Jaco were about the same age, but Zawinul and Wayne Shorter were considerably older, and both were already jazz legends. How should a young musician behave in a situation like that?*

PE: After Weather Report, when Joe started the Zawinul Syndicate, he had one of his new, young drum finds. They ran into Roy Haynes in a hotel lobby, and Joe says, "Hey Roy, you gotta check out my new drummer." And Roy says, "He needs to check *me* out" [laughs]. But that was the climate in jazz. When I was growing up, that was the kind of gauntlet you had to walk through to survive. I don't know if I was consciously aware of it or if it was just natural, but I've always maintained a level of respect for my elders, even if I was not particularly a fan of the way they played, because they deserved it. They had been doing it longer than I had. And that was always a door opener, too. That's why another musician would be willing to share some stuff with you. Some guys were harder nuts to crack than others. But I found that most of the jazz drumming masters are pretty happy to share and pass along what they know, just like we've all experienced at PASIC.

There is a picture of me with Buddy Rich where I'm actually down on bended knee. Buddy had just played one of the all-time impossible drum solos, like he did every night. Buddy was seated, so I wasn't going to make the man look up to me. There was no chair there, so I went down on my knees; it was just a subconscious sign of respect. And he was very gracious.

WDR Big Band with Joe Zawinul
D♭ Waltz
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lPxgTZIDJeQ

RM: *A lot of people were surprised when you joined Weather Report, because your gigs with Kenton and Ferguson had given you the reputation as being a big band drummer. So it was interesting how those two things came together when you played a tribute to Joe Zawinul with the WDR Big Band.*

PE: It was basically a Weather Report rhythm section with me on drums, Alex Acuna on percussion, and Victor Bailey on bass. Some of the charts were Vince Mandoza big band arrangements, and they weren't meant to imitate Weather Report. I was originally approaching one of them, "Night Passage," like a West-Coast Mel Lewis in the early 1960s. As I said before, I sometimes wonder, "If I had known then what I know now, and I could go back and do that again, what would it be like?" So this was that opportunity.

Joe could only make the last rehearsal the night before the concert. So we're playing, and almost immediately Joe points to me and says, "No, no, don't play like that. That's not a Weather Report beat." I felt my face turning red, but out of respect to Joe I didn't want to say, "Hey, f--- off! I don't work for you anymore." But I was really hurt. It's like, you think you're all grown up, and then you go back home for Thanksgiving, and your grandmother says that one thing that immediately throws you back to the dynamic of the relationship you had when you were a kid. So I was angry at Joe and furious at myself, and it took me a tune or two, but I finally got back on track. But it really threw me that this guy could bring back all these ghosts of my playing insecurity. He was the kind of guy who would give you these looks on stage that made it obvious to everyone that he was profoundly disappointed.


Peter with Buddy Rich

The next day I'm walking towards the concert hall, and here comes Zawinul from the opposite direction. So I'm prepared for whatever new criticism he's going to offer, and he goes, "Peter Erskine! You sounded great last night, man! You played your ass off!" So with a guy like that you always felt like Charlie Brown, and Joe was like Lucy with the football [laughs]. But those old beboppers love to mess with you.

I might enjoy the respect of a lot of players today because they like the way I play. But I think it's also that if you survive that stuff, you're one of the cats. You're a veteran, a survivor, and I think that counts for something with some people.

Metropole Orchestra
"Nubian Sundance"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IoTsL6S170

PE: The tribute to Zawinul with the Metropole Orchestra completes the circle in some ways. When Joe died it was terribly sad. The breadth and depth of the man's music still astonishes me. I was so aware and sensitized to the fact that he wasn't going to be around any more. He was definitely a musical father figure, with all the complexities that go into a relationship like that.

When we did this concert, I was so fortunate to again have Alex Acuna beside me playing percussion. As you can see in the clip of "Nubian Sundance," everything he does is perfect. Victor Bailey is playing bass. I loved being in the band with Jaco, but Victor is every bit as much Weather Report as anyone who ever played with the band, and I love his sound. Vince Mandoza did a brilliant job arranging this piece for an orchestra. We put it together pretty quickly. Jim Beard did a hell of a job on synthesizer.

This drumbeat is like a one-legged man in a rear-end kicking contest. It was originally played by two drummers, and the drumbeat to "Nubian Sundance" was my audition for Weather Report by telephone. I got a call from a guy from Weather Report's management, and he said, "Peter, Joe Zawinul has one question: Can you play the beat to 'Nubian Sundance'?" And in my youthful, unguarded exuberance I said, "Yeah, I can play the shit out of it." It's a fun beat to play, but it does require some concentration, and it goes on for quite some time. But the power of the song is evident. People should check out that entire concert; it's called *Fast City*. You realize what a timeless, wonderful period that was when Weather Report was making recordings.

Steps Ahead
"Islands"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfNURSHTQU4

RM: *After you left Weather Report, you moved to New York and joined Steps Ahead, replacing Steve Gadd. The other members were Mike Mainieri on vibes, Michael Brecker on sax, Eddie Gomez on bass, and Don Grolnick on keyboards. When Gadd was in the band, it was a pretty straight-ahead bebop group, but gradually, and with some personnel changes, it evolved into more of a fusion band.*

PE: I had done a live gig with Don, and he enjoyed the collaboration, and I had also worked on a Mike Mainieri album, and I had played with Michael Brecker on the Mainieri album and on a couple of other things, and being in Weather Report, it seemed like a good fit. That was why I decided to move to New York. I was thrilled to get the opportunity to work with all these guys.

Eventually Grolnick left the band, and Eddie Gomez and I suggested Eliane Elias because we had done a demo recording with her. She was only 21, I think, and had just moved to New York. She had a remarkable talent and we thought it was a cool idea. She brought a Brazilian influence into the picture, and we were still trying to figure out how light or how heavy to play. I was trying to adjust my touch, and trying to bring what I thought I knew from Weather Report into this, and meanwhile was just starting to learn how to play like a New York musician. It was really playing in a trio with John Abercrombie that I started learning how to loosen up.

The Steps stuff always had a nice feel. The band played with a lot of heart, and "Islands" is a typical, breezy, Mainieri tune with good hooks. The video clip is pretty hilarious. It was recorded in a museum in Copenhagen. The clip says "live" but there was nobody there. It starts with us visiting the museum to look at the artwork and we wind up playing. It's really corny; we're terrible actors.

The taping in Copenhagen… I recently auditioned a bunch of drummers at USC, and I tried to make them comfortable, and I told them, "No one has ever left an audition saying, 'Wow, that was fun! That's the best I've ever played!'" And oftentimes, when you go into the studio for a recording or a video, chances are 50/50 that it will be a really good night or a really bad night. I remember the videotaping in Copenhagen being a really lousy day. We thought the sound was horrific as we were playing, there were a lot of production issues, and there was a bit of tension on the set. But however you feel about an audition or recording or taping, the true essence of any musician will come through. And when I watch this now, it wasn't the peak of what we could do, but it was representative.

In terms of the groove, that's a pretty straight baiao, and I learned that beat primarily from listening to Airto and a little bit to Dom um Ramao, who had played percussion in Weather Report and with Sergio Mendez.

You can see the incredibly stupid angles that I have my toms and cymbals. I thought I was setting it up like a cockpit, but I was really fighting the instrument and not getting a good sound out of the drums. Bad posture, dumb setup. I'm surprised I could sound as halfway decent as I did. If you fast-forward a year or two to another Steps Ahead clip, "Trains," from the Northsea Jazz Festival, my setup is more ergonomic, and I'm playing more powerfully, because this tune had a fair amount of energy.

Steps Ahead
"Trains"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQDAlUG6VyA

RM: *"Islands" was basically acoustic Steps Ahead. While you were in that band, the electronic revolution happened with synthesizers, computers, MIDI, and drum machines, and the first thing you see in the "Trains" clip is Brecker with his EWI (Electronic Wind Instrument).*

PE: That was the first-generation electronic device that was designed by Nyle Steiner. And a lot of what we did was pre-MIDI. We were dealing with a proprietary Oberheim system and trying to interface that with a Moog-this and a Roland-that.

I remember that show with fondness. We were relaxed and having a good time that afternoon. That was a fun band, and during that summer tour, we went to Japan and after a seven-year separation, I re-met the woman who would become my wife. So that was a great summer with Steps.

"Trains" was a lot of fun. There is an obvious Pat Metheny influence in the guitar. Having Victor Bailey in the band, all of a sudden, was so much fun because Victor is so funky and inventive. So we had two Weather Reporters in Steps, and that provided a real nice spirit and sensibility on how to approach the stuff. Mainieri was an old-time bebopper, but he was really kind of a hippy—very folky. I remember he told Victor that he should check out one or two folk recordings to get the vibe for one of the tunes, and Victor shook his head and said, "Well you're going to have to loan me some of *your* albums because I don't have any of that in *my* record collection" [laughs].

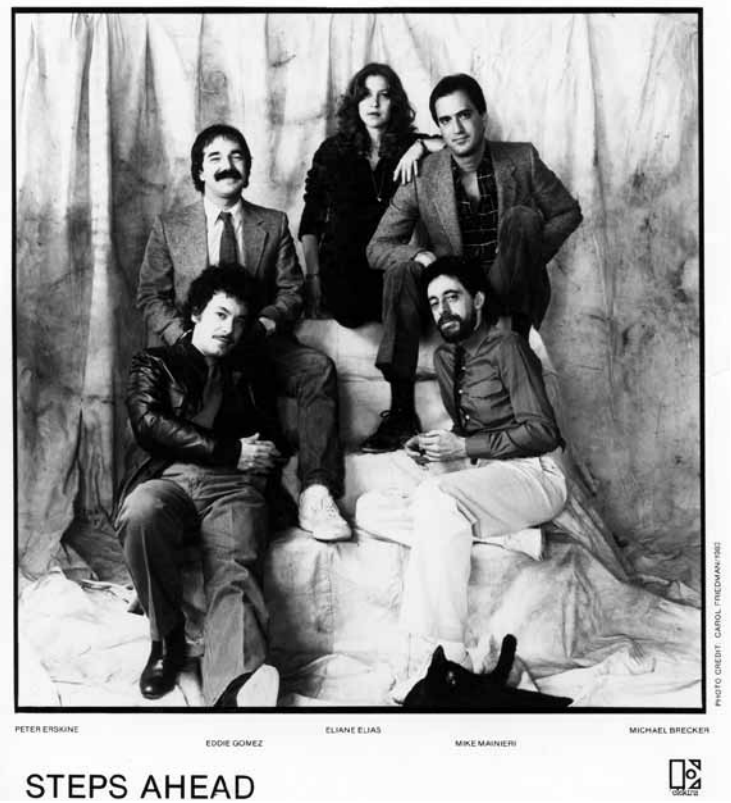
The groove is a double time hi-hat with a halftime backbeat. There are a few Steps things and Weather Report things, like "Night Passage," that had that double-time hi-hat shuffle with a half-time backbeat on the snare. It was always fun to combine the two meters, as it were. Part of the fun of Steps was that it always had the feel of a bebop group, and we were trying to come up with different types of grooves and still make it have that kind of focus so it would be enjoyable to listen to.

RM: *In terms of the electronics, I know you became fascinated with a lot of that; in fact, you were the first person I knew who had a Mac. And didn't you record some of the sounds for the Oberheim DMX drum machine?*

PE: Yeah. We recorded snare drum, toms, tambourine, hi-hat, maybe a crash. It was a Yamaha kit of mine. The DMX wasn't as prolific a machine as the LinnDrum, but those sounds appeared on a lot of recordings. So I got a DMX out of the deal; that was my payment. And then Steps invested in a DSX, and Mainieri had an OBX1, and I bought one as well, and we did all the sequencing for the *Modern Times* album on a DSX. Back in those days you could make little drum patterns and link them into a song. But if you made a mistake in the linear sequencing, there was no backspace. You had to redo the whole thing. I remember we spent a lot of time and took a lot of care building some of those tracks. Warren Bernhardt and I took on a lot of that responsibility. So yeah, I was into it.

RM: *Looking back on that period now, do you feel it was time well spent?*

PE: The music was nice. You can hear that we're sort of finding our way, but I think we did awfully good for the technology we had, none of us being real synth experts. It's all tools, and it's all in the way you use a tool, or an instrument. And it was good for us. Those were the days when you were given a budget to do an album and you worked on it for maybe a few weeks, spending long days, often starting in the evening because that was the only time you could get in the studio, sometimes not getting home until 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning. As de-



manding and time-consuming as that stuff was, it was fun. It was neat for the music to unfold over that period of time.

So much of what I do now happens in real time. We might spend some time mixing, but especially with my own record company, we specialize in getting things recorded as quickly as possible—sort of guerilla-tactic recording. But that was a very interesting time. Today, for most instrumental music, there are no big budgets. People still buy CDs at gigs, but otherwise they expect to get music free on the Internet. We're all trying to figure out how to get the music out there and not lose too much money doing it.

Michael and Randy Brecker with the WDR Big Band
"Some Skunk Funk"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYJX5xEZm3c

PE: Michael Brecker—another musician we lost way too soon. Michael won a Grammy for the tenor solo in this clip. That's a signature tune of the Brecker Brothers. There are several different versions out there with a lot of great drummers. Harvey Mason is on the original and he's amazing on that.

That was a fun band. No one got a sound like Michael and Randy because of their vibrato and the way they played together. It was a beautiful sound and rhythmically so precise. And to have Will Lee playing bass on this tune made it completely perfect. The way he plays on that is unbelievably great. It wasn't too long after this that Michael became ill. He died by the time the Grammy award was announced. I was happy to be one of the Grammy winners for that album, and Michael won an additional Grammy for his solo. When we went on stage to accept the award, I took the occasion to say that every solo Michael played was worthy of a Grammy.

John Abercrombie, Marc Johnson, Peter Erskine
"My Foolish Heart"
http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx

RM: *While you were in New York you started playing with guitarist John Abercrombie's trio. Did that get you closer to what you aspired to do back in your Kenton days?*

PE: Yeah, and beyond. With John, there was no piano-player's left hand blocking out chords and harmonic structure in a rhythmically specific manner. John would sometimes play harmony, sometimes he wouldn't, there might be a fleeting chord here and there. Rhythmically he is very legato and flowing—and quite unpredictable. I was able to realize pretty quickly that playing out of habit wouldn't work, and the connecting devices I was used to playing between phrases didn't work. I still had the straight eighth-note thing in my system pretty heavily from Weather Report, and I wasn't comfortable with being a stone bebopper yet, but the loosening up process began, and even with the improvised stuff I was able to make a contribution or state a musical idea without feeling too self-conscious. So that was a lot of fun, and I also got a much better understanding of the interaction between bass and drums, and how to create surface tension and release through things like doing the rhythmic equivalent of bending the pitch—bending the time. The bass player, Marc Johnson, was interested in that as well, so he was a good foil.

There were very few predetermined elements. Often we would just go out and start playing free. We would call it "Time, No Changes." That became the way we started a lot of shows. It was very cool because we didn't know what was going to happen.

That was a really fun group and we toured quite a bit in Europe and played together a lot for a few years. And then we became a core group for a couple of recording projects I did where it was hard to imagine John and Marc not being there, including the quartet we had with Michael Brecker, which was around the time I left Steps. Michael wanted to do something outside of Steps before he made the leap into having his own band. He and Abercrombie were good buddies from when they were in Dreams in the late '60s.

So it was nice. I have a lot of good memories of the music scene in New York in the '80s. This particular track reflects John and Marc's fascination and fondness for the music of Bill Evans, and I suppose it also reflects my great admiration and respect for Paul Motian.

Peter Erskine Trio
"Everybody's Song but My Own"
http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx

RM: *I remember you telling me how happy you were to start doing sessions for ECM in the 1980s, and that some of those sessions brought some different things out of you.*

PE: John Abercrombie was an ECM artist, and Marc Johnson's Bass Desires recordings were also on ECM, and then I put a trio together that recorded on ECM. It was great working with ECM owner and producer Manfred Eicher. The sessions were often challenging but always fun. He has a Machiavellian side to him, which I think he sometimes employs when he feels the need to stir things up. He oftentimes would like to pull the rug out from under you conceptually or emotionally, and like a lot of the recordings we listened to when we were younger where musicians were playing things that might not have been their "thing," they seem to reveal the nature of the players. So Manfred was real good at provoking musical responses if he wasn't confident that what you were doing was hip.

The sound was as much a part of the ECM formula as anything else.

Left to right: John Taylor, Palle Danielsson, Peter Erskine

Once I started working with my piano trio, with John Taylor on piano and Palle Danielsson on bass, the sound of that particular piano at Rainbow studios in Oslo, and the voicing and tuning that that particular piano technician achieved, had a big effect on the music we played. ECM records really force you to make musical choices based on being an active listener. Manfred could smell a predetermined thing a mile away. And if you played too much… One time he told me, "You sound like Billy Cobham's drumset being kicked down a circular stairwell" [laughs].

That was the beginning of my real education in terms of space and the grander vision of finding the horizon in every piece of music, understanding the role of the drums in terms of counterpoint and counterbalance, and ultimately leading to my understanding of playing with intent. As long as you have a specific intent—which can turn on a dime, but if you are in the moment and are very truthful—you can suggest or hint or play around a musical idea without having to state it outright, and that becomes much more interesting. It's a lot less explicit. I'm really into that now.

When I look back at that Kenton clip, the difference is that the drums are very explicit; the drums are almost hitting you over the head with every rhythmic idea. I've tried to get as far away from that as I can—not to the point that Paul Motian was able to achieve; he was a real genius—but a lot more suggestive than I was in my past. I think other musicians respond well to that.

RM: *And referring to the Kenton clip again, I think you played more notes in that one solo than you played on some entire ECM albums.*

PE: [laughs] I bet you're right!

It's odd to be the leader of a piano trio when you're a drummer. I'm doing it again with my new trio, but these guys are younger than me so I can get away with it. But working with an older, established pianist like John Taylor, it was kind of ballsy that I got away with it.

Gary Burton
"Tiempos Felice"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFA4WiG1vJI

RM: *I remember coming to see you in a club in New York with Abercrombie where you were sharing the bill with Gary Burton. Soon after, you started working with Burton, including the album and tour on which he reunited with Pat Metheny.*

PE: Pretty much every night when I was on tour with Gary, there would be a moment when I would be listening him play and remembering being a 14-year-old fan, and thinking, "Wow, I can't believe I'm this close to Gary Burton playing." It was interesting because before I got to play with Gary I'd been working with Mainieri, and they had a little bit of a friendly rivalry on some level, but they're so different. I love the way Mike plays and his whole musical sensibility. But Gary is certainly the Paganini of that instrument, and to this day I'm amazed at what he can play and the language he created on vibraphone. It isn't just the technique; there is a whole Burton language, and it's so much fun to listen to.

Those albums were fun and Gary was great to work with—very enthusiastic. At one point he allowed me to bring Will Lee into the fold, and that turned out to be a very happy collaboration. Gary told me he would choose the drummer first and then allow the drummer to choose the bass player. Gary is a very smart bandleader.

RM: *Did he give you a lot of direction on the tunes?*

PE: He let me make my own choices. He's not averse to confrontation, but he has a larger view and a lot of patience. I did a concert with him recently subbing for Antonio Sanchez, and we had about a half hour to rehearse, and Gary gave good, succinct advice, but he left the choices up to me.

RM: *What led you to start your own record label, Fuzzy Music?*

PE: During the time I was doing the ECM stuff, when I would get back home from Europe I would get calls to do GRP record dates with people like David Benoit, and Manfred was having a problem with me doing that stuff. He may have heard that those things were not making me a better player. My justification was that I was a professional, it was part of my craft, everything could inform everything else, and I was sending my kids to private school and I had to work. But ultimately, after ECM and whatever sideman stuff I was doing at the time, I focused more and more on making my own recordings and putting them out myself, which is very satisfying.

Oftentimes you look back at things you've done and you go through cycles where you like it, and then you don't like it, and then it's the greatest thing you ever did, and then you hate it and think, "Did I really do that?" And then you think it's nice. But some of the recordings we did I still have a great fondness for. That would include some of the things I did with Dave Carpenter on bass and Alan Pasqua on piano. We did a recording called *Standards*, which has a lovely sound. We set up on a stage in an acoustically live hall—no headphones, just a pair of stereo mics capturing the whole trio, and we achieved a nice balance and just played. The more sophisticated things have become, the more we are forced to return to the most natural way of making music. So *Standards* and *Standards II: Movie Music* both do that.

"Bulgaria" comes from *The Interlochen Concert*, played where most of my musically formative years were spent, with Alan Pasqua on piano and Darek Oles on bass. The sound is great, it's live, and no self-consciousness is apparent. I was using a PDP drumkit, which was DWs discount brand. They make a little bebop kit. Basically, if the

bearing edges are okay and you have good heads, you can get a good sound out of any drum.

RM: *Today's "budget" kits are better made than the kits we grew up with, which are now considered "vintage classics."*

PE: Oh yeah. A lot of those drums were a total mess. So this PDP kit is a great sounding drumset. Again, if you play with intent you can draw the sound you want out of a drumset. And if it's not the sound you expect, you don't fight it, you work with it.

That's another thing, I think in the past I fought the music more. Someone asked me once at a clinic, "What's the difference in the way you play now and the way you played when you were younger?" And the answer surprised me; I said, "When I was younger I played as if my life depended on it. Now I play as if someone else's life depends on it." Maybe it's a more selfless way of playing. Once you stop wrestling or grappling with the process, it allows you to be more responsive to the moment and be more musical.

So I like all the recordings we've been able to do on Fuzzy Music, including the big band stuff with Tim Hagans. It's been a lot of fun.

Peter Erskine
"A Bird Sings"
http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx

RM: *A few years ago, I attended a concert celebrating George Gaber's 80th birthday, in which an ensemble that included you, Kenny Aronoff, Judy Moonert, Jeff Hamilton, Kay Stonefelt, Dick Markus, and other former Gaber students played "Ionisation," conducted by Stuart Marrs. You've also played with Nexus on occasion, including at PASIC. And I assume you played in the percussion ensemble at IU. So I wasn't too surprised when I heard that you had written a piece for percussion ensemble, "A Bird Sings."*

PE: One of the big influences on the piece goes back to my formative years. I had some recordings of percussion ensembles directed by Warren Benson, and one of them featured Max Roach with percussionists from the Boston Symphony. Max played some really cool stuff. Aside from maybe some of the Dick Schory stuff, Max was the first drumset player I was aware of to collaborate with a classical percussion ensemble. So that informed a lot of my writing and orchestration choices.

The piece came about when John Tafoya asked me if I'd like to write a percussion ensemble. He put together a consortium of ten schools who each put up some money, and those schools had first rights of performing the piece. The premiere performance had John Tafoya on timpani, She-e Wu on marimba, Alan Abel playing percussion, and me on drumset. We only had an afternoon to rehearse, and I wanted to get a better recording of it, so I had done a concert with a wonderful percussionist in L.A. named Wade Culbreath. I had also worked with Wade in the studios a bit. The first time was a Disney animation; he was playing xylophone, and I walked over to him and said, "You might be the best mallet player I've ever heard." He was pulling such a beautiful sound out of the xylophone and nailing every note. So I had the feeling that he would be able to record all the parts. I booked time at one of the new film recording studios in town called The Bridge in Glendale. It's a wonderful sounding room, and Wade did a magnificent job, and so did the engineer. I just played drums on it. We kept the stereo sound in mind and the instruments were placed as if there was an ensemble in the room playing live.

The piece was written in memory of John Wyre of Nexus, and it employs a few quotations of things that I either heard him play with Nexus or things that he talked about playing, such as "Nola," which I played with Nexus twice. There's a little bit of "Porgy and Bess," a little bit of "Ionisation," a little bit of Mahler, some Warren Benson influence, some Mendelssohn, and the 12/8 African groove, which was a big staple of the Nexus repertoire.

John was such a lovely man, and he might be the person who taught me more about space and sound than anybody, because John was so enchanted and entranced by sound. I got to visit him in Nova Scotia shortly before his passing, and we went into this room where he had all these bells and chimes and gongs—a beautiful construct with things hanging all over the place. You could spend hours in there just tapping, listening to things ring. It wasn't just the striking; he would really tune you into listening to how the tone changed as it sustained and decayed. He had a wonderful awareness of life, and I think as he

Peter with Mark-Anthony Turnage and Boston Symphony Orchestra percussionist Will Hudgins

understood that death was drawing closer, he was able share an even more profound vision of life through sound. So this piece is a very humble offering for those gifts he gave us. My favorite thing about recording the piece was that I was able to send it to his widow, Jean, and I think she really enjoyed listening to it.

Now I think the piece is going to get a second life. I just played it for Rick Kvistad, who is a percussionist with the San Francisco Opera. He's got a workshop coming up in Texas and he wants to play it there.

RM: *Who is publishing it?*

PE: I'm publishing it myself. You can buy it through my website (www.petererskine.com) and I'll send you the pdfs. I'm hoping to appeal to people's good nature so they won't copy it and send it to other people.

I've tried my hand at writing for different ensembles, but I have a better chance of writing for percussion ensemble because I know what the instruments sound like. In my studio I have my five-octave Marimba-One, and I want to write more for the instrument. I've got my little bebop kit and my Roland recording setup. I'm a happy guy.

Mark-Anthony Turnage
"Fractured Lines"
Anna Nicole
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fwXLmr6ZcA

PE: I've enjoyed a wonderful, rewarding association with British composer Mark-Anthony Turnage. I've made several recordings with him, including "Blood on the Floor," "Scorched," which is an acronym for SCOfield ORCHestrated; I did that with John Scofield and John Pattitucci. I did a concerto called "Fractured Lines," which featured Evelyn Glennie. And I've done "Blood on the Floor" with the Berlin Philharmonic, the L.A. Philharmonic, and Boulez's Ensemble Inter-Contemporain as a ballet. I've played other Turnage pieces with the Chicago Symphony. And I played the world premiere of Mark's opera *Anna Nicole* at the Royal Opera House. That was very much fun. John Paul Jones from Led Zeppelin was on bass. We were on stage for one scene, and I played a cocktail kit; the rest of the time we were in the pit. Drumset-wise, it was kind of like playing an old-fashioned Broadway show, and yet very modern. It was the first pit gig I've had since high school.

Thanks to Mark I've gotten to work with so many wonderful musicians and different orchestras. I love the challenge of playing his pieces. Playing his music in concert is the closest I'll get to being an Olympic downhill skier. There's that much fun and adventure. It's certainly a lot more responsibility than getting on the bandstand with a trio. There's a lot of responsibility there, too, but not like when you are playing with so many players who are reading, and you can't improvise quite the same way.

RM: *Didn't something you played with Turnage lead to you recording with Kate Bush?*

PE: Yeah. After "Blood on the Floor," someone associated with the BBC Orchestra thought it would be cool to film me creating a drum part for one of Mark's pieces. So they flew me to London, we went into the orchestra rehearsal room, and did you ever have one of those nightmares where the orchestra is starting and you can't get your drums set up in time? Well, that's kind of what it was like with this kit they had rented, and then I was trying to follow the conductor but I was way in the back, couldn't hear the brass, and blah, blah, blah. But bad rehearsals generally lead to good things—if you don't get fired. So I took notes, and the next morning I figured everything out. Then they taped it and used it as part of a broadcast.

Kate Bush saw it and really liked it. So I got a phone call from her. She was very sweet and asked if I would like to come to England and record with her, and I truly enjoyed the experience. She is really a lovely person.

Peter Erskine New Trio: Vardan Ovsepian, Peter Erskine, Damian Erskine

Then the same thing happened with Elvis Costello. He got in touch with me because he also saw that BBC documentary. So thanks to Mark I got to work with two truly iconic pop performers, as well as all these great orchestras. Drumming will take you lots of interesting places.

Elvis came to my studio, played me the recording of the piece he had done with the ballet orchestra in Bologna, Italy. I suggested that we go to a studio in L.A. and I'd put drums on it, but he said he wanted to hear what would happen between me and the orchestra, so they flew me to London and we did it live with the London Symphony. This was the album *Il Sogno*, Elvis's ballet based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He also had me work on *North*, which was a ballad album, because as great as his band is, they're not ballad players necessarily.

Elvis said a really nice thing in front of the orchestra. He had to leave to rehearse for a tour, but he called across the room, "Peter—fearless!" I'm not sure what that meant, but that would be a fine epitaph.

The orchestra stuff has been fun, like the project I did with Joni Mitchell. It was just playing brushes; not a lot to listen to drum-wise, but it's interesting how you can steer a ship that big just by dipping the paddles in the water here and there.

Peter Erskine New Trio
"Joy Luck"
http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx

PE: I was in Cape Town, South Africa when that tune came to me. I couldn't get it out of my head. I kept singing it to myself, over and over. So I came home and figured it out, and thought marimba would

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sound cool. I like the little hook. It's not quite on the level of [Weather Report's] "Birdland," but it has a pleasing sound.

In general, the way I play on the *Joy Luck* album is more drumming than usual on a lot of the trio stuff I do. I have to play with quite a bit of restraint on most trio albums. So I got to cut loose on this one a little more. My nephew, Damian Erskine, is playing bass; it's been fun working with him. Vardan Ovsepian is on keyboards. It's the first band of my own where I'm the oldest guy. I've always been the youngest guy, or the same age. Now all of a sudden I'm not the youngest, and it's interesting. I love directing, instructing, guiding—and having them help me carry my stuff [laughs]. I can get used to that pretty quick!

RM: *Compare your drumming with this trio and your playing with the ECM trio.*

PE: This is a lot more muscular.

RM: *Is it just the natural reaction to the way they play versus Taylor and Danielsson, or have you changed?*

PE: It's a reaction to them and to the room. When you're recording at Rainbow Studio in Oslo with an acoustic piano, you really have to edit your choices. But with this one, I'm actually creating a play-along app. The drums and piano were in separate rooms and the bass was going direct, so we got the kind of separation that will allow that. I've created trio play-alongs for drum books before, but not from the actual album performance.

Also, I wrote more of the tunes and I produced it. So there's a whole different energy when you are the one who makes the decisions, from which tune you'll do next to when you'll have lunch.

But how did I play differently? I don't know. It's all kind of the same—just try to fit the circumstance. It's not like, "I'm now playing this way because I'm more enlightened." You play the best you can every time you play. Sometimes it's better, and sometimes as you get older you look back and realize that something wasn't as good as you thought it was at the time. I do honestly feel that I'm playing better now than I've ever played, and I feel fortunate to feel that way. Maybe all 57-year-old drummers feel that way; I don't know. But I'm not deluding myself. I know enough about how this stuff is supposed to sound.

I also feel fortunate that I can enjoy the certainty that, musically, I'm still relevant. I'm still a contributing member to society. That's why I have to still travel and play gigs in town, even though teaching at USC keeps me very busy. I can't take myself out of challenging musical situations, because I've seen too many people, when they do that, lose the creative reflex—that ability to respond in the time it takes to still be hip when you play. You see some of these people, and it's nice to see them again, but you seem to recall that they used to play better. I try to look around and learn from stuff. When I was younger I may have tried on the Zawinul ego thing for size, "What we're doing is really hip," and the occasional false modesty, but I can say with true modesty now, the way I play works for me. And I enjoy teaching that aesthetic. I know with certainty that some of the things work, but it's just one way to do it, and it's just the way that fits for me—not the best or only way.

So what's different now? I think I don't feel in competition anymore. Maybe I was more concerned about that when I was younger. And maybe that's the way nature makes us so we continue the species. When you're young you have to compete to get the woman you want, and to get the shelter you want, to get the food you want. But I'm glad I can enjoy the musical contributions of other people, whether they're younger or older. If I like it, I like it, and if I don't, it's kind of nice to know that, too.

ADDITIONAL LINKS

For more video clips of Peter Erskine performing, check out the following links:

Drum solo at PASIC
(Note: video is labeled 2004 but it was PASIC 2003 in Louisville. The vibes player heard at the beginning of the clip is Mike Mainieri.)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V70BYk5D0e8

Steely Dan: "Countermoon—Teahouse on the Tracks"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCr1QnjwaeI&feature=youtu be_gdata_player

Brecker Bros.: "Baffled"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sz_CDCFq7M4

Steps Ahead: "Trains," Japan, 1985, Madarao Jazz Festival
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Po9kvuN8_aU PN

Words of Wisdom with Zakir Hussain

By Mark Griffith

Zakir Hussain is one of the wisest people I have ever met. His analogies and explanations cut right to the core of truly learning about music. He recently completed a series of sold-out concerts at Carnegie Hall where he was conducting and performing with a variety of musicians. This series of performances found Zakir playing in a different musical context each night. Hussain can play with classical musicians, jazz musicians, and rock musicians, and he always creates an intimate, open, joyous, musical meeting place in which to communicate with those surrounding him.

While I watched him rehearsing in New York, I saw him teaching musicians to approach their instruments in new ways, and I must say that the music that he coaxed out of them was astounding. The Indian musical concepts and organizing principles surrounding the compositions were new to some, but his musical explanations made everything seem so simple—even when they were quite the opposite.

With upcoming tours and a recording with Bela Fleck and Edgar Meyer, a new commission with the San Francisco Ballet, and more projects than even he can remember, Zakir will continue taking us all on a unique musical journey and showing us many wondrous things.

His combination of a childlike musical innocence and sheer, unrelenting musical virtuosity make many people refer to him as a "master musician." And in my opinion, if there ever was a true "drumming guru," Zakir would be it. However, he refutes those ideas and the idea of "mastery." Instead he calls himself a "good student of music." But I caught myself wondering where the student, the teacher, and the performer intersect in Zakir Hussain. So that's where we started.

Griffith: *How do you define a "good student" of music?*

Hussain: In India, we believe that it is not the teacher who teaches, it is the student who extracts the information from the teacher. In other words, it is the student who inspires the teacher to teach and relate knowledge freely. That spark is the sign of a good student. The student should inspire the teacher to willingly and with an open heart pass along knowledge with positive energy.

Griffith: *Throughout your career, you have worked with many great drummers. Being a "good student" of music, can you share some of what you have learned from some of these great musicians?*

Hussain: Let's start with my father [legendary tabla maestro Ustad Alla Rakha]. He taught me discipline and focus, and how to apply these principles to the repertoire that has been handed down for thousands of years. When I watched Elvin Jones play, I learned that discipline, focus, and repertoire was one thing, but you also must be able to look at a "beat" from every corner, and that every nook and cranny of the beat was vitally important.

PHOTO BY SUSANA MILLMAN

Griffith: *Elvin's "beat" was truly three dimensional.*

Hussain: He taught us that it was important to be able to make the beat breathe so it could expand and contract. We all learned this important concept from Elvin, but I felt that it was important to incorporate this idea into the traditional repertoire.

From drummers like Olatunji, Armando Perazza, and Francisco Aguabella, I learned how to be melodic and create a speaking language with rhythm. From Mickey Hart I have learned the possibility and the importance of playing rhythms in a trancelike manor. Through this practice, you can go into a meditative zone that will transform you into a whole different world of rhythm. That has opened up a whole new can of worms to fish with. When I play with Airto, I learn about using percussion to design soundscapes. From Tony Williams I was inspired to learn about how drumming could change with a unique combination of swing, tone, and power.

Griffith: *I was amazed by your duet, "The Path of Two," with Narada Michael Walden on the* Masters of Percussion *CD. Do you ever find it difficult to work with someone playing the drumset? There is such a vast difference in the dynamic level of the two instruments.*

Hussain: I have been very fortunate to work with fantastic drummers like Narada, Steve Smith, Eric Harland, and Buddy Miles. These drummers have allowed my voice to appear on stage. If they wanted to, each of them could have smothered me with sound, but they allowed me to coexist with them. Steve and Eric play the drumset with a sense of a hand drummer, so when I play with them it really feels like I am playing with another tabla player. Both Steve and Eric also create musical openings to allow other musicians to express themselves around them, which is very important.

I did a drum trio tour many years back with Billy Cobham and Tito Puente. On that tour, I heard Tito playing funk on his timbales! That really changed me; I learned that anything was possible. Then I heard Latin hand drummers like Giovanni Hidalgo and Armando Perazza play three or four

congas and hold a melodic pattern with the left hand, while soloing on the quinto with the right hand. That was when I realized that I could express myself both rhythmically and melodically on the tabla.

The jazz, or the rock, drumset has taken the idea of extended soloing to a whole new level. But the Latin hand drummers are much closer in their improvising concepts to that of the tabla. If you look at the bongos, the timbales, the older arrangement of the congas—with a lower tumba and a high quinto—and even the combination of the bass and snare drum, you have always had the elements of the low and the high. That is melody. Learning the tabla, and the techniques of this instrument, has allowed me to partake in all of these other areas of drumming that come from all over the world. Any drum can be played melodically, it all depends on the approach of the drummer. A log drum or a slit drum is approached melodically. It is just up to the drummer to break out of the mindset of just playing rhythm and rhythmic patterns, and just take a step back and allow the instrument to speak with melodic possibilities.

The war drums that were mounted in pairs on the backs of animals were tuned to high and low pitches; they were used to tell the soldiers what tempo to march and when to attack. The drums were also used to keep time for the rowers in the Roman Navy. Pitch and melody has always been a consideration on the drums.

Griffith: *You have a special way of relating to the musicians around you that enables you to work with a large variety of different players. You just mentioned playing with Buddy Miles and Eric Harland in the same sentence. In your rehearsals at Carnegie Hall I even saw you trying to get some classically trained orchestral musicians to improvise. It seems that you are always trying to push the musical boundaries of yourself and the musicians surrounding you. Can you talk about the importance of this process?*

Hussain: I have to start by saying that I can do that because I have fallen flat on my face on stage a million times, and it just doesn't hurt anymore. It just means that I have to practice some more and strive to be better. Everything is a learning experience; you cannot be a master of anything, *ever*! You can only be a very good student of something. So to think of yourself as a "master" who is going to give the "best" performance every time that you play is not attainable. That does not exist.

Griffith: *I heard you quote your colleague, saxophonist Charles Lloyd, once by saying that you hadn't played good enough to quit yet. And I'm guessing that as long as you keep "falling on your face," you'll keep playing.*

> It is more important to be able to go somewhere different every night than to be perfect.

Hussain: Yes, that sums it all up. Every time I walk on stage, I learn something new. But I must add that one of the reasons behind why I have no problems falling on my face in performance is because my confidence has developed through not always having to perform in front of musical "connoisseurs." If I was playing in India constantly, I would have the critics in my face all of the time. This would make me more apprehensive to try things that were out of the ordinary, or just not "normal."

But through playing internationally, I have found myself playing with musicians who were okay with not being their "best" on a given evening, as long as it was for the sake of trying something different. This has allowed me to adopt that mindset as well. I have found that it is acceptable to not have to be perfect every night. I believe that it is more important to be able to go somewhere different every night than to be perfect.

Griffith: *What would you say to younger musicians today who still have that fear of falling on their face?*

Hussain: Twenty-five years ago I was always in my safety zone on stage. I had that fear; I wasn't trying all of these new things. I was playing all of my packages that I had worked out. So young musicians today are probably in this same situation. That musician has certain compositions that he has learned to play, and he can fall back on them in case nothing else is working. But that doesn't mean that he shouldn't try to step out of the circle a little bit every now and then. It's all right to break a few "mind bones" every once in a while.

Griffith: *Do you feel that this is a process that has to come with age?*

Hussain: It takes time. Once you become comfortable with what you know, then you can start to move it around. It's like moving the furniture around in your living room. After you are comfortable in your own home, you find that you can reach the things that surround you with your eyes closed. You know where everything is. But when you get *too* comfortable, you have to move things around a little bit or things becomes a little boring.

But here's the thing: If you know what that "chair" really looks and feels like, you can make it fit in any room you choose. But you have to have the ability, the capability, the desire, and the confidence to try new things. And those things do take time to develop.

Griffith: *I have heard you use the term "projection" a great deal. With my students, I use the idea of conviction a lot. If you play any idea, simple or complex, with ultimate conviction, you will project the idea.*

Hussain: I think we are talking about similar ideas. If you present any honest musical idea with enough conviction, it will project. Charlie Parker played chromatically whenever he soloed, no matter what the chord progression was. And when people asked him about it, he said something like, "It is right, as long as you can make it so." That is conviction, confidence, and projection. With those qualities, you can play something that is not "the norm," and it is projected as being valid.

When we play the drums, most of the time we keep our heads up. When it's really good, we are having a visual experience when we play, it is almost like we are riding a roller coaster or a glider. The ride that we are taking implies that we are experiencing a landscape of wondrous things. So if you can, in some way, project that visual element—the ride—to the listener, then nothing else matters. It doesn't matter if you look like you are having an epileptic fit, or if you are barely moving your arms, as long as you are projecting the experience that you are having. Your instrument helps you project your experiences beyond the instrument to the listener. You are the canvas, and you have to be able to project the music onto yourself so it will come through your instrument.

ZAKIR ON YOUTUBE

This is just a sampling of the many videos featuring Zakir Hussain that are available on YouTube.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3sf32_uUww
www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCXYrdRYBrY
www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOUM8K0-Wkc

Mark Griffith is a recording artist, clinician, author, drumming historian, and sideman on the New York music scene. He has written for *Modern Drummer*, *Percussive Notes*, *Not So Modern Drummer*, Hudson Music, and the UK's *Drummer!* His most recent recording, *Drumatic*, features music written by the great jazz drummer-composers. He is currently working on a book titled *The Complete Evolution of Jazz and Fusion Drumming*. PN

Bembe for the Intermediate Percussion Ensemble

By Dave S. Knowlton, Craig Williams, and Jerry Bolen

A number of traditional 6/8 dances and rhythms have been traced from West Africa to Cuba, including Fume Fume and Gamala. This article deals with one of those rhythms—Bembe. As the Bembe rhythm migrated with slaves from Africa to Cuba, variations in the rhythm occurred. This article addresses one of the typical versions that could be performed by a medium-skilled percussion ensemble. In addition to presenting the typical parts for Bembe, this article also addresses some strategies for improving the quality of a Bembe performance.

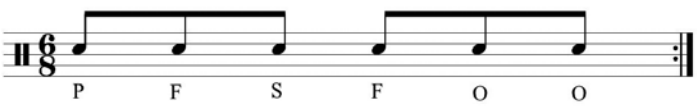
The term "Bembe" can refer to a specific type of religious celebration, a dance, a rhythm, or a drum. The Bembe drums are skin drums, shaped somewhat like timpani, with laces. However, the Bembe rhythm can be played on congas, djembes, or other hand drums that allow for bass tones, open tones, and slap tones. This flexibility makes it an appropriate performance avenue for many western ensembles that may have a limited variety of drum types.

This article addresses three different versions of Bembe for the conga family of drums. The first two are meant to be performed by a single player. We refer to those as "one-drum" and "two-drum" Bembe. This article also will address an ensemble form of Bembe.

ONE-DRUM BEMBE

Example 1 shows the pattern for one-drum Bembe. Performers might be most comfortable using their non-dominant hand to play the palm (P) and fingers (F) pattern, and the dominant hand for the slap (S) and open (O) tones. Though we refer to the first note as a "palm," performers should aim for a sound between a palm tone and a bass tone. Performers who are slightly more versatile and fluent in technique might enjoy moving the slap tones or two open tones to a lower drum. For example, one might play all but the last two notes on a quinto (the highest-pitched drum in the conga family) and play the last two notes—the open tones—on a conga (the middle-pitched drum in the conga family).

Example 1

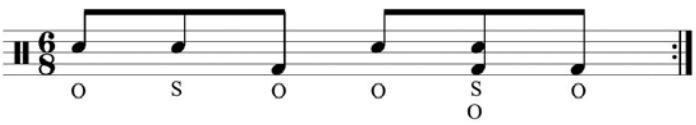


TWO-DRUM BEMBE

Two-drum Bembe is also meant to be played by one person; it is shown in Example 2. What makes this rhythm an appropriate one for the medium-skilled player is that each hand is isolated on a single drum. Therefore, a player can focus on tone accuracy, not on the way that hands must move between the two drums.

In Example 2, the third space (the C space, if treble clef) is the quinto part—typically played by the non-dominant hand. Performers should focus on the accuracy of changing from the open tone to the slap tone with the same hand. The first space (the F space, if treble clef) is the conga drum. It typically is played by the dominant hand. The fact that all of the tones on this bottom drum are open tones allows the performer to focus on the constantly alternating tones in the non-dominant hand.

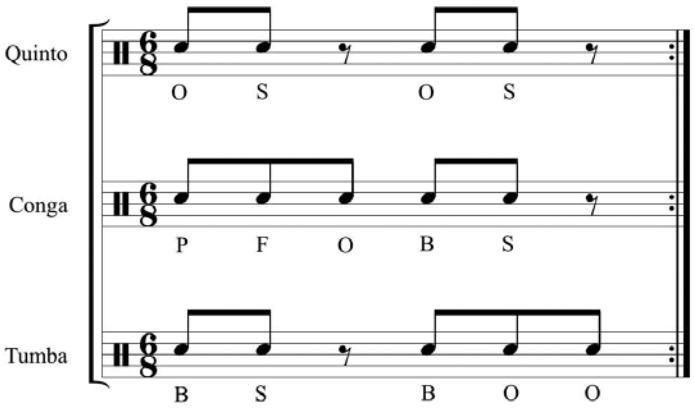
Example 2



ENSEMBLE BEMBE

The ensemble version of Bembe we present requires approximately six musicians. Larger ensembles can double parts to accommodate additional performers. Example 3 shows the traditional drum parts for ensemble Bembe. The top staff is the quinto. The middle stave is the conga. The bottom stave is the tumba (the lowest-pitched drum in the conga family). Unlike one- and two-drum Bembe, ensemble Bembe also uses a bass tone (B) in the conga and tumba parts.

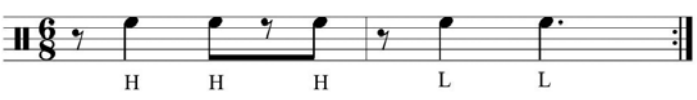
Example 3



Accompanying the three drums is a hoe blade, for which a cowbell could be substituted. The traditional hoe blade part is shown in Example 4. Notice that the first measure is high pitched (h), while the second measure is a lower pitch (l). Pitches are created through hitting the hoe blade in different places.

Another accompanying instrument is the claves, which play the inverse of the hoe blade part; whereas the hoe blade starts with the three-note measure, the claves start on the two-note measure. Unlike the hoe blade, the claves do not play high and low pitches; rather, the clave player should aim to achieve a single and consistent pitch.

Example 4



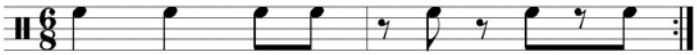
The last accompanying instrument that would be appropriate is a shekeré. The shekeré sometimes keeps time by playing dotted-quarter notes. But it is not uncommon to hear the shekeré play all six eighth

Visit http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx to hear an audio clip of the Bembe arrangement illustrated in this article.

Web Extras

notes of a 6/8 measure; in this case, the bass tone would be played on count one, with the other five counts being created through a "shake" of the instrument to create the bead sounds. Alternatively, the shekeré can play constant eighth notes but accent the rhythm shown in Example 5.

Example 5



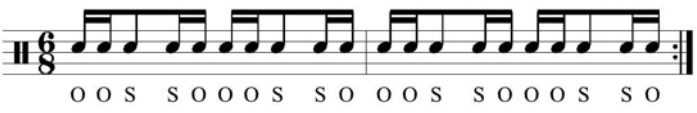
The combination of the drums, clave, bell, and shekeré create a sound that combines wood, metal, and skin. This is very typical of culturally-authentic Afro-Cuban drumming. These parts can be used to create a complete musical work that could be performed at a concert or festival. You can hear how all the parts sound together in the accompanying sound clip.

The following chart summarizes the typical form of a Bembe performance.

Break performed by the master drummer
Response of Break performed by the entire ensemble
Stack in clave, hoe blade, shekeré, quinto, conga, tumba
Break is performed by solo performer
Response of Break performed by the entire ensemble
Qunto solo is performed over the top of the ensemble Bembe parts
Break is performed by soloist at the end of the solo
Response of Break performed by the entire ensemble
Unstack all voices starting with the tumba and working through clave

Music of this genre typically begins with a "call" or a "break." A traditional break is shown in Example 6. We have found, however, that this break can be difficult for moderately-skilled performers to feel and execute. So an alternative break might be based on the rhythm shown in Example 5. This alternative break shares a common feel with both the clave and hoe blade parts. Therefore, moderately-skilled performers can sometimes more easily take their cue from this break than they can from the break shown in Example 6.

Example 6



A master drummer (first-chair performer or section leader) plays the break. This serves as a signal for the ensemble to repeat the break. Immediately following the break, the performers stack in their parts. Typically, this stacking process would begin with clave, followed by hoe blade, shekeré, quinto, conga, and tumba. To shorten this stack-in process, the clave, bell, and shekeré could enter together, and the quinto, conga, and tumba could enter together.

Once all players are stacked in, a designated performer plays the break. This could be the master drummer or any other performer. The break is a signal that solos are about to begin. The entire ensemble responds with the break. Traditionally, the solo is performed by the quinto. The rest of the ensemble members play their parts to Bembe (as shown in Examples 3 through 5) underneath the solo. Obviously, the quinto player will not be playing the quinto part shown in Example 3 while soloing. If another quinto drum and performer are available, then that performer can play the quinto part during the solo. If a second quinto is not available, an additional performer could play the quinto part on bongos. If neither an additional drum nor performer is available, then the tumba player could play one-drum Bembe during the solo. Because one-drum Bembe is a combination of the three separate parts, it can fill out the sound during the quinto solo.

At the end of the quinto solo, the quinto player plays the break as a signal to the ensemble that his or her solo is complete. The ensemble plays the break as a response. This process of using break and solo can be repeated many times. For example, a large ensemble might have five or six performers capable of soloing; therefore, cycles of break, response, solo, break, and response can be repeated as many times as necessary.

After the last soloist signifies the ending of his or her solo by playing the break and the ensemble responds, the ensemble members continue playing their parts to Bembe, as the ensemble begins unstacking. Typically, the unstacking process occurs in the opposite order of the stacking process. That is, the tumba player is usually the first to stop playing, followed by the conga, and moving all the way across the ensemble until the clave is the only instrument left. As an alternative to this unstacking process, ensembles simply can end together after the last solo with the break.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Bembe is hundreds of years old, so performance notes could fill many books. However, we offer just a few performance notes that hopefully will be useful to directors of an intermediate ensemble. Specifically, we focus on strategies for improving the content of performers' solos and creating strong ensemble cohesiveness within Bembe.

For the moderately-skilled percussionist, playing fluid and cogent solos within the Afro-Cuban tradition can be a challenge. To help with this challenge, instructors should teach students that a good solo is not about note density (showing off their "chops") as much as it is about tonal ideas that are thinner (showing off their melodic sensibilities). Many western students come to understand this idea when they are asked to write out their solos in standard notation. Admittedly, writing out rhythms and tones of solos in western notation is not culturally authentic to Bembe; nevertheless, we have found that requiring students to write out their solos can be educationally useful. To extend the benefit of notating solos, ensemble directors can have the performers bring multiple copies of their solos and provide opportunities for performers to synthesize ideas from across various compositions (e.g., "Let's play the first two measures of Marilee's solo followed by two measures of Nate's solo, and conclude the phrase with two measures from Josh's solo"). This type of synthesis builds solo fluidity and tonal skills.

Bembe often is described as being "determined" or "intense," but it is not loud. This seeming contradiction between its "drive" and lack of volume can create problems with ensemble cohesiveness with both rhythm and tone. In terms of ensemble cohesiveness of tone, our experiences suggest that performers do not know how to listen to the tonal (melodic)

ideas within Afro-Cuban drumming. The melody of Bembe is created through the various slap tones that are spread across the three drum parts in Example 3. To help performers hear the melody, we sometimes ask the performers to play their rhythm but to put all notes on their thigh (or other soft surface), except for the slap tones, which they should play on their drum. This allows the performers to better hear the melody of Bembe without being distracted by the accompanying bass tones and open tones—the counter-rhythms and melodies.

While melody is an essential ingredient of Afro-Cuban drumming, ensemble cohesiveness is often a rhythmic problem, as well. One means of helping to solidify the rhythmic drive of Bembe is to use one-drum Bembe as an ostinato "check pattern." It might be useful, for example, to have those who play the quinto, conga, and tumba drums play eight counts of one-drum Bembe (as shown in Example 1) and then eight counts of three-drum Bembe (as shown in Example 3). Because their playing of one-drum Bembe creates a unison part among the performers, it serves as an appropriate tool to help them solidify time and tempo. Similarly, having the performers play three-drum Bembe while having a fourth performer playing one-drum Bembe can be useful for helping the ensemble lock in the time and the determined feel of Bembe.

Another means of solidifying the ensemble from a rhythmic perspective can occur through isolating and matching different voices. When properly performed, the drive for time in Bembe primarily comes from the middle voice—the conga part. Similarly, the solidification of the entire ensemble is created by the combination of the clave and hoe blade parts. It is important to instruct the ensemble to listen to those voices as their center of ensemble awareness. Are the performers even aware, for example, that the hoe blade and clave parts are the same, just reversed? One useful strategy is to allow each performer to play his or her part with the conga and/or the clave and hoe blade. This allows each performer to better hear how his or her part aligns with the drive for time and solidification of time. Importantly, even when a performer plays his or her part with these other parts, that performer may not be aware of the relationships among the parts. Therefore, brief discussions that require the performer to explain the relationship among the parts can be useful.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

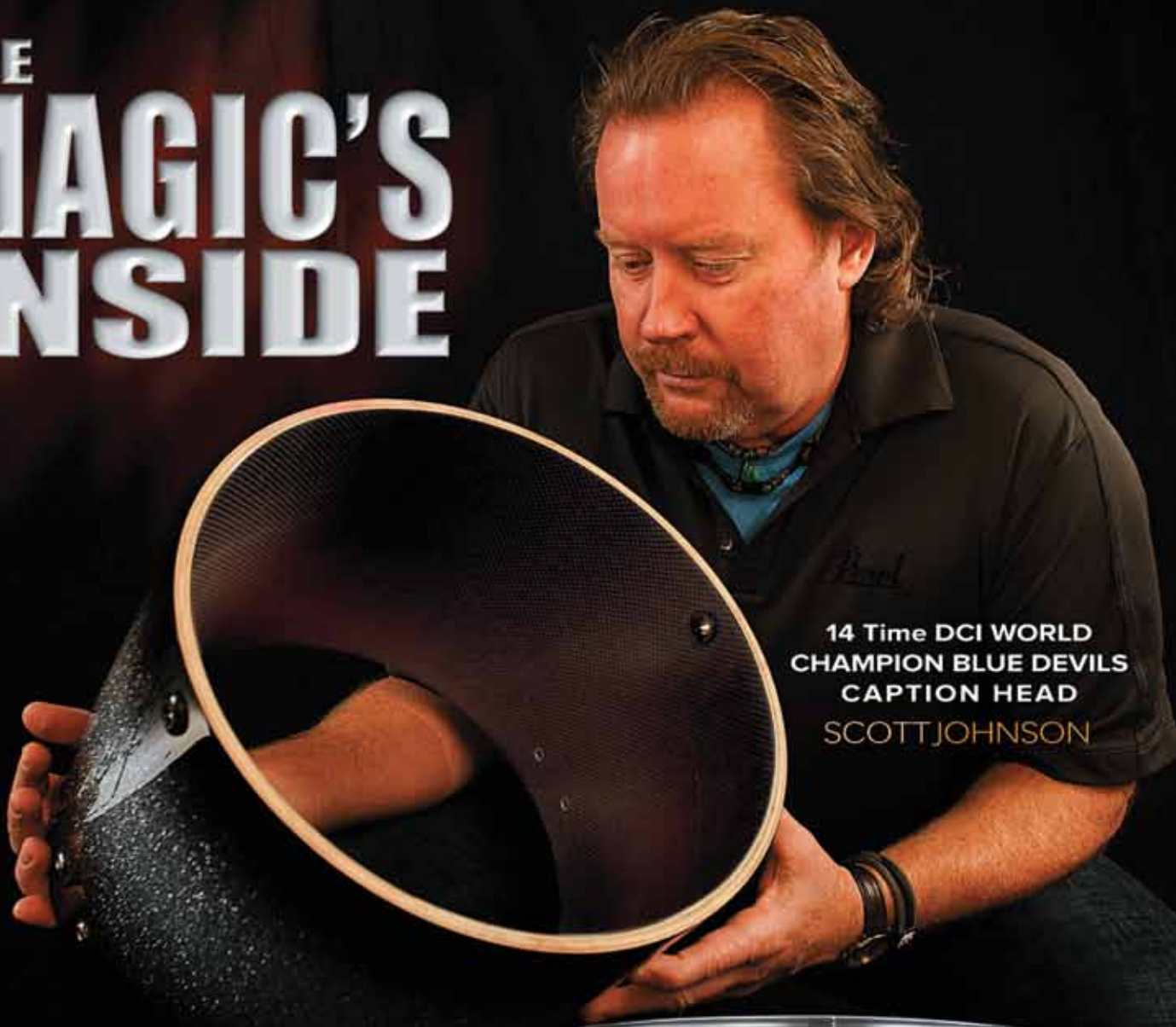
It is important for percussionists to be exposed to a variety of cultural traditions. When percussion teachers attempt to do so, however, they have a responsibility to both the students and to the cultural tradition being taught. We hope that this article has provided practical insights for teachers who attempt to expose performers to some of the 6/8 dances and rhythms that migrated from West Africa to Cuba.

Dave Knowlton is associate professor in the School of Education at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. His research interests include music and cognition and learning theory. Dr. Knowlton regularly serves as consultant, clinician, composer/arranger, and judge in the areas of marching percussion and ensemble pedagogy.

Craig Williams is a freelance percussionist in St. Louis, Missouri. He grew up performing with famed dancer Katherine Dunham as a part of her troupe of dancers, singers, actors, and musicians. Williams is highly sought after as a world music clinician, lecturer, and performer.

Jerry Bolen is a past adjunct instructor of percussion studies at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Bolen regularly performs throughout the Midwest where he is in demand as an adjudicator, percussion soloist, and clinician. He is Principal Percussionist with the St. Louis Municipal Opera Orchestra and Fox Theatre Orchestra. PN

THE MAGIC'S INSIDE



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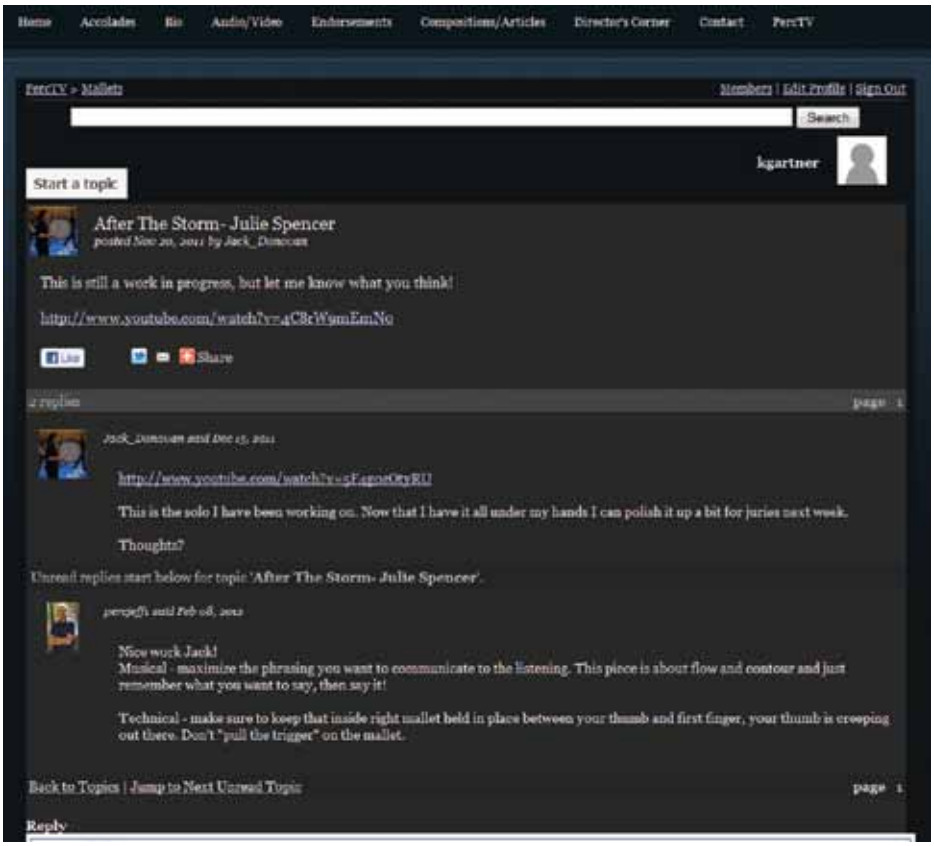
Jeff Crowell and PercTV:
Civilization in the Frontier of Social Media

By Kurt Gartner

As I assembled the notes I took during my interview with Jeff Crowell, I began formulating the opening paragraph of this article, looking for the "hook" that would introduce readers to its subject while enticing them to read on. I wanted to locate a relevant quote regarding the frontier nature of the Internet. I immediately turned—as many of us do on a daily basis—to the Internet itself (namely, brainyquote.com, found via Google search). There, I found the following quote by a prominent figure in the "Wild West" of popular culture and entertainment—World Wrestling Entertainment Chairman and CEO Vince McMahon: "I think that the Internet—and I do love the free flow of ideas on the 'Net—is like the wild west of the information world."

My ignorance concerning McMahon prompted a second Google search, which pointed me first to the Wikipedia article on McMahon and his biography. As I worked through this unexpected line of research for an article about percussion education, I was reminded of a cautionary comment made years ago by James Upton, my doctoral co-research advisor. Often, he referred to the Internet as "the domain of the unpublished." Herein lays the dilemma that we all may face: the Internet is a resource, a tool, which is inherently neutral, powerful, and ubiquitous. How far would I be willing to go to verify the accuracy of the Wikipedia article about McMahon—or for that matter, the McMahon quote itself?

Our capacity to share vast amounts of information almost instantaneously and universally has already changed the nature of discourse on a global scale. Past *Percussive Notes* articles have included the tremendous advances in performance, education, and community among percussionists, thanks to uses of the Internet and related technologies. Norman Weinberg's online course development, Allan Molnar's world evangelism for the use of video conference technology, and PAS advancements in its own web presence are a few examples. Regularly, I point my students to the online version of the Siwe databases and other PAS research tools. However, the results of less-regulated transmissions can be misleading or destructive among Internet users who are less discerning, who are searching for the "truth" they seek in a highly filtered, individualized manner, or, perhaps most insidiously, who through the vicarious nature of the medium, post unfounded or mean-spirited comments regarding the publicly shared works of others. In my opinion, all of these issues point to the good timing of Jeff Crowell's launching of PercTV.



PercTV: CROWELL'S RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM

Throughout his career, Jeff Crowell has utilized technology extensively in his performing and teaching. In addition to his work with MIDI software and hardware, he (like many of us) has been intrigued by video-related media that have been made highly accessible via the Internet. Although he sees a great deal of possibility in the capacity of social media to advance artistic pursuits in percussion, he also recognizes the clear drawbacks of the "Wild West" terrain of performance video and comments posted on popular sites such as YouTube.com. Crowell points out that a given composition may have thousands of different performances posted on YouTube. Among these posts, many of them, though well-intentioned, may not be instructive in a musical sense, and an even greater number will attract comments that are irrelevant, misguided, or destructive.

After a good deal of planning and development, Crowell launched PercTV, a site created "to encourage each other and to further our craft in an environment that supports relevant feedback by people that share a common enthusiasm and/or are in the field professionally." Crowell further explains the purpose of the site:

> PercTV was conceived out of a need I saw that was not being met on the Internet—a place where people could post videos of themselves playing percussion and then get comments back by people that share the same passion, not just anyone that happens to see the video and decides to post something.
>
> PercTV is a place where people should feel comfortable about posting their videos, knowing they'll be seen by people of similar drive

and that all the feedback they receive will be provided to better themselves technically and musically, regardless of what member is posting.

Like the recent development of video-conference technology, Crowell sees PercTV as a great opportunity to expand artistic growth among percussionists. Although he is wary of using the relatively unregulated forum of YouTube, he explains, "it's not that I don't want my students getting input from other people; of course I do. It's like using iChat for juries. That's an amazing idea; we should all be doing that to get someone else's feedback. You've heard your teacher enough; why don't you get someone else's feedback?"

Crowell sees a parallel between many of the negative, thoughtless posts associated with YouTube videos of percussion performances and the comments posted beneath articles published on established sites such as those of major network news organizations. "People, because they're on line, will say anything, because there's no accountability."

As moderator, he has established guidelines for submission of supportive comments by peers and professionals. "I want those high school and college students to feel comfortable that anybody going there to view it had to log in at some point and make the effort to make constructive feedback." Also, Crowell acknowledges the power of comments that come from objective, third-party reviewers—especially professionals—often affirming and validating original comments from a student's principal teacher.

THE MECHANICS OF PercTV

Committed to keeping the site free and accessible, Crowell is underwriting the costs of its infrastructure and moderation. The process of using the site is relatively simple, as explained on his main page:

> Upload your videos to YouTube and then provide the link in your post. You can use videos you have already uploaded. And if you've never uploaded to YouTube before, you CAN select options that will allow only people that know the link to see the video, essentially keeping it from the general YouTube viewing public. Once you provide the link in a post, people can see your video and then make comments. Please post your video under the correct heading, e.g., Mallets, Multi-Percussion, Drumset, etc. Don't forget [that] you can use videos that already exist. Remember: when you post, you have the option of subscribing to it to get e-mail updates when people respond.

A distinct advantage of the infrastructure is that it relies on YouTube as the repository of videos. Therefore, many videos already on YouTube could quickly be posted on PercTV for peer comments. Only registered PercTV users may post video links or comments on the performances of others; however, registration is free and simple through a user's existing Google, Facebook, Twitter, Yahoo!, or similar account. Current performance categories include Mallets, Orchestral Snare Drum, Classical Percussion, Multi-Percussion, Timpani, Drumset, Marching Percussion, and Percussion Ensemble.

Although Crowell envisions a time when student users may post videos for comment only by professionals, he doesn't see this as a big issue for most students, who are acculturated to the notion of freely posting videos without a sense of apprehension.

Crowell knows that PercTV may not solve all the percussion world's problems regarding the use of social media, but it's a definite and positive start. "It's totally worth it to me to do this for my students," he said. "I think it's going to be a great place for people to go—a vital tool that people can use."

Let's hope that PercTV will serve as a model for the advancement of percussion performance and education in a supportive online environment.

Visit and register for PercTV at www.jeffcrowell.com/perctv.html.

Kurt Gartner serves as Professor of Percussion at Kansas State University. Also, he has served KSU as Special Assistant to the Provost and currently serves as coordinator of the university's Peer Review of Teaching Program. PN

Our Rudimental Drumming Heritage Re-Imagined:

'The Mixed-Up Downfall of Paris'

By Neal Flum

There is a saying of unknown origin that offers the following advice: "Look to the past to see the future." What if we did not want to see into the future, but instead, wanted to see how the past was expressing itself in the present? What if we percussionists wanted to see how one of our essential performance vocabularies, the rudiments, was currently being expressed in the marching percussion activity? There is no shortage of examples that help answer that question. We can look to DCI, WGI, high school marching bands, college marching bands, pro-sports drumlines, and so many other marching percussion activities to find rudiments existing quite well with a usefulness and vibrancy that belies their importance to performers, educators, and arrangers in the marching percussion activity.

What if we wanted to be creative in taking the past and re-imagining it in our current marching percussion vernacular? This question served as the impetus for taking a piece from our rudimental drumming heritage, "The Downfall of Paris," and expressing it in the current marching percussion idiom through an arrangement for the University of Alabama marching band percussion section.

In order to reacquaint myself with the original piece, I used two sources: Robert Damm's article on "The Downfall of Paris" in the January 2011 issue of *Percussive Notes* (Vol. 49. No. 1, pg. 35) and the original Bruce and Emmett version that can be seen at Robin Engelman's website: http://robinengelman.com.

"The Mixed-Up Downfall of Paris" is my arrangement of "The Downfall of Paris," expressed in a more current vernacular. It is a mixed-meter rendering of "The Downfall of Paris" that was written for a battery instrumentation consisting of snare drums, multi-tenors, bass drums, and cymbals. "Mixed-Up Downfall" (for short) is imitative, including many of the rudiments found in the original, as well as adding rudiments from the PAS list of 40 and a few hybrid rudiments. Obviously, multi-tenors, tonal bass drums, and cymbals were not found in the source material, and the orchestration in the multi-tenors and bass drums, as well as some of the dialogue between the voices, is intended to be more contemporary while not completely ignoring the style and spirit of the original.

"Mixed-Up Downfall" was written for the University of Alabama marching percussion section to be performed at our pre-game warm-ups. The marching percussion section will learn the original "Downfall of Paris" and "Three Camps" to emphasize the importance of our rudimental drumming heritage. We intend to get our piccolo section to learn the fife part to "The Downfall of Paris," which could provide an interesting ensemble during game-day activities. More importantly, learning the "The Downfall of Paris" demonstrates to the students that our drumming heritage can have a high level of usefulness in what is performed currently, and help foster a respect, as well as a mastery of, the rudiments.

BACKGROUND

The history and differing versions of "The Downfall of Paris" are not the focus of this particular article. If one is interested in a lengthier history of the piece, one might seek out Robin Engelman's website, which includes sound samples and photocopies of relevant documents at: http://robinengelman.com/category/articles/fifes-drums/. There is a concise history in the aforementioned *Percussive Notes* article by Robert Damm. Another short historical article on "The Downfall of Paris" is in the July 1986 *Percussive Notes* (Vol. 24, No. 5 pg. 38), written by former PAS historian Frederick D. Fairchild, entitled "Background Notes on The Downfall of Paris." The article was written in support of a mass drumline performance of "The Downfall of Paris" that took place at PASIC '86. One can also find insightful commentary offered by Sanford Moeller in his book *The Art of Snare Drumming* where he states, "'The Downfall of Paris' is one of the most ancient and perhaps the most famous of beats. It has always been the pride of the schooled drummers, not only to play it so it sounded correct but also to beat it in the prescribed way." (Moeller, p. 89) One might also look to Frederick Fennell's *The Drummer's Heritage* for background on the pieces that form a significant part of our heritage as rudimental drummers and some of which are contemporaries of "The Downfall of Paris." A search through the PAS publications archives will also prove helpful in learning more about the history of rudimental drumming and, specifically, "The Downfall of Paris."

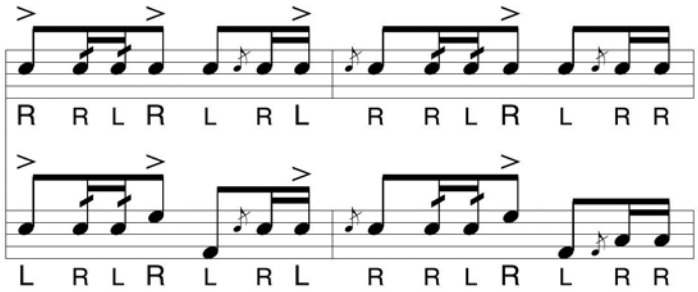
THE "MIXED-UP" ARRANGEMENT

The introduction of the piece is imitative of the opening section of "The Downfall of Paris." The opening seven-stroke roll is written in duple as opposed to a triplet interpretation, which I prefer when an ensemble is entering with a cold-attack roll leading into duple meter music. The snares and tenors in the introduction play unison with the line orchestrated around the multi-tenors instead of a single drum. Bass drum 5 begins using a muffled-open approach until we get to bar 4, where the bass drums enter in unison to contrast the opening four bars. The opening section finds the bass drum part with a lesser-note density and the presence of space, allowing an opportunity for some visuals as well as different and perhaps more traditional strokes (in the style of the bass drummers in The Old Guard or other fife and drum corps). The cymbals reinforce some of the more prominent accents in the section without significantly altering the ensemble's sonority by adopting a more limited, supportive role. Incorporating the cymbals into the piece was one of the more challenging aspects of arranging "Mixed-Up Downfall."

Note that in bar 2, instead of employing version "A" below that is found in "The Downfall of Paris" in Moeller's book, Damm's article, and Fennell's *The Drummer's Heritage,* a flamacue ("B") replaces version "A." Using version "B" was an arranging choice and a means of familiarizing students with the flamacue, one of our 40 PAS rudiments.

Rehearsal letter "A" of "Mixed-Up Downfall" restates the first four bars of the opening section while adding some different stickings and some subtle interplay between the snares and multi-tenors. The bass drums continue the traditional approach of the opening section but adopt a more linear approach as the note density of its parts increase. The cymbals are expressed in a similar manner as the opening section while including another crash technique, the port crash. The snares add a different timbre to the piece with the introduction of the ping shots in bar 7 of letter "A." Their inclusion most decidedly makes for a more "current" sound.

Note that in transitioning from bar 5 to 6 of section "A," we employ what might be termed a condensed flamacue.



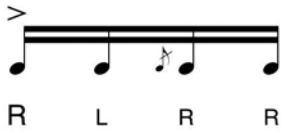
Letter "B" of "Mixed-up Downfall" is imitative of the second section of the original "Downfall of Paris" in opening with 15-stroke rolls. The Lesson 25s of the original are filled out in the "Mixed-Up Downfall" version (examples A and B below), and we also include a 6-stroke roll and a 7-stroke roll, and then two ratamacues help bring the section to a close. The ratamacues are written in a more current notation. In the 15-stroke roll measures, the bass drums are written in ascending and descending melodic fashion and adopt a unison reinforcement role in the two bars following the 15-stroke roll. The form of the section is two four-bar phrases: A-B-C-D, then A-B-E-F. The cymbals once again reinforce the main accents in the section while introducing the technique of right-hand and left-hand sprays.

Letter "C" of "Mixed-Up Downfall" is a sort of recapitulation of the opening statement with the multi-tenors playing on drum four. This is to be imitative of a straight-tenor and to complement the snare part with a more traditional sound that might be found in the marching percussion battery of the 1930s through the 1950s. The bass drums are written in unison, which provides more space for the snare voice to speak prominently. The bass drums use a muffled-open approach to its ostinato pattern. Letter "C" finds the inclusion of dynamics, which is not found in the original source material.

Letter "D" of "Mixed-Up Downfall" is imitative of the third section

of "The Downfall of Paris," which is essentially a flam paradiddle section with some flammed-lesson 25s included. Letter "D" of "Mixed-Up Downfall" finds a greater number of accented notes and some interplay between the snares and multi-tenors in bars 1, 2, 5, and 6, which is achieved by the placement of the flams in the paradiddle rudiments. Whereas "The Downfall of Paris" has mainly flam paradiddles, "Mixed-up Downfall" includes some "choo-choos," flam taps, paradiddle-diddles with flams on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th partials, and the bass drums find a greater level of syncopation and interaction with the snare and multi-tenor voices.

Note bars 1 and 2 of Letter "D" where the flam in the paradiddle is shifted to the third partial to create interplay between the snares and multi-tenors and also provides for the inclusion of a hybrid rudiment known as a "choo choo."



Letter "E" is imitative of the closing section of "The Downfall of Paris," except that the single drags are filled in, and flam taps and paradiddles with 5-stroke rolls on the first two partials are included. The bass drums have a dense, linear pattern whose accents and rhythms have a contrapuntal relationship with the snare and multi-tenors voices. The cymbals help reinforce some of the accents in the bass drum part and bring the piece to a close with four port crashes that crescendo to the release of the piece.

When it comes to pieces that properly belong in the canon of rudimental drumming, like "Hell on The Wabash," "Three Camps," "The Connecticut Halftime," and "The Downfall of Paris," there is no reinventing the wheel, but there should be the possibility of using such pieces as the inspiration for the creation of new arrangements. The resulting works, expressed in a current vernacular, are more accessible to students and provide an appealing way to introduce the essential vocabulary of rudiments. Such a process is useful in demonstrating the longevity of the rudiments as the foundation of marching percussion while also showing their ability to be adapted into contemporary, ever-evolving marching percussion music. For an arranger, such activity is an instructive and rewarding experience. Perhaps the greater reward is contributing to a more evolved marching percussion vernacular and making our rudimental drumming heritage into something new.

Special thanks to Sean Womack who was kind enough to listen to my arrangement and make several helpful comments regarding its final version.

Neal Flum is associate director of athletic bands for the University of Alabama. He serves as chair of the PAS Marching Percussion Committee, is a staff member of Thom Hannum's Mobile Percussion Seminar, and is a past president (two terms) and past secretary of the Alabama PAS Chapter.

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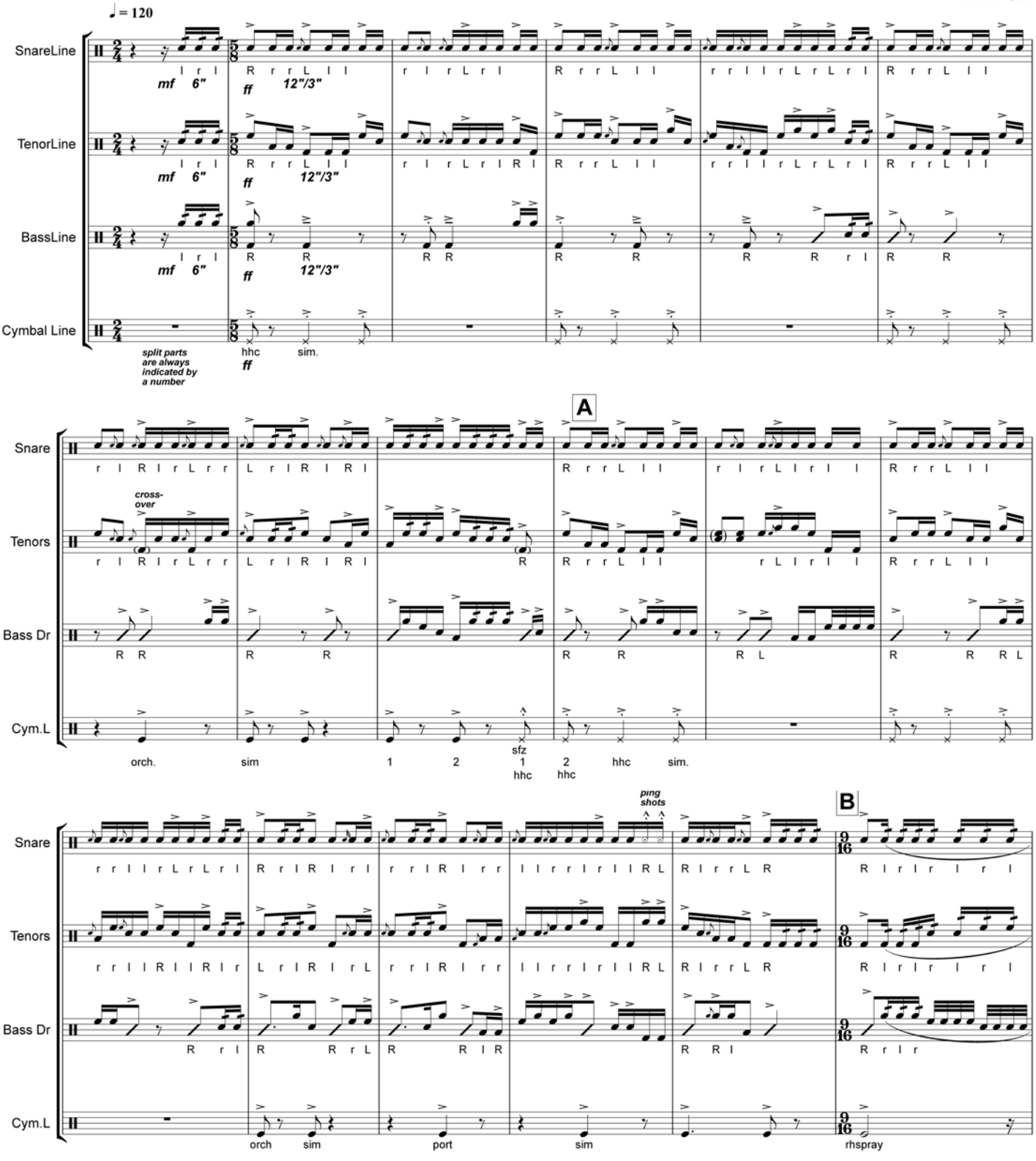
Web Extras

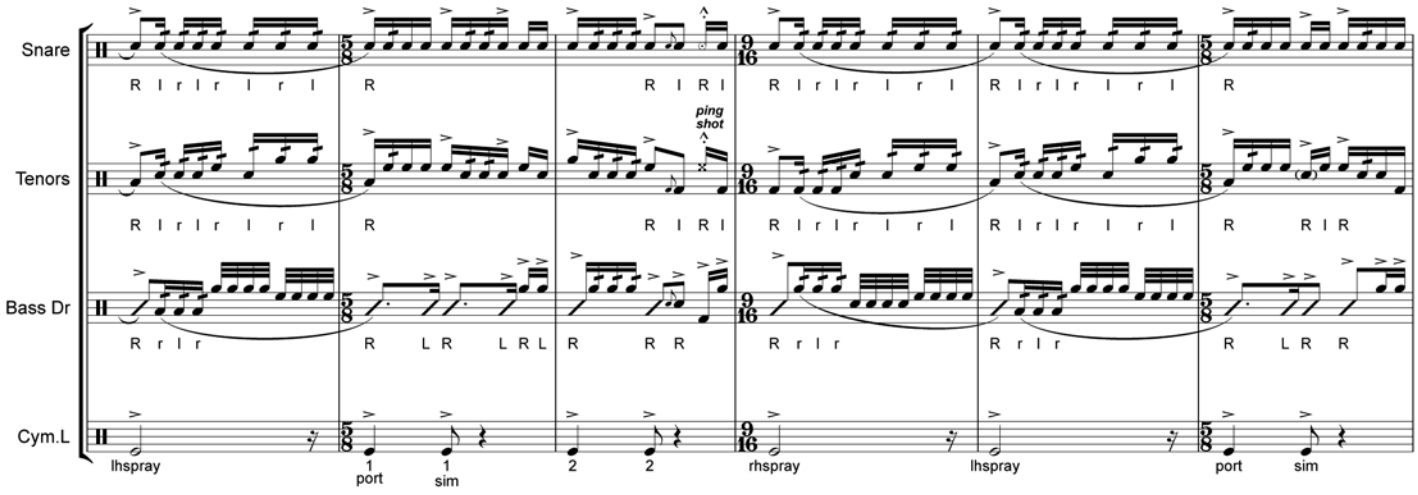
The Mixed Up Downfall of Paris

The University of Alabama
Million Dollar Band

Dedicated to Mr. Tard Beio:
My first rudimental drumming instructor,
and an excellent one at that.

Original: Traditional
Source material: Bruce & Emmett, 1862
arranged by Neal Flum
©December 9, 2011

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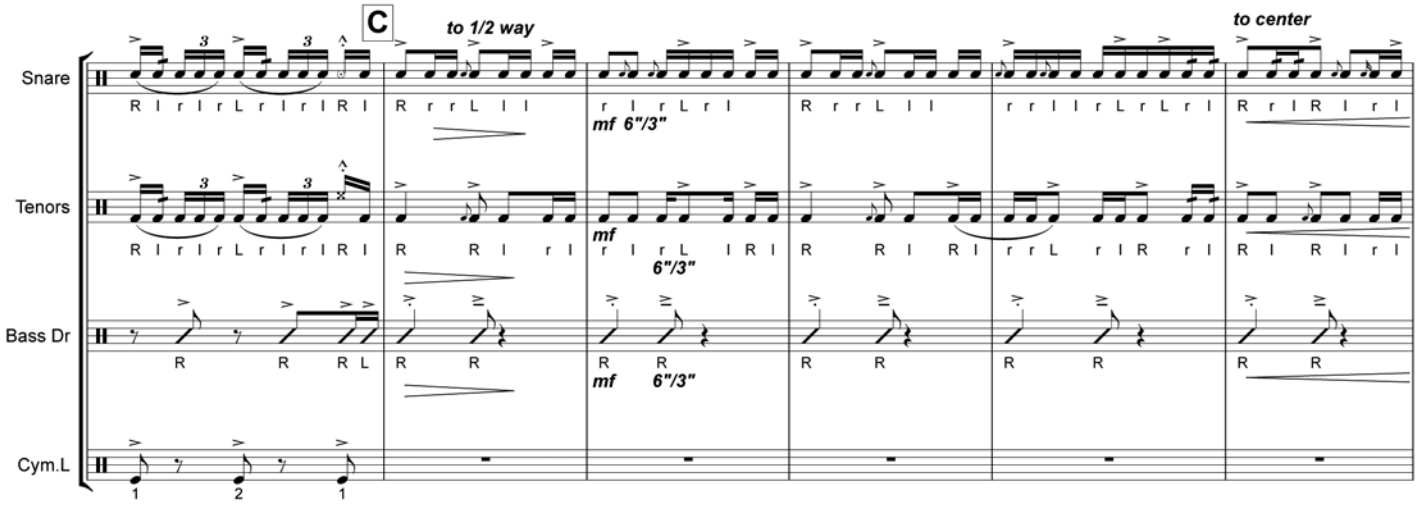
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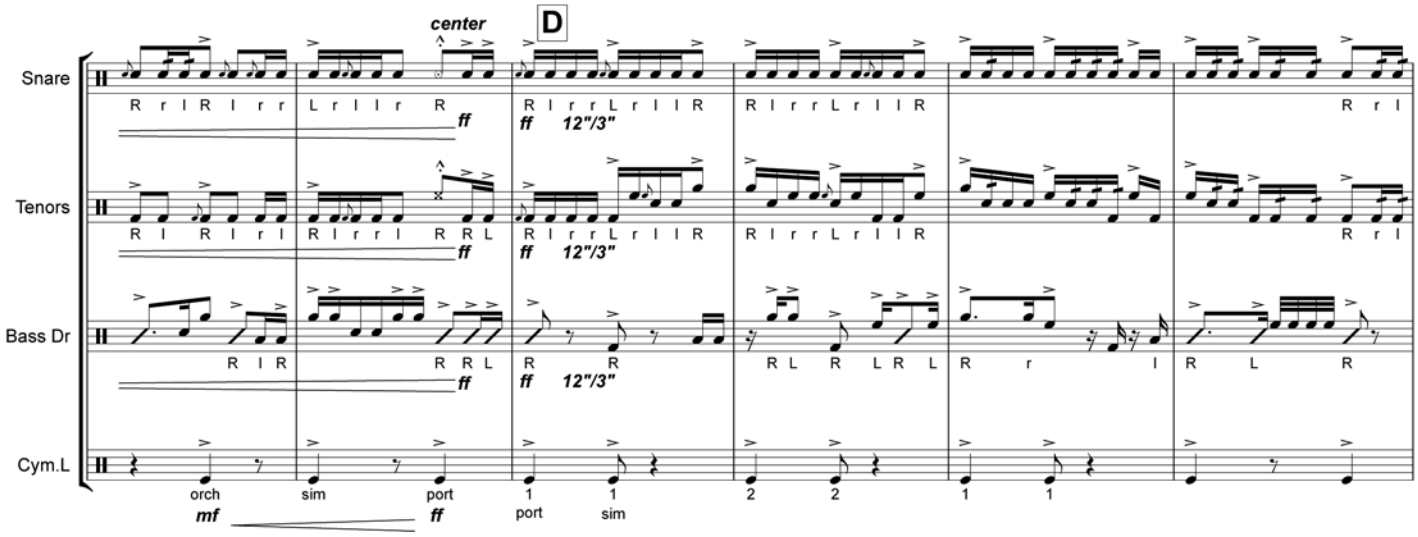
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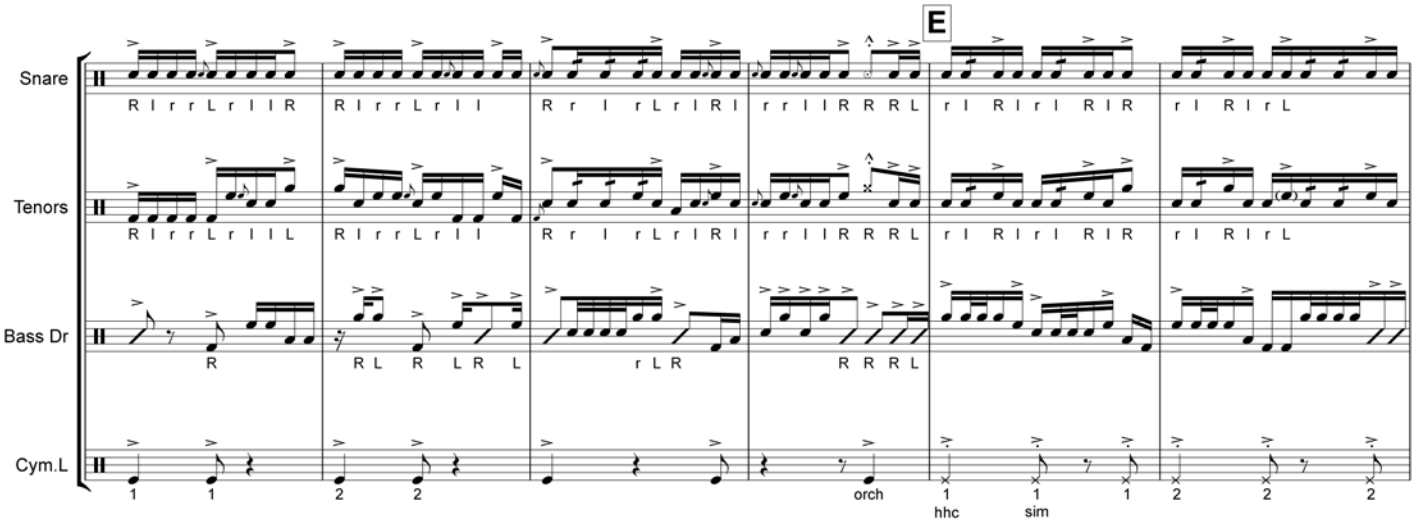
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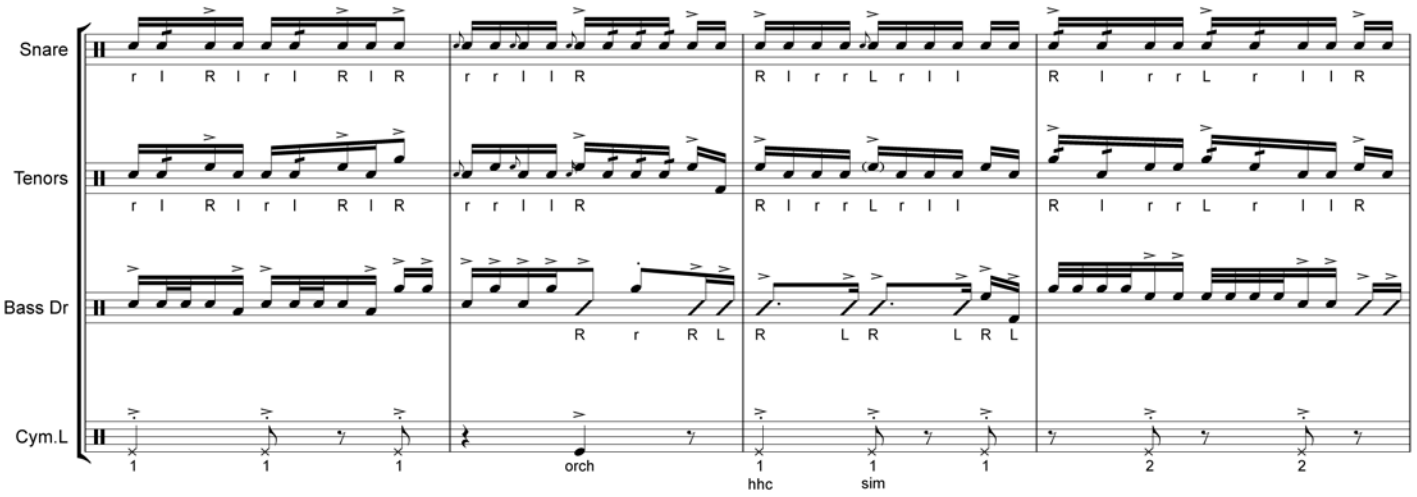
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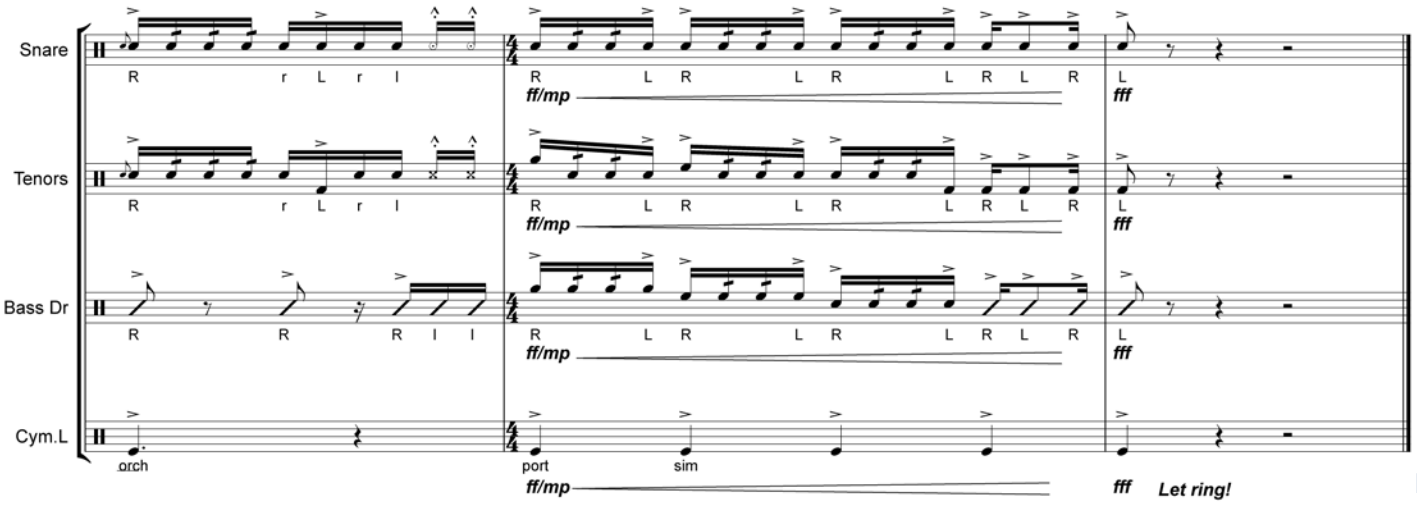
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Drumming with the Angels

By Peggy Sexton

An eighteenth-century Coptic Bible in the British Library contains an illustration for the book of *Revelations* by an anonymous Ethiopian artist portraying seven angelic timpanists, all playing their drums with crooked sticks, providing thunder accompanied by lightning issuing from God's throne.[1] One immediately thinks of the host of human timpanists required for the Berlioz "Requiem." Timpani are frequently associated with awe-inspiring concepts such as the Last Judgment.

The harp, on the other hand, is normally associated with more ethereal heavenly activities. It is frequently played by angels in musical iconography and considered a calming influence. We normally associate harps with cherubim and romantic occasions such as weddings unless, of course, the bride and groom are a royal couple who would naturally require both trumpets and timpani as royal prerogatives. Yet in some parts of the world the harp is used as both a melodic plucked string and a percussion instrument.

The author was astonished to find, on checking various percussion works that are staples of the field—James Blades' *Percusssion Instruments and Their History* (rev. ed.), Gordon B. Peters' *The Drummer: Man* (rev. ed.), Thomas D. Rossing's *The Science of Percussion Instruments*, Jeremy Montagu's *Timpani and Percussion,* James Holland's *Percussion*, Gerassimos Avgerinos' *Lexikon der Pauke*, and the more popularized and ethnically oriented works of the Grateful Dead's Mickey Hart—that none of these discuss the custom of harp drumming.

Percussive harping is common in Africa, and buzzing sounds are considered essential. Africa, in fact, boasts the world's greatest variety of harp forms and is used by 150 tribes.[2] A Mauritanian type has small metal jingles attached to a metal plate that is then fixed to the soundboard. Another kind has buzzing rings of banana fiber wrapped in lizard skin, and a Kirdi *ougdyé* has a soundhole covered with spider cocoon membranes.[3] Harp ensembles often include percussion instruments, and a Ugandan *kinzasa* harp is sometimes struck on the soundboard with both a rattle and a drumstick while the harpist plucks the strings.[4]

One of the most endearing things about Bishop Baltasar Jaime Martinez Compañon y Bujanda's eighteenth-century travel journal,

Baltasar Jaime Martinez Compañon y Bujanda, MS Trujillo del Peru II (1782–1785), Estampa 159. Fundació Biblioteca Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra [database on-line], accessed 2 January 2011; available from www.cervantesvirtual.com.

Trujillo del Peru II, is the extremely rare early iconographic appearance of harp drumming shown as an example of wedding music. The accompanying illustration shows the bridal couple with their sponsors or a priest and an attendant in the foreground and three musicians (harpist, *tamborero,* and lutenist) in the background.[5] This use of percussion follows the widespread folk custom of using percussion in rites of passage.

Another use of harp drumming in Hispanic Catholic countries is the provision of music for children's wakes. Such a wake is called a *velorio*, a term also used for a night vigil in honor of a saint or the Holy Cross.[6] Roman Catholic doctrine holds that a baptized child is assured salvation, and to this day many Hispanic Catholics in both the Old and New World believe that a deceased child lives with the angels, logically making a child's wake a festive occasion.[7] Eugene Louis Backman also points out that, historically, European death dances were also aimed at securing the deceased's cooperation in repelling evil spirits and various illnesses and misfortunes. The dead were thought to envy the living and have the ability to bring them to an early grave.[8]

Various paintings exist of Hispanic children's wakes. Gustave Doré accompanied Baron Jean Charles Davillier on a journey through Spain ca. 1872 and observed a child's wake in Jijona, Alicante Province. The festive sounds of guitar, *bandurria*, and castanets at first led the travelers to think a wedding was in progress. The deceased was a carefully dressed little girl wearing a crown of flowers who was laid on a table with four lighted candles at the corners. A weeping woman, whom Davillier surmised may have been the mother, sat by the corpse. The rest of the assemblage cheered, sang, and clapped while a ceremonially dressed couple danced a *jota* with their castanets. Davillier writes, "It was difficult for us to understand this rejoicing in the midst of such grief. 'Está con los ánjeles' [*sic*]—she is with the angels—one of the relatives told us. Indeed, in Spain, it is believed that children who die go right away to heaven: 'Anjelitos [*sic*] al cielo,'—little angels in the sky—the saying goes; that is why one rejoices to see them go to God, instead of feeling grief-stricken.'"[9] Here we see again the folk practice of percussion use during rites of passage.

The Andean area employs harpists and harp drummers for both children's wakes and

weddings. The drummer is called a *golpeador* in Ecuador and *tamborero* in Peru.[10] John Schechter points out that the harp drumming practice has been authenticated as early as 1923 for parts of Ecuador, where the *golpe* is a one-handed rhythm and the *golpeador* also is the singer.[11] But a nineteenth-century traveler, Friedrich Hassaurek, describes harp drumming for Ecuadoran Indian processional dancing in his landmark ethnographic travel journal: "While marching, some of them will play their crude flutes or guitars. Even harps will be carried along in the procession, with their bottoms resting on the back of a little boy, while the musician harps away at the strings, and one of his companions beats the time on the side of the instrument."[12] Schechter observes with amazement, "Hassaurek's description is noteworthy for what he omits: drums." He further states that the drum, normally widely present, is frequently missing from northern Ecuadoran instrumental groups and theorizes that the prevalent harp drumming may take its place.[13]

Modern Peruvian harps normally exhibit elaborate neck carving, most often portraying a pair of lions' heads (called a *león*), with flowers and birds also common. The *león* or other decoration serves an important and uniquely Peruvian function on these folk harps. The carving forms a hooked shape, pointing away from the performer, which enables performers to invert the instrument, insert a sling worn around their neck into the hook, and play the harp upside down while marching in processions. Relief carving on Spanish harps dates from 1503, and processional use may originate in the middle sixteenth century for Spanish Corpus Christi processions and in the eighteenth century for the Ecuadorian-Peruvian Marañón River area. The processional harp custom was definitely established for that area by the nineteenth century.[14]

> In some parts of the world the harp is used as both a melodic plucked string and a percussion instrument.

Processional harps are portrayed in several watercolors from this period by Afro-Peruvian mulatto artist Pancho Fierro (1803–1879) of Lima: *Danza de Pallas, Día de la Vieja*, and *Son de los Diablos, Procesión de Cuasimodo*.[15] The last painting shows a black percussionist keeping a rhythm with a mallet and lidded salt box. A painting of similar subject, *La Noche de la Vieja en la Cuaresma*, shows a marching harpist and guitarist with no percussion visible.[16] Another work, *Altar de la Purísima,* which portrays a well-dressed black or mulatto couple performing a scarf dance before an altar honoring a winged saint, shows a harpist sans *tamborero* in the foreground. His instrument has a simple scroll curving forward away from the player as forepillar finial.[17]

But Martinez Compañon's example shows a quite austere-looking instrument. The soundbox, shaped like an isosceles triangle, has two round soundholes of the same size and parallel to each other on opposite sides of the bass strings and an S-shaped pair set diagonally opposite the treble strings. Except for a very simple scroll curving back towards the performer that forms the top of the forepillar finial, the harp looks unadorned, although this may have been due to the inexpertise of the obviously untrained artist, shown in part by a lack of perspective pervading the drawings.[18] Another historical difference may be the *tamborero*'s position—on the harpist's left in Mar-

tinez Compañon but on the right for various modern Ecuadorian *golpeadores*.[19]

The Martinez Compañon journal is the only example known to the author that contains an authentic early illustration of harp drumming. Nevertheless, various Latin American artists have been captivated by the *velorio*, called *velorio de angelito* when done for a child. One painting by Ecuadoran artist Joaquin Pinto (1842–1906), *Velorio de Indios* (late nineteenth century), portrays a harpist without *golpeador* in the foreground. In the heavily shaded background one sees a seated dead child wearing angel's wings and headdress, surrounded by four lighted candles. Another Pinto work, *Paisaje*, portrays two musicians, a violinist and harpist walking along a country road, possibly going to an engagement or leading a procession.[20]

It should be noted that when and if a *velorio* scene showing a harpist minus the *tamborero* or *golpeador* is encountered, it does not indicate that one was not actually present. Ecuadoran wake music had three important components. The piece always performed first at a *velorio*, the *vacación*, is performed by solo harp only when the activity directly concerns the deceased child—dressing, closing the coffin, etc.—and never involves dancing. By contrast, the *sanjuán*, in simple duple meter, and the *pareja*, in simple or compound duple meter played faster than the *sanjuán*, accompany dancing and employ harp drumming.[21]

Puerto Rican artist Francisco Oller y Cestero (1833–1917) shows no musicians but stresses the occasionally rowdy character of the custom in *El Velorio*, ca. 1893.[22] The burial costume with angelic wings echoes the old Catholic belief in the Dance of the Angels, an angelic dance around the throne of God. Backman observes that in the fifteenth century, *los seises*, the famed Seville cathedral dancers who perform a minuet-like dance with castanets before the altar on special feast days, were costumed as angels.[23]

One might well wonder why having percussive sounds was so important to these rites of passage beyond the most obvious one of repelling malevolent spirits. The author believes that these sounds may represent the closing of a door on a former state as one enters a new one. The child's spirit experiences the closing of the door to earthly life and its entrance in eternity, while the bridal couple closes the door to the single life and enters the married state.

The uniqueness and importance of the harp drumming custom for festive occasions is stressed by Schechter: "That the golpe is an absolutely essential concomitant in contemporary performance practice is indicated by the great concern harpists express when the golpe is lacking or is executed incorrectly."[24]

It would be unpardonable of the author not to mention the fine musicians with whom I had my first opportunity to harp drum, fortunately at an occasion more festive than a wake. These were harpist Becky Baxter, guitarist Bruce Brogdon, and lutenist Scott Horton, with whom I performed on the faculty concert at the Texas Toot (formerly the Texas Early Music Festival) at Concordia College, Austin, Texas, in June, 2000. To them, a hearty *"Óle!"*

Many thanks also go to Terry Cornett of the Huntsville [AL] Symphony Orchestra and the Old Towne Band for alerting me to the availability of MS Trujillo del Peru II online and to the Virtual Library Miguel de Cervantes for providing access to this excellent primary source.

This article first appeared in Early Music Colorado Quarterly.

ENDNOTES

1. Mickey Hart and Fredric Lieberman with D. A. Sonneborn, *Planet Drum: A Celebration of Percussion and Rhythm* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 18.
2. DeVale, Sue Carol, "Harp §III. Africa," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2d ed. 10, 888.
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Timpani Piece for Jimmy

By Brian Holder

"Everyone knows that James Blades is one of our great percussionists. He plays all the various instruments with accuracy and an infectious sense of rhythm, and his timpani playing is noted for its impeccable intonation and beautiful tone." These are the words of Benjamin Britten, which percussionists have no doubt read in the introduction to James Blades' text *Percussion Instruments and Their History*.[1]

Britten penned his introduction in January 1970, by which time both artists had worked together on many productions and creative endeavors. Applauding dedications are not uncommon in works of this sort, especially when one artist praises a famed contemporary. The relation between Britten and Blades, however, was one forged over much of their professional lives. The two artists worked in close contact with one another; Blades was a member of Britten's English Chamber Orchestra, and many of Britten's most well-known percussion parts were conceived for him.

In return for Britten's introductory praise, and as further evidence of their positive working relationship, Blades repaid the favor in the body of his text, referencing Britten as "a composer whose inventions in the use of percussion seem inexhaustible… Britten captures the essence of each percussion instrument."[2] Such collaborative spirit infused many of the percussion parts created by Britten, yet the work whose entire essence speaks of the Blades/Britten collaboration remains on the sidelines of the percussion world. This is the "Timpani Piece for Jimmy," a modest timpani solo with piano accompaniment. It cleverly showcases what timpani do best—an idiomatic display characteristic of Britten's percussion writing as a whole.

The genesis of "Timpani Piece for Jimmy" has a conflicted history. In his autobiography, Blades recalled that Britten wrote the manuscript on a train ride "between Munich and Venice."[3] In a 1996 interview in this journal he elaborated:

> "We were on route to Munich to perform one of his operas. In chatting with Ben over the dinner table, I said, 'Ben, sometime when you have the time, would you be kind enough to write a short piece for my lecture recital with a piano accompaniment to be played by my wife, Joan?' 'Well,' he said, 'of course I will. Would you like it now?' 'Well,' I said, 'you rather surprise me, but I would like it now.' When we left the train at Munich he handed me a short sketch of the 'Timpani Piece for Jimmy.' I played that piece on my lecture recitals for years. It was a simple piece but quite Brittenish. It was to portray the difference in pitch in two keys, d minor and B major, and it changed back and forth between these two keys."[4]

James Blades

Benjamin Britten

Yet there is a difference of opinion. Britten and his longtime partner, Peter Pears, embarked on a concert tour of Eastern Europe and the Far East in November 1955. The editors of *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters and Diaries of Benjamin Britten: volume four (1952–1957)* feel that the work must have been composed in Turkey, one stop on the Britten/Pears tour. This text notes that the work was likely written on either December 8 or 9 of that year, as Britten's busy schedule allowed for some downtime.[5]

Mervyn Cooke reinforces this point in his *Britten and the Far East: Asian Influences on the Music of Benjamin Britten*, in which he notes that the manuscript was sent immediately to Imogen Holst (Britten's assistant and daughter of Gustav Holst) in the United Kingdom.[6] She was acting as the artistic director of the Aldeburgh Festival while Britten and Pears were out of the country, and was much in contact with the composer during his travels.

The Library of Congress houses one manuscript copy of the timpani solo. It is dated 1956 and was inscribed "as promised: Imogen." The text is in Britten's handwriting and appears to confirm the later point—that Britten mailed a copy to Holst in the early months of 1956. Upon returning to Blades' commentary, however, one is faced with the term "sketch," which offers some room for interpretation. It seems likely that Britten and Blades discussed the work during their train ride, and, trusting Blades' recollection, a manuscript was delivered in short order. This author believes that the Library of Congress copy was written later, during the Britten/Pears concert tour of 1955–56. It remains likely that Britten informed Imogen Holst of the sketch previously given to Blades, and promised to send her a copy at a later date. Thus the inscription to Holst on the Library of Congress manuscript and Mervyn Cooke's above commentary.

It is reasonable to assume that Blades kept his original copy. Thankfully, he not only performed the work widely, but also made a recording. This was done as a part of the 1972 "All About Music" educational series—a perfect setting for Britten's pedagogical work. Blades' recording is an exact duplication of the manuscript held at the Library of Congress, and puts aside any doubts as to consistency from one manuscript to the other.

As an aside, the reader should reflect on an entry in the diary of Imogen Holst. In regard to the score of Britten's *Gloriana* she wrote: "After the Friends of the Festival meeting in the evening, he [Britten] helped me sort out the Gittern rhythms in the street scene, which were all over the shop, and he put one bar with [seven sixteenth notes] in 6/8 saying, '*That'll* give all the musicologists something to talk about'."[7]

It thus remains possible that none of this discussion matters too much. Britten did not intend to pull the wool over our eyes with "Timpani Piece for Jimmy," and it may be that the specific details are outside the expectations of posterity. Regardless, Blades received his copy, and Holst was sent another. The music reached its intended audience, and above all

the brief work remains a charming timpani solo.

Yet with Blades' passing in 1999 the future of his solo remained uncertain. Copies had been shared among the percussion community, but the work remained unpublished and distant from the larger musical community. Recently "Timpani Piece for Jimmy" has become available through Bachovich Music Publications (www.bachovich.com). The title has been changed to "Concert Piece for Jimmy," but otherwise the work is presented without alteration. Only the indications to change pitch have been excluded, which is easily supplied by any performer or teacher.[8] Thus a reexamination is due.

The technical elements are straightforward, well thought out, and within the means of any student of the instrument. The performer needs only two drums and is given an opportunity to display the various basic skills required to master the timpani.[9] There are staccato and legato strokes, rolls of varying length, simple tuning changes in both drums, movements between the drums, and the additional element of working with a pianist (which young percussionists don't always do while sitting behind the timpani). None of these elements are extremely challenging, and thus the educational context for this solo is apparent at first glance. The duration is also quite manageable. "Timpani Piece for Jimmy" is 111 measures in length, and there are no page turns for the timpanist. Players can also clock themselves against Blades himself; the work lasts approximately one-and-a-half minutes on the 1972 recording. All told, Britten delivered on his promise to Blades: The solo is an excellent way to introduce an audience into the world of timpani.

For this reason the work deserves to be utilized as a medium for training students in the basic techniques of timpani playing. The origin may be debatable, but a reasonable conclusion can be drawn. "Timpani Piece for Jimmy" is a wonderful recital selection for the beginning player that audiences can easily digest. Perhaps more importantly it is also a concise introduction to Benjamin Britten, and can serve percussion educators as a means to introduce their students to the music of one of the twentieth century's great creative minds.

ENDNOTES

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6. Mervyn Cooke, *Britten and the Far East: Asian Influences on the Music of Benjamin Britten* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998) 51.
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8. This comparison is made against the Library of Congress manuscript.
9. 29- and 26-inch drums are appropriate. The lower drum requires the notes A2 and B2, while the higher drum requires D3 and F♯3.

Brian Holder is an adjunct professor at Santa Fe College. He teaches classes in Guatemalan marimba, percussion, percussion ensemble, string orchestra, music appreciation, popular music, and introductory music theory and music history. Brian holds PhD and MM degrees from the University of Florida and a BM from the University of Dayton. Brian leads the Guatemalan marimba band Marimba Ayin and performs with the Black Thistle Caledonian Pipe Band and the ceili band Fear Buile. PN

Dodging the 'Curve Ball' at Orchestra Auditions

By W. Lee Vinson

I refer to anything unexpected that comes up in an audition as a "curve ball." This could be something pertaining to the music you are asked to perform, special requests from the committee, issues with equipment, or conditions in the performance space itself, just to name a few. By recognizing some of these possible curve balls ahead of time we can better prepare for them—or hopefully avoid them all together. For this article I will focus only on circumstances that may potentially arise during the actual audition.

MUSIC: "THE SLIDER"

Curve balls frequently come in the form of an unexpected excerpt. Committees usually have the freedom to request any excerpt from any piece on the repertoire list on any round at an audition. It should go without saying that everything on the list needs to be audition-ready. Just because it isn't a common audition excerpt doesn't mean that it shouldn't be as well prepared as the rest of the list. Guessing which excerpts from which pieces are going to come up on any given audition round is usually a lost cause. If everything isn't completely prepared ahead of time, you are simply setting yourself up for failure.

In addition, know the entire piece of music rather than just the audition excerpts—even if rehearsal numbers are included on the printed list. If sight-reading is included on the list, it could come from the standard repertoire including the music you were asked to prepare. Don't get caught off guard by an unfamiliar excerpt on the other half of a page of music that you've been working on for months or years.

Committees may also have special requests during an audition. Be prepared to demonstrate basic techniques such as a snare drum roll or cymbal crashes on command. Be prepared to perform excerpts again with adjustments to interpretation, tempo, or dynamics. Being flexible is crucial. This is precisely why audition committees throw curve balls—to see if you can make adjustments under pressure.

EQUIPMENT: "THE SCREWBALL"

Know what you're going to be playing on before you arrive at the audition. If the audition is well run, the audition coordinator will send out a list of instruments that will be provided at the audition along with the repertoire list. If a list of instruments is not provided, contact the orchestra and find out exactly what equipment will be provided.

Once you know what type of instruments will be provided at the audition, do your best to practice on the same or similar instruments whenever possible. Performing on a mallet instrument with unfamiliar bar widths can spell disaster for your note accuracy. Even if you are lucky enough to have access to a similar instrument to practice on, there will always be some differences however subtle between instruments of the same model such as wood grain on xylophones and marimbas, the color or finish of the keys on all mallet instruments, instrument heights, and the condition of the instruments.

The bottom line is that you have to be ready for anything. Practice your mallet excerpts on every mallet instrument you can find. Try practicing xylophone excerpts on glockenspiel. Practice your glockenspiel excerpts on vibraphone. Loosen a bolt or two on timpani to create some rattling noises so that you get used to playing on instruments that may not be well maintained. Vary the height of your mallet instruments to get familiar with playing on an extremely high or low keyboard. Practice cymbal excerpts with every pair of cymbals you can find. The more things you try, the more things you will be ready for in an audition. Don't let problems with equipment get in your way. Chances are if there is a problem with the equipment on stage, everyone will be dealing with the same curve ball.

AUDITION ROOMS: "THE BREAKING BALL"

You can never know what to fully expect walking into an audition room. Even if you've played in that particular room before, there will inevitably be something different about the space for an audition. Finding the instruments positioned differently or in a different order can make a room appear different. The committee could be positioned right in front of the instruments on stage or at the back of the hall. There may or may not be a screen between you and the committee. Other variables include acoustics, lighting, and temperature.

Prepare for the unexpected by practicing and performing in as many different rooms and under as many different conditions as possible—especially as you get closer to the audition date. Try playing mock auditions under circumstances that make you uncomfortable. For example, have someone else set up the instruments for you ahead of time so that you won't be familiar with the setup when you walk into the room. Practice in extremely cold or hot rooms. Position the instruments differently every time you practice. Be prepared to play with poor lighting or with a spotlight directly in front of you. Try practicing in a room with distractions such as an open window or extraneous sounds from another room. These are all ways to prepare for the unexpected curve ball when walking into an unfamiliar audition room.

CONCLUSION

In the end, there is no substitute for experience and maturity. This can only come from years of practice and auditioning. All musicians who have taken their share of auditions have their own horror stories about what went wrong and how they could have avoided the problem. Preparing yourself for as many curve balls as possible ahead of time will lead to a more comfortable, and hopefully a more successful, audition experience.

Lee Vinson is a freelance percussionist in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. PN

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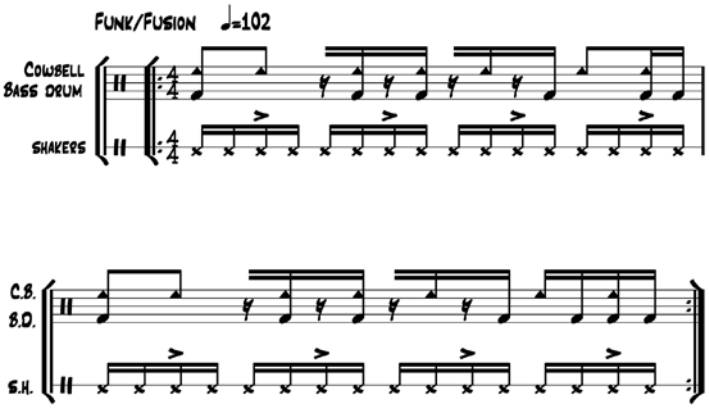
Creating a Linear Drum Groove

By John Di Raimo

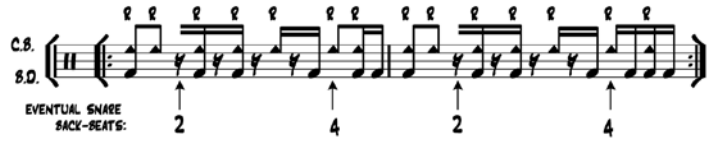
The precise definition of "linear drumming" (by Gary Chaffee) is having "no two voices (hi-hat, snare, or bass drum) played at the same time when creating or playing a rhythm or drum groove." Often, though, in funk it is important that we add an extra voice to create a certain effect that is found within the melody or harmony of the tune. So the "linear" sound has been diluted somewhat but can still create an exciting effect. This brings me to the tune "The Sauce," recorded by Dave Grusin and Lee Ritenour from the album *G.R.P. Super "Live."* The intro to the tune is a two-measure percussion loop orchestrated with a cowbell, bass drum, and shakers (see Example 1).

Example 1



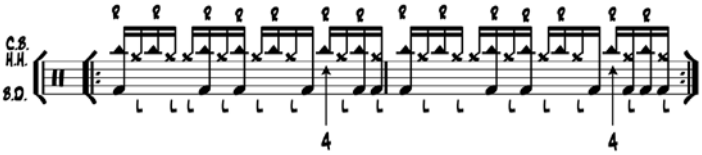
The drummer on the recording is Vinnie Colaiuta, and he masterfully plays a goove without disrupting any of the drum loop "parts." The goal in this article is to create a "two in one" rhythm that plays all the drum loop parts, at the same time creating a sixteenth-note funk groove, as felt by the shaker part. To do this, we will assume a few things. First, the snare drum backbeats will be on 2 and 4. Secondly, the cowbell will be played with only the right hand. Finally, we will refrain from playing any three consecutive sixteenth notes with either the right of the left hands. See Example 2.

Example 2



Next, to keep the groove with a sixteenth-note feel, we will fill in all the spaces with the left hand, played on the closed hi-hat (see Example 3).

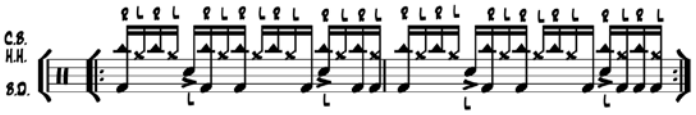
Example 3



In Example 3, the hi-hat "fill-in" on the "a" of beat 3 isn't added. On beat 4, as was stated earlier, we will be playing snare drum, and since the right hand is playing the cowbell from the original loop, the snare drum has to be played by the left hand. So if we played hi-hat on the "a" of 3, three consecutive left hands (hi-hat, snare drum, hi-hat) would have to be played. But on the "a" of beat 4 we did "fill in" the hi-hat even though the bass drum is already in that space. We could choose not to add the hi-hat there and it would be perfectly acceptable. But playing it here gives the groove a greater forward motion.

Next, we need to add the snare drum on beats 2 and 4. First, any "fill-in" notes that happen to fall on beats 2 or 4 need to be moved from the hi-hat to the snare. Second, if a right-hand cowbell is already played on 2 or 4, then play the snare with the left hand (see Example 4).

Example 4

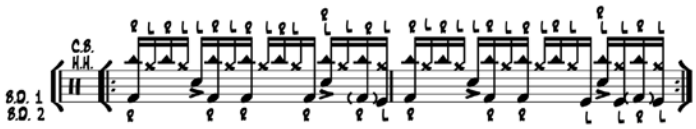


Upon examining the snare drum that falls on beat 2 in Example 4, we see that we have created a sticking that breaks up two consecutive sixteenth notes between the hi-hat and snare. For beat 4, we need to only have the left hand play the snare while the right hand plays the cowbell from the original loop.

Finally, with the tempo being so quick and the loop playing three consecutive sixteenth-note bass drums in the first bar and four consecutive sixteenth notes in the second bar, we may need to distribute the load between two pedals. The notated foot pattern in Example 5 is only suggested and can be reversed if necessary. If you do not have a double pedal, feel free to leave one or two sixteenth notes out. These are notated by bass drum notes in parenthesis.

Here then, in Example 5, is the final alterations added to create the "2 in 1" groove that plays the original drum loop and provides the forward motion of the linear phrase.

Example 5

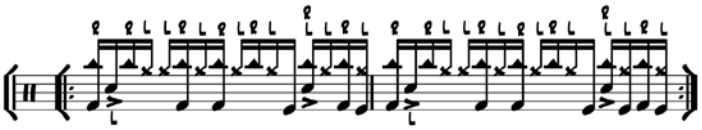


Hear audio files of the examples in this article at
http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx.

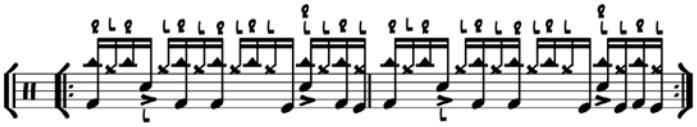
Web Extras

Once you have mastered the linear groove you have created, experiment by moving the left-hand snare drum around by using the existing "fill-ins" that are currently played on the hi-hat. Follow the examples below for starters. Remember that the sticking remains the same and that the only change you will be making is where the left hand will be moving to.

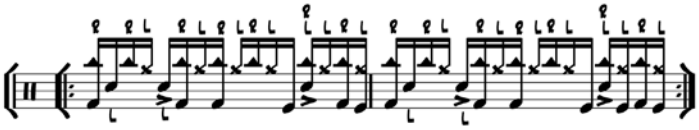
Example 6a: Left hand plays the snare on the second partial of beat 1 and moves back the "fill-in" to the hi-hat.



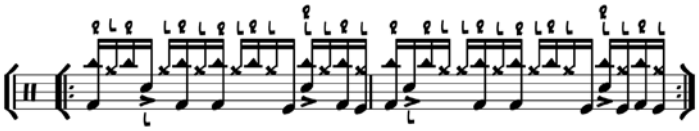
Example 6b: Left hand plays the snare on the fourth partial of beat 1 and moves back the "fill-in" to the hi-hat.



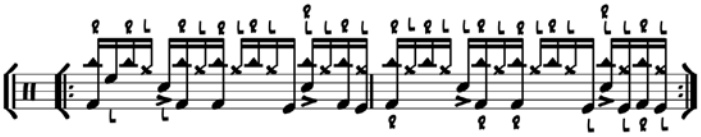
Example 6c: Left hand plays the snare on the second partial of beat 1 and leaves the backbeat on 2 and 4.



Example 6d: In the first measure, the left hand plays the snare on the fourth partial of beat 1 and moves the "fill in" to the hi-hat. In the second measure, the left hand plays the snare on the first partial of beat 1 and also moves the snare back.



Example 6e: Left hand plays the tom on the second partial of beat 1 and leaves the backbeat on 2 and 4.



Continue exploring the available combinations, by using this approach. Don't forget to explore using the tom-toms in combination with the snare drum. Also, there is the possibility of exploring some of the other left hand "fill ins" that are found on beats 3 and 4. It is important in this case not to disrupt the original loop and to make the sixteenth-note groove flow. Think of it as "adding" to what already exists and not taking away from it. The sounds are endless and the spice you are going to use is all up to you!

John Di Raimo attained a diploma after completing a three-year drumset and percussion performance program at Humber College, Toronto Ontario, Canada and attained a B.F.A in Performance in Jazz Music at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He has had articles published in *Modern Drummer* magazine and teaches drumset at the KoSA Centre for the Arts, in Montreal Canada. PN

The Nutritional Edge

By Stephen K. Workman

Playing an instrument that requires movement of multiple limbs for a long period of time is a physically demanding task reaching athletic levels in many cases. Orchestral percussionists can spend an entire performance on their feet potentially changing instruments for each piece. Those who are in a marching band spend hours a day outside in weather extremes playing and carrying their instrument. Drumset players often move all parts of their body to provide the beats and fills that the music requires.

No matter the area of expertise, our instruments place a lot of stress on the body. For this reason, it is important that we keep our body in good enough condition to meet the needs put upon it.

Studies have been done on the physiological requirements of drumming. In some studies, drummers' heart rates have been monitored while they were performing or practicing. These heart rates have been as high as 190 beats per minute, which is a common maximum heart rate while exercising for adults 20–35 years old. This is the heart rate that athletes usually attain when in an all-out sprint or at the peak of their exercise. Along these lines, independent studies have found that the amount of calories a drummer burns during one hour of intense, consistent playing is at least equivalent to the amount of calories burned during a moderate three-mile run.

If we expect our body to have such a high output, then we need to make sure that it's well equipped to perform at this level. How much time we spend training and practicing will not matter if we do not provide our body with the nutrition it requires to accomplish the tasks we demand of it.

It is easy to see why good fitness and nutrition are necessary to meet such high demands placed on the body. What we put *in* our body is what we will get *out* of it. You have probably noticed that during a performance, or shortly after, you crave something to eat. This is because your body depleted itself of the nutrients that were immediately available and needed more. Since the most readily available foods provided at many performance venues don't provide the nutrition necessary for the body to perform at such a high level, it is vital to make sure that we keep our body's gas tank full of "high-octane" fuel.

When searching for the right diet, the best option to go for is well spaced, properly balanced natural foods. There isn't a proper substitute for whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, home-cooked meals, etc. Foods like this provide a well balanced and a more natural way to obtain the vitamins and minerals necessary for daily activities, especially those of an active adult. The more natural the food is, the better it is for you. This is why there is such a push for the consumption of organic foods, which avoid the overuse of pesticides, steroids, antibiotics, and other additives. Since there is a higher cost involved in the production of organic foods, the price is driven up, which often turns away potential buyers.

Above is a sample of some of the supplements available in the form of powders, capsules and ready-to-eat bars.

Today's world is extremely busy and constantly changing. This makes it difficult to take the time to cook a nutritious meal or keep the refrigerator and pantry stocked with fresh foods. The complication of a hectic schedule and musician's lifestyle make things even more difficult. This is where the importance of supplements comes into play.

Many people think that supplements are for body builders, power lifters, high-level athletes, etc. That is false, and we musicians must change our view of nutrition. Because we put loads on our bodies similar to that of an athlete, we would do well to provide fuel that meets those needs. Supplements are meant to help bridge the gap between what your body requires in order to function based on the demands you place on it, and what nutrients you are able to consistently provide it with.

Just because the label shows a muscle-bound power lifter, that doesn't mean you are going to look like that when you ingest protein powder or vitamins. Your body will look like the exercise you put it through, but the supplements will assist you in reaching the highest level possible for that activity.

Many forms of supplements are available. I'm going to address those in pill form and powder form. When looking into supplementation, it is important to factor into the equation your age, weight, gender, and health history. Also be sure to follow the instructions on the label, keeping in mind that more isn't necessarily better. The body only absorbs what it requires to function. Whatever isn't needed, the body finds a way to dispose of it. It is also very important to discuss your dieting needs and goals with your physician and/or dietician/nutritionist prior to starting a change in nutrition.

CAPSULES

Most capsules or pill forms of a supplement provide very specific vitamins and minerals. Each vitamin and mineral helps the body function in particular ways. Capsules are extremely easy to store, carry, and consume with no preparation requirements. This makes them a great fit for keeping in a locker, at the studio, or in a travel bag. While many vitamins are beneficial, a few are commonly recommended by professionals to give a well-rounded boost to the daily diet.

As a couple of examples, MSM, Glucosamine, and Chondroitin help maintain healthy joints and are available in joint support capsules and even drink mixes. Vitamin C commonly supports the immune system. Vitamin D3 helps support bone strength along with the immune and cardiovascular system. B-vitamin complex contains multiple B vitamins that help with the body's metabolic functions, aiding in the process of converting food into energy.

Multivitamins provide an accumulation of most of the essential vitamins that your body needs in order to function at its best. There are many options when it comes to multivitamins, including some that focus on men's health, women's health, or even energy and metabolism boosts. Make sure to find the one that is best suited for your needs. Check the expiration date, and be sure the vitamins are going to provide the nutrition they claim. It is wise

to research various companies, because some make a better product than others.

Fish oils also come in capsular form and provide a good source of omega-3 essential fatty acids that also increase the efficiency of the cardiovascular and immune systems. Don't let the word "fatty" throw you off. Too many people have the misconception that anything with the word "fat" in it should be avoided. This is incorrect. Fats play their own role in the overall functions of the body.

POWDERS

Typically, powders are assumed to be strictly protein for building massive muscle. However, they actually supplement a wide variety of nutrients to fill in what is most commonly deficient in a typical diet. They generally include a large amount of protein in addition to many of the vitamins and minerals listed above. Protein is so abundant because it plays such a crucial role in the maintenance of muscle.

The general rule of thumb for protein consumption is one gram of protein for every pound of body weight, spread evenly throughout the 24-hour day. Some companies actually have products that contain "time released" proteins, so they are supplying the body while it is sleeping. Proteins are vital to the function of the body, and if they are not supplied in sufficient amounts, the body suffers. The signs of not having enough protein in your diet include decreased coordination, loss of sleep, muscle and joint weakness, and pain. Protein shakes, meal replacement shakes, and protein bars are convenient ways to boost your protein intake.

Meal replacement shakes are great options for fulfilling a wide variety of nutritional needs in a quick and easy-to-make drink. They are very similar to the foods we consume daily and are easy to absorb since they are already broken down to a powder form. These drinks are specifically for making sure that people constantly on the go with little time to prepare well-balanced meals don't have to sacrifice their health because of life's busy demands. With that in mind, companies make sure that the ingredients in their drinks provide the most essential nutritional value possible.

Some who have tried these options couldn't get past the poor and chalky taste in order to make these drinks a consistent option. There are ways to add or change the flavor of your drink. Many people add instant breakfast powder, Gatorade powder, or various fruit combinations to make their shakes more enjoyable.

Keep in mind that there are many different brands that produce these efficient drinks, and not all of them taste the same or provide the same nutrition. So it is important to test multiple brands and what they have to offer so that you can find what works for you. I have found Labrada Nutrition to be the right fit for me in terms of combining the nutrition I need with the taste I enjoy.

Protein bars have become increasingly popular. Like the drinks mentioned above, they are loaded with all kinds of nutrition. They are popular because of how little space they take up and how easily you can switch up the variety without adding preparation time. Because they are so convenient, it's easy for people to forget they are meant to be used as supplements when balanced meals are harder to come by. It's very important to remember that, when using protein bars as a supplement, you must drink a lot of fluids.

This article is not meant to be a deep analysis of nutrition, which is not possible to do in a few pages. It is simply to inform readers about supplements that can be used as a tool to help their nutrition and therefore increase their ability to perform. Seek out reputable information about the nutritional values of the body and quality supplements that can help you achieve your goals.

Stephen K. Workman has been playing drums and percussion for over 20 years and has taught for 10 years. He has been a member of the PAS Health & Wellness Committee since 2001. He is a pre-med biology and exercise science major and plans to enter graduate school in the fall of 2012 to become a Doctor of Chiropractic. PN

Lifetime Thoughts on the Philosophy of Music Teaching

By Jerry Leake

After three decades of teaching, a number of philosophical phrases have surfaced that I believe have merit for students from every conceivable background, instrument, and style. I'd like to share those phrases, my personal background with them, and briefly elaborate on their meaning in teaching. I hope they can work for you and for all students of percussion and music.

TRYING IS A GOOD THING

I was an Ewe drum student in Ghana and making good progress. After two weeks of work, I was proud of myself and felt I deserved a compliment of some kind from my teacher, a simple pat on the back with words of praise to feed my ego. "Reuben, how am I doing with my drumming?" I asked. He looked at me and with a smile replied, "You are trying." I was devastated. "Trying? That's all I get?"

I went to the corner of the compound and pondered my self-pity. Reuben came over, stood next to me and put his hand on my shoulder. "Jerry," he said, "you see the other students, over there?" He pointed to a gathering of other American students. "They are not trying. *You* are trying." His comment did not feed my ego and inflate my head. Instead, it made me realize the error of my ways. All along I thought the other students were "trying" when, in fact, in my teacher's eyes they were not; their painstaking effort and sacrifice was not there.

This simple yet valuable lesson is not limited to music. I adopt a "trying is a good thing" attitude to everything I do in life. In many parts of Africa there are no equivalent words for "can't" or "won't." These words are famous in western society but do not exist in the land of my teachers. This forever changed my perspective on everything! Yes, trying is good thing; it is, in fact, the only thing!

MUSIC IS ABOUT PROCESS, NOT PRODUCT

As students who are hungry for knowledge and ideas, we sometimes lose focus on the fact that learning music is a lifelong journey—complete with pain and suffering, along with the benefits of reward. Today is a particular point in your craft (in your "process") and tomorrow you will be one day farther along, a day deeper—but only *if* you do the work. Of course, we have to deliver a periodic "product" in the form of a gig, a recording session, or whatever.

Some people look back on their past and wish they could have done things differently. Why? The reason you are here at this point in time is because of all the work you did in the days, months, and years leading to this moment. Do not deny the painstaking process that is your past, your history. Always embrace it and let that process guide you to the next stage in your artistic maturity. Then, imagine all of the quality "products" you will produce.

MUSIC IS AN OCEAN

Some swimmers are content keeping their heads above water, looking up to the bright sky, admiring all the out-of-water scenery. Similarly, some musicians are content to swim on the surface of their craft, admiring the scenery, detached from the water/musical environment that surrounds them. This is not going deep; it is playing it safe above the surface.

Musicians must be like deep-sea divers with the courage to hold their breath and go deep below the surface into uncharted territory, to risk their wellbeing (ego) for the sake of discovery. Sure, you will likely bump along the jagged walls as you descend into the depths. You will also hit a few clams (wrong notes/ideas), but you will be recognized for having taken chances. Next to a clam you may also discover an oyster with pearls of richness and reward. Any great artist who has descended into the depths has learned how to turn clams into oysters—mistakes into moments of brilliance. Hold your breath, dive beneath the surface, and discover the rewards of taking exciting chances.

MUSIC IS DIFFICULT, BUT IT SHOULD ALSO BE FUN

Music is one of the most difficult of all art forms. A vast history of master musicians have raised the bar of excellence to seemingly insurmountable heights. You've heard it before: "Be yourself." And yet, I can hear the major influences (and sometimes outright stealing) of ideas from musicians who aspire to play like their idols and fail to find their own voice.

We are glad that music is difficult, otherwise everyone would be doing it and no one would be great; but playing music should also be fun. When the joy vanishes from your art, when it becomes all work and no play (remember we are "playing" music), then you should think about moving on to some other profession. If so, you may be able to play music as a hobby and recapture the fun without having to rely on music to feed your family. Embrace the challenges, find your voice beyond your idols, and have fun!

EACH IDEA IS A SEED

Each piece of information you are blessed to receive from your teacher is a seed that you must plant in your personal musical garden—a garden that requires constant, diligent care and nurturing. Have you ever tended a garden before? Hours of work are involved in preparing, planning, planting, fertilizing, weeding, and watering—repeat, repeat, repeat. It is a mountain of hard work that requires daily, sometimes hourly focus.

Our mission in music is to tend that idea with great care, to grow, not just a small bush or tree but a giant sequoia—a massive tree that will dominate your musical landscape. A musical sequoia is unshakeable and will survive well beyond your existence. Mastery and confidence with rhythm requires a towering degree of unshakeable force. This sequoia-like stance with rhythm (your high skill level) means that nothing in the precarious world—earthquakes or unskilled musicians—will shake you free from your foundation of musical time. Trust in it, then go plant another seed.

OWNERSHIP

Ask yourself, "Do I truly 'own' this concept, technique, or composition?" Full ownership of anything in the arts requires many years (decades!) of hard work, suffering, failure, the will to survive, and an honest assessment of where you truly are in your craft. At this point in my career I can state with confidence that I have come to own the material I have studied, deconstructed, and taught for thirty years.

Be honest: What, if anything in your music, do you truly own? In my classes, students often confess that they do not even own their own compositions; they cannot sing them back to me, or teach all aspects of groove, bass line, rhythm section, harmonic depth, melody, and interpretation to other students. This is a humbling experience and could be utilized

as a tool to understand how to dig deep, how to develop, how to mature, and ultimately how to "own" your ideas and creations.

DECONSTRUCTION/RECONSTRUCTION

Imagine taking apart a vintage car piece by piece, placing the many hundreds of components on the ground, and organizing and studying them with great depth and detail. Now put the car back together piece by piece, patiently, thoroughly, and with complete confidence that you now understand this complex machine on every conceivable level. The results may be a car that is more efficient and stronger than before.

This is what must take place in your evolution as a musician and with every idea and technique you develop. It is how you come to "own" your work. By never being satisfied with what you have at the moment, always telling yourself that there is more to uncover, you will be able to rebuild the essentials of your art to the highest possible degree.

DETERMINATION VS. DEVOTION

Years ago I realized the presence of ego-driven goals that nearly caused me to quit music: "Why aren't I farther along in my career?" I was determined to learn this or that composition, to develop this or that technique, and to play like my heroes. This "me" attitude was destined to become my downfall. Rather than being determined to achieve a specific recognized goal, I realized that I needed to be devoted to the *idea* of the goal—devoted to the art itself and not to some selfish need to be recognized.

Devotion is all about love—the love of music that compels me to work so hard. I discovered that I had forgotten the love for my art. I needed to step back and remember the reasons why I started on this journey. Picture a married couple, struggling in their relationship, but determined to solve their problems. They seek counseling, determined to fix their problems even if it kills them. Inevitably this single-minded approach will result in failure. Rather than being driven by determination, they also need the devotion to each other and the love that first brought them together. Always remember the "love" of your art through devotion.

TIME WAS INVENTED SO WE DON'T HAVE TO DO EVERYTHING AT ONCE

This phrase speaks volumes about the "Kali Yuga" society in which we live today. Hindus and Sikhs believe that human civilization degenerates spiritually during the Kali Yuga, which is referred to as the Dark Age because in it people are as far removed as possible from God. It points directly to a rapid-paced, multi-tasking world that has removed the notion of taking small steps to achieve a long-term goal.

Students today want to learn everything *now*! On occasion, students sit in their chairs waiting to be educated, entertained, and informed, without doing any of the work; in the end, they may blame the teacher.

In Africa, my Dagomba drum teacher and paramount chief, Dolsinaa Abubakaru Lunna, had to deal with my desire to learn more "stuff." Always the wise and patient man he said, "Small steps… small, small." I am grateful for his lessons in philosophy and in music, so take your time, smell the roses, and always trust in the pace and guidance of your teachers.

ALL WAYS AND ALWAYS

I firmly believe in an "All Ways and Always" perspective regarding rhythm, culture, and instrument. Explore all of the possible ways of playing a single idea, and be engaged in that idea all of the time. The point is to become the most resourceful person you know in terms of how you explore one piece of information. By never being satisfied that you have gone as far as you can with your approach, you will always discover and uncover new and magical lands of possibilities.

HIGHER AESTHETICS: GEOMETRY AND CHOREOGRAPHY

After decades devoted to developing strong technique, good sound production, and an essential repertoire of traditional material, I realized that I needed to go deeper into what I call the "higher aesthetics" of music. For me, this involves going beyond what I see right in front of my eyes and conceptualizing music from other degrees and perspectives. While writing the book *Relating Sound & Time,* I started to think in terms of the geometry and choreography of music. There is indeed a geometric aspect of rhythm in the shapes that you can perceive in your mind, as well as the literal shapes that phrases form as they are played.

South Indian music is a great example of seeing geometry within rhythm. There are drum compositions—built using the syllable system called *soklattu*—that resemble the shapes of conical drums such as the mrdangam and damaru. I started to imagine the metaphysical and metaphorical shapes taking place within patterns. It was like discovering a new level of magic inside the music.

Regarding choreography, I feel my body fully engaged in every aspect of the actual music making. I feel my heart beating strongly in my chest, fueling the motions of my arms and legs, feeling an internal dance within my body center. This results from being completely relaxed and unburdened by the world and tensions of life. It is a complete surrender of my physical self to discover the internal choreography taking place.

DO NOT CONGRATULATE OR PUNISH YOURSELF

As massive as the artist's ego can become, a level of insecurity can be equally immense. The great abstract painter Jackson Pollock suffered with an insecure ego that eventually killed him. To solve this conflict of ego and devastation I decided to stop patting myself on the back for a great gig—to stop depending upon applause and accolades. Therefore, by surrendering the glory of the good, I knew that I could also surrender the pain of the bad.

Remember, artists live in miniscule moments of time, and each time we play a gig or session the environment is different from before. We cannot recreate what was magical in a previous gig. We have to create new moments and be honest with ourselves. We need to willingly bare our souls, live in the moment, and discover the power of now!

YOU NEED TO SURVIVE THE SHIPWRECK IN ORDER TO GET INTO THE LIFEBOAT

Many of the greatest musicians in the world have endured tremendous pain and suffering in their evolution as artists. They survived numerous shipwrecks in their personal and professional lives to become stronger and more mature. You will no doubt experience a shipwreck or two (or ten or fifty) in your own evolution. How you handle these little moments will define how you will survive in the large-scale and tumultuous music business.

Some musicians who suffer deadly blows to their egos quit music entirely, whereas others see the pain and suffering as an opportunity to grow. You will always see the lifeboat within reach, with your teachers, colleagues, and family ready to pull you in and give you a second chance at life in the arts. Don't drown!

OH S*#T AND OH S*#T!

Pardon my language and redundancy. The first "Oh s*#t" is how ego-driven artists respond to hearing or seeing their heros perform. "If I can't ever play like this, what is the point?" I can recall a gifted bamboo flute player who went to India to study. Upon hearing the opening note of his teacher, he quit! I was shocked to hear this, but I do understand his conflict. He drowned as a result of this particular shipwreck.

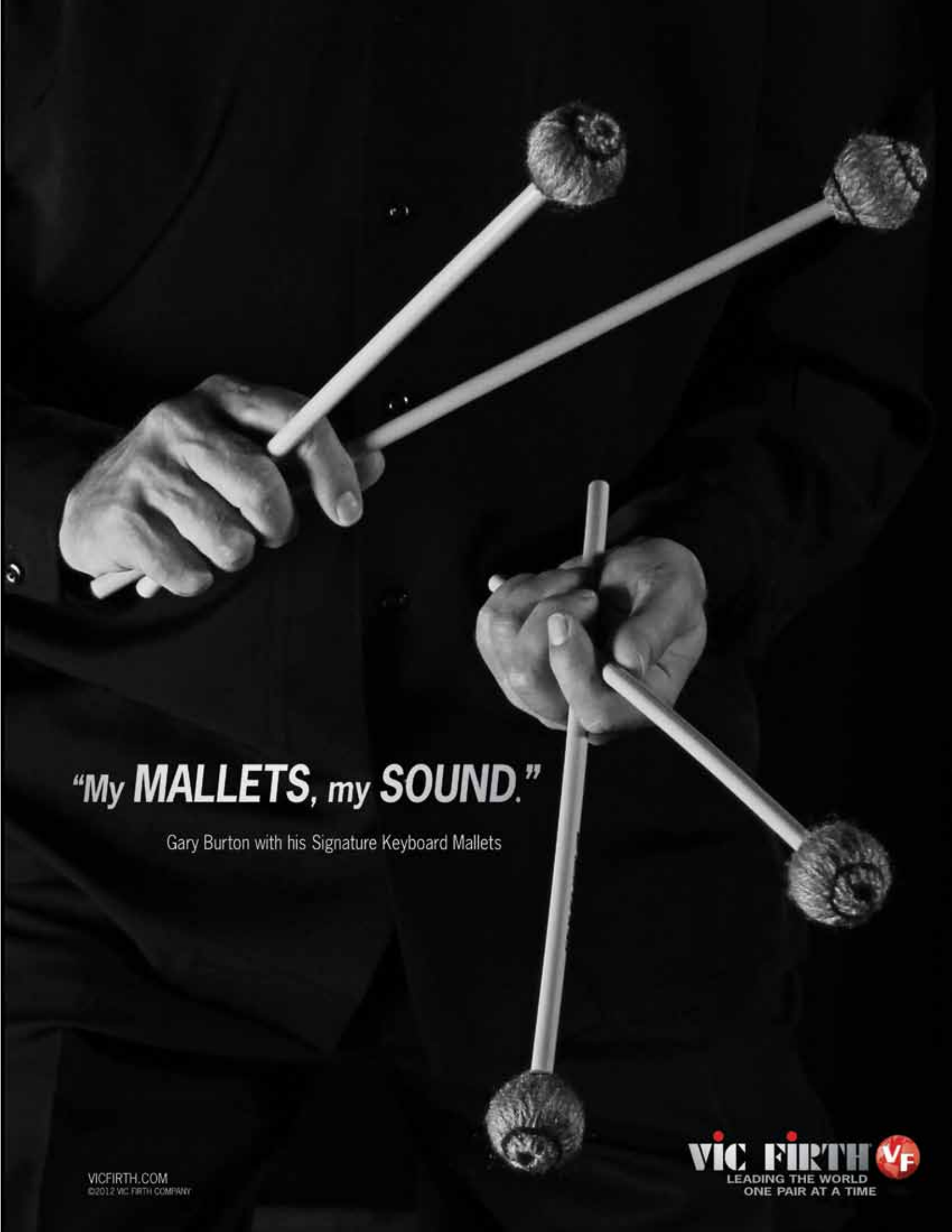
The second "Oh s*#t" moment is fueled by the non-ego response to a great player, by seeing the possibilities of the human mind, body, and spirit. This becomes the inspiration. It is the fuel to work hard—not to become your hero, but to realize your own potential. It is like walking in the path of a great explorer, inspired by the steps before you, with the explorer wishing you well to forge your own path and find your own voice in history.

10,000 HOURS

It has been said that it takes 10,000 hours to become an expert in any field of endeavor, especially in the arts: music, dance, painting, writing—three hours a day for ten years. Notice that I did not say "become a master." I could never become a master in any field; I am far too small in the immense history of creation and human accomplishment. If you think you are a master, then it is time for you to quit your art and sit upon a self-inscribed throne of greatness. Do not be surprised if the entire world ignores you as an ignorant and foolish fraud.

"That's it, I'm ready for the next lesson." These are familiar words that I have said in the past. Students (which I will always be) should never kick back and wait to be taken to the next level by a teacher. It is your duty to discover the next level. The word *educate* comes from the word *educe*, which means to draw out from within. It is up to you to find the deeper meaning of each lesson, to play cleaner, faster, with more soul, and from every angle you can imagine. Since it takes *at least* 10,000 hours to become an expert, go play for another hour today, and two more tomorrow—and remember to have fun!

Jerry Leake is an Associate Professor of Percussion at Berklee College of Music and the New England Conservatory. He leads the world-rock-fusion octet Cubist (cubistband.com), which performs compositions from his 2010 acclaimed *Cubist* CD. In 2011 he released *Cubist Live* with renowned Berklee faculty, and *Mobeus* with jazz legend Rakalam Bob Moses. Jerry is cofounder of the world-music ensemble Natraj, and performs with Club d'Elf and the Agbekor Society. Jerry has written eight widely used texts on North and South Indian, West African, and Latin American percussion, and advanced rhythm theory (Rhombuspublishing.com). Jerry is also former president of the Massachusetts PAS Chapter, and was a presenter of his "Harmonic Time" concept at a 2011 TEDx Seminar in Cambridge, Mass. PN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An Analysis of Basta's 'Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra'

By Brian Malone

In the January 2012 issue of *Percussive Notes*, James Basta gave his reflections on the creation of his "Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra." This article will explore some of the compositional techniques used in its performance.

Basta's "Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra" is a single, fourteen-minute, through-composed work, but it can be interpreted in three movements. The marimba part is written in treble clef throughout and requires a four-octave instrument. Double strokes are used extensively throughout the work, and many scalar passages are treated with this technique by doubling each note with a rebound. Most notes longer than an eighth note are rolled, creating a lush tremolo effect throughout. The first and third movements require two mallets, while the lyrical second movement requires four.

Harmonically the composition is very traditional and based off of an altered a-minor scale. Basta states, "I wanted to write a dramatic piece, and I thought it should be primarily in a minor key. I was playing around with a-minor, and I thought, 'What will happen if I shift this note this way?' So I flatted the fifth and raised the sixth and seventh. It wasn't really a melodic minor scale but with a lowered fifth. The more I played around with the harmony, different themes and ideas occurred to me. When people ask me about it, I say it's somewhat modern. I liked some of the richer harmonies—ninth and eleventh chords."

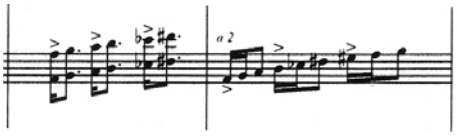
Several themes emerge as variations of the material presented during the first 37 measures of the piece. Basta was "very impressed by Beethoven, who could take a little bit of material and build a whole symphony. If it was rhapsodic and rambled on and on it wouldn't satisfy my idea of craftsmanship, so I thought, 'How much can I write with as little material as possible?'"

Basta originally intended the "Concerto" as a work for soloist with orchestra. It was only after publishing requests came in that he created the piano reduction. In doing so, he was forced to make some concessions. "I had to finally leave stuff out of it. Sometimes there were big chords and two or three lines happening, and I had to just leave it out."

FIRST MOVEMENT

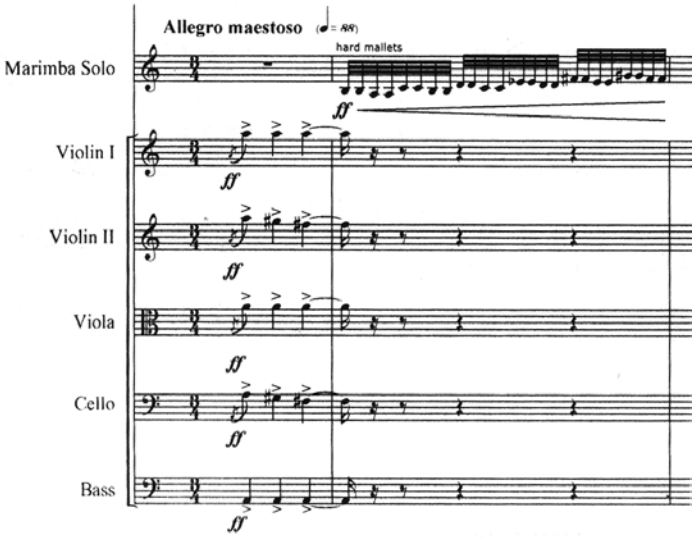
The first movement of the concerto is a bold rhythmic statement in 3/4 time and can be loosely characterized as sonata-allegro form. The exposition of the work provides melodic material on which a large portion of the rest of the piece is based. In the fifth measure, Basta's altered a-minor scale (A, B, C. D, E♭, F♯, G♯) is completely presented in the trombone part (see Example 1).

Example 1



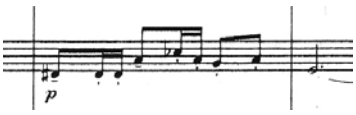
The entire concerto is based on three short themes that are manipulated in various ways. The first theme, a descending three-note (m2, M2) motive found in the second violin and cello in the first bar, reappears as a fanfare throughout the piece. The scalar pattern in the second bar is a second theme that is manipulated in numerous ways as the concerto unfolds (see Example 2).

Example 2



In measure nine the bassoon provides the third theme (see Example 3).

Example 3



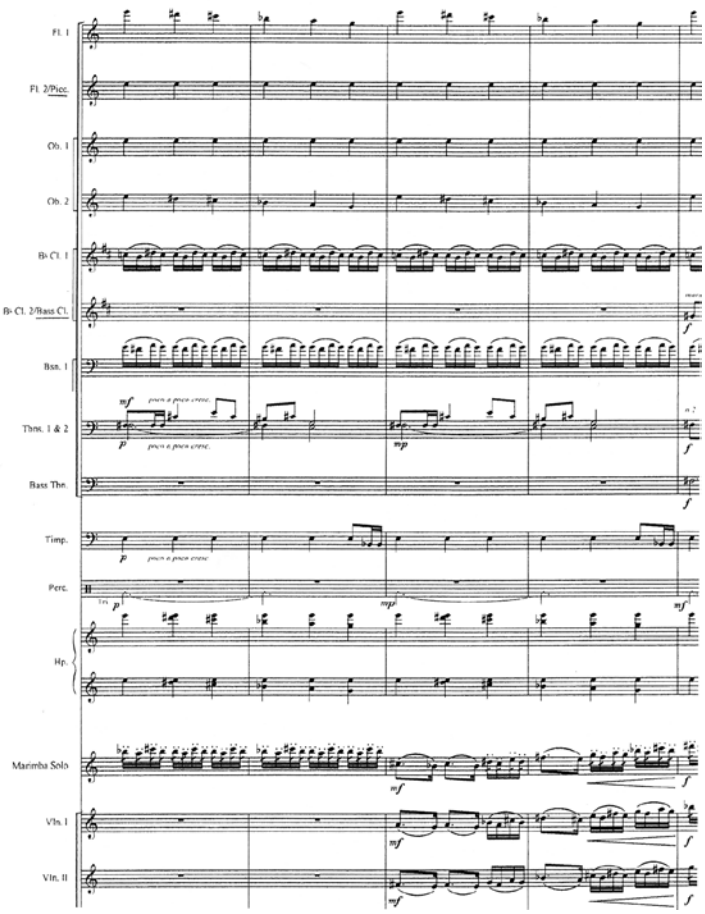
Basta used these simple themes to create the rest of the piece. As he stated, Basta was intrigued by Beethoven's ability to construct variations and new themes from existing material, and he challenged himself to create as much as he could with minimal material.

In the excerpt from the first movement shown in Example 4, all three themes are used simutaniously. Theme one can be found in the flute, piccolo, oboe, and harp; theme two is played by the clarinet, bassoon, violins, and marimba; the trombones perform a rhythmically elongated third theme.

Hear the premiere performance of James Basta's "Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra," March 1, 1956. James R. Dotson, soloist; Eastman-Rochester Philharmonic, conducted by Howard Hanson at http://www.pas.org/publications/March2012webextras.aspx.

Web Extras

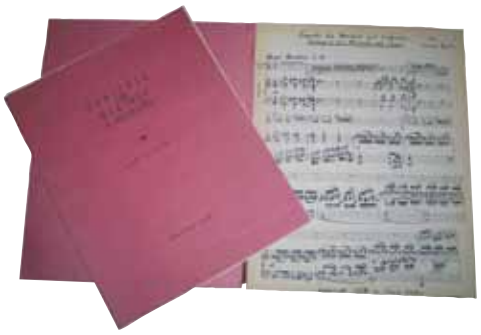
Example 4



After the expositon, a lyrical section provides contrast as the marimba and woodwinds exchange a variation of the second theme before an energetic return to the fist theme.

SECOND MOVEMENT

The second movement is marked Adagio and is written for four mallets. The chorale-like setting is entirely rolled and requires the player to reach intervals of up to a major seventh in each hand. This was particularly challenging given that the majority of players used the traditional or cross grip in 1956 when the concerto was written. Basta remembers, "When I wrote the four-mallet section, he (soloist Jimmy Dotson) said he worked on it and worked on it, and especially the sevenths. So when it was published, he said, 'You'd better write an ossai line to show it simplified and condensed.' They asked me to cut it down because they said that a lot of marimbists wouldn't be able to do those big stretches." The current edition features an ossia part during this section with reduced intervals.

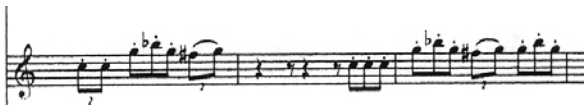


This relatively short section is written in 4/4 and begins in C-Major, the relative major to the key of a-minor at the begining of the piece.

THIRD MOVEMENT

The third movement takes the form of a scherzo in 9/8 in which the third theme (Example 5) is presented in triplet groupings instead of the earlier duple pattern.

Example 5



After a brief recap of the adagio, the concerto ends with a driving repetion of the second theme.

Basta views his "Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra" as almost romantic in character. Moments certainly evoke Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestration married to Beethoven's creative adept use of thematic material. This is in direct contrast to the post-tonal, 12-tone, and serial writing techniques that were being applied to percussion at that time. Most of Basta's compositional output since the "Concerto" has been smaller works and choral arrangements, reflecting his busy schedule as a performer, teacher, and church music director. While he has no plans for another concerto at this time, the percussion community is thankful that he created this influental work at a crucial time in the devolopement of the marimba.

Brian Malone is a freelance percussionist in the Cincinnati area. He holds a B.M. in Percussion Performance from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and an M.M. in Percussion Performance from Miami University. He has performed with such artists as Aretha Franklin, Don Rickles, and xylophone virtuoso Ian Finkel. His orchestral engagements include the Kentucky Symphony, Cincinnati Ballet Orchestra, Opera, and Playhouse in the Park. He has performed on cruise ships and at theaters across the U.S. PN

Comping for Vibes and Marimba Players Part 1

By Ted Wolff

In a jazz performance, mallet players are often called upon to accompany, or "comp," for the soloist. "Comping" requires many of the same skills as improvising. Both the soloist and the accompanist are attempting to create spontaneous music that describes, or suggests, the tonal centers of the tune, while inventing melodies and textures that have logic, form, and direction. The relationship between soloist and accompanist is like a dance—a creative interplay of ideas and emotions.

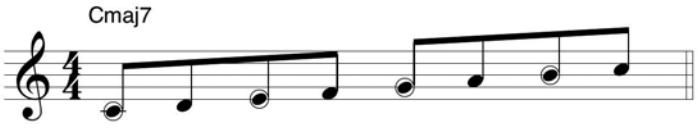
The information and examples presented here are designed to help mallet players learn about the art of comping. This is not a course that requires memorization of a gazillion different chords. It will teach you how to create your own chords instinctively, and how to use those chords to effectively support the soloist. The article's primary goals are:

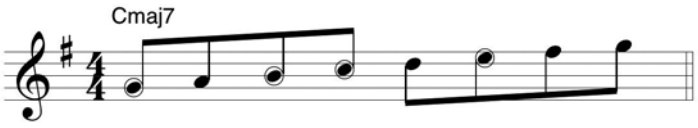
- Keep the memorization to a minimum.
- Become skilled at modifying and restructuring basic voicing concepts to fit the moment.
- Create colors and sounds that can inspire the soloist.

In Part 1 we will discuss concepts, ideas, and exercises to help strengthen and speed up your ability to identify the tonal centers of tunes and be able to instantly recognize all the notes available to build chords for any given chord symbol. In Part 2 we will go into an analysis of some of the chord symbols you see most often—maj7, min7, dom7 with both natural and altered tensions, dim7—and develop a strategy to create good sounding chords on the fly. Then we will talk about voice leading and start developing a musical, creative approach to comping. You'll learn about a technique I call the "top-down approach," a method to help you develop a musical and distinctive comping style.

These articles should stimulate your imagination and improve your understanding of basic music theory. They will also give you the tools to spontaneously construct chord structures that describe the key center accurately and have valid musical merit as well.

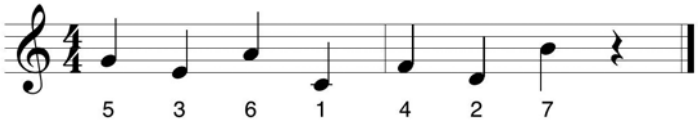
Okay, let's begin. The first concept to understand is that chords are parts of scales. A Cmaj7 chord could be made up of the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th degrees of a C major scale. It could also be the 4th, 6th, 1st, and 3rd of a G major scale. The notes in a Cmin7 chord can be members of a B♭ maj scale, or an F min scale. Chords like this are said to be diatonic because all the chord tones belong to a scale (or key). Thus, chords are part of, and can represent, keys (or tonal areas).



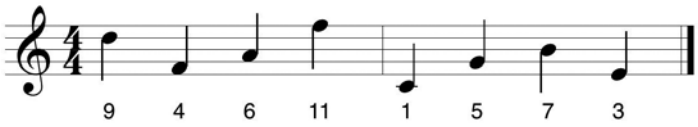


Let's take a fresh look at how to practice scales. The method we will use is a departure from the traditional ways we are taught, and will have a direct and immediate application when learning how to create chords spontaneously and creatively. The goal is to get to know each note of every scale as well as you know each member of your family. For example, if someone asks you the name of your mother, you don't have to think about it, you just know it. In the same way, if someone asks you for the name of the 11th degree of a B major scale, you should be able to identify it immediately. Let's get reacquainted with all the members of the family of major and minor scales.

Here's a great exercise I call the "phone book" exercise. The idea is to take the seven notes in a scale and mix them up. What you get can look like a phone number, e.g., 573-1642 or maybe 741-2356. You can create these patterns yourself. Just make sure you use all seven notes. When you practice your phone number, play it steadily at a slow pace and transpose it through the 12 keys.



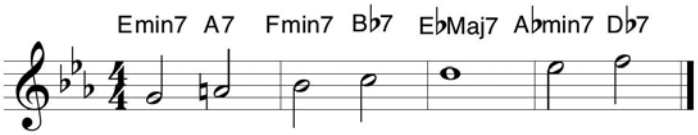
Select a tempo and key and play each note in order: 5 3 6 1 4 2 7. Don't stop if you can't find one of the notes, just keep going. Do it two or three times if needed, then move to another key. Try expanding this to two octaves to sharpen your recognition of the tensions 9, 11, and 13.



Again, start by making up a sequence (your "phone number"), memorize it, and play it in different keys. You can apply this exercise to all the minor scales, modes, diminished scales, etc. This should help you gain a more intimate knowledge of each member of a scale, which is just the kind of knowledge you need to be great at comping.

Expand on this by picking an interesting melodic phrase from a tune you like and transpose the phrase. Some good choices are "Invitation," "Recordamé," or "Israel." Select a short phrase from the tune that contains five to ten notes. Analyze the notes and assign the correct numbers to them. Memorize the phrase and play it in several different keys, just as you did with your phone numbers. Pick tunes that contain some wide leaps and unusual intervals.

Let's move on. Take a look at the short chord progression below.



In bar 1 we have two chords that make up a common cadence (the familiar ii–V progression) in the key of D major. All the notes for the

Emin7 and A7 chords are part of a D major scale. The chords in the second and third bars are a ii–V–I progression in the key of E♭ major. Measure 4 demonstrates another ii–V, this time in the key of G♭ major. Each of these ii–V patterns outlines a specific scale. This means that, when choosing notes for your chords, you have an entire scale of notes to choose from, not just the 1, 3, 5, and 7. And just like an artist working with a large palette of colors, when you're comping you want to have a large palette of notes to work with. Determining what key a chord symbol is part of is an important part of being a skilled "comper."

Now that you have more notes (a full scale) to choose from to create chords, which three or four notes should you pick to make a chord? Answering these three questions will help you decide:

1. Are there any notes I *must* have in my chord?
2. Are some notes more important than others?
3. Are there any notes that I should avoid using?

Picking notes to make a chord is just like picking a group of players for a sports team, where the job is to pick a balanced group of players that work well together and can win the game. In our case, we are picking a team of three or four notes that will sound great together and accurately describe the key that the chord represents.

In Part 2, we will take a look at several common chord types and figure out the answers to the three questions we asked above.

Ted Wolff, a native of the San Francisco Bay Area, began his vibe studies at age 16. He moved to Boston in 1970, where he studied privately with Gary Burton and Dave Samuels. Ted taught vibes at Berklee College of Music from 1974 to 1982. Ted currently lives in California. Visit his website at http://tedwolff.net. PN

Dave Black: a Publisher's Perspective

By Rick Mattingly

Dave Black serves as Vice President and Editor-in-Chief, School & Church Publications, for Alfred Music Publishing Company. A prolific composer and arranger, more than 60 of his compositions and arrangements have been published by Alfred, Barnhouse, CPP/Belwin, TRN, Highland/Etling, and Warner Bros. Black has written for the bands of Louie Bellson, Sammy Nestico, Bill Watrous, Bobby Shew, Ed Shaughnessy, Gordon Brisker, and the C.S.U., Northridge Jazz Ensemble. In addition, many of his compositions have been used as source/background music on numerous TV shows including *All My Children*, *Coach*, *The Drew Carey Show*, *General Hospital*, *Ellen*, *Grace Under Fire*, *Nightline*, *Roseanne*, and *Good Morning America*, and the movie *Drumline*. Black is the co-author of several best-selling books published by Alfred, including *Alfred's Drum Method*, *Books 1 & 2*; *Alfred's Beginning Drumset Method*; *Contemporary Brush Techniques*; *Drumset 101*; *Alfred's Kid's Drum Course*; and *Cymbals: A Crash Course*. Black served on the PAS Board of Directors for six years, was a member of the Sustaining Members Advisory Council, and hosted PASIC '91 in Anaheim, California.

Rick Mattingly: *In the 27 years you've been at Alfred, you must have seen hundreds of manuscripts and proposals from people who wanted you to publish their drum or percussion instruction books. Are there common mistakes people make when submitting proposals?*

Dave Black: Very often, a proposal starts out with, "I have never seen anything like this on the market," but when I start flipping through the manuscript, I can name several books that have a similar content and/or approach. So when they say they haven't seen anything like this, they probably haven't done their homework.

Before people propose a book to a publisher, they should go to local music stores and browse the books, and then go to publishers' websites and see what's already in print. You can't write another drum book and expect to get it published unless it has a different twist or element from the ones that are already out there.

Before you take the time to write the book, you should contact the publisher and ask if there is a need for the book you want to write. If so, what would the publisher suggest you do to make it different? Not many people do that kind of groundwork in advance.

Another mistake I often see are people who try to write the bible of whatever subject they're teaching, and they send in a 200-page manuscript. No one is going to publish a book that size. Had they talked to the publisher in advance and asked for a recommended page count, they could have saved themselves a lot of time.

RM: *Based on what I saw when I used to review manuscripts for Hal Leonard, how many times have you seen a manuscript that is basically a rewrite of* Stick Control*?*

DB: More than I can count. Just in the past two months I had a couple of people submit proposals like that. They will take the same basic rhythms and write out every possible sticking variation. Most of them, I feel, are just trying to ride the coattails of something that is already established and popular. George Lawrence Stone was more than capable of writing out every possible sticking combination had he wanted to, but he was selective. Hundreds of books just seem to be endless sticking permutations, and they become boring and don't appear to have any application to a real musical setting. Even though *Stick Control* has become a staple, with anything that is published now, people expect an audio or video component to be included with the book.

RM: *I often saw books that came from teachers who said, "Instead of students having to buy several different drum books, this one book has everything they need!" It would have a little bit about reading, a little bit about rudiments, a couple of pages of* Stick Control*-type exercises, a little bit of rock drumset, a little bit of jazz drumset, a little bit about fills, a little double bass, a little odd-time stuff—a little bit of a lot of things, but not enough of anything.*

DB: Right. The typical cover letter I often receive will say something like, "I've been teaching for 25 years, but I've never found one book that has what I need, so I've been writing out my own exercises for years and using them with my students, and everybody says I should get this published." But everything in it is just like the material in countless other books. It may all be valid, but they are not adding any new element. And with a book that size, the price might end up being too cost prohibitive for a student to afford. Of course, name recognition can be a factor. Alfred is not necessarily looking to publish a new drumset method, but if Steve Gadd wanted to write one, I would do it in a heartbeat, even if it had similar material, because there are people who would buy it simply because Steve wrote it.

RM: *What do the good proposals contain?*

DB: A new idea or a different spin on an old idea. A recent example is Steve Fidyk's new book, *Big Band Drumming at First Sight*. There have been other books about interpreting big band drum charts, but he came up with a system of being able to look at drum parts at a glance in order to make them easier to read the first time through. The audio CD he created includes full-band versions with and without drums, as well as isolated beat and ensemble figure transcriptions featuring three styles of loop examples. This gives the student the ability to be able to work on just those figures and really get them down. Fidyk was really able to dissect big band charts in a new way. So it was a different take on that subject, and that's what I look for.

One of the advantages of owning engraving programs like Finale and Sibelius, layout programs like InDesign, and the fact that a lot of people have their own studios, is that manuscripts now come in looking like finished books. Seeing handwritten music that's sloppy and poorly laid out can be a turnoff. Submitting books with music that's

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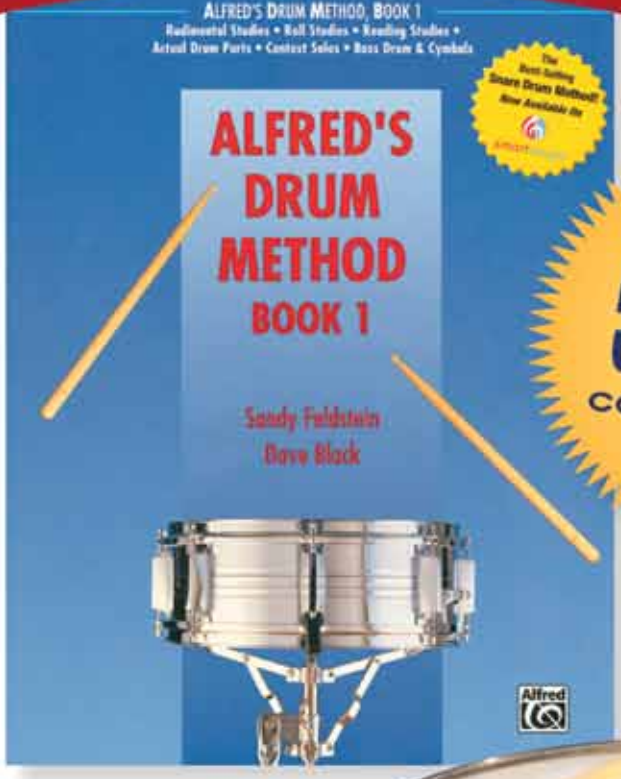

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already engraved, that are well laid out, and that include nice-sounding audio tracks not only makes a good impression, but makes the manuscript a lot easier to evaluate. I'm more likely to accept a book that's done that way than one that comes in sloppy and will take a lot of work on our end to clean up for publication.

RM: *I saw a couple of proposals in which the author had invented a new system of notation that was said to make learning easier. I always asked, "How does this prepare a student for the real world?"*

DB: I've seen books like that as well. Unfortunately, I wouldn't be able to sell five copies of a book like that, even if I thought it was a clever idea. I often see something that I think is interesting or unique, but I have to ask if it is the right fit for Alfred. I've seen many things over the years that I thought were good ideas and well thought-out, but I didn't accept them because I knew they wouldn't sell enough copies. So if a publisher rejects something, it doesn't always mean the idea is bad. It might just mean that we don't think it would sell enough, or that is not the right fit for our catalog.

If I get a well-written book by an unknown author, but I don't have room in my production schedule, sometimes I advise the author to self-publish. Your local music stores will probably sell it for a percentage, and you can advertise it on a number of websites or through Facebook. Then, if you get some sales and create some buzz about the book, you can go back to a major publisher and say, "I did this book on my own, it has sold a thousand copies, and several teachers are using it." That would make me take a second look and consider publishing it, because now it has a following and has proven itself in a local market.

The digital press has changed the way we make decisions on what to publish. It has given me the opportunity to publish in areas we haven't touched for years, such as steel drum pieces and percussion ensembles. We didn't publish those types of pieces in the past because with traditional offset printing, you would have to print at least five-hundred copies, or more, in order to get a good print price. If you only sold one-hundred copies the first year, you'd have four-hundred copies that you paid for and would have to warehouse. But with a digital press, if I predict that it's only going to sell one- or two-hundred copies, then I can print one- or two-hundred copies. Something I would have rejected five years ago, because it didn't have a big enough market or was too esoteric, I will now publish because I don't have the expense of having to print hundreds of copies that might never sell.

Also, because of programs like Sibelius and Finale, people are able to send in manuscripts that are already engraved. We will clean it up, but we don't have to engrave it from scratch, which costs a lot of money. When people submit something in Sibelius or Finale, that keeps our costs down. So that has helped open up more opportunities for people to get published as well. The downside of that is that it has also opened up more opportunities for people to self-publish, which has taken away a piece of the pie for the major publishers.

RM: *What are the pros and cons of self-publishing?*

DB: The most obvious benefit is that they get 100 percent of the profit. They are in complete control of the quality and production and don't have to deal with a publisher who may want them to reduce the size or do major rewrites. With the ability for people to be able to sell things through their own websites and advertise on Facebook and Twitter, they can do pretty well with that.

The disadvantage is that they don't have the money or the muscle that a major publisher has. Self-publishers can't take their books to all the major trade shows and conventions—PASIC, NAMM, MENC, TBA, and so on—and/or get them into music stores all over the world. We have dealers who automatically take everything we put out. It's not easy for self-publishers to be able to get their products into dealers' hands like that. A lot of people get huffy over the fact that they will only make ten percent if they go with a major publisher, but they don't realize how much money we are putting out to produce the book and then to advertise and promote it. I've had a lot of people over the years who self-published and then came back to me after a couple of years and said, "I'm reconsidering this." They are spending a lot of time and money sending out books, they can't get their foot in the door of the major dealers, they haven't been able to recoup what they spent on printing, and so now they want to sell their book to a major publisher.

RM: *Where is the biggest market for instructional books: beginning, intermediate, or advanced?*

DB: Beginning books far outsell intermediate or advanced books. The reason is that everybody has to start with a beginning book of some kind. Once they get through that first book, some will decide that music isn't their thing, and others might feel they've gained enough skills to continue without any additional formal training. If we're selling 20,000 copies of *Alfred's Drum Method, Book 1* per year, *Book 2* will only be selling 3,000 to 4,000 copies.

RM: *So if beginning books are the biggest sellers, does that mean that Alfred is looking to publish more beginning books?*

DB: Not really. We have to have a well-rounded catalog, and so that means a commitment on our part to publish more advanced books.

RM: *That's obviously the other side of the coin. How many ways can you rewrite a beginning book?*

DB: You can't, which is why they don't sell. When Alfred bought Warner Bros., we acquired the Belwin catalog, the Henry Adler catalog, and everything else Warner published. That makes my job more difficult each year, because how much can the market continue to absorb, and is there anything that hasn't already been done? There's some truth to the saying, "Do we really need another drum book?" But then I see something that's unique or different and I say, "Okay, there's still room."

Once again, name recognition can be a factor. Young drummers of today might not recognize the name Haskell Harr, but if there is a book by a contemporary drummer whose name they recognize, they'll buy that. So that's the advantage of publishing something by a drummer who is current and very visible. Even if the book isn't much different from other books that are on the market, that drummer's name will draw in a new generation.

RM: *What led you and Sandy Feldstein to create* Alfred's Drum Method*? There were already snare drum methods on the market.*

DB: At that time, the Haskell Harr book had been out for 50 years, and the Roy Burns drum method had been out for 25 years. The two were widely used, but it had been 25 years since a major snare method had come out, so we felt we could update those two books. We introduced rolls in a way that would be easier to understand—particularly the 7-stroke roll. One of the biggest differences was when a new concept was introduced on a page, we provided a Combination Study at the bottom of that page that incorporated what the student had just learned, and then ended each section with a full-length solo that incorporated all the new concepts that had been taught up until that point. Something else that was unique was the fact that we incorporated actual drum parts from Sousa marches and well-known concert band pieces. That was the first book to show how rudiments, such as five-stroke rolls and flams, were used in actual drum parts. We also made an accompanying VHS video that correlated with the book. As you know, drum videos were a fairly new concept in 1987.

RM: *In terms of the educational material Alfred has published in recent years, what percentage are books and what percentage are DVDs?*

DB: It's probably two thirds to one third, but

most books include CDs and/or DVDs. Other than something like Zoro's *The Big Gig*, I can't think of very many recent books that haven't been packaged with a DVD or audio CD. And now, with everything going digital, we're starting to put out DVDs that include e-books in pdf format, so you're not having to piggyback a printed book or pamphlet with the DVD.

RM: *And with the proliferation of devices like the iPad, Kindle, and other digital readers, print, audio, and video are becoming even more integrated. Do you think print-only instructional books are becoming obsolete?*

DB: I do. There will always be people who like to have the physical product in their hands. People like you and me are not going to toss out the libraries we've been collecting for years. But the current generation and the generation that follows will be buying books online because that's the way they grew up. They are already used to buying their music from iTunes, and the same will happen with books.

We've already started adapting many of our best sellers. Ted Reed's *Syncopation* book, *Alfred's Drum Method*, and *Stick Control* are available as downloads through Amazon. Our new band method is available for the iPad, and it has audio and DVD clips that are available under the printed examples, so you just hit the play button and it plays right there. Moving forward, most of the new stuff we will publish will automatically have a digital version, and we will continue to convert older material in our catalog.

RM: *And I know Hal Leonard is doing the same thing.*

DB: Of course; that is the way people are going to purchase music in the future. Within the next five years or so, students will be bringing their iPads to class, putting them on the music stand, and playing from that when the director calls out a piece or a page from a band method. Can you imagine jazz musicians on a gig having *The Real Book* in their iPads, hitting a button, and there's the tune? You can have a thousand tunes stored in that one device rather than having to carry around all of that printed music.

It's going to be interesting to see where this all goes, but it's happening very rapidly. Publishers are all scrambling to keep up with the technology and make it accessible. Otherwise, they're not going to survive because that's the way the younger generation is going to want to buy product.

RM: Alfred's Drum Method *is celebrating its 25th anniversary and has sold over a half-million copies. In addition, several books that Alfred publishes—including George Lawrence Stone's* Stick Control, *Carmine Appice's* Realistic Rock, *Zoro's* The Commandments of R&B Drumming, *and Ed Thigpen's* The Sound of Brushes*—recently appeared on* Modern Drummer *magazine's list of "25 Timeless Drum Books." What makes a drum book "timeless"?*

DB: My definition of "timeless" is something that has been around a while, continues to be fundamentally sound, and continues to be used by generations of teachers and students. Even though newer books have come out on the market that have accompanying audio and video—things that people have come to expect—many of the books on that list have no CDs or DVDs. They are just good, fundamentally sound books that have stood the test of time. PN

New Percussion Literature and Recordings

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Difficulty Rating Scale	
I–II	Elementary
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GENERAL REFERENCE

The Big Gig
Zoro
$19.99
Alfred
Web: sample pages
www.alfred.com/samplepages/00-37750.pdf

"Playing your instrument is only half the job of being a musician," says Zoro midway through *The Big Gig*. "The other half is managing your affairs." As is clear from this 412-page book, there are a lot of "affairs" to be managed, from your attitude to knowing how to negotiate a contract.

The book is aimed primarily at those wishing to be freelance musicians. Just listing all of the topics Zoro covers would take up all the space allotted for this review, but some of the subjects dealt with include defining career goals, preparing for a career through learning and practicing, understanding the role of a sideman, auditioning, gigging, touring, studio work, networking, managing and promoting yourself, getting endorsements, doing clinics, expanding career opportunities, and maintaining a relationship or family while being on the road.

The book is filled with standard "success principles" that can apply to any career or to life in general, and it is filled with relevant quotes from everyone from Steve Gadd to Leonardo di Vinci to Henry Ford. Reflective of the author himself, the book oozes positive attitude, but unlike so many "success" books that would have you believe that people with positive attitudes never experience difficulties or failure, Zoro has lived in the real world of the music business, and so he knows the dark side of that world and offers very practical advice on how to deal with it so no one takes advantage of you. A positive attitude is certainly part of the equation, but so is knowing when to dig in your heels when demanding fair pay and learning to deal with "slime balls, liars, sharks, scumbags, hustlers, cutthroats, backstabbers, and downright ruthless people."

Whether you aspire to tour with a rock band, play jazz in nightclubs, work in the studios, or perform with a symphony orchestra, there is information in this book that will help prepare you to make a living as a musician.

—Rick Mattingly

Sound Innovations for Concert Band – Percussion Books 1 and 2 **I–II**
Robert Sheldon, Peter Boonshaft, Dave Black, Bob Phillips
$12.99 for Combined Percussion Book
Alfred
Web: sample page and video
www.alfred.com/Products/Sound-Innovations-for-Concert-Band-Book--00-34545.aspx

In the world of beginning band methods, creating something truly new or revolutionary is all but impossible. Typically, the first five notes introduced are the pitches in the B-flat pentachord, melodies like "Hot Cross Buns," "Jingle Bells," and "London Bridge" are all within the first ten pages, and every new note is labeled in color with a large, bold font.

In an effort to be unique, this new method goes a step beyond the now commonly included play-along CD by providing an mp3 CD of all the music within the book as well as an instructional DVD. The percussion DVD features Shannon Wood, principal timpanist of the Grand Rapids Symphony, and contains over one hour of such material as instrument care, technical demonstrations, and performances of the included rudiments. Additionally, the accompanying SI Player software features the ability to vary the speed of the recordings without changing pitch.

Pedagogically, no band method is an ideal substitute for an instrument specific approach. The first time eighth notes are introduced on a snare drum probably should not be in a paradiddle. Also, two pages of music with B-flat, C, and D whole notes and whole rests are not the best way to start keyboard percussionists. On the plus side, this two-year curriculum does cover many of the standard rudiments, common scales, and key signatures found in most band literature, an introduction to timpani in Book 2, and instruction on many frequently used percussion accessories.

As is typical with most popular band methods, all of the information contained in each of the separate instrument specific books is included on facing pages (mallets/timpani on the left, snare drum/bass drum/accessories on the right) in the combined percussion books. *Sound Innovations* is not extraordinarily innovative, but is certainly a quality method from a percussion standpoint and is worth consideration by beginning-band directors.

—Josh Gottry

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION METHOD

Sequential Studies for Four-Mallet Marimba **I–II**
Julia Gaines
$19.95
Gaines Publications
Web: videos of solos
www.youtube.com/user/marimbalevels?feature=mhee

Once beginning students have a firm foundation in two-mallet performance, I believe it is imperative to allow them to initiate four-mallet practice at an early age. Julia Gaines provides beginning students with an accessible, and not overwhelming, comprehensive source that promotes a strong foundation in rudimentary four-mallet marimba study.

Subtitled *Level 1: In the Very Beginning*, this is the first book in a forthcoming series. It begins with warm-up stretches and includes photo and verbal explanations to aid in the execution of each. As one who has dealt with performance related injuries in the past, I think this is a wonderful place to begin rather than starting with grip explanation or performance warm-ups. The remainder of the method is divided into two large sections focusing on 20 lessons and eight short solos that are easily accessible for beginning students.

The first section begins with a description of the three grips associated with four-mallet marimba performance, piston stroke, sticking notation, playing positions, and body positioning. This section contains lessons 1–10, solos 1–3, and deals with the lower manual exclusively. Only single independent and double vertical strokes are used.

The second section begins with photo and verbal descriptions of double vertical strokes; these descriptions deal with parallel motion, mirrored motion, and split motion. Lessons 11–20 and solos 4–8 use both the lower and upper manuals; the lessons closely resemble those of the first section, and the solos progressively increase in difficulty, always providing students with a challenge appropriate for their level.

All lessons include a progress chart and have very clear objectives. Each solo contains a description that provides performance-related information, including types of strokes, intervals, motion, and independence that are found within the piece.

The method is punctuated with three appendices that include characteristics of Level 1 literature, examples of published Level 1 literature, and a glossary. These provide the educator with useful information that will aid in "prescribing" appropriate, supplemental materials.

This is a fantastic addition to the few methods associated with the targeted, beginning audience. Gaines' use of photos (from various angles) is very helpful in the understanding of the topic at hand, and her written explanations are easily understood. The lessons and solos within this method will prove invaluable in the initial stages of four-mallet marimba study.

—T. Adam Blackstock

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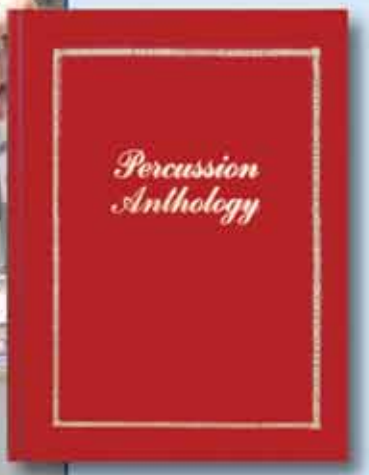

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KEYBOARD PERCUSSION SOLO

A Farewell to Those Left Behind IV
Tim Ferchen
€25,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: four-mallet vibraphone
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=89

This piece for solo vibraphone uses a variety of recurring themes to communicate the sorrow felt for those who perished in Hurricane Katrina. Tonal throughout, a combination of classical and jazz harmonies is used. Perhaps the latter is intended as a nod to the city of New Orleans. Scored for four mallets, the texture alternates between lush chordal writing and active rhythmic figures—all appearing to be idiomatically conceived for the instrument.

The piece opens with a spacious chordal section, creating a mood that is expressive and mournful. This is followed by a melody in the top mallet, accompanied by thirty-second notes played between the other mallets. While these rhythms may appear intimidating upon first glance, a tempo marking of 40 bpm makes the accompaniment lines more accessible. Here the performer must be sensitive to the prominence of the upper melodic line by way of pedaling, mallet choice, and balance, to give the rendering of a slow-moving melody over the top of a fluttering, yet light, accompaniment. These ideas recur several times before the piece comes to a close with a final statement of the opening theme.

Although an intermediate percussionist, with the requisite amount of preparation, would be able to handle the technical demands of this piece, an advanced understanding of dampening, pedaling, and musical intuition is required in order to distinguish the melodic lines, note durations, and overall pacing of the work in order to move seamlessly from one phrase to the next in a way that makes the emotional weight of the music obvious to the listener. For this reason, "A Farewell to Those Left Behind" would serve as a fine recital choice for an advanced undergraduate to professional performer in search of a piece that straddles the classical and jazz idioms in a way that is expressively meaningful.

—Jason Baker

Etude in E-flat Minor V
Pius Cheung
€16,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=139#

Another fine marimba composition in Pius Cheung's series of etudes, "Etude in E-flat Minor" is well crafted, technically challenging (yet idiomatic), and musically satisfying for the performer and audience alike. He states in the program notes that his "Etude in E Major" and this etude were composed together as a set. This etude is an "extremely tonal fugue" based on the theme of his "Etude in E Major."

Cheung explains he did not include markings (stickings or musical), as there are so many ways to interpret the piece and he did not want to limit the performer's imagination. This piece is challenging, but attainable by advanced undergraduate and graduate students. It is appropriate for recital or jury programming, as well as professional performances. The technical challenges are one aspect of consideration, but the musical interpretation choices require a mature player who understands how to communicate and perform contrapuntal material. The musical and compositional quality of this work is excellent.

—Jeff Moore

Fugue on a Chromatic Subject V
Bjorn Berkhout
€18,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=110

Composed for marimbist Matthew Coley, "Fugue on a Chromatic Subject" requires a marimbist who is fastidiously technical in performance interpretation of the Baroque style of composition. Although titled "Fugue," a purist might re-title this "Invention" because there are only two voices (two-voice fugues are existent but rare). On the other hand, all the traits of a fugue (subject/answer/countersubjects/episodes) are apparent in this 57-measure piece. An extended pedal-point on the tonic (C) completes and ends this difficult composition, which demands careful study and technical control. This composition is appropriate for early graduate-level study on marimba. It is equally demanding mentally and musically.

—Jim Lambert

Intermezzo IV+
Christopher Swist
€15,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: Four-mallet vibraphone
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/user_files/pdf/Intermezzo%20%28extract%29.pdf
www.editionsvitzer.com/user_files/sound_files/intermezzo%20%28extract%29.mp3

Standing in contrast to many groove-oriented or atonal mallet solos, this aptly titled work will serve as a nice breather for audience members. Throughout the five-minute piece, Christopher Swist creates a musical atmosphere reminiscent of piano works by Satie or Debussy as notes are carefully chosen to exploit the sonic characteristics of the instrument. Additionally, appropriate pedaling serves to highlight the composer's clever usage of melodic sequencing and intriguing chord patterns.

Labeled at no faster than quarter = 86, the music alternates between sections of *rubato* and *a tempo* without feeling disjunct. Melodic gestures seamlessly shift between major chords, minor chords, and seventh chords with ease and intelligence. In the hands of a vibraphonist with a mature (or developing) sense of musicality and pacing, this solo will serve as a welcome addition to any master class, recital, or concert.

—Joshua D. Smith

Magic Mirror V
Christopher Swist
€18,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=107

This six-minute, unaccompanied fantasia for four-mallet marimba opens with steady arpeggiated figures on B-flat, which outline modern sounding yet unconventional harmonies. This loosely tonal composition then transitions (after 18 measures) to a slower and a softer sounding chorale on the lower end of the marimba—which articulates quartal/quintal harmonies that give way again (after 13 measures) to the arpeggios of the opening section.

Christopher Swist is fond of this type of compositional style (his earlier "Streamline," for example). Through his use of sixteenth-note triplets, Swist transitions from 4/4 to 6/8, thus establishing a compound-meter groove also characterized by repeatedly descending arpeggios before returning to the compositional reference of his opening 4/4 passage. "Magic Mirror" ends very quietly on an E-flat major triad marked *pppp*.

Advanced four-mallet technique and mature musicianship are a prerequisite for an effectual performance of this challenging solo. This selection is appropriate for an audition or a junior percussion recital.

—Jim Lambert

Noriyoune III
Lin Chin Cheng
$15.39, hardcopy; $13.12, digital download
Éditions François Dhalmann
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba

This is a pleasant work composed in 2011 for two marimbists who are friends of the composer. The title of this work appears to be a conflation of the friends' forenames: Noriko and Mi-Youne. The work is grounded firmly in A-major and has a duration of 5:22 minutes, although 2:29 of the total is generated by a gratuitously verbatim repetition of a major portion of the work.

The composer utilizes utmost economy in motivic material yet avoids redundancy through continuous and subtle variation. Also, frequent meter changes, from 5/8 to 17/8, are integral in the work's development. The meter changes also function effectively in varying the work's nearly constant eighth-note rhythmic flow that is only elaborated occasionally by brief additions of sixteenth and sixteenth-note triplets.

The work is highly idiomatic for the marimba, no doubt because the composer is a marimbist, and although this inevitably results in the appearance of clichéd gestures, the work transcends these familiarities to create a fresh and enjoyable experience for the performer.

—Ron Coulter

Prelude for Marimba V
Christopher Swist
€19,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=41

A 5.0-octave marimba offers a menacing low range, which this piece capitalizes on throughout its five-minute duration. Composed in an idiomatic fashion for four mallets, "Prelude for Marimba" offers the listener and performer passages of intensity and aggression that are juxtaposed with moments of freedom and flexibility.

Constructed in an ABA form, the piece begins with a variety of driving rhythmic patterns, with melodic fragments derived from a tone row. The combination of single independent and double vertical strokes create lines that alternate between being nimble and heavy. The middle section is marked by a slower tempo, more spacious rhythms, tremolo passages, and indications of greater interpretive freedom. Here, a new tone row is introduced, creating fresh material while maintaining the "angular" tonalities of the first section. The final section employs replication of passages from the opening of the piece, while also introducing new rhythmic variations that serve to drive the work to its energetic conclusion.

Although the performer must possess an advanced level of physical technique to execute this piece, all stickings (while not notated in the score) would be fairly obvious, due to the idiomatic, "marimba friendly" nature of the scoring. This piece

would serve as a fine opening selection on a recital, or for those looking to christen the low end of their new five-octave instrument.

—Jason Baker

Souvenir from Chisinau **IV**
Daniel Galay
€**18,00**
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=103

Composed in Klezmer style, this four-movement work is full of dance-like melodies that are suitable for any audience. Each movement flows into the next, via short cadenzas, which provides the listener with 12 minutes of continuous celebratory charm.

On paper, the music looks as if it should be scored for cello and violin; the left hand is usually the accompaniment, while the right hand provides the melodic lines. Primarily, single independent (inside and outside), double vertical, and single alternating strokes are used. Although the techniques are not extremely advanced, tremendous sensitivity and musicality are needed. Much of the material is repeated, and I recommend omitting several, if not all repeats, reducing the work to nine minutes.

As music seemingly becomes more difficult by the minute, it is a breath of fresh air to see this new work that utilizes intermediate technique and musical content that can be appreciated by all.

—T. Adam Blackstock

Stella Polaris **III**
Daniel Berg
$22.00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: four-mallet vibraphone
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/user_files/pdf/stella%20%28web%29.pdf
www.editionsvitzer.com/user_files/sound_files/stella%20%28web%29.mp3

This collection of five short solos is perfect for introducing playing styles and character of upper level vibraphone literature to students that might not be ready to tackle the length and overall difficulty level typically associated with such works. Each solo, which ranges from one to three minutes, focuses on one element of vibraphone performance such as pedaling, dampening, interlocking rhythms, etc. Akin to marimba books of the same vein, such as Quartier's *Image* collection, the music is written in a style that serves as a springboard to popular classical vibraphone literature.

Amongst the solos, melodic and harmonic variety is found in the form of steady eighth-note lines, interlocking groovy sixteenth-note passages, and one solo completely void of time and tempo constraints. Berg offers limited explanation on performing these works; however, the simplicity of the music makes performance success achievable. Students and teachers alike will appreciate the depth and accessibility of the music from this accomplished composer.

—Joshua D. Smith

Superfluous 2 **VI**
Matthew Coley
€**18,00**
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=101#

Obviously aware of the extreme demands of this composition, Matthew Coley poses the following question: "Is it really necessary to write something of such complicated technical demand for a solo percussion instrument and player?" In order to expand the repertoire and vocabulary for the instrument, there is always a need to produce new works for all ability levels. It is not as if Coley did not warn the performer of the difficulty in the title.

Do not be fooled by the duration of this short, modern fugue. Approximately two minutes and 30 seconds, there are plenty of elements to challenge advanced performers. With the presence of a sixteenth-note pulse almost always apparent, all four-mallet stroke types are required. Using intervals that exceed an octave, shifts to a second are made within the duration of one sixteenth note. A rapid, controlled alternating stroke technique is needed in the left hand to execute a descending thirty-second note passage that incorporates chromatic neighbor tones. Independence is a necessity as a large wingspan frequently separates the hands during this work.

A note to experienced marimbists: Leave your ego at the door. Extreme independence and technical facility are a must in order to attempt this work. A mature musician will ensure that the density and demands do not interfere with compositional ideas.

—Darin Olson

Tales for Vibraphone, Vol. 1 **V**
Arr. Max Seide Leth
€**27,00**
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: vibraphone
Web: sample page and audio clip
http://editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=115

Max Leth, who is perhaps best known for his arrangements for the Safri Duo, has created a challenging collection of lush arrangements for solo vibraphone containing "Over the Rainbow" by Harold Arlen, "Sophisticated Lady" by Duke Ellington, "Tea for Two" by Vincent Youmans, and "Kristallen den fina," a Swedish folk song. The collection is a visually attractive, high-quality publication.

The four short (3- to 4-minute) pieces in this collection are all similarly arranged in what can be described as jazz ballad or nocturne style. Each work contains a wide range of rhythmic material and ample use of grace notes; duration is controlled through meticulous notation of dampening. Each of the arrangements modulates through numerous keys and is harmonically complex. The harmonic surprises combined with varied rhythmic material, rubato, and tempo changes give the works an improvisational facade bordering on parody. Texturally, all of the works are dense, requiring four mallets, with few linear single-line passages.

Challenging, quality arrangements such as these are inevitably controversial; some will praise their jazziness while others will condemn their schmaltz. I appreciate the intended effect of these works but encourage those wishing to perform in the jazz style to study the idiom instead of imitating it through well-intentioned etudes. Those who like fish should learn to catch them, not settle for a can of tuna.

—Ron Coulter

Time-Clouds **V**
Jorge Vidales
$18.00
HoneyRock
Instrumentation: vibraphone

This seven-minute solo is comprised of depth, thought, and a compositional structure worthy of the third-place award it received in the 2011 PAS Composition Contest. This is an intricate work that utilizes bowed notes, playing with rattan shafts, sweeping across groups of keys, and extensive use of the motor and pedaling.

The mood of the work is established from the onset with single-note repetitions that crescendo from *ppp* to *p* and back, labeled with the performance direction of "slow, contemplative, like a rising mist of sound." This musical idea returns sporadically throughout, serving as melodic glue that unifies the piece as it moves through "static, resonant moments" and "more dynamic and articulate events." For these more articulate events, Vidales also offers faster material in 7/8 and 5/8, labeled "brisk and lively," which combines eighth-note dead strokes juxtaposed with thirty-second-note flourishes.

From beginning to end, harmonic material is well thought-out, as are the passages that require extended performance techniques. With its multiple moods, variety of musical sections, and performance techniques, the end result is a vibraphone solo where all roads lead to a unified piece that will challenge even a seasoned performer.

—Joshua D. Smith

Trois Tableaux **V**
Tobias Broström
€**30,00**
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=92

Looking to add ten minutes of intensity to your next solo concert? In this three-movement work, Tobias Broström provides advanced marimbists with another opportunity to perform music that is modeled after the early compositional style of Stravinsky.

The three "pictures" that make up this composition are loosely based upon thematic material from "The Firebird," "Petrushka," and "The Rite of Spring." Each movement is named for the corresponding year of each ballet, in chronological order (1910, 1911, and 1913). The opening of the first movement is similar to that of the corresponding ballet and deals with harmonic content from the "Petrushka chord." The second movement may bring thoughts of the opening flute passages in "Petrushka." The last movement is highly rhythmic, based around a repeated theme and has the character of a folk-tune dance.

Single independent (inside and outside), double vertical, double lateral (inside and outside), triple lateral (inside and outside), and single alternating strokes are all used here. The writing is non-idiomatic at times, and requires advanced technique. This is for seasoned marimbists who are looking for a challenging addition to their repertoire.

It is often a gamble for a composer to attempt the compositional style of another—especially one of the most famous in history. Composers should not completely limit themselves to replicating what has already been done, but rather strive to take the ideas and mesh them with their own. As a percussionist/composer, Broström effectively utilizes the marimba as an outlet for this intense musical expression.

—T. Adam Blackstock

Wild Rose **V**
Ivana Bilic
€**16,00**
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba

Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=123

Ivana Bilic is an internationally recognized marimba virtuoso and versatile percussion artist. She composed this piece, inspired by several musical genres including rock 'n' roll, jazz, soundtracks, and world music, for the 2012 Salzburg Marimba Competition. Technically, it contains contrapuntal lines, triple laterals, double verticals, same-hand octaves in the low register, independent rolls, and a brief chorale phrase. Some of the compositional style is reminiscent of Keiko Abe, with Bilic stating "It is an impromptu with a free flow of ideas, using certain patterns, intervals or rhythmical permutation, and familiar musical material as the driving force and inspiration."

The varied technical requirements help make this an excellent work with many teaching and learning opportunities in a package that will please the performer and audience. I found the composition quality to be excellent and very idiomatic. With its eclectic mix of genres and techniques, this work is unique and is highly deserving of consideration for programming at the college level.

—Jeff Moore

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION DUO

Duo Arpeggio **III+**
Anders Åstrand
€16,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: vibraphone and 4.3-octave marimba
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/user_files/pdf/Arpeggio%20%28web%29.pdf
www.editionsvitzer.com/user_files/sound_files/duo%20%28web%29.mp3

If playing mallet instruments is fun, then playing this latest offering from Anders Åstrand is super fun! This seven-minute four-mallet duet is saturated with returning permutation patterns, outlined 7th chords, and a character and feel that is signature Åstrand.

Comprised of two sections, this work begins with bowed vibraphone notes over chordal outlines from the marimbist. The second half bumps up the tempo and the groove factor with almost continuous sixteenth notes to the end of the piece that shifts through various 7th chords and harmonies. During musically active sections, the backbone of each part breaks down to arpeggiated 4ths or 5ths, making the music accessible to performers with a wide spectrum of experience levels. In spite of the simplicity of its structure, this is an extremely rewarding work that is sure to win over any audience.

—Joshua D. Smith

Mallet Dance **IV**
Anders Åstrand
€16,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 4.3-octave marimba and vibraphone
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=118

This short and sweet four-minute work is more of a technical exercise for the marimbist. In the A section, the marimba writing consists primarily of single independent strokes in the left hand, while executing inside and outside double lateral strokes in the right hand; double lateral strokes alternate, which works the "pendulum" technique. This provides underlying harmonies while the vibraphone plays seemingly improvisational lines above. (Four-mallet technique is also required in the vibraphone.)

The work is in ABA form, with the brief B section consisting of scalar passages in both parts, which quickly leads to the return of the A section. Easily accessible for advanced high school students, this work provides an enjoyable opportunity to feature a duo at your next percussion ensemble concert, or solo and ensemble festival.

—T. Adam Blackstock

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Aformentioned For Marimba Quartet **II**
Michael Wachs
$24.95
HoneyRock
Instrumentation: four 4.0-octave marimbas

This is a simplistic work in terms of rhythmic and harmonic content, and it is mercifully short (three minutes, 40 seconds). The purchase of this piece includes a score and four parts.

A number of significant problems make this piece difficult to recommend. To begin with, its simplicity is a liability, creating an aesthetically empty work that strikes me as compositionally unsophisticated. The work's orchestration is unusual as all four parts are scored in treble clef, resulting in dense, opaque textures that obscure the intended melody throughout. Part ranges cross regularly, which will make creating a dynamically balanced performance extremely difficult in addition to untangling a consistently delineated melodic line. The use of accidentals is unconventional and creates unnecessary difficulty in reading the notation. For example, the work frequently notates ascending intervals using flats and consecutive enharmonic equivalents (one such occurrence is notated as A-natural and B-double flat). These pitch-notation issues are wholly unnecessary and out of place in such a harmonically simple work in F major.

Part 2 contains two measures that require five-mallet technique; this is curiously out of place and presumably an error. Parts 3 and 4 require four-mallet technique for the nine-measure introduction and nine-measure recapitulation. The remainder of the work requires two-mallet technique.

—Ron Coulter

Bridging the World **V**
Tobias Broström
€52,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave marimba, 4.3-octave marimba, 3.0-octave vibraphone, crotales (1 octave), 3 tuned gongs, 5 woodblocks, suspended cymbal
Web: score/part samples and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=60#

Based on J.S. Bach's "Chaconne in D minor" and composed on commission for the Rotary International's Centennial Celebration, Tobias Broström has beautifully set Bach's theme in a contemporary context and created an outstanding new trio for college or professional percussionists. Each performer is responsible for one keyboard instrument, one tuned gong, and a few accessories in this musically sophisticated, six-minute work.

Each player holds four mallets throughout the piece, and while there are no specific advanced techniques within the keyboard writing, the challenge of simultaneously playing vibraphone and crotales, or multiple woodblocks and marimba, will provide an extra level of interest for the audience and some extra choreography work on the part of the performers. The piece opens softly and slowly, transitions into a sparse 7/8 passage that gradually builds in activity and texture, and eventually relaxes into the final 3/4, which contains the most overt presentation of Bach's original theme.

Throughout the work, the orchestration of the vibes and crotales beautifully shimmers over the resonant warmth and forward motion generated in the marimba and woodblock voices. The sparse use of tuned gongs and suspended cymbal adds a subtle, exotic flavor, and Broström effectively utilizes rolls, dead-strokes, and a wide range of dynamics and textures. A unique combination of the historical and the contemporary, this trio would be a welcome addition to literature for college recitals or professional chamber programs.

—Josh Gottry

Classic Mallet Trios **III**
J.S. Bach, G.F. Handel, G. Bizet, A. Scarlatti
Arr. Brian Slawson
$17.99
Alfred
Instrumentation: marimba, vibraphone
Web: sample pages and audio clips
www.alfred.com/Products/Classic-Mallet-Trios--00-37479.aspx

Creating quality arrangements of literature that predates our contemporary keyboard percussion instruments opens the door for percussionists to perform significant historical works. These arrangements of Handel's "Adagio," Bizet's "Habanera," Scarlatti's "Folia," and Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" are consistent with the original works, well-orchestrated for one vibraphone and two marimba voices (both marimbists can share an instrument), and ideal for intermediate high-school musicians.

Both the Handel and Bizet are slightly over one-minute in length and require two mallets for each player. Neither is particularly striking, and "Habanera" sounds a bit thin within a trio context, but the voicing is clear and consistent and no single part is more or less difficult than another. The "Folia" arrangement is approximately two-minutes long and is particularly musically effective. The variations in each phrase are well-paced, the texture is thickened slightly with the addition of a three-mallet part in the vibraphone, and the final phrase is repeated, the second time more slowly, which makes the work sound slightly more complete than the first two selections.

The arrangement of "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" is longer (three minutes), requires two mallets in all parts, and is the only piece in the collection to include rolls. Anyone familiar with Slawson's mallet sextet arrangement of this piece will see striking similarities. In fact, the vibraphone and top marimba part could be used as easier alternate parts to those in the sextet, and the bass marimba part is adapted to be playable on a low-A marimba (instead of 5.0-octave). This trio version is not quite as nice as the larger ensemble arrangement, but is easier and more effective while staying true to Bach's original.

This collection of tasteful arrangements would be good for high school solo and ensemble festivals, concert prelude or lobby music, or even useful for more advanced percussionists looking for accessible gigging or background music.

—Josh Gottry

The 2nd Flight of the Bumblebee **V**
Tobias Broström
€27,00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 5.0-octave and 4.6-octave marimbas

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Web: sample page and audio clip www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=42#

Originally conceived for two pianos, Tobias Broström later adapted this work for marimba duet. Requiring four-mallet technique throughout, one 5.0-octave and one 4.6-octave (low-E) marimba are needed for performance.

After presenting the recognizable theme from Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumblebee" in homophonic texture, the development section really stirs up the hive. In what the composer calls an "intense battle," melodic ideas are passed between players at a rapid rate, overlapped, and imitated. Maintaining a connection to the original composition, chromatic fragments of the melody are consistently present.

A suitable and challenging work for a senior or graduate recital, this would also serve as an exciting encore for a professional percussion duo. The energetic sixteenth notes of the melody are used almost exclusively during this three-minute piece. Each marimbist has an equal opportunity to contribute melodic and accompaniment roles. With a familiar theme, this work is sure to leave a "buzzing" impression on any audience.

—Darin Olson

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Tinplay **V**
Per Andreasson
€**60,00**
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: hi-hat, bongos, 13 tin cans, temple blocks, crotales, splash cymbal, China cymbal, pedal bass drum, two concert bass drums, six tom-toms, two woodblocks, four octobans, brake drum, three metal pipes, snare drum, four metal objects, a metal disc.
Web: sample page and audio clip www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=48#

Imagine if your favorite funk drummer had eight arms, three legs, and an array of timbres to explore. Now, picture several short, syncopated, sixteenth-note based motives. However, don't combine these motives all at once. Some sections need density, yet others require space for the polyrhythmic, hocketing ideas to be perceived. After experiencing this composition, I have a vivid image of Per Andreasson using the above scenario to create this funky piece. Approximately seven minutes in duration, this percussion quartet should be strongly considered when programming your next percussion ensemble concert.

Opening with a clock-like pulse on tom-tom rims, several motivic fragments foreshadowing future material are presented. Continuing to use these thematic ideas throughout, Andreasson does an exceptional job of creating tension. Juxtaposing a handful of short thematic ideas, the composer is never satisfied with direct repetition. He provides variation to familiar motives in several ways: dynamic change, augmentation, diminution, and scoring. This idea holds true for the metric structure. A large majority of the piece is in 4/4 and 3/4. However, Andreasson occasionally inserts 12/16, 2/4, 6/16, and 9/16 measures. While these instances create a slight sense of instability, they are nothing compared to the last dramatic moment of the piece. Moving through 10/16, 8/16, 7/16, 5/16, 4/16, 5/16, and 5/8, several single-measure motives are repeated. Unstable at first, they eventually transition back to four measures of recognizable material to close.

Using an extensive instrumentation, the composer provides an apology for the time and energy needed for assembling the multiple percussion setups. He does, however, provide a clear notation legend, suggested setup picture, and specific performance instructions for the individual parts. Do not allow the instrumentation and logistical issues deter you from considering this piece. It is energetic, exciting and will likely bring a crowd to its feet.

—Darin Olson

STEEL PAN ENSEMBLE

ABBA Medley **V**
arr. Jeff Moore
$19.99
Alfred
Instrumentation: steel pans, drumset
Web: sample page and mp3 www.alfred.com/Products/ABBA-Medley--00-37484.aspx

Jeff Moore has selected five of the Swedish supergroup ABBA's most well-known tunes for this medley arrangement, including the hits "Dancing Queen" and "Waterloo." The arrangement earns its grade 5 rating due to length, and also because the melody parts (representing the vocal lines of the original tunes) are somewhat difficult. Nonetheless, a good high school steel band could certainly perform this arrangement successfully, given adequate rehearsal time. The drumset part is highly detailed, providing specific, clearly notated ideas for managing the transitions between the various tunes in the medley.

The drawback of this arrangement is its orchestration. The overall sound is often thin for two reasons. First, the melodic line is placed solely in the lead pan; only in a few instances throughout the chart is another instrument playing the melody. The thinness of the melodic line is exacerbated when the tessitura of the melody reaches the upper portion of the lead pan's range. Secondly, the other instruments rarely play double-stops, a typical orchestration device for instruments such as double second or cello/guitar pan that normally serve as harmonic support instruments. In essence, ABBA's tunes are there, but the presentation lacks a certain verve.

—Chris Tanner

Bahia Street Beat **II**
Julie Hill
$17.99
Alfred
Instrumentation: steel pans, high surdo (or high tom), low surdo (or low tom), drumset
Web: sample page and mp3 www.alfred.com/Products/Bahia-Street-Beat--00-34461.aspx

The inclusion of surdo parts in this original composition is for the purpose of capturing the flavor of the Brazilian samba-reggae groove. Julie Hill explains in the score that floor toms, concert toms, or other low-pitched drums may substitute for the surdos; that's good advice, as many bands that might program this piece are likely to not own such specialized instruments.

The piece is graded level 2 (medium easy) by the publisher, and the parts accurately reflect that rating. The drumming parts are quite simple, setting-up and for the most part maintaining a two-measure groove indicative of the samba-reggae style, and the pan parts are very easy and repetitive. The only difficulty may arise in the fact that the full pan ensemble has a recurring two-bar passage of eighth-note runs (at a tempo of quarter note = 160). "Bahia Street Beat" is a very easy piece that should come together quickly even for a beginning ensemble.

One curiosity worth mentioning is the fact that Hill notates all of the pan parts in treble clef. This is odd, as typically cello/guitar and bass pan instruments read bass clef due to their low registers. In the performance notes at the front of the score, Hill states that writing these low voice parts in treble clef was "a conscious choice based on my experience in teaching beginning steel drummers," but the argument is not persuasive. Directors with a library of charts employing standard notational practices for typical steel pan instruments may find this piece unsuitable due to this peculiar decision.

—Chris Tanner

Spaghetti Tornado **III**
Kirk J. Gay
$17.99
Alfred
Instrumentation: steel pans, drumset, optional bass guitar
Web: sample page and mp3 www.alfred.com/Products/Spaghetti-Tornado--00-37487.aspx

Indicative of the piece's title, "Spaghetti Tornado," a new offering in Alfred's Steel Drum Ensemble series, begins with a back-and-forth chromatic passage in the upper voices. A simple AB tune follows, utilizing I–IV–V harmony. The melody is then passed to the double second and guitar pans, while the lead and double tenor pans take the strumming duties. The orchestration here is rather unimaginative, with the players literally swapping parts verbatim, albeit adjusted for register. New material follows that introduces an arpeggiated melodic style and a new chord (G major); in this section, the drumset part moves to a double-time feel. The piece closes with a strong statement of tonic that revisits the chromatic scale idea from the introduction.

The publisher gave this composition a grade 3 (medium), yet it would clearly prove quite easy in terms of execution. The key is F major (very common for many entry-level steel band pieces), the structure is short and repetitive, and the melodic rhythms are for the most part non-syncopated. For these reasons, the piece would be more appropriately

regarded as level 1 or 2 in difficulty, suitable for junior high or perhaps even elementary school steel bands.

—*Chris Tanner*

Yellow Bird **III**
Bergman/Luboff
arr. Jeff Moore
$17.99
Alfred
Instrumentation: steel pans, drumset
Web: sample page and mp3
www.alfred.com/Products/Yellow-bird--00-37490.aspx

Opening with a two-measure unaccompanied drumset rhythm in 4/4, which sets the mood of this traditional steel pan style, Jeff Moore's accessible arrangement of "Yellow Bird" tastefully presents this traditional island tune with close harmonies between the lead pans and tenors in which the familiar chorus is stated in thirds. This 48-measure arrangement has a brief nine-measure connecting bridge and then restates the opening 16 measures in the same tonality of F major before ending with the traditional "cha-cha-cha."

This arrangement is appropriate for a younger/less experienced set of steel drum players who are just becoming acquainted with the sounds of the pan ensemble. The more difficult pan parts are definitely the lead and tenor parts. The remaining pan parts might be given a slightly easier difficulty rating (II+). Well-scored, softer contrasting dynamic markings provide musical balance for the lead pan's melody to project. A solid drumset player as well as a skilled bass player will make this popular steel drum tune a crowd-pleaser.

—*Jim Lambert*

SNARE DRUM METHOD

The Couch Potato Drum Workout **I–III**
Pete Sweeney
$9.99
Alfred
Web: sample page
www.alfred.com/samplepages/00-38806.pdf

The material in this book is as thin as the premise contained in the title. Stating that you will need implements, a metronome, and a music stand to use this book, the author goes on to recommend other surfaces like your leg, a cushion, a pillow, or the couch itself, although he warns that the angle may not be ideal for prolonged practice. This is typical of the advice and instruction in this book, including a section on eating with one hand while practicing with the other.

A complete drumset notation key is included on page 10, but there is not one exercise included that utilizes drumset

notation. It is all snare exercises with a few pages at the end that integrate the bass drum foot with the hands in linear-type patterns. All the material in this book (minus the suggestions for couch playing, food eating, and watching TV) can be found in other, much better books (*Rudimental Logic* by Bill Bachman and *The Next Level* by Jeff Queen, to name two). The topics, Single and Double Strokes, Mixed Stickings, Paradiddles, Triplets, Accents, Gridding, and Open Rolls are covered in books with more detailed instruction and stronger sequential exercises.

—*Jeff Moore*

Tricky Biscuits **III–VI**
Bent Lylloff
€28,00
Edition Svitzer
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=37

Most snare drum method books tend to use short phrases to teach technique while full-length etudes are employed to address musicality. "Tricky Biscuits," however, presents the opposite: 172 short (two-line) phrases intended to isolate aspects of musicality in an "exercise" format. This book, published posthumously in 2007, draws inspiration from the technical exercises of longtime New York Philharmonic percussionist Buster Bailey, with whom the author was associated.

As with any good primer on musicality and interpretation, many details are left open to the discretion of the performer. Each two-line phrase includes the obligatory rhythms, dynamics, and tempo markings, but intentionally omits indications of sticking or roll/embellishment interpretation. The majority of the exercises include frequently shifting meters, rolls, and grace notes, necessitating that the student have a strong understanding of technique and notation before attempting this material. While exercises of varying difficulty appear throughout the book, there does not seem to be any "progressive" ordering to the material.

In contrast to other standard etude books, a major advantage to this collection is that the student can focus on the sound and execution of shorter phrases, instead of trying to learn an entire work. Although the material in this book would not suffice for an audition or jury performance, it would serve as an excellent primer for skills needed in order to execute more advanced works.

—*Jason Baker*

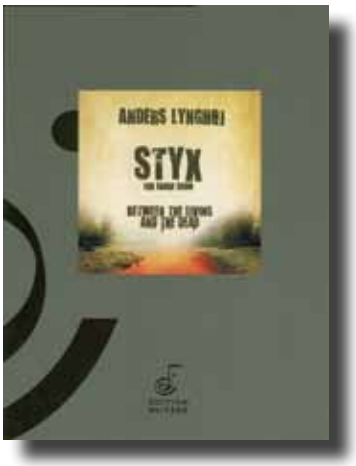
SNARE DRUM SOLO

Styx **IV**
Anders Lynghoj
€15,00
Edition Svitzer
Web: sample page and audio clip
www.editionsvitzer.com/archive_valgt.php?id_vaerk=38

Inspired by the river in Greek mythology, this concert-length work (approximately six minutes) for solo snare drum presents a journey through a variety of tempi, styles, and timbres for the instrument. While the composer does not indicate whether any of the musical material is programmatic in nature, a lengthy explanation of the river Styx and its role in Greek mythology is given in the front matter of the piece. Performers can draw their own conclusions as to how this information should inform the performance of the work.

After a brief, spacious introduction, "Styx" commences with a graceful section in 3/8 (somewhat reminiscent of the first solo from Delelcuse's *Douze Etudes*). This is followed by a brief multi-meter passage in a suddenly quicker tempo, leading into the most aggressive portion of the piece characterized by driving sixteenth notes and accents at 172 bpm. After this, a slower section commences with rudimental roll passages, indicating a strong "Three Camps" influence.

The next two sections are the most interesting. The first is a cadenza, which



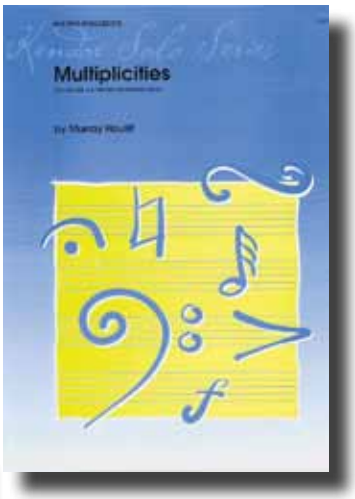
gives room for improvisation, while the second uses foot stomping, playing on the rim, and playing on the drum (without snares). Clearly, the performer must be aware of the concert hall in which the solo is to be performed in order to make preparations to produce the best "bass" sound with his or her foot. From here, the piece concludes with several brief passages, each with its own tempo and metric orientation.

While the form and construction of "Styx" may seem rather schizophrenic, perhaps this is the composer's attempt to portray the river that is "between the living and the dead." The abruptness of each section's ending could be interpreted as the feeling one has regarding death while crossing the river into Hades.

—*Jason Baker*

MULTIPLE PERCUSSION

Multiplicities **III–V**
Murray Houllif
$10.95
Kendor
Instrumentation: various percussion including snare drum, tenor drum, glockenspiel, tom-toms, bongos, tin cans and bottles.
Web: sample score page
www.kendormusic.com/reference_parts/1/13614_part.pdf



While multiple-percussion playing is required of performers in a variety of solo and ensemble settings, there is comparatively little pedagogical material dedicated to it. This collection contains ten short solos that introduce intermediate percussion students to multiple-percussion performance. In addition to the brevity of each work (each is two pages long), teachers will find these pieces beneficial as they incorporate a variety of musical styles and use a small amount of instruments common to any percussion program.

Several highlights from the collection include "It's Rudimental," a rudimental-style piece using a snare drum and tenor drum; "Bell Canto," a work that incorporates counterpoint between glockenspiel and tom-toms/bongos; and "Junk Funk," a rock 'n' roll inspired piece using four graduated tin cans and four graduated glass bottles.

While stickings are indicated in passages of a few solos, teachers will have to guide students in making appropriate choices with regard to instrument logistics. Furthermore, while the foreword of the collection mentions that setup suggestions are given with each solo, no such indications appear aside from a notation key at the beginning of each work. However, this should not diminish one's interest in these pieces, as the trial-and-error aspect of coming up with an appropriate setup is perhaps more beneficial to the student than following a prescribed diagram.

—Jason Baker

Yoshihisa (in memorium) **V+**
Bruno Giner
$29.85
Éditions François Dhalmann
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba, pedal bass drum, hi-hat

This composition is a memorial to Japanese composer Yoshihisa Taïra (1937–2005), who may be known to percussionists for his composition "Convergence I." "Yoshihisa" is a sizable work, the duration of which is listed on the publisher's website as 10–15 minutes. The score consists of 15 pages of traditionally notated music and one page of performance notes, most of which is in French.

The work is divided into six sections that often elide seamlessly, only occasionally demarked by changes in tempo or motivic material. The first five sections do not contain a time signature or barlines; these are only introduced in the concluding section, "Coda (rituel)," composed in 9/4. Rhythmically, the work is diverse and makes use of standard rhythmic fare as well as quintuplets, septuplets, occasional flurries of notes "senza tempo," and a generous use of grace notes (one- and two-note groupings) throughout.

In terms of pitch treatment, the work can be characterized as highly dissonant and disjunct. Within the work's freely chromatic context, intervallic and pitch repetition are used effectively to create cohesion in the dissonant vertical harmonies that are often tightly compacted but also widely separated across the instruments' range. Horizontal lines share this contrast, often either centering on repetition of a single pitch or bursting in disjunct contrary motion over a wide range of the keyboard.

Technical difficulties also lie in the requisite extended techniques, including: dead strokes, playing on nodes, playing with handles, playing with four mallets with two mallets reversed, and whistling. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of the work will be executing the pedal bass drum simultaneously with the marimba, as the bass drum will be in a fixed position yet the marimba part covers a wide tessitura. If you are not a whistler, this piece may by removed from your repertoire before you even start. The whistling is used significantly but only requires two pitches. However, these pitches occur unaided within a highly chromatic pitch context.

This composition is highly mimetic of the Japanese style of marimba composition. It uses diverse (often rhythmically disjunct and harmonically dissonant) materials yet creates a unifying logic through repetition and subtle variation. Contrast is also used to the extreme in terms of pitch range, dynamics, and character—at times serene and at times brutal. "Yoshihisa" is a difficult work for a mature interpreter seeking technical challenges as well as aesthetic growth.

—Ron Coulter

TIMPANI

Concertante Per I Bambini Del Mondo **V–VI**
Luigi Morleo
€30,00
Morleo Editore

Exploring tone colors on timpani has become common practice since Elliott Carter's *Eight Pieces for Timpani*. This piece for four timpani explores tonal changes throughout the work. The notations include playing in the normal head area (regular notation), near the rim (diamond-shaped notes marked "bordo"), and center of the head ("x" notes marked "centro"). These contrasts in color appear throughout this minimilistic work.

The piece is written for timpani and piano, but the piano score was not included with the review materials. The rhythmic patterns occur very rapidly, so I have some reservations about how the changes in tone color will be evident to the listener. There are some very creative ideas in the piece, including placing crotales on the head while playing glissando patterns. There also is one cadenza that is totally improvised.

It would be helpful for performers if there were more performance notes describing the contrasts in notation. However, even without this help, I believe it is worthy of including on an advanced recital.

—George Frock

Variations and Themes for Four Timpani **VI**
Peter Coutsouridis
$17.95
HoneyRock

Can a musical composition be dyslexic? Peter Coutsouridis has created a work for four timpani that presents a set of variations that exposes thematic material instead of the more traditional thematic introduction followed by variations. The work is presented in five brief movements, and the movements relate to each other by motive material, meter, and tempo. Each movement takes approximately a minute and a half to perform, but has numerous challenges. These include quick tuning changes, contrasting rhythmic patterns between the hands, compound rhythms, and one-hand rolls on one drum while performing rhythmic patterns in the other. The three tone colors are created via medium felt mallets, hard felt mallets with wood handles covered with a thin layer of moleskin, and a pair of wire brushes. The drum assignments and mallet changes are clearly notated.

There is one pattern, short/long, (sixteenth/eighth note), which consists of two notes on the same pitch, and like a heartbeat unifies the work by appearing in each movement. There are huge dynamic contrasts in each movement as well.

This composition was the third-place winner in the 2010 PAS Composition Contest. There are so many creative materials in this piece that it should receive many performances on advanced recital programs.

—George Frock

MIXED INSTRUMENTATION

Dionysus **IV**
Caryn Block
$20.00
Self-published
Instrumentation: marimba and cello

Fusing the similar, yet distinctive, resonant qualities of the marimba and cello, this four-minute piece is part of the larger multi-movement work "Odyssey." Using the extreme ranges on both instruments, this work requires a 4.3-octave marimba; an alternate scoring is provided for three measures if the marimbist has access to a 4.5-octave marimba. All of the material can be executed using two mallets; however, four-mallet technique may facilitate the large leaps in range.

With the exception of four measures marked "Intensita," this work maintains a song-like, expressive character. An improvisatory effect is achieved by linking sustained notes, which comprise a majority of the piece, with ornamented figures. While learning the individual parts is not a daunting task, a cohesive duet is needed to execute this ensemble. Balance during motivic imitation and passing lines combined with the blend of instrumental timbre will challenge many collegiate percussionists. Additionally, strong communication skills will contribute to success as the composer allows for rhythmic freedom during moments of ornamentation.

—Darin Olson

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO

Epik Drums **III–IV**
Ken Scott
$29.99
Alfred
Instrumentation: drumset
Web: sample video
www.alfred.com/Products/EpiK-DrumS-EDU--00-37502.aspx

This two-disc instructional DVD details how to record and mix live drums in a studio. Ken Scott, who engineered for the Beatles, David Bowie, Elton John, Pink Floyd, Jeff Beck, Mahavishnu Orchestra, and many others, demonstrates and discusses the approaches he took to achieve some of the classic drum sounds of the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. Using authentic drum gear, recording boards, and the talents of Terry Bozzio, Billy Cobham, Rod Morgenstein, Bob Siebenberg, and Woody Woodsmansey, Scott walks the viewer through the process of miking, engineering, and mixing drums.

Scott originally recorded a product entitled *Epik Drums*, which contained samples of the original drum sounds he achieved during his career. This package was intended for engineers and artists who wanted to use them to trigger these classic drum sounds on modern recordings. Scott thought it might be useful for viewers to understand the process of *how* to get good live drum

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sounds, and that's why this video was conceived.

Scott narrates and provides his insights into the recording process on the first DVD. The second disc is a DVD-ROM that contains the audio tracks listeners can download, listen to, and ultimately remix so they can learn the mixing process. Two additional re-mixable tracks, tips on dampening, information about how to fix a dented head and use a water gong, and interviews with the drummers are some of the bonuses on the DVD. Drummers who want to know more about the recording process, as well as some young engineers, will find this video useful.

—Terry O'Mahoney

Learn to Read Rhythms...Better!
Pat Petrillo
$29.99
Alfred
Instrumentation: drumset
Web: sample video
www.alfred.com/Products/Pat-Petrillos-Learn-to-Read-Rhythms-Better--98-8527129.aspx

This two-DVD set with printable pdf documents and play-along mp3 files may help you read rhythms better, but in a very limited context. Of the 73 rhythm etudes included, only 11 utilize a time signature other than common time. Despite Petrillo's effort to teach the use of rhythmic "sound pictures," which is a common and effective approach, he has narrowed the scope so significantly that the majority of the "sound picture" rhythms being presented are those that students typically read well anyway, and none are addressed or discussed in the context of compound or asymmetrical meters.

The instruction on the DVD also features a handful of controversial uses of musical terms and notation. Despite Petrillo's assertions, a time signature is not a fraction and syncopation cannot be simply defined as an off-beat quarter note in place of an off-beat eighth note and strong-beat eighth rest. When introducing new note or rest values, things like a half rest on beat two in common time or a measure containing two dotted quarter notes followed by a quarter note on beat four are poor rhythmic notation and should be avoided in instructional etudes. Petrillo also uses a popular jazz font for the counting labels, which is difficult to read clearly at times, and he fails to provide counting suggestions for thirty-second-note or triplet rhythms when they are introduced.

The video's introductory material is generally good. Petrillo's "R's of Reading" are explained well and are pedagogically appropriate, and the rhythm etudes on the video and in the PDF e-book are structured and sequenced fairly well. However, there are many good beginning snare drum methods that cover more material (including rolls, grace notes, dynamics, etc.), still present rhythmic reading elements in a similar sequence, and often give significantly more attention and better pacing to a variety of meters and rhythmic values. Technology cannot truly replace a teacher, and this case is not an exception.—Josh Gottry

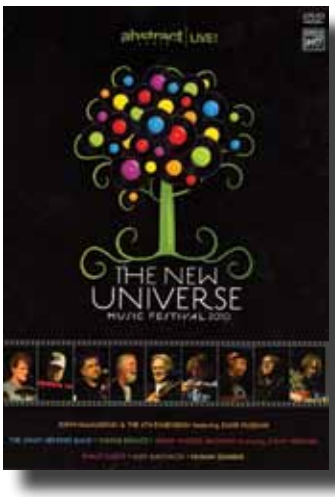
DRUMSET VIDEOS

The New Universe Music Festival 2010
Various Abstract Logix Artists
$17.99
Big Hassle Media
Web: promotional video
www.abstractlogix.com/xcart/product.php?productid=25266

Apparently, fusion is not dead. This two-DVD set is a live concert production culminating with a performance by the Fourth Dimension, the latest ensemble from guitarist John McLaughlin, featuring guest percussionist Zakir Hussain. The DVD also contains interviews with several of the musicians, including legendary jazz/fusion drummer Lenny White and Indian drummer Ranjit Barot.

One highlight is the "all hands on deck" finale with McLaughlin (guitar), Etienne M'Bappe (bass), Gary Husband and Mark Mondesir (drums), and Hussain (tabla). There is also an extended romp with Husband, Mondesir, and Hussain, but perhaps the most memorable moments are the traded solos between McLaughlin and Hussain on a tune called "Mother Tongues." Hussain is as elegant as ever, and McLaughlin is one of the smoothest guitarists on the planet. In addition to displaying some serious virtuosity, their "duel" is remarkable for showcasing a high level of improvisatory communication. To me, that moment encapsulates the aspirations of fusion and the focus of this festival.

As the liner notes suggest, the music "defies genre categorization in favor of unbridled expression." "Fusion" doesn't quite feel like the right label anymore, but nothing else seems to fit. There is a feeling of tribute for McLaughlin's storied career and nostalgia for the glory days (think Tony Williams' Lifetime and McLaughlin's Shakti). Fusion—especially the East-meets-West variety that much of this DVD displays—is renewed with the vigor of new talent, yet retains the depth from the legends. With plugged in, loud, electric sounds, fusion appears to be alive and well.



—John Lane

Acuña-Hoff-Mathisen Trio in Concert
Acuña/Hoff/Mathisen
$24.95
Alfred
Web: video sample
www.alfred.com/Products/Alex-Acu%C3%B1a-Acu%C3%B1a-Hoff-Mathisen-Trio-in-Concert--93-DV10002101.aspx

Sometimes you play with people for the first time and you know it's right. That apparently was the case with drumming icon Alex Acuña, Per Mathisen (acoustic/electric bass), and Jan Gunnar Hoff (piano/keyboards). The two Norwegians and Peruvian native share a musical kinship that is evident on every track of this two-hour in-studio recording. Together, they create inspired contemporary improvised instrumental music that is reminiscent of the music of Weather Report, the Keith Jarrett Trio, and other European jazz artists of the past 20 years on the ECM record label.

Hoff sounds like an offspring of Keith Jarrett and Joe Zawinul, Mathisen's approach melds the best of Jaco Pastorius and Eddie Gomez, and Acuña sounds as amazing as always as he smoothly migrates between drumset, cajon, and percussion during the extended improvisations. Acuña has plenty of space in this format to shine not only as a sensitive ensemble member but also as a soloist.

The music on this video is a recreation of their CD, but there is obviously a strong improvisational element in everything they do. The bonuses include their audio CD, photos, an interview led by Terry Bozzio, a brief spontaneous improvisation by the trio, and reflections by each of the musicians about their experience and the music. If you wonder what a new version of Weather Report *might* sound like, check out this video.

—Terry O'Mahoney

Modern Drummer Festival 2011 **III–V**
Various artists
$29.99
Hudson Music
Web: preview videos
www.hudsonmusic.com/hudson/products/modern-drummer-festival-2011/

Not everyone can make it to Modern Drummer's annual Drum Festival, but this two-disc DVD makes you feel like you were there. The festival is known for its stylistic diversity, and last year's festival features some of the world's best straight-ahead jazz, metal, world music, hip-hop, country, and fusion players.

The five-hour video opens with Gil Sharone (Stolen Babies/Dillinger Escape Plan), who demonstrates and discusses jazz-influenced fusion, reggae, and the "mathcore" style of Dillinger Escape Plan using play-along tracks. He's got some amazing chops and a deep pocket. Next up is Trevor Lawrence, Jr. (Herbie Hancock, Dr. Dre), who opens his segment with a jazz-inspired open drum solo before launching into two funk/fusion tunes ("Spokes," "Gettinjiggy"), a hip-hop medley ("Like a Million Bucks"), and then taking questions. His answers are very clear and informative, and he shares a few "insider secrets" about playing hip-hop. Guest percussionist Taku Hirano gets some of the spotlight in a nice solo that serves as the intro to a "late '70s Miles Davis jazz" sounding tune, "Stratus."

Jazz icon Jeff "Tain" Watts looks like a bobbing and weaving boxer as he jabs and prods his way through a fiery set with his quartet. This segment of the video is spectacular. Starting with the uptempo swing tune "Mobius," he shows why he's been at the forefront of modern jazz for over three decades. He continues with "Of August Moon," a quirky, multi-sectional tune with some great interplay between Watts and pianist Dave Kikoski, a funky vamp tune entitled "Uh-UH!," and "Vodville," a swing tune with some unexpected internal tempo changes and a great solo by Watts. A ballad, "A Wreath for John T. Smith," and odd-meter montuno-based "Seeds of Blakzilla" (the springboard for a blazing drum solo), close the set.

Next up is Brazilian prog metal drummer Aquiles Priester (Hangar), who plays through nine hard-hitting tunes including "Colorblind," "Hastiness," "Some Light to Find My Way," and "The Reason for Your Conviction." Most of the tunes sound like material from the 1970s and '80s (when the genre was first codified), and you see and hear what you would normally expect at a heavy metal concert: a huge drumset, flashy fills, pounding double bass, and screaming vocals—so there is little in terms of new concepts or surprises.

Cuban drummer Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez performs five Afro-Cuban and Cuban-inspired tunes with his New World Order band. The ten-piece ensemble (drums, bass, guitar, keyboards, two horns, and three singers) perform "La Candela," "Beyoglu," "Cuba is Africa," "Tropiezo," and "Outro" (a duet with a flamenco dancer). Hernandez

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sounds fluid yet exciting as he never fails to disappoint the audience with chops, taste, and a deep groove.

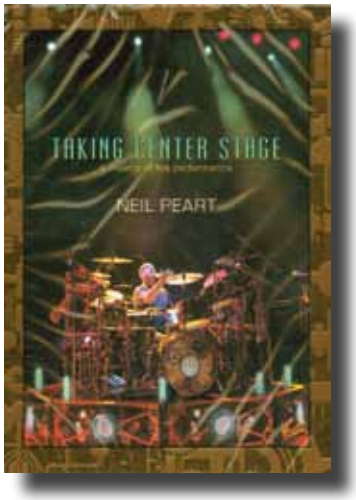
Aside from the five players who were featured on the main stage, there were also two sessions in the morning. Master jazz pedagogue John Riley delivered an hour-long master class in which he talked about inspiration, his lessons with Joe Morello, and how to hear music "from different angles." He also demonstrated some polyrhythmic concepts and patterns that will enhance any drummer's vocabulary. After a blistering five-minute opening track, country drummer Jim Riley (Rascal Flatts) focused on hand technique and rudiments as they apply to the snare drum and drumset and some career advice. Don't let the fact that Jim Riley primarily plays country music lead you to believe he doesn't have much to say; he'd be a great player in any genre and backs that up with his performance of several pre-recorded tracks. Bonuses include a PDF e-book with transcriptions of selected excerpts and other educational material.

This Modern Drummer Festival DVD is one of the best ones I've seen in recent years. There's a great deal of variety, good information presented, and the drummers are featured in musical settings (with bands!) where their talents can really shine. The master classes were a definite plus.

—Terry O'Mahoney

Taking Center Stage: A Lifetime of Live Performance **IV–V**
Neil Peart
$39.95
Hudson Music
Web: preview videos
www.hudsonmusic.com/hudson/products/taking-center-stage/

Part drumset instructional video, part behind-the-scenes documentary, this three-disc DVD set chronicles drummer Neil Peart's process for preparing to perform live on the 2010–11 *Time Machine* world tour with Rush. Peart's



relaxed, friendly narrative (delivered in the panorama of California's Death Valley) walks the viewer through his world of drumming and reinforces the intense level of self-analysis and thought that goes into every aspect of playing.

Peart shares his warm-up tips, the process behind selecting the songs for a live performance, concepts behind the development of a new drum solo, detailed musical analysis and back-story of each tune, ideas on how to develop the endurance required for live performance, the challenges on integrating sequences into live performances, and other musical and non-musical aspects of live performance preparation. Through drum-only rehearsals, Peart demonstrates the important grooves, fills, and intros from numerous classic Rush tunes (e.g., "Tom Sawyer," "YYZ," "Free Will," "Time Stand Still," "Subdivisions," "Limelight," "Far Cry," "The Spirit of the Radio," "Stick It Out") as well as a new tune ("Caravan") in both real time and slow motion. Each demonstration is followed by concert footage of the entire song with camera shots focused entirely on the drums. Bonuses include a pdf e-book containing transcribed drum parts, two live performances from Rush's 2008 *Snakes and Arrows* tour, a photo gallery, and an interview with Peart's drum technician.

Even if you don't like Rush's music, you have to respect the attention to detail that Peart invests in each song and solo he produces. If all drummers thought as much about the details of their performance as Peart does, they'd be much better players.

—Terry O'Mahoney

RECORDINGS

Catch a Corner
Cinque
Alma Records

The name of the group may be unfamiliar, but the players are legends: Joey DeFrancesco (B3 organ), Steve Gadd (drums), Robi Botos (piano), John Johnson (saxophone), and Peter Cardinali (bass). The vision of Cardinali, the head of Alma records, was to bring together an all-star cast for a jazz-funk band. According to the liner notes, but not surprisingly for this kind of effort, the tunes were written in the studio and recorded on the spot. One would never guess that the entire album was put together in two afternoons, but that is a credit to the communication and sync that happens when this caliber of veteran musicians get together.

Gadd, who might be the most consistently tasty drummer of all time, is in top form. His signature sounds and laid-back groove are a perfect marriage with DeFrancesco's organ playing, which is whimsical and deep at the same time. The album closes with Paul Simon's tune "Still Crazy After All These Years." It's probably a bit of a nod to Gadd, of course, because he played on the original recording. I could not imagine a better tune for the end of a great party, and this album is surely a party of the funkiest kind.

—John Lane

Essentially Hermeto
Erik Charlston/JazzBrazil
Sunnyside Records
Web: video performances
www.erikcharlston.com

Carnivale has arrived! With the opening track you'll be instantly transported to Brazil by way of the music of Hermeto Pascoal. This is the debut album of Erik Charlston (vibes and marimba) with JazzBrazil. Rounding out the group are Brazilian percussionists Rogerio Boccato and Café with several of New York's finest jazz musicians (Ted Nash on sax, flute, and clarinet; Mark Soskin on piano; Jay Anderson on bass). Charlston has had a diverse career centering mostly in New York with ties to both the jazz and classical worlds, performing and recording with such jazz luminaries as Wynton Marsalis and Dave Brubeck, but also with the New York Philharmonic and on film soundtracks such as the Coen brothers' *True Grit*.

His classical training melds well with sharp jazz instincts, but the soul of the playing is Brazilian. Charlston's vibe and marimba playing is effortless. Love and respect for the music make the interpretations colorful and interesting. The Brazilian flavor is authentic, with percussionists Boccato and Café bringing a wide range of traditional instruments, grooves, and textures. Among the highlights are the cuica playing on "Viva O Rio De Janeiro" and the exotic virtuosity of Café's berimbau solo on "Essa Foi Demais."

Hermeto's compositions are timeless, with each track representing a range of Brazilian styles. While the music is sophisticated, both rhythmically and harmonically, it is always celebratory and beautiful. Perhaps most of all, it is fun!

—John Lane

Kuniko Plays Reich
Kuniko
Linn Records
Web: audio samples
www.linnrecords.com/recording-kuniko-plays-reich.aspx

An astounding production—Kuniko should be highly commended on this project that took nearly two-and-half years. The culminating recording features arrangements for solo percussion and pre-recorded tape of Steve Reich's monumental compositions "Electric Counterpoint," "Six Marimbas," and "Vermont Counterpoint." Maintaining communication with Reich throughout the process, Kuniko earned his praise on the final production. Reich stated, "Kuniko Kato is a first-rate percussionist who has put a lot of careful thought and hours of rehearsal into making this excellent CD. She has created new and very beautiful arrangements." First rate in all aspects, the liner notes detail the evolution of the works including comments from Reich.

Recorded without loops or quantization, Kuniko performs with clarity and consistency on the various instruments. Her arrangement of "Electric Counterpoint" is scored for steel pans, vibraphone, marimba, and pre-recorded tape. "Six Marimbas Counterpoint," which Reich titled Kuniko's arrangement, features a new solo marimba part with the other five voices performed on pre-recorded tape. Imitating the various articulations achieved on a flute, "Vermont Counterpoint" is arranged for vibraphone and pre-recorded tape. This production is one-of-a-kind and now, thanks to Kuniko, percussionists can perform these great works in a solo setting.

—Darin Olson

Line Upon Line Percussion
Line Upon Line Percussion
Self-published
Web: audio excerpts
www.lineuponlinepercussion.com

This percussion trio was formed in 2009 out of a simple love for performing percussion chamber music. The group is based in Austin, Texas, and its members are Adam Bedell, Cullen Faulk, and Matthew Teodori. All of the music on the CD was composed by Austin composers and represents a variety of approaches to exploring percussion sound possibilities.

The CD opens with "Redshift" by James D. Norman. This rather abstract work is made up of six metal plates, six wood planks (tuned to the same pitches for each player), and one modified crash cymbal. Each musician has the same "instrument" but with different timbres. The result is over 12 minutes of exploration and interaction that manages to keep the listener's interest throughout. The work unfolds logically, and there is a nice balance between unity and variety.

Steven Snowden's "A Man with a Gun Lives Here" follows, based on notes left by hobos in the Great Depression years that served as guides to find food or avoid potential trouble. Using this kind of graffiti as an inspiration for music was used by Harry Partch decades ago, but Snowden's work shows little resemblance to Partch's pieces. The three movements, "Be Prepared to Defend Yourself," "There are Thieves About," and "A Man with a Gun Lives Here," are more abstract and do not include lyrics. Rather, the music seems to be an attempt to create a mood that reflects the title in some way. The piece is completely unpitched, and like "Redshift" is an exploration in timbre and rhythmic complexity.

"Echoes of Veiled Light" is a nice contrast to the first two works. As the title implies, the piece is slow and quiet throughout, and echo effects are created by "close imitation of thematic material." The soft sounds of tam tams and other metal instruments suggest soft beams of light. The use of bowed instruments is particularly effective.

The CD concludes with Ian Dicke's "Missa Materialis," which was inspired by the Cathedral of Junk in Austin. This massive structure constructed of trash and discarded items is reflected in the music, in that many of the instruments are of the "found" variety, including a garbage can, boom box radio, saw, plastic water bottles, and shopping bags. The six-movement work is not a novelty piece, but a serious statement about the environment. Included with the percussion sounds are whistling and chant-like singing.

Line Upon Line is a serious, accomplished, and creative percussion group. The music on this first CD is profound and deserves to be included among the important percussion ensemble recordings of 2011.

—Tom Morgan

Quartz City
David Johnson
Lian Records

Spiritual, genuine, heartfelt, and whimsical are the words that best describe this recording. *Quartz City* is a collection of works composed and performed by marimba/vibraphone soloist and percussionist David Johnson, who is joined by the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet and percussionists Steve Forman, Nick Terry, TJ Troy, and Lynn Vartan. In addition, cellist Roger Lebow, who commissioned "Dark Wing," gives a hauntingly beautiful performance.

Johnson is known for his unique blend of jazz and minimalist styles. His credits include a variety of collaborations: a member of the historic Blackearth Percussion Group, he has also worked with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez, Dave Brubeck, Stuart Copeland, and can be heard on approximately 40 movie scores.

Three large percussion ensemble works—"Quartz City," "Dark Wing," and "Oregon Variations"—feature Johnson as a soloist, while the inner two works, "Los Osos" and "Shape Shifter," are smaller scale vibraphone/marimba duos. "Quartz City"—scored for solo vibraphone with percussion ensemble—won the 1995 PAS composition contest. "Los Osos" is a Friedman/Samuels-esque duo for marimba and vibes, commissioned (and performed here) by Lynn Varton. The work is an excellent vehicle for Johnson's improvisation, but the tune also begins and ends with a wonderfully quirky 36-bar unison melody separated by a tenth.

The CD is a reflection of the varied interests and merging styles that Johnson has refined over the years. This is just one of many projects by an ambitious (and busy) percussionist, who will continue to cultivate a unique voice in contemporary percussion.

—John Lane

CORRECTION

The review of a recording by Alejandro Ruiz Zuluaga that appeared in the November 2011 issue contained several errors. The title was listed as *Maroma*, but the correct title is *La Marimba de los Compositores Colombianos, Vol. 1*. The review stated that two of the compositions were composed by the performer, but should have said that they were composed for the performer. The review also said that Zuluaga overdubbed all the parts in ensemble pieces, but Zuluaga says that other musicians played those parts (although according to the reviewer, they were not identified in the liner notes).

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CLAIR OMAR MUSSER'S CANTERBURY MARIMBA, MODEL 500, SERIAL NO. 6002

Acquired from Leigh Howard Stevens, 2011-08-01

The Canterbury marimbas and vibraphones were the premier instruments designed by Clair Omar Musser for his company, Musser Marimbas, Inc., during the 1950s. The Model 500, with a 4 1/3-octave range, featured a contemporary design with dual, arched, brass resonators finished in a bright, burnished gold. The ivory-finished wood and metal frame had a streamlined shape, was decorated with gold-colored trim, and featured recessed wheels for an elegant appearance.

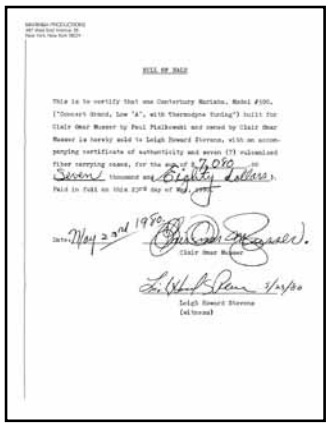
This Canterbury marimba was the personal instrument designed for and owned by PAS Hall of Fame member Clair Omar Musser, who then sold it to Leigh Howard Stevens, also a PAS Hall of Famer. The bars, which range in size from 1 5/8 x 3/4 x 7 1/2 inches (high C) to 15/16 x 2 1/2 x 18 inches (low A), were constructed from Black Klyposeros (Cocabolo) trees personally selected by Musser on a trip to Honduras. This growth of Cocabolo hard wood originated on volcanic slopes that produced a high-density of solid resin in the bars. The bars are shaped and tuned in his patented, parabolic contour design. During the final year Musser owned his company, he instructed his chief tuner, Paul Fialkowski, to construct this instrument, "the finest ever built," for Musser's personal use.

The instrument measures 36 1/2 inches in height, 34 inches in width at the bass end, and 81 inches in length. It also comes with the original set of fibre cases and features a unique Coat of Arms plaque. An additional feature available on this model instrument was Musser's "Thermodyne" tuning system, which allows the resonators to be easily tuned, depending upon temperature and humidity conditions, by rotating a screw mechanism. In addition, this instrument has a built-in "Electronic Marimba Metronome" that adjusts the tempo by rotating a dial.

Electronic Marimba Metronome (arrow up = Largo, arrow down = Presto)

"Thermodyne" tuning system with gauges and adjustment screw

Musser's Coat of Arms plaque



BILL OF SALE

This is to certify that one Canterbury Marimba, Model #500, ("Concert Grand, Low "A", with Thermodyne Tuning") built for Clair Omar Musser by Paul Fialkowski and owned by Clair Omar Musser is hereby sold to Leigh Howard Stevens, with an accompanying certificate of authenticity and seven (7) rubberized fiber carrying cases, for the sum of Seven thousand and Eighty dollars. Paid in full on this 23rd day of May, 1980.

Date: May 2nd 1980 — Clair Omar Musser

Leigh Howard Stevens (witness)

Bill of Sale from Clair Omar Musser to Leigh Howard Stevens

Musser personally contacted Stevens by letter, dated January 1, 1980, and offered to sell him the instrument, which was then purchased by Stevens on May 23, 1980 for $7,080. It was appraised later that year by Harvey Vogel of Lone Star Percussion at a value of $25,000. The list price for this model in the 1950 Musser Catalog was $1,095.

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

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