# PERCUSSIVE NOTES

Vol. 55, No. 2 ▪ May 2017

## Marimba Masters Reunion

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# PERCUSSIVE NOTES



## columns

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**HOURS** Monday–Friday, 9 A.M.–5 P.M. EST



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# The Percussion Season is Blooming

By Dr. Brian Zator, President, Percussive Arts Society

I am a runner. I ran my first half-marathon in 2012 after friends at church encouraged me to join them. I have run four more half-marathons since then and many more 5k races. Like most everything else in my life, I am competitive during these races; I want to achieve a personal best every time I run. However, there are times when I am training that I force myself to slow down, look around my beautiful town, and enjoy the many splendors of the season. As the season changes from winter to spring and the flowers and trees are blooming, I also see that the PAS spring season is in full bloom with intensity and anticipation. Percussion activities are happening across the world, and PAS is there to support and lead the way to building strong drumming communities.

## PAS DAYS OF PERCUSSION

Over the past four months, PAS chapters all across the world hosted a total of 50 Day of Percussion® events, with the primary goal of educating percussionists and exposing them to incredible performers and educators. As I read updates and see pictures of young students attending concerts and clinics, I am encouraged by the outreach PAS chapters have to their local communities. The chapter officers are empowered to make a difference in their towns and schools, which fosters a love of percussion.

Many of these events occurred in the U.S., but I am honored to attend the Taiwan International Percussion Convention (TIPC) in late May, hosted by the Ju Percussion Group Foundation. The Ju Percussion Group are strong supporters of PAS and invited me to attend as the PAS Ambassador. I am honored to attend and I look forward to talking with many artists and audiences about the mission and vision of our organization.

## PAS AND PASIC COMPETITIONS

We are very excited about the PAS 2017 Drumset Competition, our first online competition for drumset players. There is no entry fee, and applicants do not have to be PAS members to submit. The deadlines for this and several PASIC competitions are approaching: the International Percussion Ensemble Competition features some of the best college, high school and middle school groups competing for the chance to perform at PASIC 2017; and the Solo Artist Competition is a great opportunity for college students to display their talents to compete in the finals at PASIC.

Other ensemble competitions include the World Percussion Ensemble category, through a taped submission, and the Concert Chamber Ensemble Competition. Registrations are currently being accepted to compete in the Marching Festival and Drumline Battle, two exciting and prestigious events held at PASIC.

If that isn't enough, PAS will unveil another new online competition for this fall. Keep on the lookout; this one will be a blast!

## PASIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Free money! Get your free money here!

I think I have your attention now. PAS is proud to support students at all levels through our generous scholarship programs. June 15 is the deadline to apply for a scholarship to attend PASIC or receive financial assistance for your education. Additionally, some chapters offer their own scholarship programs, so be sure you are in contact with your chapter officers about their deadlines and protocol.

## WGI

Dayton is the place to be for WGI finals, and

PAS will be right there in the middle of the action. (Check out the cover story in the March 2017 *Percussive Notes*.) The PAS booth will host the Rudiment Training Sessions, similar to what the Education and Marching Committees started at PASIC16. We have two all-stars, Scott Johnson and Jeff Queen, working with the students, furthering our outreach into the marching community.

## CONCERT SEASON

Many schools are wrapping up the concert band

PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

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

season and their end-of-the-year percussion ensemble concerts. While we all spend a great deal of detailed work on our accent-tap strokes during marching band, don't forget about detailed work playing triangle, crash cymbals, and tambourine. Check out the PAS Education Resources and Specialties pages for handouts to remind your students about the proper techniques of these "other" instruments.

## PASIC

We are a little less than seven months away from PASIC17! Now is the time to register and make plans to attend an amazing four days of drums and percussion. Artists, concerts, clinics, and exhibitor announcements are flooding social media, and this convention looks to be another amazing event. We, as a leadership team, are purposeful in making this event memorable for first-time attendees, those that are coming back after a few years off, and the "experienced" people who come back year after year. First and foremost, we are securing outstanding artists, but we will also provide unique *experiences* in the convention center and beyond those walls as well. We want every year to your best year to attend PASIC.

Now that spring has arrived and the summer months are drawing near, know that while the percussion seasons always change, PAS is always around. We are more than just an incredible four-day convention; we are musicians, educators, artists, ambassadors, friends, drummers, percussionists, and, overall, people who are empowered to continuously spread the joy of PAS and enrich the lives of those around us. Keep drumming, run fast, and enjoy the little things in life throughout every season.

Percussively yours,

Brian Zator

# REBOUNDS

## REVIEW CORRECTION

In *Percussive Notes* Vol.55, No.1, March 2017, Julia Gaines incorrectly states that the Marimba 1 part to my marimba duo "Somewhere in Africa There's a Whirlwind" can be performed on a 4.3-octave instrument. That is incorrect. Measures 127–130 in the Marimba 1 part shows multiple notes below the 4.3-octave range, going down to low E-flat. This duo does indeed require two 5-octave marimbas to perform.

—Gordon Stout

# ADVERTISERS INDEX

# PASIC 2017 Scholarships

The Percussive Arts Society is pleased to announce several scholarships assisting students to attend PASIC 2017. Applicant must be a full-time student and an active individual PAS member at the VIP or All Access level, or part of an active Group Membership, at time of application. If selected, membership must be active through PASIC 2017. Scholarship winners are required to write a post-PASIC review/blog.

*State chapter PASIC scholarships are currently available in California, Texas, and Canada. Additional scholarships may be available. Contact your chapter for additional information.*

*PASIC International Scholarship—exclusively available to PAS Subscribers outside the continental United States, Hawaii, and Alaska.*

**Qualifications:**

- Must be a full-time student.
- Must be a member of PAS (VIP, All Access, or part of a Group Membership).

**Provided:**

- PASIC registration
- PASIC souvenir t-shirt
- $500 toward the cost of transportation/lodging

**Service Component:**

- Write a post-PASIC review/blog.

**Deadline:**

- June 15, 2017

**Selections:**

- Winners will be announced no later than August 1, 2017.

**Online Application Materials:**

- Upload a file detailing awards, scholarships, etc., and dates received; goals; major instruments (instruments that you have or are seriously studying); and a personal statement (optional).
- A four to five minute video of you performing a percussion solo, or as a featured ensemble performer
- One supporting letter of recommendation verifying age and full-time student status.
- Recent copy of grade transcripts or latest grade card.

**Apply:**

- Visit bit.ly/PASICScholarships for more information

PASIC 17
PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

***Corporate PASIC Scholarships***

*The following companies have recognized the value of the annual Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC), such that they have established scholarship funds in order to assist individuals to attend PASIC at little or no cost.*

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***Individual PASIC Scholarships***

*The following named scholarships have been established to honor the individuals, past and present, who recognize the value of PAS and PASIC. These funds are awarded every year to assist individuals attend PASIC.*


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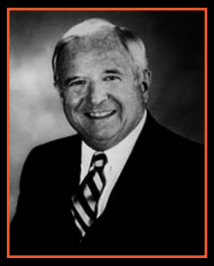
Val and Venus Eddy


Steve Ettleson


Jack H. McKenzie


James A. Sewrey


Thomas Siwe
(2 awarded)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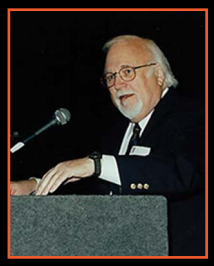
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# Marimba Masters Reunion

## Celebrating Marimba Six Decades Later

By Lauren Vogel Weiss

Marimba Masters members attending the reunion were (back row, L–R) Stan Leonard, Norm Fickett, Ronald Barnett, Vivian Emery; (front row, L–R) John Beck, Peter Tanner, John Galm, Gordon Peters

Imagine being able to recreate a memorable concert from six decades ago. Seven members (of nine in attendance) from the esteemed Marimba Masters ensemble did just that last November in Schaeffer Auditorium at Kutztown University in Kutztown, Pennsylvania, performing some of the same tunes they had played in Kilbourn Hall at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York in 1954.

"It was as if a 'time cloud' descended on us," said John Galm, a member during the ensemble's last academic season (1958–59). "Fifty-plus years vanished, and I was back behind the marimba with my classmates."

## THE MARIMBA MASTERS – THEN

To appreciate the historical significance of the event presented by the Center for Mallet Percussion Research (CMPR) at Kutztown University November 4–6, 2016, one needs some background on the then-innovative chamber music ensemble soon to be known as the Marimba Masters.

Gordon Peters enrolled at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester in 1953. He had spent one year at Northwestern University, under the tutelage of Clair Omar Musser, and three years in the United States Military Academy Band at West Point, including weekly lessons with Saul Goodman and Morris Goldenberg in New York City. While at Eastman, Peters studied percussion with William Street and conducting with Paul White and Herman Genhart. Compared to most 18-year-old incoming freshmen, Gordon was a 22-year-old percussionist with professional experience. In addition to his own marimba, Peters brought twelve arrangements by Musser of popular classical pieces that he had purchased at Franks Drum Shop in Chicago, along with an appreciation that "music is song."

Peters, who had played in two of José Bethancourt's large marimba ensembles at Soldier Field in Chicago, in addition to Musser's marimba ensemble at Northwestern in 1950, wanted to bring the chamber music experience to his fellow percussionists in Rochester. "I chose pieces that you could sing the tune when you left the concert," he explained. "Should this music be ignored in favor of *only* contemporary music? I don't think that's an option. Would you start building a house with a chimney or a roof? No! There *has* to be a foundation. I soon discovered that there were just enough instruments between all of us students to form a marimba ensemble, and everyone seemed interested. We started rehearsing, and arguing about interpretations—a necessary ingredient to chamber music making!"

Stan Leonard, one of the original members, described their rehearsal space on the fifth floor of the main building at Eastman. "There was a low wooden wall halfway up, and the rest of the wall was made of wire, like a cage. It was a bizarre room. I had my own marimba—a 4-octave Deagan I had bought from my teacher in Missouri, Vera McNary Daehlin, who had been a Musser student. John Beck and I shared that marimba in our practice room." The other three 4-octave marimbas were Deagan, Leedy, and Musser models, while the fifth instrument was a 4½-octave Deagan Imperial (C to F) owned by Bill Street.

Beck, another of the seven original members, remembers their camaraderie. "We used to go in that room and read duets all

The 1957–58 Marimba Masters were (back row, L–R) Jane Burnet, Edward DeMatteo (string bass), Vivian Emery; (front row, L–R) Peter Tanner, Mitchell Peters, Ronald Barnett, Gordon Peters

Marimba Masters performing in Kilbourn Hall in 1959: (L–R) Vivian Emery, Ronald Barnett, Joel Thome, Gordon Peters, Peter Tanner, Roger Ruggeri (string bass) and Norman Fickett

# THE MARIMBA MASTERS

## (surviving members in attendance November 2016)

**Gordon Peters**, founder and conductor
Hometown: Cicero, Illinois
Current location: Evanston, Illinois
Attended Eastman: 1953–59
Marimba Masters: 1954–59
Chicago Symphony Orchestra (principal percussionist 1959–2001); professor of percussion at Northwestern University (1963–68); conductor/administrator of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago (1966–87); author of *The Drummer: Man*
PAS President (1964–67); inducted into PAS Hall of Fame 2004

(the following are listed in alphabetical order)
**Ronald Barnett**
Hometown: Hellertown, Pennsylvania
Current location: Capon Bridge, West Virginia
Attended Eastman: 1956–60
Marimba Masters: 1957–59
Kennedy Center Opera and Ballet Orchestra percussionist (1971–2000); professor of percussion at the University of Maryland (36 years); Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra (57 seasons)

**John H. Beck**
Hometown: Lewisburg, Pennsylvania
Current location: Rochester, New York
Attended Eastman: 1951–55
Marimba Masters: 1954–55 (original member)
Professor of percussion at Eastman School of Music (1959–2008), now professor emeritus of percussion; Rochester Philharmonic (principal percussionist 1959–62, timpanist 1962–2002)
PAS President (1987–90); inducted into PAS Hall of Fame 1999

**Vivian Emery Speca**
Hometown: Gilbertsville, Pennsylvania
Current location: Pottstown, Pennsylvania
Attended Eastman: 1955–59
Marimba Masters: 1956–59
Elementary music teacher in Boyertown (Pennsylvania) School District (1987–2001)

**Norman Fickett**
Hometown: Portland, Maine
Current location: Pleasant Ridge, Michigan
Attended Eastman: 1957–64
Marimba Masters: 1958–59
Detroit Symphony Orchestra (assistant principal percussion 1965-2002); taught at Oakland University and Schoolcraft College

**John Galm**
Hometown: Indianapolis, Indiana
Current location: Nelson, British Columbia, Canada
Attended Eastman: 1956–61
Marimba Masters: 1958–59
Professor of percussion and ethnomusicology at the University of Colorado (1966–2000)

**Stanley Leonard**
Hometown: Independence, Missouri
Current location: Naples, Florida
Attended Eastman: 1951–54
Marimba Masters: 1954 (original member)
Principal timpanist, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (1956–94); composer; taught at Carnegie Mellon and Duquesne Universities
Inducted into PAS Hall of Fame 2010

**Peter Tanner**
Hometown: Irondequoit, New York
Current location: Melbourne Beach, Florida
Attended Eastman: 1954–59
Marimba Masters: 1955–59
Professor of percussion at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst (1969–99); composer

**Joel Thome**
Hometown: Pontiac, Michigan
Current location: New York City, New York
Attended Eastman: 1957–61
Marimba Masters: 1958–59
Conductor and artistic director of Orchestra of Our Time; associate professor of composition at the Conservatory of Music at Purchase College, State University of New York; 1994 Grammy Award recipient "Best Rock Instrumental" for his orchestrations on *Zappa's Universe* (Polygram/Verve); nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for "Savitri Traveler of the Worlds"

(surviving members unable to attend reunion)
**Jane Burnet Varella**
Hometown: Dayton, Ohio
Current location: Dayton, Ohio
Attended Eastman: 1954–58
Marimba Masters: 1956–58
Personnel manager of Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra (and former principal percussionist); teaches at the Performing Arts School in Dayton and at Sinclair Community College

**Mitchell Peters**
Current location: Los Angeles, California
Attended Eastman: 1953–58
Marimba Masters: 1954–58 (original member)
Dallas Symphony Orchestra (timpanist 1960–69); Los Angeles Philharmonic (principal percussionist 1969–81, principal timpanist 1981–2006); composer; professor of percussion at University of California, Los Angeles (through 2012)

(other percussion members)
**James "Jimmy" Dotson** *deceased 1983*
Marimba Masters: 1954–57 (original member)
San Antonino Symphony (1957–83)

**Theodore "Ted" Frazeur** *deceased 2014*
Marimba Masters: 1955–56
Professor of percussion, State University of New York at Fredonia (1960–93)

**Douglas Marsh**
Marimba Masters: 1954–57 (original member)
United States Air Force Jazz Band (1957–60)

**Jay Pouhe**
Marimba Masters: 1955 (pianist who substituted for John Beck, June 1955)
Metropolitan Opera; Santa Fe Opera

**Kenneth Wendrich** *deceased 1994*
Marimba Masters: 1955–56
Bowling Green State University; W.O. Smith Music School

(string bass members)
**Donald Snow** (1953–55) *deceased 2015*
**Frederick Wyss** (1955–56)
**Armand Russell** (1956–57)
**Edward DeMatteo** (1957–58) *deceased 2010*
**Roger Ruggeri** (1958–59)

the time. Even if we only had twenty minutes, we'd go through a pile of string duets. I think all that reading was one of the incentives for the Marimba Masters. We were six percussionists running around the school, and Gordon corralled us together. We had some great experiences, as well as a lot of fun. Looking back, we established something pretty special."

The Marimba Masters' first performance was a noontime recital in Kilbourn Hall on March 11, 1954 "by the Students from the Percussion Class of William Street," although they were still referred to as just a "marimba ensemble." Their iconic moniker would not come for another year when they adopted the name Marimba Masters before their first national television broadcast. Conducted by Gordon Peters, the other marimbists were Beck and Leonard, along with James Dotson, Douglas Marsh, and Mitchell Peters (no relation to Gordon), and Donald Snow on double bass.

"Gordon wanted a bass marimba and none was available," Snow said in the January 2006 issue of *Eastman Notes*, "so he added a double bass—me. I played with the group for two years."

That first program included the overture from Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro," the "Dance of the Comedians" from Smetana's *Bartered Bride*, the "Largo" from Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, and excerpts from "Carmen" by Bizet. The concert also featured the world premiere of "Chorale for Marimba Quintet" by Robert Resseger, which would be performed again by the "alumni" 62 years later in Kutztown.

David Harvard, founder of the Rochester Commerce Club, happened to hear Peters' unique ensemble during its premiere performance and invited them to play for his organization "for five bucks and lunch!" This led to more performances, including ones for local and national companies, such as Kodak. And just over a year after their first concert, the Marimba Masters were invited to appear on *Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts*, a radio and television variety show airing on Monday nights on CBS, which was a mid-century forerunner of such contemporary programs as *American Idol* or *America's Got Talent*.

"I was part of the ensemble that auditioned for the Godfrey show," Beck explained, "but by the time they got on [in June], I was a staff sergeant in the Marine Band. I don't know who had the better deal; I had a four-year enlistment, but [the Marimba Masters] only had a couple of engagements!"

"Eleven shows in two weeks!" Peters said, correcting Beck with a smile. "Godfrey fell in love with the group, and he invited us to appear on ten more shows."

What was Peters' favorite memory of the Marimba Masters from the 1950s? "I could be funny and say it was driving the two-ton truck that moved the instruments! But it probably was a combination of our first recital, our recording session, and ultimately playing on national television 15 months after we formed a student group. That's outrageous!"

During the television performances, Gordon Peters began to play *with* the ensemble instead of conducting it. He adapted the first marimba part for xylophone and bells, and soon there were six percussionists and string bass performing the repertoire. (Jay Pouhe filled in for Beck during those national broadcasts.) Although Godfrey offered them an engagement in Las Vegas, all the players agreed to stay in school, so additional fame would have to wait a few more years.

The following school year (1954–55), Theodore "Ted" Frazeur took Leonard's place in the Marimba Masters, followed by Peter Tanner and Kenneth Wendrich (replacing Beck and then Marsh, whose military duty prevented him from returning for his second semester).

"My favorite Marimba Masters memories were from our rehearsals," recalled Tanner, who joined the ensemble during the second semester of his freshman year and always played the fourth marimba part. "We would laugh and make jokes while Gordon was trying to keep us in line. He was very meticulous with the music, and he made us write everything down—all the little crescendos and diminuendos. Sometimes we didn't feel like we really needed to do that, especially since we were playing the same pieces over and over again, but he was right. Those additional notations made it music. And then we made *our* students write things down!"

In the spring of 1956, the Marimba Masters recorded their first, and only, eponymous LP record. It featured popular and classical music, along with an expanded percussion section of bongos, maracas, and other percussion instruments. The recording "led to real acceptance of that group as a classical entity," Frazeur wrote in the January 2006 issue of *Eastman Notes*, "and restarted the seriousness of the marimba on a massive scale."

During the Marimba Masters' third full

The Marimba Masters performed on *The Ed Sullivan Show* on January 12, 1958: (L–R) Vivian Emery, Jane Burnet, Edward DeMatteo (string bass), Gordon Peters, Ronald Barnett, Ed Sullivan (in front) and Mitchell Peters (not shown: Peter Tanner)

Photo by Lauren Vogel Weiss

Gordon Peters and Greg Giannascoli (kneeling in front) directed the Marimba Masters and Marimba Masters Jr., respectively: (standing, L–R) Norm Fickett, Ron Barnett, Joel Thome, Stan Leonard, John Galm, John Beck, Peter Tanner, Jake Borden, Manny Solano, Christian Lopez, Josh Park, Ian Woo, Gabe Gaw and Andrew Bambridge

year (1956–57), the ensemble added its first female members: Jane Burnet and Vivian Emery (replacing Frazeur and Wendrich). "In those days, you couldn't have just one girl in the group," recalled Vivian Emery Speca. "So Janie and I joined the ensemble.

"I still remember when Ed Sullivan came to Rochester to emcee [a fundraising show hosted by the Women's Committee of the Rochester Civic Music Association in November 1957] at the Eastman Theater," she continued. "He brought Carol Burnett, who was just starting her career, and she sang 'I Made a Fool of Myself Over John Foster Dulles.' The Marimba Masters also played that benefit and [Sullivan] was so excited about our group that he asked us to come to New York." And on January 12, 1958, the Marimba Masters—Gordon Peters, Barnett, Burnet, Emery (now concertmistress), Mitchell Peters, Tanner, and Edward DeMatteo on string bass—performed two pieces on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, Sunday night "must see TV" for people of a certain age.

"My favorite Marimba Masters memory was getting to play in so many special places," said Ron Barnett, who joined the ensemble in 1957. He had also performed in a marimba ensemble in Allentown, Pennsylvania that was directed by his marimba instructor, Dorothy Yoder Albright, another student of Musser and alumnus of his King George marimba orchestra tour. "We played not just on the Sullivan show, but also with the Buffalo Philharmonic and the Eastman Rochester Pops. We had our own section of the concert where they featured percussionists instead of the usual piano or violin soloist."

The performance with the Buffalo Philharmonic was for a winter pops concert on February 1, 1957. "It was more than 20 degrees below zero that day," Jane Burnet Varella remembered. "We were loading the truck and my fingers were freezing! The marimba started to slide out of my grasp, but luckily I was still able to grab it and everything was okay."

Joel Thome, who joined the Marimba Masters during their last year, recalled their television appearance. "I first heard them on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. I had several choices about where I was going to go to school and after seeing them, I wanted to go to Eastman, and it's been a great experience ever since!" The Marimba Masters played over 50 public engagements during their five years in existence.

"I *loved* the Marimba Masters," reminisced John Galm. "I just thought they were great! I originally got involved by helping them move the marimbas for the Sullivan show—down from the fifth floor, across the hallway, into the theater, and then we had to move them back! I even drove the truck a few times! Eventually I got accepted into the group during my junior year [1958]. Gordon was such a wonderful guy. He would teach me the parts on a one-to-one basis."

Norm Fickett was invited to join the Marimba Masters after the group returned from playing the Sullivan show. "I played the bass marimba part alongside Vivian Emery," he recalled, "and what an inspiration that was. The Marimba Masters was a great foundation for me, and it was my first professional ensemble experience. I learned a lot: how to articulate, how to play more musically, how to *read*, and most of all, how to *listen*. Gordon was a great player, a great leader, and he had the ability to bring out the best in all of us."

"I'm indebted to Gordon," agreed Galm. "When I was playing with the Rochester Philharmonic, he would always bring a score with him and sit in the percussion section. He was studying to be a conductor, and it was such a privilege to read the scores with him—which was much better than counting all those damn rests!"

"The Marimba Masters had such a great camaraderie," Galm added. "Everybody pitched in, from moving the marimbas to playing with such wonderful, musical expressions. The group level that you heard was just so incredible. The diligence with which they played was really quite lovely. And everybody was into it. That made it fun."

Although Gordon Peters was the leader of the Marimba Masters, he gives due credit to his teacher. "Bill Street was one-hundred-percent behind us. He encouraged us as we created our ensemble and chamber music library. He was also the most musical, and gentlemanly, timpanist I have ever encountered. Bill was special."

"Bill Street taught us to teach ourselves," said John Beck, who took over the Eastman percussion department when Street retired in 1968, a position Beck held for the next 49 years. "That was one of Bill's greatest attributes. He let us learn by understanding ourselves. He encouraged us but never got in our way, and that was important. Mutual respect."

## THE PLANNING BEGINS

Gordon Peters may have inadvertently been the impetus for the Marimba Masters historic reunion in 2016. He had rearranged all the original Musser scores, adding xylophone and string bass, and by 1959, there were 101 compositions in the Marimba Masters library. Since his retirement as principal percussionist of the Chicago Symphony in 2001, Peters has finished almost 200 arrangements with the instrumentation of xylophone, five marimba parts (on four instruments), and string bass. "That's fourteen-hundred minutes of music," he stated proudly. "Almost 24 hours of concert reper-

toire! That's my contribution to future generations of percussionists." (Many of these new arrangements will be released during 2017 through the website www.kutztown.edu/cmpr.

David O'Fallon, a former percussionist in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago (the training orchestra of the Chicago Symphony, under the direction of Peters), is assisting Gordon with preparations for publication. O'Fallon performs with the Venice Symphony in Florida, along with Dana Kimble, a retired percussionist with the United States Military Academy Band at West Point. Kimble, principal percussionist in the Venice Symphony, is also a co-founder and member of the Board of Directors for the Center for Mallet Percussion Research at Kutztown University, which hosted "Celebrate Marimba! A Tribute to the Music of Clair Omar Musser" in 2015.

"Following a conversation with Dave O'Fallon about the marimba orchestra tribute to Musser in Kutztown, we started discussing the Marimba Masters ensemble music he was working on," said Kimble. "So I decided to give Gordon a call and catch up. After speaking with Gordon several times and learning of his new publishing endeavor, I came up with the idea of featuring the musical legacy of the Marimba Masters during our next festival in Kutztown. The most challenging aspect was to track down as many of the [original] marimba players as we could. Gordon and John [Beck] were extremely helpful in finding people. I felt it was important to have someone legitimize the project, so John wrote a letter to all of the former members to come to the event. Before I knew it, we had nine Marimba Masters planning to attend the event in Kutztown." (Jane Burnet Varella and Mitch Peters were unable to travel to Pennsylvania last November.)

Photo by Lauren Vogel Weiss

Jane Burnet Varella backstage at the Schuster Center in Dayton, Ohio

Photo by Lauren Vogel Weiss

The Marimba Masters Reunion event brought together (back row, L–R) Frank Kumor, Gordon Stout, John Galm, Peter Tanner, John Beck, Stan Leonard, Bill Cahn, Dana Kimble, (front row, L–R) Ron Barnett, Joel Thome, Gordon Peters and Norm Fickett

As the reunion grew into reality, plans for the rest of the festival continued—this one to be called "Celebrate Marimba! The Marimba Masters."

"We wanted to invite ensembles that had a connection to this theme," explained Kimble. "The first choice was the current Eastman ensemble, for obvious reasons. Another group we chose was the University of Central Florida Percussion Ensemble, under the direction of Jeff Moore and Thad Anderson, because Jeff had been working with Gordon on the ensemble arrangements, too."

The third ensemble invited was the Marimba Masters Jr.—a pre-college program at Juilliard under the direction of Greg Giannascoli. "We wanted to show how the music was still relevant to young people," added Kimble. "Now we had keyboard players of all ages involved, from teenagers and college students all the way up to the original Marimba Masters, who were in their eighties. To round out the program, we invited Jeff Calissi to give a lecture about the Marimba Masters, which was the topic of his dissertation, and we asked all the members themselves to participate in a panel discussion."

## THE MARIMBA MASTERS – NOW

The festival began with a Marimba Masters reunion dinner on Friday evening. It was joyful to watch these percussion legends see each other, some of them for the first time in more than half a century!

"It was hard to sleep the last few nights just thinking about everybody," Peter Tanner admitted. "I hadn't seen Ron in 40 years and Gordon in 50! It's good to know that we're all in our eighties now and still getting around. It must be something in the marimba water!"

Ron Barnett said he was amazed when he saw the list of who would be attending. "I knew a few people had passed away," Ron said, "but so many of us were still alive and kicking!"

Stan Leonard remembers something Bill Street once told him: "Playing percussion is different than the other instruments because it's like riding a bicycle—you never forget how."

"Well, I haven't played the marimba for

20 years," Leonard said before the concert, "and I'm going to try playing it in public tomorrow!"

Tanner agreed. "I haven't been in front of a marimba in 15 years, so I did a lot of practicing on 'air marimba' for the concert this week!"

One event the alumni were looking forward to was the panel discussion scheduled for early Saturday afternoon. Bill Cahn and Gordon Stout, two more Eastman alumni, moderated the session featuring Barnett, Beck, Fickett, Galm, Leonard, Peters, and Tanner. Many of the stories and memories included in this article were taken from the lively hour-long conversation.

Norm Fickett shared an observation he made when he returned to Rochester for PASIC '76: "I went to clinics by Gordon Stout and Leigh Stevens. Gordon was playing his 'Mexican Dances' and Leigh was playing a Bach sonata with graduated mallets. This was the first time I'd ever *seen* anything like this. I watched them in *total awe*. I walked out of there and wanted to cut off my hands!" The audience sympathized with laughter.

"Norm is not the only one who felt that way," added Cahn. "John [Beck] and I were in the audience, sitting next to Vic Firth, Dan Hinger, and Saul Goodman, watching Gordon and Leigh play. They had the same reaction. This was truly a quantum leap forward for the marimba."

In his closing remarks, Cahn thanked "the great artists, musicians, and teachers sitting before us. They are literally a 'who's who' of the percussion world." It is still debatable who enjoyed the reminiscing more—the audience or the Marimba Masters themselves!

Later that afternoon, Gordon Peters led the alumni in an intense rehearsal. "Having 'grown some experienced ears,' I can now truly appreciate this chamber music," he admitted. "I feel that these arrangements are a great way to teach future generations of marimbists how to make music. Balances, tone quality, phrasing, dynamics, tempo choices, articulations—the art of listening."

"The highlight of the weekend for me was getting together with Gordon Peters and listening to him converse in ways that he has always done," Beck said with a grin. "He wants the music to be perfect, although in our situation this weekend, perfection may not be the greatest thing we can achieve. But we're trying! And it's been a lot of fun."

"Gordon is Gordon!" exclaimed Norm Fickett. "Playing with him brings back a lot of memories. He hasn't changed a bit, but working with him is like—wow! It's been so much fun playing with all the ensembles."

"I was looking forward to reconnecting with everybody," added John Galm. "I'm also indebted to Dana [Kimble], Frank [Kumor], and Will [Rapp] for putting this event together. I had no idea that this Center [for Mallet Percussion Research] was unfolding as it is." (Kumor is Professor of Percussion at Kuztown University and Willis Rapp is Professor Emeritus.)

## THE REUNION

Saturday's events began with a lecture, "The History and Accomplishments of the Marimba Masters" by Jeff Calissi, associate professor and director of percussion studies at Eastern Connecticut State University. Calissi wrote his dissertation on the Marimba Masters to earn his doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2004. (VIP or All Access subscribers can view this paper at the PAS Online Research Thesis/Dissertation Repository http://www.pas.org/resources/research/ThesisDissertation/Calissi.aspx)

What was it like to speak in front of the actual subjects of his research? "At one point, I considered it to be a bit daunting, but it turned out to be rather fulfilling," he said with a sigh of relief. "Even though I had spoken to many of them over the phone during my years of research, once I met them in person, I felt more at ease talking *about* them in *front* of them! They were more than happy to answer a few more questions I had.

"I met Gordon at the beginning of this project," Calissi continued. "We had two straight days of interviews and he showed me all the scrapbooks that Jane [Burnet] compiled. Then he scanned all the material

PHOTO BY LAUREN VOGEL WEISS

Jeff Calissi (center) surrounded by (L–R) Joel Thome, John Beck, John Galm, Peter Tanner, Gordon Peters, Ron Barnett, Norm Fickett, and Stan Leonard

PHOTO BY LAUREN VOGEL WEISS

The University of Central Florida Percussion Ensemble, under the direction of Jeffrey M. Moore (far left) and Thad Anderson (far right) pose with the Marimba Masters alumni and their conductor Gordon Peters (center)

and sent it to me in North Carolina. But right before I left him in Chicago, he said something I'll never forget: 'One should study music first and study instruments second—and in that order of priority.' It was a fitting way to end our interview, and those are also the last words of my dissertation.

"A few minutes after I finished my lecture in Kutztown, Gordon came up to me and said, 'You have come a long way since your last presentation at PASIC [2004]. You conjured up all new memories that I didn't think I had!' During the presentation, I was watching him in particular, and he had the best smile on his face! There's nothing better than seeing and hearing a pleased reaction from the man who essentially gave me the opportunity to earn my doctorate. I cannot think of a better topic to be identified with, knowing the impact the Marimba Masters had on percussion—and my career."

The first concert on Saturday morning was by the young Marimba Masters Jr. under the direction of Greg Giannascoli. "In 2012, we hosted one of Leigh Howard Stevens' Pre-College Marimba Seminars in New Jersey," Giannascoli explained, "and Leigh suggested that the students play some marimba ensemble pieces that Marimba Productions published. Those turned out to be some of Gordon Peters' arrangements, and they were a hit with the students *and* parents. We played them again the following year at Leigh's College Summer Marimba Seminar, and the college kids loved the music, too."

The students in the Marimba Masters Jr. come from all over the New York City metropolitan area, including one from South Jersey. The 2016 ensemble included Andrew Bambridge (age 17), Jacob Borden (16), Gabriel Gaw (16), Josh Park (15), Emmanuel Solano (18), Christian Santos (14), and Ian Woo (13).

The youthful ensemble played six pieces arranged by Peters—"Finlandia" by Sibelius, Mozart's "A Little Night Music," selections from Bizet's "Carmen" and Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition," de Falla's "Ritual Fire Dance," and "Stars and Stripes Forever" by Sousa—along with Musser's arrangement of "Bolero" by Rosales.

What was it like to perform in front of their famous namesakes? "It was great!" Giannascoli said with a wide grin. "We were honored—and a little nervous. We took liberties with the tempos and tried to play in the romantic style of the period, so we hoped they liked what we did. The students also got to play on wonderful, historically significant instruments as well as play in front of the Marimba Masters themselves."

"They're literally living legends," said Ian Woo, "so it was a rare opportunity."

Jake Borden agreed. "It was interesting to put faces to the names of these people. You hear their names all the time but actually being able to meet them was a very surreal experience."

The lecture/performance on Saturday afternoon was presented by the University of Central Florida Percussion Ensemble, under the direction of Jeffrey M. Moore and Thad Anderson. Sixteen percussion students and one double bass player flew from Orlando for the celebration in Kutztown.

This session included ten selections, from the 17th to the 20th centuries, from the new Gordon B. Peters Marimba Library, along with Moore's explanations of why it's important to program transcriptions on concerts and the importance, as well as the rewards, of chamber music in training musicians. The performers onstage were Joshua Albert, Chris Baird, Kai Yin Clive Chan, Nick Chase, Chi Him Calvin Chiu, Gina Cilluffo, Devon Costanza, Steve Estes, Theodore Jackson, Matt Malhiot, Chris Marsh, Deborah Parsons, Madison Schafer, Christina Smith, Austin Warren, Paul Yorke, and Sara Barbee on bass.

Moore, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at UCF as well as one of the percussion professors, recalled how he got involved in this project. "I met Gordon while I was an undergraduate at North Texas, and we've stayed in touch over the years. At PASIC 2009, Thad and I saw him and learned of his new transcriptions. Since publishers wanted them 'computer ready' instead of Gordon's original manuscript, we offered to help engrave them. We even included a few of the arrangements during our New Literature session at PASIC 2014. We still try to program two to three transcriptions each year.

"We play the arrangements as intended," Moore continued. "One percussionist on each part, plus a string bass. We try to perform in Gordon's original setup because


PHOTO BY LAUREN VOGEL WEISS

Michael Burritt performs his "Home Trilogy" with the Eastman Graduate Percussion Ensemble

PHOTO BY LAUREN VOGEL WEISS

The University of Central Florida Percussion Ensemble

he edits the dynamics in the music for that arrangement. So when he asks Marimba 3 to play out a little bit more, he's basing that on the idea that you're going to be in the configuration he recommends. The only exception we made to this was we flipped the Marimba 1 and 5 instrument to the other side so that Marimba 1 could be next to the xylophone. It's a bit of a trade-off, but since the xylophone player and Marimba 1 were in unison a lot during the pieces we picked, it made more sense to do that instead of having the bass next to Marimba 5."

Another distinctive feature of Peters' arrangements is his request for rubber mallets. "Just as the setup is specified, he arranged the parts with rubber mallets in mind," Moore explained. "It's a different sound quality, a different articulation between wrapped and unwrapped mallets. As our literature has evolved in the world of percussion, we've embraced wrapped mallets. Many of us look at rubber mallets as sort of *passé*. But when you hear these arrangements that were written with rubber mallets in mind *played* with rubber mallets, it changes your perspective on the marimba. I hear this music and think, 'That's the way it should sound.' Don't make the decision not to use rubber mallets in marimba ensemble before you've heard it; give your ear the choice. That was the key."

The Saturday evening concert bridged the gap between Eastman in the 1950s and Eastman today. The Eastman Graduate Percussion Ensemble—Catherine Cole, Cameron Leach, Aaron Locklear, Josh McClellan, Kyle Peters, Hannah Weaver, and Caroline Samuels on bass, under the direction of Michael Burritt, professor of percussion—performed its own version of "then and now." Burritt, who received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees, as well as the prestigious Performer's Certificate, from Eastman, succeeded *his* teacher, John Beck, at the school in 2008.

The first half of their program was a tribute to the Marimba Masters and featured six pieces arranged for marimba ensemble by Gordon Peters: "Summer's Storm" from Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, "Pavane for a Dead Princess" by Ravel, Handel's "Music for the Royal Fireworks," the second movement of Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, "Nimrod" from Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, and the "Sabre Dance" from *Gayne Ballet* by Khachaturian.

The second half of Eastman's concert showcased music from the 21st century. Burritt's "180," which received its world premiere at PASIC15, is a marimba quartet of 360 measures with a seminal tutti in measure 180. Aaron Locklear and Kyle Peters then played the marimba duet "2+1" by Trevino. "Hymning" by Honstein, a marimba solo commissioned by Michael Burritt, received a stunningly beautiful performance by Burritt (which he repeated a week later at PASIC16). The evening concluded with two movements from Burritt's *Home Trilogy*: "Painted Hills" and "White Pines."

"It's great to hear young percussion ensembles playing the classics and reconnecting with that music, because it's not usually a part of their lives," said Cahn. "Fortunately, Gordon Peters has provided a medium through which they can reconnect with this music, because there are aspects of performance and musicality that are unique to that repertoire. Then Michael Burritt and the Eastman Percussion Ensemble took it in another direction during their concert; they expanded on the past and brought it into the present in a beautiful way."

"Bill Cahn and I sit in countless concerts and recitals at the Eastman School of Music," Beck added with a smile. "We watch the mallet parts these students are playing, look at each other and say, 'They have played more notes this evening than you and I have played in our lifetimes!' "

Galm laughed in agreement. "I'm just blown away by the excellence and advanced musicianship we've heard from the high school group from Juilliard to these college students."

The "grand finale" of the weekend was the "Mallet Masters Festival Concert" on Sunday afternoon. Every piece on the program was arranged by Gordon Peters in the instrumentation utilized by the Marimba Masters. The program opened with the

PHOTO BY LAUREN VOGEL WEISS

Frank Kumor conducted the Kutztown University Percussion Ensemble

Tap to play Video

PHOTO BY LAUREN VOGEL WEISS

The Marimba Masters alumni ensemble (L–R) Bill Cahn, John Beck, Norm Ficket (hidden), Gordon Peters, Amanda Mawson (string bass), Peter Tanner and Ron Barnett performed the "Polka" from Shostakovich's *The Golden Age*

Tap to play Video

Jeffrey M. Moore conducts Gliere's "Russian Sailor's Dance" with the combined marimba ensembles during the finale

Photo by Ron Weiss

The author with members of the Marimba Masters alumni (L–R) Stan Leonard, Norm Fickett, Gordon Peters, Peter Tanner, and John Beck

University of Central Florida Percussion Ensemble playing the overture from "Die Fleidermaus" by Strauss, Enesco's "Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1," two Joplin rags ("Entertainer" and "Maple Leaf"), Holst's "Mars" from *The Planets*, three selections from Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker," and "Hungarian Dance No. 5" by Brahms.

They were followed by the Kutztown University Percussion Ensemble, under the direction of Frank Kumor: Brandon Bargo, Eric Farkas, Mark Feld, Noah Flaharty, Jacqueline Foran, Adrian Garcia, Damian Lunny, Erica Malinowski, Rebekah Miller, Tori Miller, Brianna Parry, Brandon Rafter, Peter Snyder, John Spero, Andrew Warren, Bryan Weber, and Brandon Zajaczkowski. They performed Glinka's "Ruslan and Ludmilla," "Danza Pastorale" from Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, "Pizzicato Polka" by Strauss, and the finale from Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony (No. 41).

After intermission, black-and-white images from *The Ed Sullivan Show* flickered on the auditorium screen, just like they did on television sets across America on January 12, 1958. Then came the moment everyone had been waiting for: the Marimba Masters themselves returning to the stage to perform for the first time since 1959. Peters stepped to the podium to conduct the "Chorale" from Resseger's *Marimba Quintet* with Beck, Galm, Leonard, Tanner and Bill Cahn, filling in for Vivian Emery Speca. Kutztown University student Amanda Mawson played string bass.

Then Peters moved behind the xylophone to perform with Barnett, Beck, Cahn, Fickett, and Tanner in the "Polka" from *The Golden Age* by Shostakovich. More applause filled the auditorium as the years melted away.

"Seeing the 'masters' in their youth on the Ed Sullivan video and then performing in the present was a very powerful experience—even profound," said Kenneth S. Hawkinson, President of Kutztown University, who attended the once-in-a-lifetime reunion.

The combined finale incorporated the percussion ensembles from the Universities of Central Florida and Kutztown, along with seven of the original Marimba Masters. Moore conducted Gliere's "Russian Sailor's Dance" from *The Red Poppy Suite* and Kumor conducted Strauss' "Radetsky March," which were accompanied by Dean Anderson, Cahn, Kimble, and Tihda Vongkoth on percussion. For the grand finale, Peters once again stepped to the podium to conduct 28 marimbists, seven percussionists, and three string bass players in "Stars and Stripes Forever" to bring this special reunion weekend to a rousing close.

"One of the highlights of this weekend," Jeff Moore said, "was watching my students interact with the people whose names are in our percussion history and literature class and realizing we're all part of the same community."

"It was very stimulating to see the general enthusiasm about the marimba and music making," added Stan Leonard. The enthusiasm continued as the young players collected autographs from their elders as everyone mingled together onstage after the concert.

"It is amazing to be part of such a great legacy as the Marimba Masters," said Emmanuel Solano, a member of the Marimba Masters Jr. "We got to experience this performance with them, and not many people will ever say that again."

Peter Tanner summed up the feeling for his colleagues when he said, "The Marimba Masters is something that has stayed with me forever." PN

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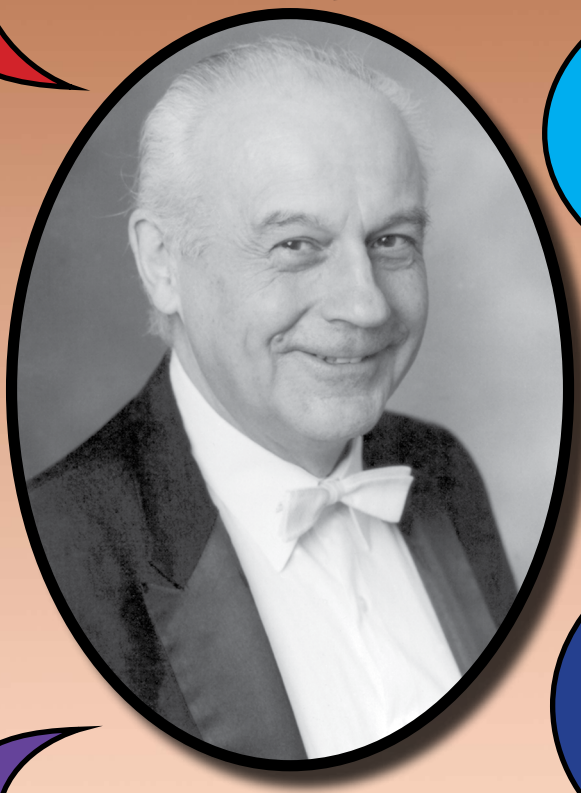
The purpose of this library is to provide a chamber music experience akin to other families of instruments.



A percussion education should not consist of music written in the last fifty years only. It should also include works from earlier musical periods as found in my marimba ensemble library.

My transcriptions are sourced from symphony orchestra, band, opera, ballet, piano, and string chamber music repertoire.

Rubber mallets should be used in playing these arrangements, with the exception of the Marimba 5 player, who should use both rubber and yarn mallets. The string bass parts may need to be amplified, depending on the performance venue.

All of these compositions are of high musical quality and have lived on through the ages. They are very "listenable" and fun to play.

Percussion and conducting have been my life. The Gordon B. Peters Percussion Chamber Music Library for Marimba Ensemble is to be my contribution to the percussion profession. It is my chosen legacy. Enjoy!

**Gordon B. Peters**

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra (1959-2001)• PAS President (1964-1967) • PAS Hall of Fame (2004)**

# to the Gordon B. Peters

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## Percussion Chamber Music Library for Marimba Ensemble

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*Suite No. 2 in B minor*
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*Corsaire Overture*
*Symphonie Fantastique "Un Bal"*
*Rakoczy March*
**BIZET** *Carmen* (excerpts)
*Symphony No. 1* (Mvt. III)
**BORODIN** *Polovetsian Dances*
**BRAHMS** *Hungarian Dance No. 1*
*Quartet No. 1 "Zingaresse"* (Mvt. IV)
*Symphony Nos. 1, 3, & 4* (excerpts)
**BRITTEN** *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*
**BRUCKNER** *Overture in G minor*
**CHOPIN** *Minute Waltz*
*Polonaise in A Major*
**DUKAS** *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*
**DVORAK** *Carnival Overture*
*Symphony Nos. 7 & 8* (excerpts)
*Slavonic Dance No. 8*
**ENESCO** *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1*
**GLINKA** *Ruslan and Ludmilla Overture*
**GRIEG** *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*
**HANDEL** *Royal Fireworks Overture*
*Water Music Suite* (excerpts)
**HAYDN** *Symphony Nos. 83, 101, 103* (excerpts)
**HOLST** *The Planets "Mars"*
**HUMPERDINCK** *Hansel and Gretel "Evening Prayer"*
**JOPLIN** *12 rags*
**KHACHATURIAN** *Gayne Ballet* (excerpts)
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*Symphony No. 5* (Mvt. II)
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**RAVEL** *Mother Goose Suite "Finale"*
*Pavane for a Dead Princess*
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**SAINT-SAENS** *Samson and Delilah "Bacchanale"*
*Symphony No. 3* (Mvt. II excerpt)
**SALIERI** *Sinfonia in D Major*
**SCHUBERT** *Symphony in C Major* (Mvts. II & III)
*Symphony No. 8 "The Unfinished"*
**SCHUMANN** *Symphony Nos. 1 & 4* (excerpts)
**SMETANA** *The Bartered Bride Overture*
**SOUSA** *El Capitan March*
**STRAUSS, JOHANN II** *Beautiful Blue Danube Waltzes*
*Die Fledermaus Overture*
**STRAUSS, JOHANN SR.** *Radetzky March*
**STRAUSS, RICHARD** *Der Rosenkavalier Suite* (excerpts)
**STRAVINSKY** *Firebird Suite "Finale"*
**TCHAIKOVSKY** *Nutcracker Suite No. 1*
*Romeo and Juliet Fantasy* (excerpts)
*Sleeping Beauty "Valse"*
*Symphony No. 6* (excerpts)
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# Adapting Three Asante Spiritual Music Styles for Drumset

By royal hartigan

royal hartigan (left) and Kwasi Boa with the Abodwese Shrine ensemble at Penteng

Asante traditional dance drumming includes a wide spectrum of pieces that are essential to, and express the meaning of, Asante ways of life: elements of the life cycle, seasonal cycles, honoring ancestors, social/recreational occasions, and connections to a spirit world. Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo are spiritual music and dance styles that involve ritual, texts, instrumental and vocal music, and dance, and whose themes can include divination, healing, and connections to a spirit world, among other topics.

This article will first focus on an analysis of the public sections of selected spiritual dance drumming styles as played in three communities in the Asante Region of Ghana, West Africa. It will then document one original approach by which their rhythmic voices may be adapted to the drumset in the African American jazz tradition.

Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo ensemble drumming involve multiple voices of time, tone, timbre, accent, and rhythm as a means to individual reflection, community ritual, and spiritual transcendence. It has a serious and personal meaning in the lives of its practitioners, serving as a strategy for meeting life's circumstances. The heritage of these spiritual dance drumming styles, their antecedents, and other similar pieces passed down through oral tradition indicate the existence among African peoples since ancient times of complex and highly sophisticated spiritual systems, cosmology, and human transcendence, long before the incursions of external influences, such as those of European and other colonial invasion, contemporary international neo-colonial penetration, and the degradations of techno-centrism.

In a similar way, the drumset and jazz ensemble in the African American tradition can function as a means toward cultural remembrance and transmission. Their historic and contemporary style of free expression serves as a repository for centuries of upheaval, struggle, and transcendence. Just as the pulse of dance drumming traditions continue in West African communities, their parallel expression in African American jazz ensembles and drumset comprise music, as stated by bassist and composer Charles Mingus, "as serious as your life."

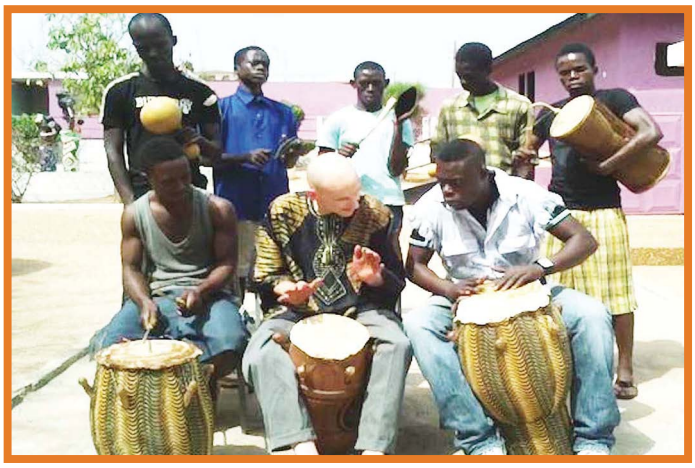
## ABODWESE, OTEDUASO, AND KOPO SPIRITUAL DANCE DRUMMING MUSIC

### Instruments and Rhythmic Structure

The common elements in the Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo drumming ensembles comprise instruments that provide a time referent, the *dawuro* bells and *ntrowa* rattle; a supporting response drum, *apentemma*; and lead drum, *pintin*. On occasion at these villages and at Mampong, two other support drums, *donno* and *abomaa*, were played in the ensemble. In the Penteng recording, the ensemble played without the *donno* and *abomaa* drums, although I have seen the *donno* played as part of the Penteng ensemble at other times.

*Dawuro* is a hollow, flat, medium-length bell played with a wooden stick, and it is also played in the Asante Fontomfrom court music. In some cases, the smaller, boat-shaped, iron *dawuro* played in Asante Kete court music may also be used, especially when the hollow flat *dawuro* is not available, as was the case in Jatiase and for one of the two bells in Mampong. Its basic timeline has a pattern of five open and mute strokes spanning 12 eighth notes in western visual notation. While oral traditions appropriately do not use visual notation as an aspect of performance, for purposes of analysis, this article will employ western notation that serves as a guide for understanding.

Playing ntrowa rattle with Abodwese Shrine singers at Penteng



Playing the Kopo style at Mampong Asante: in front, petia (substituting for abomaa), apentemma and pintin; at back, ntrowa rattles, dawuro bells, and donno hourglass drum

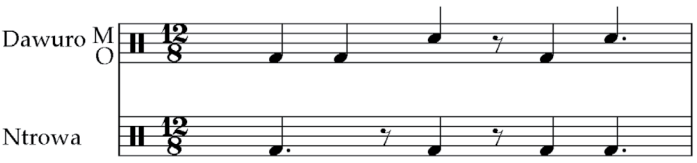
Dancers Kwasi Boa (L) and Adwoa Bona (R) interacting with the Penteng Abodwese Shrine drum ensemble

As with many West African pieces, there are many ways to hear the individual and collective voices of these spiritual music ensembles. This multiple rhythmic perspective allows simultaneous beat orientations in layers of 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and so on, across the 12 pulses of the *dawuro* time span, each potentially "beginning" on any of the 12 eighth-note pulses. As is necessary with a single visual notation, we will locate one main beat series as four dotted-quarter values over a 12/8 time cycle, based on the timing of dancers' foot movements. However, the 12/8 time cycle allows the reader to adapt the time feel as two per cycle (two dotted-half notes), three (three half notes), six (six quarter notes), or eight (eight dotted-eighth notes) still within a 12-pulse time span.

The *ntrowa* gourd rattle reflects the pulse of *dawuro*. In each community, singers played the *ntrowa* with a rhythmic propulsion and attack that ignited the time on the front edge of the beat. I learned through observation that its pattern may be played with short downward wrist/hand strokes through the air for the first and third

strokes, while short upward and outward wrist/hand strokes in the air for the second and fourth strokes produce a stronger accented sound (Example 1). Ntrowa players will sometimes add another stroke mirroring the second dawuro bell stroke so the two patterns are identical; when added, this stroke is also played in a downward motion.

Example 1. The timeline expressed by dawuro bell and ntrowa rattle (M = Mute; O = Open)




The wooden hourglass-shaped, double-headed, string-tension *donno* drum has a basic two-stroke low-high ascending voice that implies a sense of six beats across the 12 pulses, written as six quarter notes or rests. Hearing the *donno* voice as a time referent will allow the listener to perceive a six-beat feel over the basic four feel.

*Abomaa* is a slender, thin, wooden, single-headed, open-bottom drum played with two thin sticks. Its basic phrase is a sequence of alternating single and double open strokes that emphasize each of the four dotted-quarter main beats. When an *abomaa* is not available, a larger drum called *petia* is sometimes used, as in the performances at Jatiase and Mampong, while in Penteng, neither drum was available for the recording. In some communities *abomaa* is called *agyegyewa*.

Two single-headed, open-bottom hand drums complete the basic drum ensemble. *Apentemma*, whose base is smaller than its carved wooden body, uses a hand technique to sound mute, open, and bass strokes. Mute strokes are accomplished by keeping the hand (from around the knuckle area out to the fingers) or stick on the drumhead on stroke contact. Open resonant tones are produced by bouncing the hand (from the knuckle area out to the fingers) or stick off the drumhead on stroke contact. Deep bass tones are sounded by bouncing the entire palm of the hand off the drumhead, usually across the whole drumhead area. Muted bass sounds are produced by keeping the full palm on the drumhead on stroke contact for a muffled effect. Slap tones are made by striking and grabbing the drumhead in a slapping motion with the knuckles and fingers, creating a sharp, high, sound.

*Apentemma* functions as a support drum, and its basic pattern is a series of open and mute pairs that answer the strong open, mute, and bass sounds of the larger and lower-pitched *pintin* lead drum. Some players at times vary the sound and articulate the mute strokes of these two drums as higher-pitched, sharp, slap tones. *Pintin* has a narrowing contour and a smaller base than its main upper body. In my research at Jatiase, Mampong, Penteng, and Krobo, the *pintin* was a larger *apentemma*-style drum.

During rituals, *apentemma* and *pintin* often have a white powder applied to one side of the drum shell, and this area is kept on the side opposite to the drummer, as the power it represents is directed toward the ritual dancing and the activities of the okomfoo (priest/ess). At one session in Krobo village, I mistakenly placed the apentemma drum I was playing with the powder toward my body, and immediately all the participants urgently told me to turn the drum so the powder faced away from me toward the dancers. They explained that if I were to play the drum with the powder toward my body, something adverse could happen, such as misfortune or impotence.

In some communities, the *atumpan* master drums are played as a lead drum for some sections of spiritual dance drumming. In most of my research, I did not see *atumpan* played; in fact at only one ritual was *atumpan* a part of the ensemble. I was told that when available, *atumpan* are used, but that the *pintin* is commonly used as lead drum for these spiritual music styles.

While musical tempo can vary based on the specific actions of the ritual at any moment, in each community the pace of Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo ensemble drumming was generally fast, usually between 200–240 dotted-quarter beats per minute. This speed, combined with the constant interlocking of instrumental parts, creates a motion and force that propels dancers and supports the intensity of ritual activities. At Penteng, much of the drumming was at such a fast pace and soft dynamic that finger techniques, as opposed to full hand strokes, were employed for the *apentemma* drum, creating a lighter sense of motion (Example 2).

Example 2. The spiritual dance drumming ensemble

1. Abodwese dance drumming at Penteng 1 without donno and abomaa

Tap to play Video

2. Abodwese dance drumming at Penteng 2 without donno and abomaa

Tap to play Video

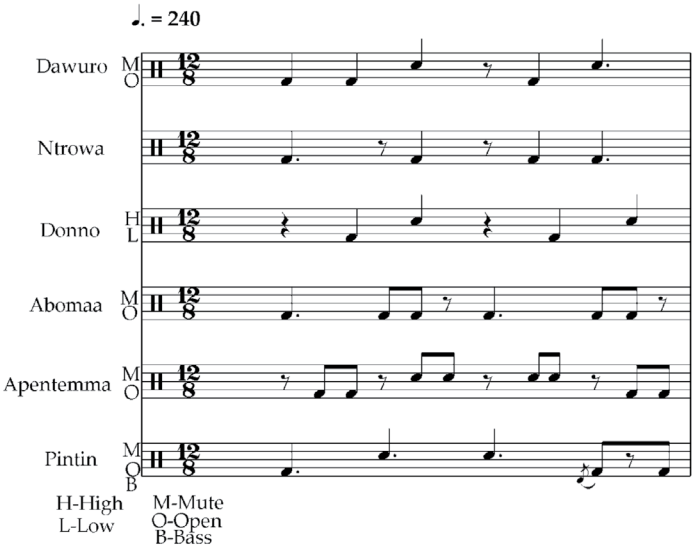
The musical notations for all examples in this work follow the indications of stroke type found to the left of the staff in the ensemble score below, for *dawuro*, mute and open (M and O), *donno*, low and high (L and H), *abomaa* and *apentemma*, mute and open (M and O), and *pintin*, mute, open, and bass (M, O, and B).

3. Spiritual dance drumming at Mampong 1

Tap to play Video

4. Spiritual dance drumming at Mampong 2

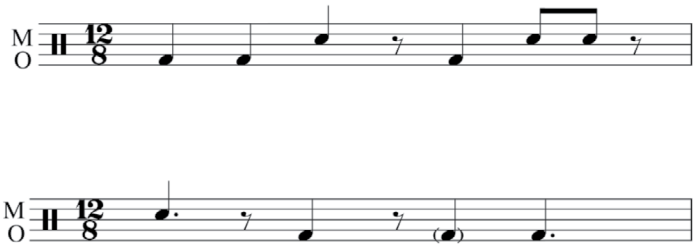
Tap to play Video




## Abodwese, Oteduaso and Kopo Ensemble Instrumental Variations

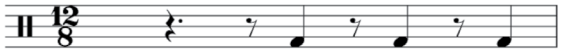
*Dawuro* variations played by Asante musicians include the addition or omission of strokes, creating a different sense of time. Playing the five strokes as an almost equidistant series creates a feeling of five over the time cycle, a forerunner and parallel to the *cinquillo* ("five") of Afro-Cuban music. Adding a stroke for a six-stroke pattern intensifies the feel. Stating only the first, third, and fifth strokes of the dawuro cycle creates a three-stroke referent across the bell timespan. This is sometimes pulled by musicians into a near equally spaced three-stroke phrase, related as an ancestor to the *tresillo* ("three") in Afro-Cuban music. Some bell players mute the first of the three strokes, resulting in an open, two-stroke sound that refocuses the time feel through subtle shading and nuance (Example 3).

Example 3. *Dawuro* bell pattern variations




One *ntrowa* variation is a three-stroke pattern that leaves space in the time cycle, falling as the second of three partials "off" dotted-quarter main beats, 2, 3, and 4 (Example 4).

Example 4. *Ntrowa* rattle variation

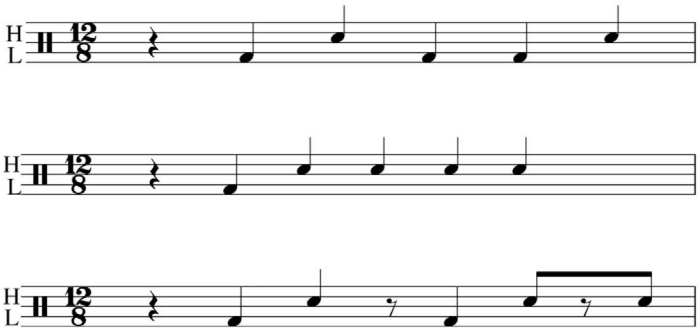



Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo ensemble *donno* styles include many variations and improvisations that can reshape the sense of time in the ensemble over the bell timeline: two-, three-, four-, or here, six-beat feels. The basic two-stroke motive, written as quarter notes low–high, following a quarter-note rest, results in a repeating three or six feel, and can be pulled across the six-beat feel to fall at different points in the time cycle. These include strokes on the second and third quarter-note values following the rest (the most common basic pattern given here in the ensemble example), the first and second quarter-note values, or the

Okomfoo Nana Osei turning in trance at Krobo Village

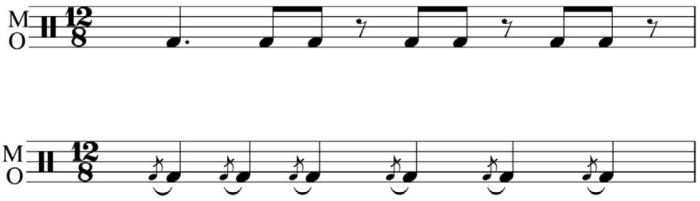
third and first quarter-note values in a six-beat feel, this last a part of the Mampong ensemble's performance. In each case, the low–high tonal shape is maintained. When a *donno* is not available, the music is played without its voice, as in the performance at Penteng (Example 5).

Example 5. *Donno* hourglass drum variation patterns

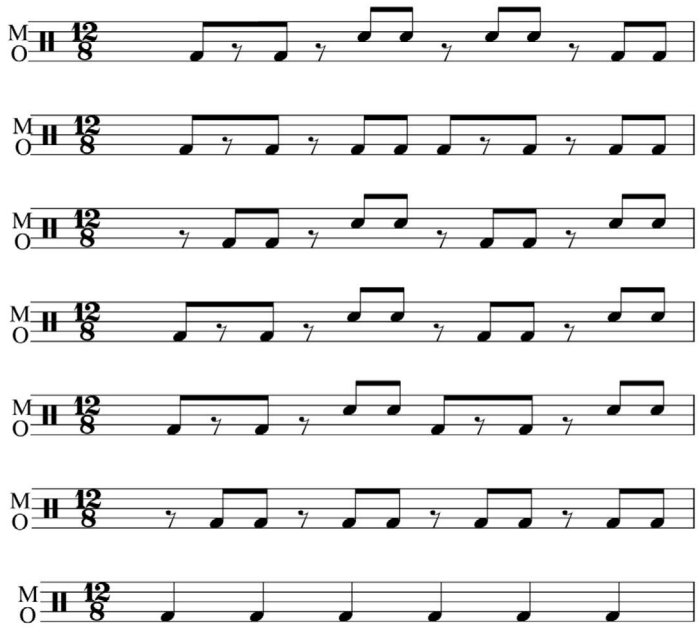



*Abomaa* variations can include an extension of its basic two-stroke motive over notated dotted-quarter main beats 2, 3, and 4, or a series of flams/grace-note strokes that suggest a six-beat feel in quarter notes (Example 6).

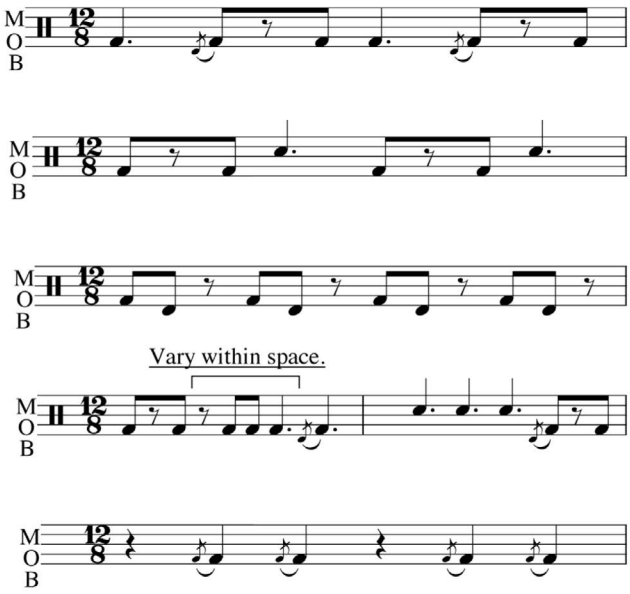
Example 6. *Abomaa* variations




Example 7. *Apentemma* variations




Example 8. *Pintin* variations

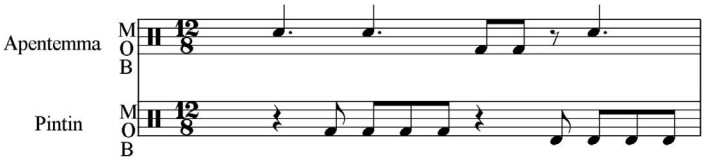



The *pintin* and *apentemma* variations are played to reflect dancers' movements, actions of the priest/ess, or other important points in the ritual. As observed in Jatiase, Penteng, and Krobo, when the *okomfoo* (ɔkomfɔ, "priest/ess," pronounced aw-kohm-faw) moves near the drum ensemble and singers, the *apentemma* and *pintin* play in a lighter, softer style. Once close, on the *okomfoo*'s signal, the drums stop playing, and only the *dawuro* bell and *ntrowa* rattle continue with singing until another signal by the *okomfoo* to resume the full ensemble playing (Examples 7 and 8).

There are many dialogues between *pintin* and *apentemma* reflecting dance movements in these spiritual dance drumming styles. One has an open tone pair and three mute strokes on *apentemma* answering and interlocking with alternating patterns of four open and four bass tones on *pintin* (Example 9).

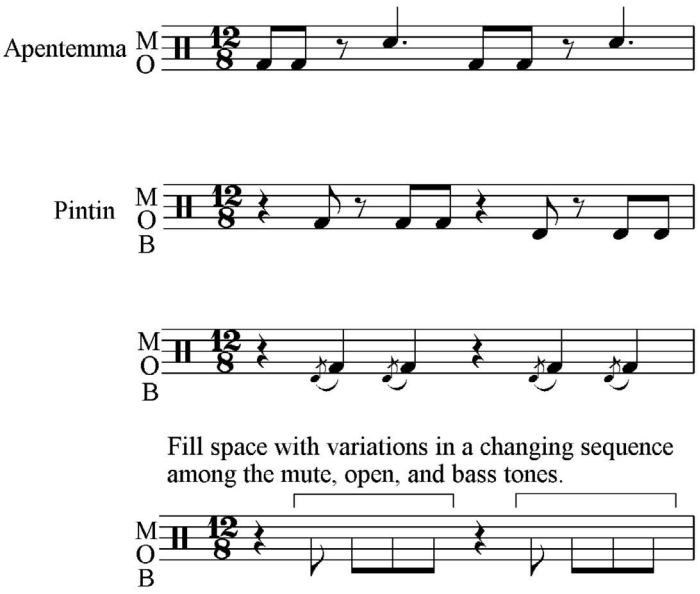
An okomfoo approaches the Kopo drum ensemble and singers at Jatiase

Example 9. *Pintin-apentemma* dialogue 1 basic patterns



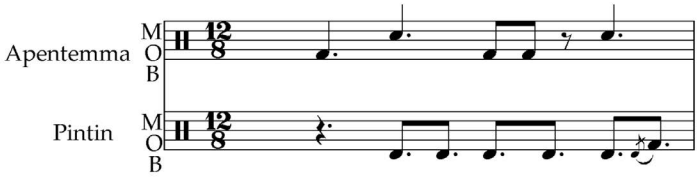
Variations in this conversation include a repetition of the open-tone pair and single mute stroke in the *apentemma* voice, while *pintin* fills the space between open-tone pairs with combinations of open, bass, mute, or slap strokes. *Pintin* can play different patterns of one, two, three, or four strokes in the space spanning its four eighth-note values (Example 10).

Example 10. *Pintin-apentemma* dialogue 1 variations




Another dialogue has *pintin* bass and open sounds implying a duple feel, written as dotted eighths, connecting with *apentemma* open and mute strokes (Example 11).

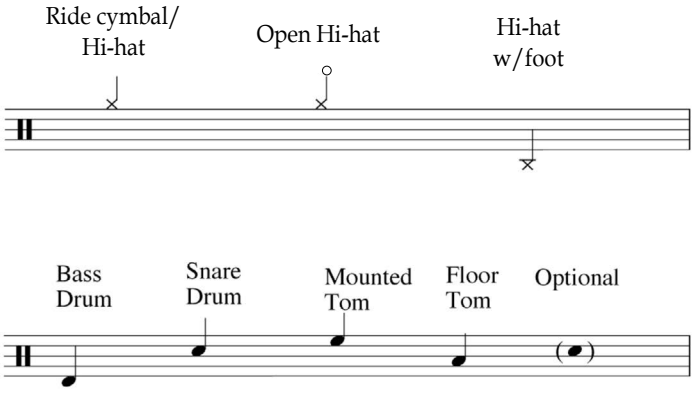
Example 11. *Pintin-apentemma* dialogue 2 basic patterns




## DRUMSET STYLES

The drumset can express the pulse of Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo ensemble drumming in many ways. For this article, our focus will be expressing the Asante rhythmic voices in an African American style, with an emphasis on jazz performance. In each of these examples, listen as you play and hear the sounds you are combining as voices in a conversation, just as you would in learning traditional African drumming. Internalize the patterns you are speaking; once you feel comfortable with the rhythmic conversation, vary the sound sources played with your sticks to all parts of the drumset in order to achieve a tonal and timbral motion. The notation guide for the drumset voices is given in Example 12.

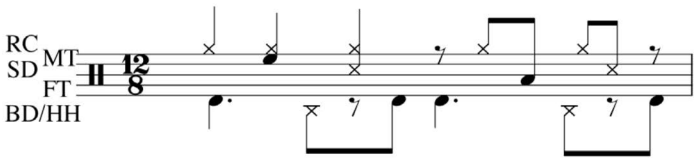
Example 12. Drumset notation key




Begin with the *dawuro* bell timeline on cymbal and the *donno* rhythm as alternating tom and snare cross-stick sounds over a *pintin* variation divided between bass drum and hi-hat. Cross-stick technique is executed by inverting the drumstick, holding the tip against the drumhead, and striking the thicker body of the stick against the drum rim, creating a hollow wooden sound similar to the clave in Afro-Cuban music. The six-beat feel of the *donno* rhythms layers over the four-beat feel of bass drum and hi-hat. Low–high *donno* sounds can also be played literally as low–high tom tones, retaining the tonal shape of the original.

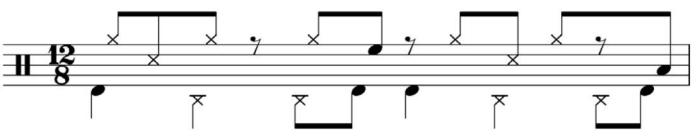
For all drumset styles in this article, cymbal rhythms can be played on the body or bell of the cymbal or hi-hat, or on snare drum, mounted tom, or floor tom rims or shells. This is a variation technique used by Edward Blackwell, Clifford Jarvis, and Max Roach, among many others. To produce a stronger sound, play on the bell of the hi-hat or cymbal; for a lighter sound strike perpendicular to the edge of the cymbal with the side of your stick (Drumset Example 1).

Drumset Example 1, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-nx_Jyrsujg&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=3&feature=plpp_video




Try a series of alternating snare cross-stick and tom sounds with the *dawuro* phrase on cymbal and a six-beat feel between a grounded bass drum sound leading to beats 1 and 3, and hi-hat strokes implying *donno* (Drumset Example 2).

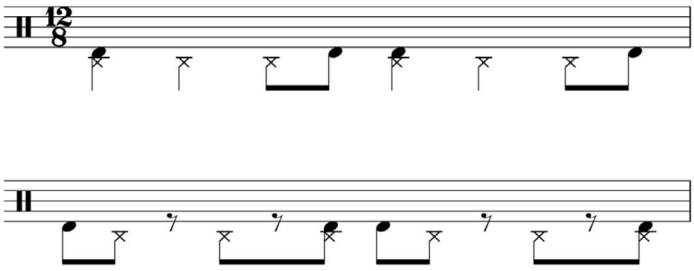
Drumset Example 2, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sp-pWPRTtdUw&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=4&feature=plpp_video



You can play this alternate hi-hat pattern, as well as six-beat feels on hi-hat written as six quarter notes, in two positions across the 12 eighth-note pulses of the bell cycle, to imply another layer of time. *Apentemma* drummers use this six-beat feel as a basis for many variations. Try these layers with the other examples in this study (Drumset Examples 3 and 4).

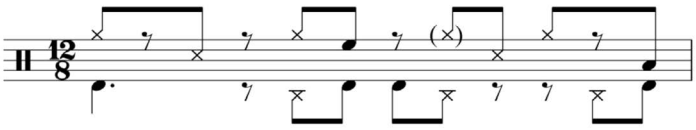
Drumset Example 3, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RW-crhS-nqeY&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=5&feature=plpp_video

and Drumset Example 4, viewable at https://youtu.be/iX3p0f9_ltY?list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C



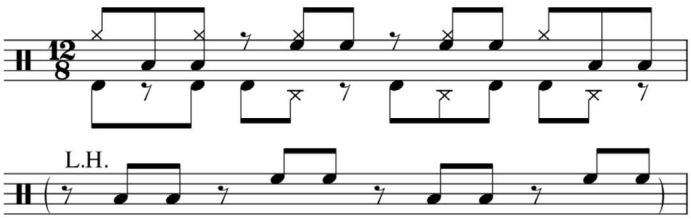
Another hi-hat style is a three-stroke statement based on an *ntrowa* variation, joined here with a bell variation on cymbal and alternating snare and tom sounds emphasizing the third eighth-note value of each dotted-quarter beat. This creates layers emphasizing the second (hi-hat) and third (snare and toms) partials of each main beat over the bass drum outlining main beats 1 and 3. The resulting interlocking of the three partials within dotted-quarter main beats produces an active sound whose timbres are constantly changing, similar to the interlocking voices of the Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo, and other Asante and Ghanaian ensembles. The cymbal pattern omits the second stroke of the basic *dawuro* phrase, and you can also omit the fourth *dawuro* timeline stroke (in parentheses), just as Asante bell players do, to shape the time in a different way (Drumset Example 5).

Drumset Example 5, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CJtE-hPxUXE&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=7&feature=plpp_video



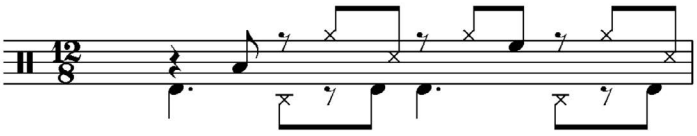
An active groove voices the lower-pitched open and higher-pitched mute *apentemma* couplets as low and high tom sounds, the *dawuro* rhythm on cymbal, the three-stroke *ntrowa* variation as hi-hat foot strokes, and a bass drum heartbeat. Both the basic and varied *apentemma* patterns fill the space and intensify ensemble interactions while retaining their tonal shape on drumset (Drumset Example 6).

Drumset Example 6, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJsc-CegpD-4&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=8&feature=plpp_video



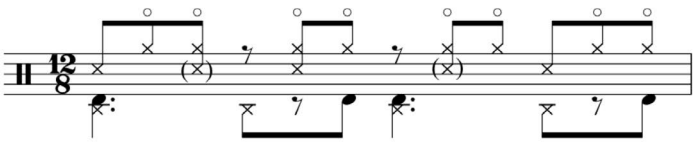

Moving the *ntrowa* three-stroke variation to cymbal with alternating snare cross-sticks and tom tones over a *pintin* variation pattern as a bass drum/hi-hat pulse creates a tonal and timbral conversation, and gives a relaxed feel under a soloist. Max Roach emphasized to me on many occasions the importance of leaving space for others in an ensemble, especially a soloist, saying, "What you don't play is often as important as what you do play" (Drumset Example 7).

Drumset Example 7, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-b8LMuK3FPc&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=9&feature=plpp_video



These spiritual dance drumming rhythms may be adapted into an African-American gospel style. Play the *dawuro* timeline as snare drum cross-sticks or tom sounds, and *apentemma* couplet motives as open hi-hat stick strokes answering foot strokes on each main beat. Asante *dawuro* players create variations by omitting some basic pattern strokes, and this works as well with cross-sticks on snare drum (optional strokes in parentheses). As with the basic *pintin* voice, bass drum reinforces the pulse on beats 1 and 3. The hi-hat stick stroke rhythm may also be played on cymbal. To intensify this sound, try the stick strokes on the bell of the hi-hat or cymbal (Drumset Example 8).

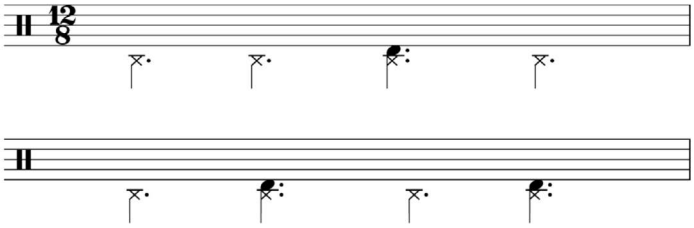
Drumset Example 8, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVT-UTvGH38&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=10&feature=plpp_video



You can also vary this style at a slower tempo by dropping ("bombing") bass drum on beat 3 for an African reggae sound. Bringing bass drum to beats 2 and 4 creates a more active reggae motion. Grooves in this style complete a circle from Africa to the Caribbean and back (Drumset Examples 9 and 10).

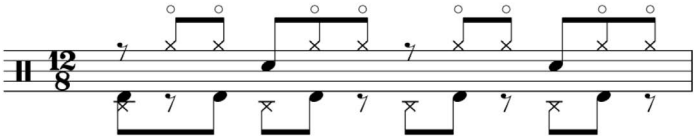
Drumset Example 9, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ_nquIZ1ow&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=11&feature=plpp_video

and Drumset Example 10, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-kZQTehRVY&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=12&feature=plpp_video



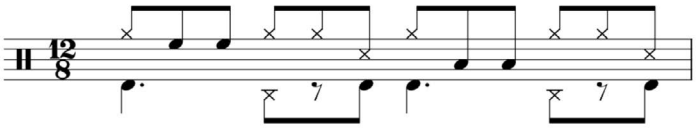
Playing an altered *dawuro* pattern on bass drum with *apentemma* motives as hi-hat or cymbal bell strokes over left-hand backbeats and a hi-hat foot pulse produces a funk sound. You can omit any one or two of the five bass drum strokes to vary the funk heartbeat, in a way similar to variations among Asante bell players (Drumset Example 11).

Drumset Example 11, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0iTZ6Ti7Sg&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=13&feature=plpp_video



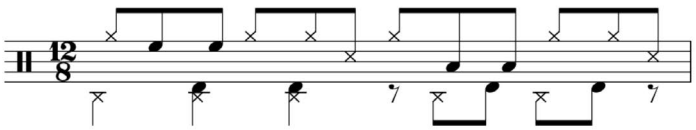
One of the common Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo ensemble interlocking instrumental conversations falls between *abomaa* and *apentemma*. Try the *abomaa* phrase as cymbal sounds and *apentemma* variation open tones on toms over a *pintin* variation divided between bass drum and hi-hat (Drumset Example 12).

Drumset Example 12, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUCByhGJD80&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=14&feature=plpp_video



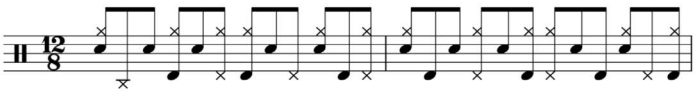
Adding the *dawuro* timeline as hi-hat foot strokes and the *donno* rhythm as bass drum sounds to the *abomaa-apentemma* conversation creates an active four-way motion that intensifies a solo or ensemble passage. The Columbia Clave of Afro-Cuban rumba traditions, which delays the third *dawuro* stroke one eighth-note duration, is similar to the *dawuro*/hi-hat pattern (Drumset Example 13).

Drumset Example 13, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FP-SHdHX1vGY&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=15&feature=plpp_video



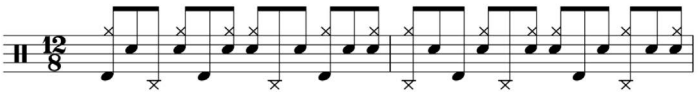
One common Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo *pintin* variation parallels a common jazz swing and bebop cymbal rhythm. First, play this pattern on cymbal with hi-hat on 2 and 4 and the *dawuro* bell phrase with your left hand on snare and toms, to hear the relationship between the triple feel of this music and jazz swing. Next, fill in all the eighth-note spaces around the dawuro voice with alternating hi-hat and bass drum strokes to produce an intense groove similar to the style of Clifford Jarvis's and Elvin Jones's layered voices. You can also focus this approach solely between left hand and hi-hat or left hand and bass drum under the cymbal pattern, this last with hi-hat foot strokes sounding on beats 2 and 4. Moving your left hand among snare, toms, and cymbals or slightly opened hi-hat creates a tonal and timbral motion (Drumset Example 14).

Drumset Example 14, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1NJ1aztkQY&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=16&feature=plpp_video



Now reverse the functions, with left hand filling in the eighth-note spaces around the *dawuro* time cycle played as alternating bass drum and hi-hat strokes. As with the previous example, you can try this approach solely between hi-hat and left hand or bass drum and left hand under the cymbal pattern, this last with hi-hat foot strokes on beats 2 and 4. Again, moving your left hand among snare, toms, and cymbals or slightly opened hi-hat creates a changing tonal and timbral space. For these last two examples, once the bass drum/hi-hat patterns are internalized, freely reorder the sequence of the two different sounds from single alternations to any combination that fits musically, e.g., two or more consecutive bass drum or hi-hat sounds in any sequence (Drumset Example 15).

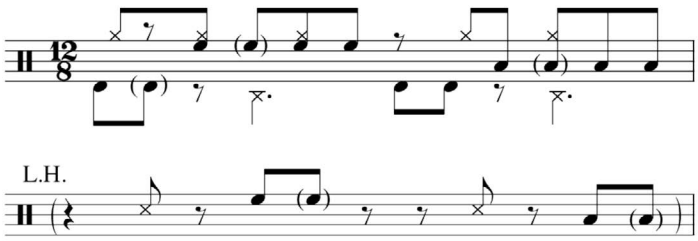
Drumset Example 15, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-BU_aA6-IZw&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=17&feature=plpp_video



The Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo *pintin-apentemma* dialogues can also be adapted to drumset. Play the *dawuro* bell pattern on cymbal with the *apentemma* phrase divided between bass drum and hi-hat sounds. Add the *pintin* four-stroke phrase alternating in its basic form between open and lower pitched bass tones as mount-

ed and floor tom sounds whose respective medium and low pitch ranges parallel the *pintin* open and bass sounds. Since the *pintin* voice can be freely varied among four, three, two, or a single bass, open, mute, or slap stroke in the space between *apentemma* open tones, try this approach as free variations of four, three, two, or single snare, tom, or cymbal sounds in the same way as the spiritual ensemble drummers. The interlocking of parts produces a dynamic motion (Drumset Example 16).

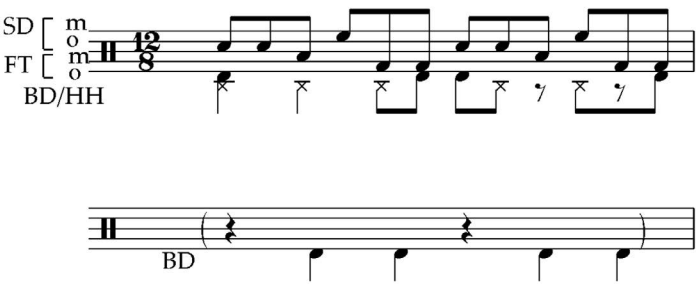
Drumset Example 16, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EXqioF_UcA&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=18&feature=plpp_video




Playing these rhythms with your hands on the drumset brings a direct and personal sound to your playing. Begin with your left hand on snare with snares released, and your right hand on floor tom. Play open and mute strokes on each drum near the edge of the drumhead, just as Asante drummers do on *apentemma*, *pintin*, and other hand drums. Try the *pintin-apentemma* dialogue with the *apentemma* open and mute strokes as open and mute left-hand strokes on snare drum. Join this with a *pintin* dialogue mute-open tone variation as mute and open tones on floor tom. Now play the *dawuro* timeline as hi-hat foot strokes and a bass drum pulse on beats 1 and 3. You can also ground bass drum as the repeating two-stroke *donno* pattern. This active conversation intensifies any music you are playing. Try this hand technique with each of the drumset rhythms in this article (Drumset Examples 17 and 18).

Drumset Example 17, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMFAdsx-GVQ&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=19&feature=plpp_video

and Drumset Example 18, viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtujMtAWJO8&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=20&feature=plpp_video




Use these patterns as a starting point—a door to finding your own sound through the spiritual dance drumming family of voices. When its rhythms feel comfortable in your playing, extend the patterns in these examples around your four limbs and the sound sources of the drumset. While keeping the timeline or other instrumental patterns inside your hearing, create your own voices in a way parallel to the transcendent drive of the Asante drummers.

Listen to the improvisations based on Abodwese, Oteduaso, and Kopo ensemble drumming rhythms at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGOPAzBaH8Q&list=PLAEDE1EB86D5AC27C&index=21&feature=plpp_video

## RESEARCH CONTEXT

In honor of musician, composer, scholar, author, teacher, mentor, and friend, Professor J. H. Kwabena Nketia, this essay is part of my lifelong performance and scholarly focus in African and African American music cultures. Professor Nketia's work and writings inspired my first formal studies in African music with Kwadzo Donkor and Kobena Adzenyah at Wesleyan University (Connecticut) in the 1980s.

royal hartigan speaking with Professor J. H. Kwabena Nketia

These led to cross-cultural studies with Wesleyan faculty professors Donkor, Adzenyah, and jazz artist Edward Blackwell, resulting in my PhD dissertation *blood drum spirit: Drum Languages of West Africa, African America, Native America, Central Java, and South India* (1986), as well as subsequent works *West African Rhythms for Drum set* (1995), *Dancin' on the Time* (2006), and *West African Eve Rhythms for Drum set* (2009), and an upcoming film on African and African American music and culture. This essay is an appreciation for all Professor Nketia has done for sharing the meaning of African music with the world, advocating for its visibility and respect, and giving us a vision of what ethnomusicology is at its best.

My research took place in four Asante communities, Jatiase, Mampong, Penteng, and Krobo. Due to the nature of this cultural expression, only the public aspects of the performances are included in this article out of respect for the people's beliefs. Since the music and dance carry ritual meaning that is sacred to the people, only short segments are given in the video clips and music notations as per the requests of the priests, priestesses, and musicians. Although copyright restrictions are not a part of Asante culture, historical misuse of indigenous materials by outsiders requires the citation of this work in all its aspects as the general property of the Asante people, and specifically here, that of the people of Jatiase, Mampong, Penteng, and Krobo. Nana Onyina, chief priest at Jatiase, Kwabena Boateng and Yaw Daniel Okyere at Mampong Asante, chief priest Nana Obeng Gyasi at Penteng, and chief priestess Nana

Kwartemaa at Krobo have given permission for study, transcription, performance, video recording, sharing, and drumset adaptations. The people who shared their music and culture in this study are as follows:

Jatiase – okomfoo (priestess) Te Nyarko, okomfoo (priest) Kwame Antwi, and okomfoo Kwarteng; musicians Kwabena Dapaa, Akwasi Amponsah, Kwaku Frimpong, and Yaw Duku, with Yaw Daniel Okyere.

Mampong Asante – musicians Kwabena Boateng, Yaw Daniel Okyere, Prince Afrifa, Papa Yaw, Akuamoah Boateng, Yaw Akowuah, Kwaku Charles, Nana Agyima, and Charles Owusu. Assistants included Kofi Oppong, Francis Opoku, and Musah Salaam.

Penteng Abodwese – shrine chief okomfoo Nana Obeng Gyasi.

Penteng – Abodwese Shrine chief priest Nana Obeng Gyasi; musicians Kwasi Boa, Kofi Bay, Jwasi Gyamfi, Adwoa Kwartemaa, Yaa Akyaa, Adwoa Bona, Akua Darkobea, Afia Mansa, Pokuwaa, Akua Kru, Akua Birago, and Akosua Agyekumwaa, with Yaw Daniel Okyere.

Krobo – chief priestess Nana Kwartemaa, musicians Nana Osei (priest), Kwaku Motia, Yaw Opoku, Kwabena Wesie, Kofi Sarpong, Kwaku Dua, Kofi Frimpong, Kwadwo Adama; other group members include Kwadwo Agyeman, Kofi Appia, and Kwame Atigya.

### Production Credits

Yaw Daniel Okyere, Kwabena Boateng, and Weihua Zhang, video recording, photographs, and formatting; Joseph Gyimah, logistics; Heather Tripp, video-photo transfer; Taylor Kirkwood, electronic music notation, and Richard Legault, notation transfer.

For Jatiase, photo credits, Yao Daniel Okyere, used with permission of Te Nyarko and Kwame Antwei; for Mampong Asante, photo and video credits, Kwabena Boateng, used with permission of Messrs. Boateng and Okyere; for Penteng, photo and video credits, Yao Daniel Okyere and Kwabena Boateng, used with permission from Nana Obeng Gyasi; and Krobo, photo credits, Yao Daniel Okyere and Marie Nelson, used with permission from Nana Kwartemaa and Nana Osei.



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# Teaching Jazz Drumset

## By Paul Buyer

Ed Shaughnessy, legendary drummer for Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show* band and PAS Hall of Famer, famously said, "In rock, the drumset is built from the bottom up. In jazz, it's built from the top down." To Shaughnessy, the *bottom up* was the danceable beat provided by the bass drum and snare drum. The *top down* was the swing feel of the ride cymbal and crisp time of the hi-hat. In my studio, this quote always begins the first jazz drumset lesson. It has an immediate impact and inspires students to look at the drumset differently than they ever have before.

Over the years, I have noticed the majority of college percussionists who come to me with drumset experience do not necessarily have a strong jazz background. Even some that played in their high school jazz band played mostly rock, funk, and Latin tunes and are often unfamiliar with jazz legends such as "Papa" Jo Jones, Mel Lewis, Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Max Roach, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Roy Haynes, Joe Morello, Peter Erskine, Ed Shaughnessy, John Riley, Ed Soph, and many others.

This was certainly the case for me. Without a high school jazz band, my drumset experience was limited to basketball pep band and a garage band my friends and I formed that played alternative rock. In college, I was expected to not only become a well-rounded percussionist, but a well-rounded drumset player, which meant developing skills and learning grooves in a variety of musical styles. By committing to private lessons and deliberate practice, I eventually earned the opportunity to play drums in my college's second jazz band, as well as jazz combos and the University Singers show choir band.

This article is written to help drumset students, drumset teachers, and band directors develop a foundational approach to jazz drumming. Though the following content is best implemented in the private lesson studio, it can be used in any musical setting.

### LISTENING

A critical component of teaching jazz drumset is listening to music, both live and recorded. In today's digital culture, the art and discipline of listening has become increasingly rare, being replaced by watching YouTube and other online videos.

Photo by Rick Mattingly

According to drumset artist, educator, and PAS Hall of Famer Ed Soph, "All kinds of materials are used to educate young jazz drummers except the music they are learning to play. Instruction is visual, not aural. The reality of the situation is that everyone can read but not everyone can hear. Musical big band drummers learn to play the music by listening to it. Listen for [concepts] that make a big band drummer musical. Listen for them in the playing of artists [like] Chick Webb, Buddy Rich, Jo Jones, Butch Miles, and Mel Lewis. You won't 'hear' these concepts in a book."

Many years ago, my professor at the University of Arizona, Gary Cook, told me a great story about how people experience live music. "One of my students came up to me and said, 'Professor Cook, did you see that concert last night?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'and I heard it too!' It was obvious from this exchange that the student watched the performance but did not listen to the music. He was not aware of balance, blend, and intonation. He did not pay attention to precision, alignment, and execution. He did not notice interpretation, phrasing, and expression. Instead, he got swept away watching the ensemble perform. While there is certainly a lot to watch during a concert such as the conductor's gestures, the musicians' body language, and the ensemble's choreography, the essence of attending a concert is about listening to the music.

According to Michael D'Angelo, Lecturer in Jazz Studies at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, "The best resource for any musician is the music itself. The more you listen to the music you want to create, the more it will become a part of you, and of course you have a model for your own development… By recognizing the qualities that make the music successful, it will be easier to incorporate those qualities into your own playing."

A few years ago, I coined a new term, *ear chops,* which is defined as the skills needed to listen to music and other musicians. By developing ear chops through a steady diet of listening over a long period of time, the music you listen to gradually "gets into your system," allowing you to expand your musical vocabulary and grow your confidence. This phenomenon also occurs in writers who read a large number of books by great authors. Over time, it "gets into their system." To learn more, see my article, "Developing Ear Chops" in Volume 1 of the *PAS Educators' Companion* at pas.org.

### FUNDAMENTALS

The fundamentals of jazz drumming include time, comping, fills, soloing, brushes, and reading.

#### Time

No skill is more important for drumset than playing in time. Good time is best developed by practicing with a metronome, play-along recordings, or other musicians. Going back to Shaughnessy's quote, time in jazz is played by the ride cymbal and hi-hat, and to develop a swing feel, the ride rhythm should be interpreted in triplets. According to legendary jazz drummer Sid Catlett, "Work on your sense of time and your feeling for the beat. That's the important thing in drumming, and without it all the technique in the world doesn't mean a thing."

#### Comping

As jazz pianists and guitarists know, comping refers to *complementing* or *accompanying.* In jazz drumming, this is done by playing rhythms on snare drum or bass drum to complement or accompany rhythms played by fellow band members. According to drummer Adam Nussbaum, "Concentrate on what the other instrumentalists are doing. So many drummers just listen to other drummers, but if you don't hear the other parts, you're missing what inspired the drummer to play what he's playing."

## Fills

Fills can be very challenging to teach, since they are usually learned from listening to music as well as to other drummers. According to Peter Erskine, a fill is "a short drum solo that is played in time, carries the music forward, is played in the style of the music, and can provide excitement…plus the unexpected." Remember that fills are musical transitions that should always serve the music—not the drummer. Many years ago, I attended a drumset camp at Capital University where drummer Gary Chaffee taught us a game. He put limits or restrictions on what we could play during a fill, including rhythms, drums, and rudiments. Some examples were "snare drum only, using triplets," "any drum, using eighth notes only," and "snare and high tom only, using paradiddles." This "fill game" forced us to do more with less and use our imagination and creativity. I remember one student who ended *every* fill he played on the floor tom. Gary promptly took the floor tom away!

## Soloing

Without question, soloing is a topic that deserves its own article, but the fundamentals of playing a drum solo can be presented here by discussing the music of the great Max Roach, known as the most melodic drummer ever. According to drummer, educator, and author John Riley, Max's solos "could afford one the opportunity to play more elaborately and/or more bombastically. However, Max is a mature *musician,* one who is more interested in developing a solo that builds on the moods [of the song he's playing], rather than using his solo space as a showcase for technical theatrics." In short, play for the music—not for yourself. The paradox is that *drum solos* are an integral part of jazz, but the *drumset* is not a solo instrument. Rather, it is an ensemble instrument. Always ask yourself what the music needs and what it is hungry for, and then feed it.

## Brushes

Brush playing is a beautiful art form and craft required in jazz drumming. While a variety of techniques, patterns, and approaches exist for playing brushes, it is ultimately up to the teacher to study the best practices, players, and concepts, and create a system for teaching them. According to drummer Tommy Igoe, "I love playing brushes more than I can say—I think brush playing gives you a fresh perspective on 'time'—and I truly believe *anyone* can play them reasonably well." Listen to great brush players like Ed Thigpen, Peter Erskine, and Clayton Cameron, and check out their resources at the end of this article. Regardless of which patterns or shapes you choose to create with your brushes, always strive for a legato sound, solid time, and a variety of textures you can contribute to the music.

## Reading

Because drumset charts are only meant to serve as a visual guide, reading skills can sometimes be a double-edged sword. For the drummer who reads well, there is a tendency to follow the chart too literally, as if playing a written snare drum solo with the goal of playing *correctly* or "playing the ink." This causes the drummer to "play by eye" rather than by ear, resulting in a lack of awareness and ear chops within the ensemble. For the drummer who does not read well, rhythms such as kicks, hits, and section/ensemble figures can easily be missed, resulting in a sub-standard musical product. The ideal is for the drummer to be able to read well *and* possess strong listening/ensemble skills.

## PRACTICE STRATEGIES

Drumset practice is always an interesting topic to discuss with students, as it can easily become more unstructured than other percussion practice regimens and routines. Without question, practicing drumset is fun and a wonderful opportunity to release some aggression, but should not be a jam session. Like marimba, timpani, or even tambourine, it should be disciplined and organized with specific goals to be achieved in the amount of time allotted. There is also a tendency for drumset students to spend too much time practicing what they already know, rather than developing new skills and woodshedding.

In my studio, I highly recommend students take snare drum lessons first, or at least arrive with a strong concert or rudimental background before studying drumset. There are four primary reasons for this. First, snare technique applies directly to drumset playing, especially in the application of the rudiments. Second, it is much more educationally sound to start on one surface than multiple surfaces. Third, it is logical to first develop hand technique before jumping in with four-limb hand/foot coordination. Finally, snare drum study, in the hands of a good teacher, will develop reading skills, which, as already discussed, is an essential skill for today's drumset player.

> In today's digital culture, the art of listening has become increasingly rare, replaced by watching online videos.

One of the most effective practice strategies I use to develop hand/foot coordination is to start with one limb, adding the others in one at a time. For example, when teaching snare or bass drum comping, start with the ride cymbal only. Notice your time. Notice your swing feel and groove. Feel the rebound. Next, add the hi-hat. Notice how these two limbs feel when played precisely together. Third, add the snare drum. Notice the relationship between the snare and ride and snare and hi-hat, as well as your dynamic balance and triplet subdivision. Finally, add the bass drum and follow the same process. Try this approach with a metronome or play-along track.

After starting with one limb, isolate two limbs and mix them up. For example, play ride and snare, hi-hat and bass, or bass and snare. Then add a third limb and finally the forth. Breaking down the limbs this way, over time, will help develop control, coordination, and independence.

Here are some other practice strategies that I recommend for all percussion instruments, especially drumset:

1. Be consistent and make practicing part of your daily routine. As author John C. Maxwell says, "The secret to your success is found in your daily agenda."
2. Remember, *how you sound* is more important than *what you play.* Average players play. Excellent players play and listen.
3. Loop each exercise. Looping means stopping after each repetition and starting again. This gives your mind and hands time to relax and focus.
4. Focus when you practice. Be aware, notice, and pay attention to the details of your craft.
5. Practice slowly. Slow practice = fast progress. Fast practice = slow progress. No practice = no progress.
6. Begin with the end in mind. To become a great player, you need to have a great semester every semester. To have a great semester, you need to have a great lesson every week. To have a great lesson every week, you need to have a great practice session every day.

## CONCLUSION

To take a "deep dive" into teaching jazz drumset, listening, fundamentals, and practice strategies are the foundation of a sound educational approach. In addition, students will grow, develop, and improve the most by attending concerts and clinics, taking lessons, watching videos, reading articles and interviews, studying drumset history, and playing with other musicians. As John Riley said so eloquently, the great jazz drummers are "masters of the instrument. They can all really *wow* us from behind the kit. Of even more significance to me, they are also the kinds of players who other instrumentalists seek to have in their bands, because all of these drummers, despite their drumming virtuosity, always consider making *music* their number-one priority."

## RESOURCES

### Books

*Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer,* Jim Chapin
*The Art of Bop Drumming,* John Riley
*Beyond Bop Drumming,* John Riley
*Drummin' Men,* Burt Korall
*Essential Drum Fills,* Peter Erskine
*Groove Essentials 1.0 and 2.0,* Tommy Igoe
*Mel Bay's Studio/Jazz Drum Cookbook,* John Pickering
*Star Sets,* Jon Cohan
*Survival Guide for the Modern Drummer,* Jim Riley
*The Evolution of Jazz Drumming,* Danny Gottlieb
*The Drummers Time,* Rick Mattingly
*The Great Jazz Drummers,* Ronald Spagnardi
*The Jazz Drummer's Workshop,* John Riley
*Their Time Was the Greatest,* Louis Bellson

### DVDs

*Brushworks,* Clayton Cameron
*Everything I Know: A Work in Progress,* Peter Erskine
*Groove Essentials 1.0 and 2.0,* Tommy Igoe
*Jazz Combo Drumming,* Danny Gottlieb
*Legends of Jazz Drumming,* hosted by Louis Bellson
*Secret Weapons for the Modern Drummer,* Jojo Mayer
*Steve Gadd,* Hudson Music Master Series
*The Art of Playing Brushes,* Adam Nussbaum and Steve Smith
*The Century Project,* Daniel Glass
*The Essence of Brushes,* Ed Thigpen
*The Master Drummer,* John Riley
*Traps,* Daniel Glass

### Websites

drummersresource.com
drummerworld.com
pas.org
vicfirth.com/drumset-history
vicfirth.com/the-jazz-trio-an-inside-view

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**Paul Buyer** is Director of Percussion, Director of Music, and Professor of Music at Clemson University. He is the author of *Working Toward Excellence* (Morgan James Publishing), *Marching Bands and Drumlines* (Meredith Music Publications), and co-author of *The Art of Vibraphone Playing* (Meredith Music Publications). He is also a contributing author to the second edition of *Teaching Percussion* by Gary Cook, and his articles have appeared in *American Music Teacher*, *Teaching Music*, *Jazz Education Network, Percussive Notes*, and *The PAS Educators' Companion*. Dr. Buyer serves as Second Vice President of the Percussive Arts Society and Career Development editor for *Percussive Notes.* His website is www.paulbuyer.com. **PN**

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# Things My Mother Never Told Me (About Vibes, Anyway)

By Jerry Tachoir

My musical adventure started out simply enough. I was dragged along to a wedding with my parents. There was a traditional Polish wedding band playing, and I was fascinated with the drummer, who noticed my interest and sat me on his lap to get a true perspective of what he was doing. I was hooked at seven years old.

Without any hesitation, my loving and generous parents sought out the best teacher in the Pittsburgh area, Eugene "Babe" Fabrizi, and I started taking a one-hour lesson every Saturday. I loved it and started to develop some skills. Babe Fabrizi belived that students need to know all of percussion, not just the drumset, so he started me on mallets. When I first realized that I could take my rhythmical drum knowledge and also play a melody, there was no turning back. This is what I wanted to do.

Again, my parents were very supportive, and even though mallet-keyboard instruments were expensive, they got me my first marimba. I practiced all the time. I wanted to get good fast. I bought as many fake books as I could afford and tried to read any piece of music I could find. Things were going great until, one day, Babe said, "Let's add a third mallet." This felt awkward and became a challenge. I wasn't sure what to do with that third mallet, so I used it to help play melodies when it was convenient, and I would sometimes grab a chord tone or root.

Reading came natural to me. I was now able to read any three-mallet music and even make some up from just reading melodies. Then, Babe did it again: "Let's add another mallet." Again, I felt as though I took five steps backward. For several weeks playing with four mallets was very clumsy, and I was having a difficult time holding the mallets and knowing which mallet to use to play the music I was given. In a few weeks, however, I got more comfortable holding four mallets, could read four-part music, and I really enjoyed the sound.


One Saturday at my regular lesson, I noticed a big box in the Fabrizi store with a Musser logo on it. It was a new vibraphone, and Babe convinced my parents that Jerry needed this. Again, my parents found a way and I took home a vibraphone. This was different; it had a pedal, and the notes would ring if you pushed down on the pedal. I remember asking Babe to explain the pedal to me, and he said, "Don't worry about it; just play it like you play your marimba." So I ignored the pedal or I would keep time with the pedal. I started to realize that I could use some of the ringing notes to create flowing melodies that were very musical, as long as the ringing wasn't too much or had half-steps or whole steps ringing, which sounded bad.

I enrolled at Berklee College of Music after meeting Gary Burton, who told me about Berklee and that I could study with him. At this point, I felt comfortable as a percussionist and really wanted to develop my mallet and improvisational skills. I put away the drums and concentrated 100 percent on being a mallet player. I learned early on that mallet instruments were not in high demand in the real world of gigging musicians. So, as a mallet player, I discovered that it is necessary to be a leader and create one's own work environment.

I also discovered that the general public was very accepting of a mallet player. Most people can recall having a toy xylophone as a child and understand that you use mallets to play these instruments—though they are fascinated to see a full-size vibraphone and marimba, and are dazzled by the use of four mallets. So even without playing a note, you have won over your audience. Now all you need is to play well.

## CHALLENGES

Keyboard percussion instruments are expensive, big, and heavy. The weight is not such an issue early on in one's career, but as you start touring more and doing one-nighters, the weight becomes an issue. The mallets themselves wear out rather quickly if you play a lot, and they are expensive compared to drumsticks or reeds for a woodwind. Playing vibes and marimba requires standing, which takes away the comfort element, and standing on one foot to play the vibes while pedaling adds to the misery. As said before, the instruments take up a lot of room and require a large car or van to haul them around.

Then there is the issue of flying. Commercial airlines absolutely hate these instruments and charge an extremely unreasonable excess-baggage fee. This forces you to find or rent an instrument at your destination, which is a compromise from your regular instrument.

Now, let's assume you are a contemporary mallet player and play with a four-mallet technique. You will discover that your hands will hurt, especially between the fingers where the mallets tend to rub. It is imperative to practice and get past the blister stage, at which point your hands will develop necessary calluses. These calluses act as support and cushion the mallets where they contact the skin on your fingers. These calluses need to be maintained. In the winter, when the air is dry, your skin will crack and so will the calluses unless you use a skin moisturizer on them when not playing. Then in the summer, especially during outdoor concerts in very humid conditions, the calluses become too soft and will blister, or worse, they can break and bleed.

This is a well-known issue for mallet players, yet something we are never taught about or made aware of in the beginning. Most mallet players who play a lot have huge calluses between the fingers to the point of almost a deformity or

> Once you realize that the world doesn't stop when you hit a wrong note, you can relax and play.

at least an unsightly lump. These calluses are a necessity and must be maintained in order to play for long times. During tours, my calluses get a good workout and seem to do well; it is the off time that I have issues. When I relax or I'm on vacation, I always have a set of mallets with me to hold and move around in my hands so I can maintain these calluses when I'm not actually playing my instrument. These are but a few of the issues mallet players must deal with.

## MALLETS

We always struggle to get the perfect set of mallets that aren't too whippy and not too stiff and straight. I prefer rattan mallets somewhat on the thin but stiff side. Rattan gives me the feel I want and just enough flex to really be able to pop the notes. I am very fussy about my mallets and very fortunate to have the support of a great company, Innovative Percussion, who makes the Jerry Tachoir JT 23 mallet. These mallets are consistent and have the highest grade of rattan in the industry. I spent a long time developing these mallets to meet my specific sound and feel.

As good as these mallets are, rattan is a natural product and is not always the same in flex, size, and straightness. Once I get a perfect set of mallets, I hoard them and try to keep them in my mallet bag when not in use. I can always tell when other people have touched my mallets because their hand oils tends to make the mallets feel different, which I can't really explain, except that for a while they tend to slip in my hands.

## THE VIBRAPHONE

Here we have a very mechanical instrument in which the standard for quite some time has been three octaves starting and ending on F. I don't know who decided the vibes' range should be F–F, but honestly, it makes no sense. At the very least give me an E at the bottom to be able to play guitar music. I personally feel the instrument would be complete if it went down to a C. I don't need any more on the upper end, as these notes tend to get rather useless anyway. But going down to a C would make total sense and make me a happy camper. A few companies have extended-range vibraphones, and the extended lower range gives unaccompanied soloing more depth and the ability to harmonically add better bass lines and a thicker, fuller sound.

Vibraphones are not very loud, especially when compared to amplified instruments such as electric guitar, electric bass, and keyboards. At times, depending on the drummer, competing to be heard is another challenge. I have experimented with mics and pickups, and each has its disadvantages. With pickups you can get loud, and feedback tends to not be an issue, but all pickups alter the acoustic sound of mallet instruments. With pickups, you tend to hear a lot of the attack of the mallet on the bars moreso than the actual warm, acoustic sound. These pickups are actually glued to the bottom of the bars and are very fragile. It is necessary to carry extra contacts and glue if you travel and use these pickup systems.

Mics allow for a more natural sound of the instrument; however, they can get in the way of one's playing. The more you move them away from the instrument to avoid bumping them, the more they tend to pick up other instruments as well. Mics are definitely the preferred way to record mallet instruments but vary in efficiency depending on the type of live performance. If I'm in a nice concert hall, I will definitely use a pair of good mics—usually condenser mics. If the performance is outdoors, and I need to be louder, then I'll opt for pickups. When using pickups, I also usually add some reverb or a little light chorus effect, to enhance the sound and try to disguise the sound of the mallets hitting the bars. For me, pickups are a compromise but a necessity at times.

## PROFESSIONALISM

I'm often asked, "How long does it take to become a pro?" Not to sound facetious, but it is a constant pursuit. There is a saying, "You don't know what you don't know" and I add, "Most don't know that they don't know it." Essentially, when you first start playing, you have total freedom and are unaware of wrong chords, scales, notes, rhythms, etc. The more you study, you realize there is more to be aware of and learn.

At that point, music can become intimidating because you realize that *you can hit a wrong note*! Once you realize that the world doesn't stop when you hit a wrong note, and that you are aware of it and can control the resolution, then you can relax and play. Those wrong notes are nothing more than an unresolved creative opportunity. Music is a series of dissonance/resolution events, and that is the beauty.

Our constant strive for perfection in the arts is a very aloof and possibly a lifelong journey to try to achieve. If we play it safe and easy, our music is uneventful, whereas if we take chances, and go out on the edge of our comfort zone, our music and performance will grow and we as artists will begin our journey of self-awareness and artistic development. This is where the fun starts! Trust your ears and your musical knowledge and strive for a clean performance with varying dynamics and tasteful dissonants/resolutions. Enjoy!

**Jerry Tachoir** is the author of *Contemporary Mallet Method – an approach to the Vibraphone and Marimba*, published by Riohcat Music. The Jerry Tachoir Group has performed at many major jazz festivals and concert halls throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe. Jerry has been the featured artist/clinician at numerous Jazz Educator Network conventions as well as PASIC. PN

# A Snare Drummer's Guide to Selected Classics for Wind Band

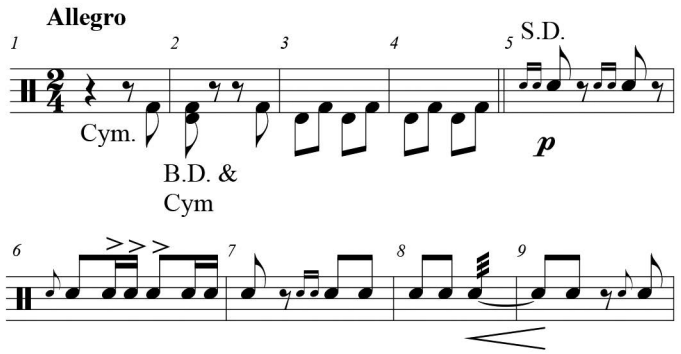
By W. Robnett Schoolfield

The musical demands of performing on snare drum in an orchestra or a wind band are the same. Both ensembles require consistent precision and musicality to achieve musical excellence. Bringing rhythmic precision and musical sensitivity to your snare drumming can be addressed through attention to dynamics and expression, roll interpretation, and sticking. Consider the following well-known snare drum passages.

## FOLK SONG SUITE

Our first work for consideration is "Folk Song Suite for Military Band" by Ralph Vaughn Williams. Beginning with the first movement, "March – 'Seventeen Come Sunday'," note that as with many marches of the day, most of the percussion parts are on the same page.[1]

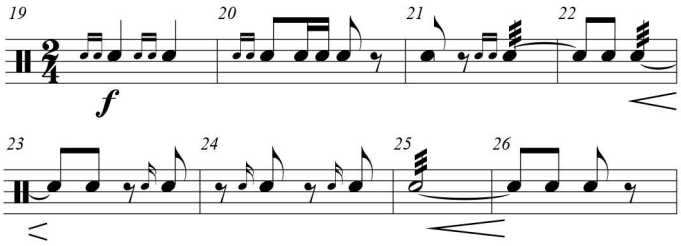
Figure 1




The snare drum enters in bar 5 at *piano*. Unfortunately, you have little else to go on for phrasing or expression. Why not do something to make this passage more than merely an exercise in drags and flams? In this opening section, the snare drum is scored with flutes and clarinets. Listen to the ensemble and match the phrasing. You might try adding some expression with the light accents I added in measure 6. Consider the little crescendo I added in measure 8. The woodwinds have a sustained pitch here and the crescendo roll will add shape to the phrase and will drive the melodic line into measure 9. Remember to play lightly and accurately throughout this section, about 13 measures, and blend your dynamic with the woodwinds.

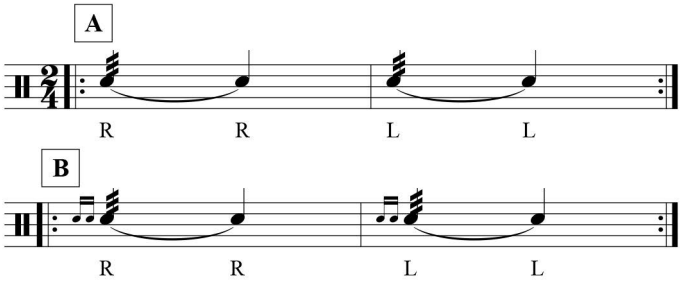
The eighth notes in measure 5 become quarter notes in measure 18, and the same motif is then taken by the brass (see Figure 2). The switch from eighth notes to quarter notes is appropriate considering that the snare drum now matched with the brass must play stronger to blend dynamically with the brass. In measure 21 the roll on count 2 begins with a drag, but more on that a little later. To continue, I added crescendos in measure 22 and 25 similar to the crescendo in measure 8. Do not forget to start these crescendos a little softer to make the dynamic shape otherwise more apparent.

Figure 2




The roll in measure 21 begins with a drag. This drag beginning softens the attack of the brass chord that connects count 2 to count 1 of the following measure. But how often do we see this in orchestral music? As far as I know the "drag roll" is not an official rudiment, but it is more common than you might think. Fortunately, developing such a roll is easy (see Figure 2A).

Figure 2A



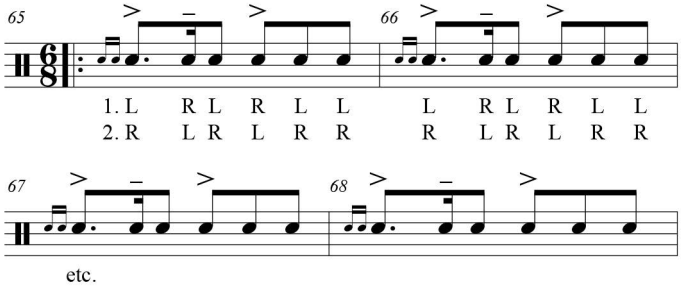

Repeat many times and vary the speed and dynamic. You might also vary the length of the drag from long to very short. Try placing accents on the different beats. Do this so you will be able to perform such a figure at a variety of tempos.

Another interesting section begins at measure 65 where the time signature shifts to 6/8. This ostinato figure performed by the snare drum provides a solid rhythmic foundation for the rest of the ensemble. It is a challenge to perform this figure consistently with precision and musicality for almost 30 measures, not counting repeats (see Figure 3).[2]

At first glance, the figure may appear simple, but do not be deceived. Drags can be difficult at certain tempos, not because of the execution but because of the preparation. It takes time to prepare the drag by separating the hands while keeping one hand close to the head. This becomes an issue by measure 66 because there is little time between the eighth note on count 6 and the drag that must precede count 1 of the following measure.

Another problem can be the precise placement of the sixteenth note following the dotted-eighth on count 1. How do we make sure that little note fulfills its most vital function in the scheme of this section? Finally, what about phrasing? It is not enough simply to deliver a well-timed collection of notes

Figure 3




within this measure. We should add something to bring life to this figure by giving it dynamic shape and a bit of forward motion and flow. The truly musical percussionist will address these issues through sticking and expression.

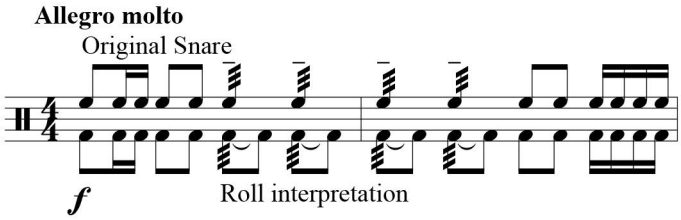
An experienced performer understands the importance of his or her part in relation to the overall effect of the composition. Notice the suggested sticking. It may seem odd for a right-handed percussionist to begin this figure with the left hand. But why not save your dominant hand for the grace notes of the drag so as to keep the grace notes consistently short? If the grace notes are too long, the separation between count 6 and count 1 will be lost and the rhythmic clarity will suffer. Doubling the left hand, actually tripling, at the end of the measure (counts 5, 6, and then 1) allows time for the right hand to get close to the head for the drag on count 1. After the left on count 1, the right hand is then ready to play the sixteenth note after the dotted-eighth on beat 1.

In addition to the sticking, expressive markings are also suggested, including the dash over the sixteenth note. This little note, though brief in duration, is vital to the overall character of the entire section. It must be played accurately each time to bring a lively, dance-like character to the section. Your dominant hand can be counted on to place that seemingly insignificant note right where it belongs with the appropriate expression. This is not to make it on the same level or intensity as the accents on counts 1 and 4, but certainly lean on it a little and enjoy the effect. The high point of the phrase is count 4, and this little sixteenth note leads us in that direction. Shape each measure the same way. Practice it with a metronome, under tempo, to fine-tune your accuracy and make it consistent.

## AMERICAN OVERTURE FOR BAND

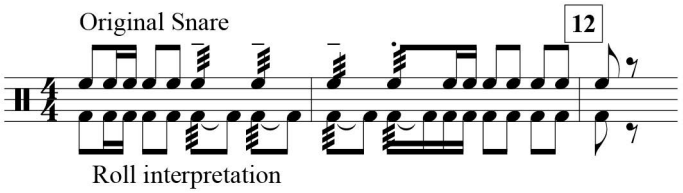
Another great composition for band with demands of rhythmic accuracy and musical sensitivity is "American Overture for Band" by Joseph Wilcox Jenkins.[3] Roll interpretation in this piece becomes an issue beginning in measure 6—the task being how to separate the quarter-note rolls while blending musically and accurately with the rest of the ensemble (see Figure 4).

Figure 4




I produced the excerpt in Figure 4 from "American Overture" with the written snare part on top with suggested articulation along with a suggested roll interpretation on the bottom. It is important to separate the rolls because the rest of the ensemble has quarter notes in the same place. One way to separate the rolls is to interpret the quarter-note rolls as 5-stroke rolls, taking care to eliminate the accent on the end. Another way to separate the rolls is to perform them as press rolls (i.e., bring both sticks together down on the head and let them buzz). Depending on the tempo, one might even choose to blend the two roll types together to create a consistent series of short, separated rolls. A similar excerpt occurs a short time later in measure 10 where roll duration adds to the challenge (see Figure 5).

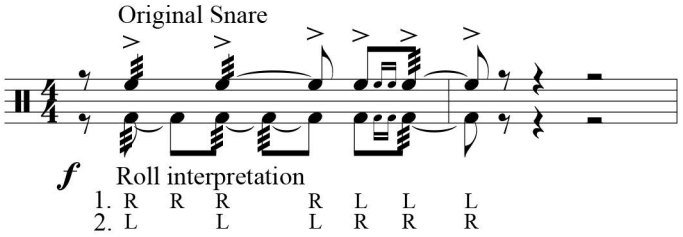
Figure 5




The excerpt in Figure 5 is quite similar to the earlier excerpt, but I have produced it here to point out that performing this excerpt becomes tricky in measure 11 with an even shorter roll on count 2. Regardless of how you interpret the earlier quarter-note rolls, a press roll might be the best choice here.

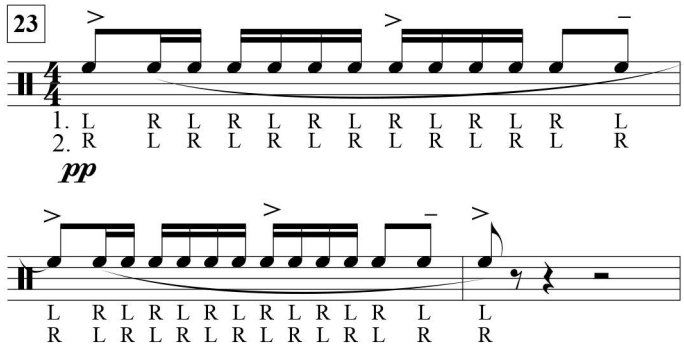
Another example of roll interpretation occurs in measure 82 (see Figure 6).[4] This particular example is syncopated and ends with another example of a drag roll. As before, the original snare part appears on top with the roll interpretation on bottom. In measure 82 the first roll beginning on the "and" of count 1 is a 5-stroke roll followed by a 9-stroke roll on the "and" of count 2. Be sure the rolls are separated as before.

Figure 6




This classic work for band offers at least one more example of how a snare drummer can display precision and musicality. A very important motif occurs at measure 23. This motif is performed several times throughout the piece at various dynamic levels (see Figure 7).[5] The music requires the snare drummer to perform with steady hand-to-hand strokes, dynamic sensitivity, and a keen sense of balance within the ensemble. There are other ways to stick this passage, including R RL instead of hand-to-hand on count 1. However, I found that I consistently lost a slight bit of time and felt the uncomfortable need to catch up until I tried performing it hand-to-hand.

Figure 7




Apart from the *pianissimo* dynamic at the beginning of this section, there is little else to go on, so the snare drummer is left to his or her own devices. I added

accents and phrasing based on what I heard the trumpets performing. The accent on count 1, remember, is in the context of the dynamic. Here is another case where a right-hand dominant player may choose to begin with the left hand. I find this helps in two ways: one, I find it easier to begin quietly by playing the first stroke with my left; two, the remaining strokes in the measure will have the right hand in the lead making it easier to perform the pulse or accent on count 3.

Notice also the smaller accent, or the dash, on the "and" of count 4. Striking with the left on the "and" of count 4, then again on count 1, allows the player to perform the repeated material with consistent sticking, expression, and phrasing. The phrasing as marked connects the "and" of count 1 to the downbeat of count 1 on the next measure. I did not indicate so-called "hairpin" crescendo/decrescendo markings under the phrase, but consider the rise and fall of this phrase. I perform this as though the high point of the phrase is on count 3.

Not all music for band requires the same amount of rhythmic precision and musicality. Even fewer percussion parts provide guidance to indicate appropriate phrasing and expression. Therefore, the musical percussionist, a "musician first, percussionist second," will look for opportunities to apply rhythmic precision and musical sensitivity to achieve musical excellence.

## ENDNOTES

1. Figures 1, 2, and 3: *English Folk Song Suite* by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Copyright © 1924 by Boosey & Co. Ltd. Reprinted by permission of Boosey & Hawkes. Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Accents and crescendoes are the author's.
2. Line 1 is suggested sticking for right-hand dominant players. Line 2 is suggested for left-hand dominant players. Accents are the author's.
3. Figures 4–7: *American Overture for Band* by Joseph Wilcox Jenkins. Copyright © 1955, 1956, 2003 by Theodore Presser Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission.
4. Separate sticking for right hand dominant (1) or left hand dominant (2) players. Accents are the author's and match articulations scored for the winds.
5. Separate stickings for right or left hand dominant players. Phrasing and articulations are the author's.

**W. Robnett Schoolfield** holds degrees from Tennessee Technological University, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and Bob Jones University (BJU). He serves as principal percussionist with the Hendersonville Symphony Orchestra in North Carolina and as percussionist and xylophone soloist with the Greenville Textile Heritage Band in Greenville, South Carolina. He also performs as timpanist with the Greenville Light Opera Works. Since 1986, Professor Schoolfield has been the Director of Percussion Studies at BJU where he founded the program and oversees all aspects of percussion including private lessons and performance from pre-college through university. Schoolfield is the founder and conductor of the Bob Jones University Percussion Ensemble and is associate conductor with the University Symphonic Wind Band. He performs regularly with the award-winning BJU Opera Association. **PN**

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TERMS USED IN PERCUSSION

# The Abbreviated Percussionist

By Michael Rosen

Here is a list of abbreviations commonly used in percussion parts, orchestral as well as chamber music. The terms have been taken from music with which I am familiar, so there are fewer abbreviations in Spanish or Portuguese. Any word can be abbreviated, so use your imagination and be on the lookout for those that are not on the list but will follow similar patterns.

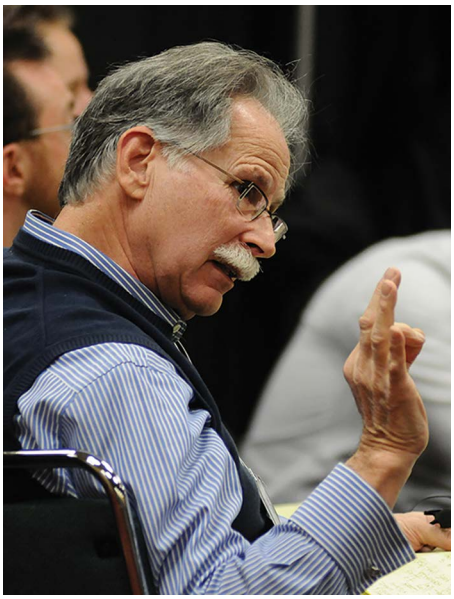
Note that there are sometimes uppercase letters and sometimes not. The same is true of punctuation. It depends on the whim of the composer as to which is used. In addition, note that nouns in German are capitalized. There are likely more than I have listed, so if you come across one not on the list please send it to me at mrosen@oberlin.edu.

( ) = language: F = French; G = German; I = Italian
[ ] = the complete term represented by the abbreviation
{ } = my comments

2 cymb. (F): 2 cymbals; pair of cymbals crashed
à2 (F): with two; cymbals struck together; bass drum and cymbals together
à d´f.de… (F) [à défaulte de… ]: in place of
AFF (F) [affolants]: thin pieces of metal {small thunder sheets used in "Persephassa"}
aig (F) [aigue]: high
à ped (F) [`à pédale]: with pedal {with a bass drum pedal}
avec bag. (F): with stick {usually means a snare drum stick; or a long French bread}
bacch. (I) [bacchetta]: stick; mallet
bag. (F) [baguette]: stick; mallet
bag.de (F) [baguette de…]: a stick made of…
bag.éponge (F) [baguette éponge]: soft mallet
bagu. (F) [baguette]: stick; mallet
Bck. (G) [Becken]: cymbals
b (F) [bloc, as in bloc de bois]: woodblock
Beck (G) [Becken]: cymbals
BG: bongos {from "Persephassa"}
bl.ch. (F) [bloc chinois]: temple block {could also mean woodblocks}
bzw (G) [beziehungsweise]: or
ca. (I) [cassa, gran cassa]: bass drum
camp. (I) [campanaccio]: cowbell
cast. (I): castanets
castag. (F): castanets
c.cl. (F) [caisse claire]: snare drum
c.clre (F) [caisse claire]: snare drum
cimb.ant. (I) [cimbali antichi]: antique cymbals; crotales
Cin. (G) [Cinellen]: cymbals {term taken from the archaic Italian term cinelli}
CL (F) [caisse claire]: snare drum {from "Persephassa"}
Clag. (F) [claquette]: slapstick
cl.de va (F) [cloche de vache]: cowbell
cmplli (I) [campanelli]: orchestra bells {generic term for small bells}
CO: conga drum {from "Persephassa"}
c.r. (F) [caisse roulante]: tenor drum {without snares}
c.r. (I) [cassa rullante]: tenor drum {without snares}
crot. (F) [crotales]: crotales
c.s. (I) [con sordino]: with mute
Cse (F) [grosse caisse]: bass drum
Cse roul. (F) [caisse roulante]: tenor drum {without snares}
Csse cl. (F) [caisse claire]: snare drum
CY (F) [cymbal]: cymbal {from "Persephassa"}
cymb. (F) [cymbale]: cymbal
Cymb.ant. (F) [cymbale antique]: antique cymbal; crotale
cymb.bag.ép (F) [cymbal baguettes éponge]: cymbal struck with a soft mallet
cymb.s (F) [cymbal suspendue]: suspended cymbal
ecc. (I) [eccetera]: etcetera
ét. (F) [étouffez]: dampen
Filzschl. (G) [Filzschlegel]: felt headed mallet {You will see Schlegel and Schlägel. Schlegel is a chicken drumstick and Schlägel is a drumstick we use. However, I have seen both spellings.}
fl.à coulisse (F): slide whistle
GC ped (F) [grande caisse à pedal]: low bass drum with a pedal {from "Persephassa"}
g.c. (F) [grosse caisse]: bass drum
g.c. (I) [gran cassa]: bass drum
g.caisse (F): bass drum
ged. (G) [gedämpt]: dampened; muffled
Glockengl. (G) [Glockengeläute]: chimes; the sound of church bells
Glocksp. (G) [Glockenspiel]: orchestra bells {actually means "keyboard instrument"}
Glsp. (G) [Glockenspiel]: orchestra bells
gr (F) [grosse caisse]: bass drum
gr.c. (I) [gran cassa]: bass drum
gr caisse (F) grande caisse: bass drum
gr.Tr. (G) [Grosse Trommel]: bass drum
gr. Trommel (G) [Grosse Trommel]: bass drum
gse caisse (F): bass drum
g.cassa (I): bass drum
hg. (G) [hängend]: suspended
Holzbl. (G) [Holzblock]: woodblock
Holzschl (G) [Holzschägel]: wood sticks
j.de t (F) [jeu de timbres]: orchestra bells {originally meant "keyboard instrument"}
Kast. (G) [Kastagnetten]: castanets
Kl (G) [kleine]: small
Kl.Mtr (G) [Kleine Militärtrommel]: military drum; field drum
Kl.TR (G) [Kleine Trommel]: snare drum [also a generic term for a small drum}
Kl.Tr.Stöcke (G) [Kleine Trommelstöcken]: drumsticks {could be thin drumsticks}
Lederst (G) [Lederstab]: leather covered mallet
Lke.Hd (G) [Links (or e) Hand]: left hand
lasc.vibr. (I): let ring
l.v. (F) [laissez vibrer]: let ring
l.v. (I) [laciare vibrare]: let ring
m. (G) [mit]: with
MAR: maracas {from "Persephassa"}
Mbf (G) [marimbafon]: marimba
mit Schwammschl (G) [mit Schwammschlägel]: with a soft mallet
m.d. (F) [main droit]: right hand
m.d. (I) mano destra: right hand
m.D. (G) [mit Dämpfer]: with damper on; muted
m.dr (F) main droit]: right hand
med. (F) [médium]: middle register
m.g. (F) [main gauche]: left hand
modo ord. (I) [modo ordinario]: in the usual way; in the usual manner
m.s. (I) [mano sinistro]: left hand
ord (F) [ordinaire]: in the ordinary manner; as usually played

ord (I) [ordinario]: in the ordinary manner; as usually played
ordin (I): in the ordinary manner; as usually played
p (I) [piatti]: cymbals {could also mean piatto; suspended cymbal}
Petite timb en re (F): small timpani tuned to d {from "Creation of the World" by Milhaud}
Pi. (I) [piatti]: cymbals
Piat. (I) [piatti]: cymbals
Pk. (G) [Pauken]: timpani
Pte Csse Cl (F) [petire caisse claire]: thin snare drum
Pte tamb (F) [petite tambour]: thin snare drum {also generic term for small drum}
Ptti (I) [piatti]: crash cymbals
Rinf. (I) [rinforzarsi]: reinforced; stromger; louder
R.Tr (G) [Rührtrommel]: tenor drum {without snares but not always}
Sans sourd (F) [sans sourdine]: without muffler
SB (F) [simantra bois]: wooden simantra {large, thin piece of wood used in "Persephassa"}
Sch. (G) [Schlegel]: generic term for a stick {usually indicates snare drum stick}
Schtr. (G) [Schellentrommel]: tambourine
Schnarrs. (G) [Schnarrseiten]: snares
Schwammschl. (G) [Schwammschlegel]: soft mallet
Sec (I) [secco]: short, don't let it ring
Sf (I) [Silifono]: xylophone
SI (F) [sirene]: siren {from "Persephassa"}
SM (F) [simantra metall]" metal simantra {piece of metal used in "Persephassa"}
Sord. (I) [sordino]: mute, muffler
Sourd. (F) [sourdine]: mute, muffler
Strisc (I) [strisciare, strisciando]: rub; rubbing
TA: tamtam {from "Persephassa"}
Tamb. (F): tambourine {could also be a generic term for tambour; drum}
Tamb (G) [tambourin de Provence]: deep drum from Provence, France {NOT a tambourine}
Tamb (I) [tamburello]: tambourine { could be tamburo, depends on context}
Tamb.avec timbre (F): snare drum with snares
Tamb.b (I) [tamburo basco]: tambourine
Tamb.de B (F): tambourine
Tamb. De B (F) [tambour de Basque]: tambourine
Tamb. De Basq (F) [tambour de Basque]: tambourine
Tamb.de Basque (F): tambourine
Tamb. Gr (I) [tamburo grande]: bass drum
Tamb in (F) [tambourin]" drum from Provence {deep drum with one snare}
Tamb. Militaire sans timbre (F) [tambour militaire sans timbre]: military drum without snares
Tamb. Mil. Sans timbre (F) [tambour militaire sans timbre]: military drum without snares
Tamb.P (F) [tambourin Provençal]: deep drum from Provence
Tamb. R. (I) [tamburo rullante]: tenor drum without snares
Ta.mi. plus loin (F) [tambour militaire plus loin]: military drum from afar {from a distance}
Tamt (I) [tamtam]: tam tam
t.b (F) [tambour de Basque]: tambourine
tbles (F) [timbales]: timpani
tbres (F) [timbres]: orchestra bells or snares
T'buro mil. (I) [tamburo militare]: military drum
t.dep (F) [tambourin de Provençal]: deep drum from Provence with one snare
T in (F) [tambourin de Provençal]: deel drum from Provence with one snare
TH: Thai gong {from "Persephassa"}
TI (F) [timbale]: timpani
TB (F): drums without snares {from "Persephassa"}
Timb. (F) [timbale]: timpani
t.m. (I) [tamburo militare]: military drum; field drum
tmb (I) [tamburo]: generic term for drum; could mean military drum
tmb.gr (I) [tamburo grande]: bass drum
tmb.r (I) [tamburo rullante]: tenor drum {without snares}
tmbrno (I) [tamburino]: tambourine {could mean just a small drum}
T.p (F) [tambourin de Provençe]: deep drum from Provence {with one snare}
Tp (I) [timpani]: timpani
TO: tom tom
Trg. (F) [triangle]: triangle
Trgl. (G) [triangle]: triangle
Trgl (I) [triangolo]: triangle
Triang (I) [triangolo]: triangle
Trommelst. (G) [trommelstöcken] drumsticks {usually means snare drum sticks}
t.t (I) (G) (F): tam tam
usw. (G) [und so weiter]: etc.; and so on
Vib. (F) [vibraphone]: vibraphone
Vibraf (I) [vibrafono]: vibraphone
Vibraph (F) [vibraphone]: vibraphone
Vibraph (G) [vibraphone]: vibraphone
WB (F): woodblock {from "Persephassa"}
Xf (I) [xylophono]: xylophone
Xil (I) [xylofono]: xylophone
Xyl (G) [xylophon]: xylophone
Xyl (I) ]xylofono]: xylophone
Xyloph (F) (G) [xylophone]- xylophone
z.B. (G) [zum Beispiel]: for example
Zilf (I) [zilafono]: xylophone
Zilo (I) [zilophono]: xylophone
Zu 2 (G) [zu zwei]: with two {with crash cymbals}
Zymb. (G) [Zymbel]: cymbal

I always enjoy getting mail from readers to help us all do a better job of using the appropriate instruments and making our crazy terminology more clear. If you would like me to tackle a question about terms you are not sure of, please send it to mrosen@oberlin.edu and I will answer you directly, then put my response in a future article.



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

# Auditioning for the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

By William Short

*William Short is Principal Bassoon of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Since auditioning is such an important consideration for all musicians, we present in this article another point of view for this process through the lens of percussionist Rob Knopper and clarinetist Boris Allakhverdyan, both of whom recently won positions in the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.*

Winston Churchill once said, "[Democracy] is the worst form of government except all those others that have been tried from time to time." Much the same can be said for orchestral auditions; they are a flawed system of objectively judging what is, ultimately, a subjective art form. Orchestral musicians devote themselves to the collective endeavor of ensemble playing; auditions put them into a harsh, solo spotlight, under which they must jump through whatever musical "hoops" the audition committee sets before them. It is the worst way of choosing the best musician—except for all the others.

Every orchestra uses a slightly different system to find the right person for the job and to make that process as painless as possible for both auditioner and auditionee. The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra is no exception. We take a great deal of pride in running the fairest, most effective auditions we can. I sat down with percussionist Rob Knopper and principal clarinetist Boris Allakhverdyan to discuss their experiences in this unique system of interviewing for a dream job.

## GETTING THE BALL ROLLING

When an audition is announced, all interested musicians submit a resume. A committee of orchestra members reviews the resumes to determine which applicants will be invited directly to the live audition and which will be asked to submit a preliminary recording. Boris was invited directly to the live audition, having already played professionally for four years in the Kansas City Symphony, advanced to later rounds in recent major auditions, and performed as a substitute with several major orchestras.

Rob, on the other hand, was asked to submit a CD. He describes the process of recording as "kind of terrible." When it was done, he enjoyed the feeling of having "conquered something [he] didn't know how to do," but remembers that, at the time, he would "listen to a 13-second excerpt and say, 'I hear 65 things that were wrong with that.'" Over time the takes improved, but so did his standards, until "the tiny errors became...so clear." He "hadn't thought about anything else for hours." Arriving at the end of the recording process, he says, combines knowing that the final product represents the best of what one can do and being intimately aware of everything that is still wrong with it.

In the end, he made it through. Both Rob and Boris were on their way to audition for the Met Orchestra.

## GEARING UP

Rob views the audition itself as little more than an endpoint of a much longer and more important preparation process, which he treats with an almost obsessive passion: "[The preparation] is what I have control over. Of course, every rejection I got—and there were tons of them—hurt in its own way, but as long as I was able to say, 'Okay, this preparation process yields this result,' I was driven to keep changing things up." Eventually, he found the process that worked for him, although he says that it took him from age 16 to 24, encompassing some 60 audition experiences. His unique system of preparation gave him a tremendous confidence boost. He knew that he had put "as much work as possible into it," and that very few others had done the same.

Boris had less time to prepare for his Met audition than he would ordinarily like, since he had another major audition several weeks before. He prefers to spend six or seven weeks preparing for an audition; for the Met, he only had four. However, he says he also felt "fresher," describing previous auditions as often feeling that he had "peaked already. [The Met audition] was not like that." He describes, amazingly, actually enjoying the audition process: "I like how concentrated I am at the auditions. They put me in a completely different mindset; I care about each note." He feels that he concentrates more under pressure, and that an audition provides more pressure than virtually any performance.

## HOW TO PICK UP CRASH CYMBALS, AND OTHER TALES FROM BEHIND THE SCREEN

Why is there so much pressure? In part, because the candidates must prepare an exhaustive list of some of the most important and demanding parts ever written for their instrument. For Boris' audition, the list included a solo concerto plus 18 excerpts

Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

from 14 operas. Rob's audition included even more excerpts from both the symphonic and operatic repertoire, in which he had to demonstrate his abilities on no fewer than nine different instruments.

Both Boris and Rob note that the lists contained a great deal of unfamiliar music, which presented both a challenge and effectively evened the playing field. Rob notes, "You're not testing [who has the most] years of experience; everyone has exactly the same amount of time to prepare." Why is the opera repertoire so little-known among orchestrally-trained musicians? Students in conservatory and university music programs are not exposed to the same quantity of operatic literature as they are to symphonic literature, so any opera audition will likely include music that most of the candidates have not played (or even heard) before.

Boris notes that some of the most difficult excerpts included Strauss' "Der Rosenkavalier," Verdi's "I Vespri Siciliani," and the overture to Smetana's "The Bartered Bride." A deceptively difficult excerpt comes from the onstage banda in Mozart's "Don Giovanni"; it sounds simple, but controlling the quality of articulation (not too hard, not too soft) is very difficult. "Largo al factotum" from Rossini's "Il barbiere di Siviglia" provides similar challenges; it

can easily sound too harsh. Stylistic differences between, say, Wagner and Verdi or Mozart and Puccini are of the utmost importance.

Rob notes that, while excerpts for the typical "major" percussion instruments, such as snare drum and xylophone, are vitally important and quite difficult, so are excerpts for more unexpected instruments. Rob described a nearly five-month process of learning to pick up and position crash cymbals in such a way that they make no noise until he wants them to. An excerpt from "Götterdämmerung" that consisted of pairs of very loud cymbal crashes entailed the following: he would pick up the cymbals separately, pressing one against his chest and gently positioning a corner of the other against it. He then moved both against his chest, lined them up, and rubbed them against each other ever-so-gently to ensure that they were exactly even. The committee could hear none of this. Only then could he proceed with the excerpt at hand.

## THE AUDITION

Once any audition has begun, its unpredictability becomes readily apparent. Boris felt that his preliminary round was "good, but nothing extraordinary. It was just fine." He advanced to the semifinal round, which was on a different day, after all preliminary auditions had concluded. He found that this gap effectively eliminated whatever confidence the thrill of advancing may have given him; it was his weakest round. He prepared himself to be eliminated. He described running out of breath in one excerpt and recovering less gracefully than he would have liked, but he still advanced—and at that point he felt that he could relax.

In this particular audition, there would be several "final" rounds until the committee gave a majority vote to one candidate, but Boris says he felt "good [about the final rounds]...better than the first two." By the end, he felt that he was finally able to "lighten" his playing: before, "the sound was a little forced...I pushed too hard. I tried too hard." The lightness he finally achieved contrasted with his determination: "I had been to the finals [of other auditions] a couple of times; I had been runner-up a couple of times, so this time I thought, 'I gotta do it. I can't be runner-up again; I have to own it.'"

On the other hand, Rob described "almost being on autopilot" due to the nature of his preparation. Despite this, there was still a voice in the back of his head that knew that he wasn't practicing anymore. This time it was real. As with any audition, some things went well and some things went less well. He advanced through to a second preliminary round, which included more instruments than the first, and again played well enough to advance.

It is notoriously difficult to gauge how one has done at an audition; virtually every musician has experienced the feeling of elation at having "knocked it out of the park," only to be eliminated. Conversely, like Boris, Rob recalls feeling that his semifinal round in the Met audition was, if not a total failure, borderline. He left the building, sulked a bit, and hoped for the best. He felt that, "If I get through, I'm lucky. If I get cut, I understand."

"It is notoriously difficult to gauge how one has done at an audition."

Ultimately, he was the only candidate to receive enough votes to advance, and thus was awarded the position without having to play what would then have been an arbitrary final round. His "borderline" audition turned out better than he ever could have hoped.

## AFTER THE AUDITION

Everyone reacts to the news that they have won a job in the Met Orchestra differently. One member of the orchestra reportedly ran screaming through the hallways. Boris had a somewhat different response: "I had a glass of beer with the people I was staying with. I was on the phone with everybody. I slept for probably two or three hours, then I had a flight early in the morning for a rehearsal in Kansas City. It hadn't sunk in yet; it came two or three weeks later."

"I lost my mind, but I tried to contain my own excitement, sitting around there with a bunch of very disappointed people," says Rob. "I went down and met the committee, but I didn't remember a single one of their names. I was just thinking, 'Oh my God, I have to tell my Dad. I have to call my old teachers. Do I have to get a new bank account?' I had never really considered what happens after you win." He says that the moment when he won was "the ultimate turning point. Your life was going in one direction and now it's going in a different direction."

## THE X-FACTOR: WHAT MAKES MET AUDITIONS DIFFERENT?

"I love it." That was Boris' immediate reaction when asked how he feels about the fact that, in all Met Orchestra auditions, the screen (which divides the candidate from the committee) stays up through the very end. "I concentrate on my playing, not on how I look. Sometimes I sit with my legs crossed, and I play better like that! All four auditions I have won were screened [until the end]." In auditions in which the screen comes down, "I think about 'looking good' too much. I feel like I shouldn't just play musically, I should look musical, too. They're looking at you, not at the music."

The Met Orchestra has several such policies that are either unusual or unique in the world of orchestral auditions. The committee is not allowed any communication or discussion amongst itself before voting on a candidate; no candidate is ever cut off mid-round; perhaps most unusually, the Met Orchestra always offers a job to a candidate at the end of an audition. Boris admits that this is what convinced him to take the audition. Because he knew that someone would win the job, he felt that it was important to take the audition, even though it came only three weeks after an audition for another major orchestra and shared none of the same audition repertoire.

Rob says these policies had a similar effect on his decision to audition. He chose not to audition for another orchestra because it would interfere with his preparation for the Met audition. "I knew that I should stay focused and put everything into this Met audition. [Because its policies are so fair], I knew the most important thing was to put the most work and energy into it, so it drove me to work harder. It was the 'X Factor.'"

Rob notes that, "The audition process should benefit all parties. The process is just a majority vote, and everyone has a different perspective on what's [musically] important. The orchestra members each vote their own musical conscience. The process ensures that the winner will have the best combination of the different qualities that everyone is looking for. The individual musicians know that it is a fair process, so they know that working harder and smarter will not only help them get a job, it will help them keep it."

Ultimately, Rob adds, audiences should be the single greatest benefactors of the audition process. Audiences validate the lifetime of work necessary to perform at the highest level, and transform it into experiences that are variously shattering and uplifting, disturbing and amusing. This presents a great responsibility to those performers who are entrusted with bringing great art to life, and that is what auditions are all about.

*This article was originally published on www.metorchestramusicians.org. It is republished here with permission.*

**William Short** previously served as Principal Bassoonist with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra and has also performed with the Houston Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra. He has toured around the United States with Curtis on Tour and has traveled to Belize, Cuba, Guatemala, and Nicaragua with the Philadelphia-based wind quintet Liberty Winds. William has performed at the Mostly Mozart, Spoleto USA, Pacific, Stellenbosch (South Africa), and Verbier Festivals. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music and his Master of Music degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. PN

# A Historical View of Iannis Xenakis's "Psappha" Instrumentation

By Tom De Cock and Simon Florin

Since the first performance of Iannis Xenakis's "Psappha" in 1975, the work's instrumentation has been a topic of discussion by percussionists worldwide. By examining the preparatory sketches of the work and interviewing musicians with an intimate knowledge of Xenakis and his compositions, further performance practice insights will be illuminated. Musicians interviewed include Sylvio Gualda (who premiered "Psappha" and to whom the work is dedicated), Gabriel Bouchet (an original member of Les Percussions de Strasbourg who premiered both Xenakis's "Persephassa" in 1970 and "Pleïades" in 1978), and Anne-Sylvie Barthel Calvet (a French musicologist who dedicated her life to all facets of rhythm in the works of Iannis Xenakis[1,2]).

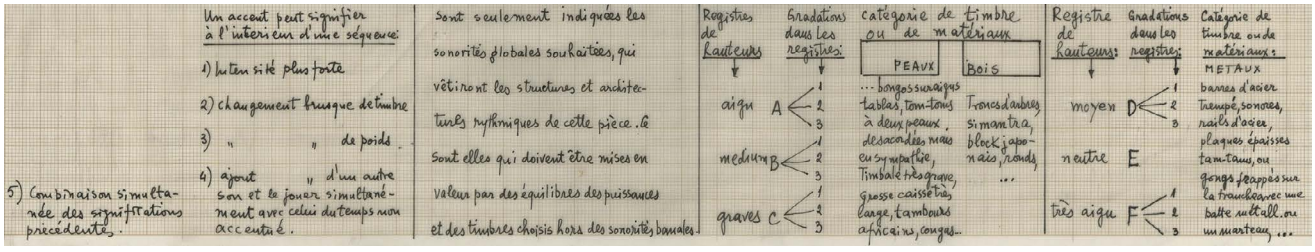
In the edited score of "Psappha,"[3] Xenakis leaves the choice of instruments to the performer (see Figure 1). There are two possible reasons for Xenakis's freedom of choice for the performer. One reason is Xenakis indeed wanted the perfomer to have the freedom to make instrument selections, especially given the time period in which the piece was composed.[4] The other possible reason, supported by Gualda and Bouchet, is that at the time of Xenakis's composition, the prescribed percussion instruments of the sketches were not always available in the instrument collections of every percussionist. It was not perceived as "normal" at the time for a player's personal instrument collection to include, for example, a good set of natural-skinned bongos or a concert bass drum.[5,6]

## COLORS AND INSTRUMENTAL GROUPS

The original instrumentation Xenakis sketched for "Psappha" included bongos (yellow), tom-toms (orange), timpani ("timbales"–red), cymbals (green), gongs and tam-tams (blue), thunder sheet ("voile acier mince long"–grey-blue/also see Figure 9), steel bars ("barres aciers"–light green), timber ("madrier"–purple), and woodblocks (brown) (see Figure 2). Note the use of the thunder sheet, gongs, cymbals, and timpani in the sketches; these instruments do not seem to be very common in today's performance practice of "Psappha."

The underlining colors for each instrument in Figure 2 return through graphic notation in the preparatory sketches part by part. They also appear in the last three sketches as "formal diagrams" of sorts (see Figure 3). We surmise that the diagrams have something to do with the musical and instrumental development of the piece, or might be part of a quantitive density analysis of the work.

Figure 1




Xenakis did not add any comments to these three last sketches, nor did he elaborate on them in the further course of his preparations. Therefore, we cannot be sure exactly what these diagrams mean. Furthermore, these formal diagrams do not appear to have anything in common with the final score of "Psappha."

Figure 4 illustrates how Xenakis used the instrument-color connection as described above. In this example, toms and bongos are combined in the opening section of the piece: orange for toms or B-instruments and yellow for the bongos or A-instruments.

## GUALDA'S ORIGINAL INSTRUMENTATION

In an interview conducted with Sylvio Gualda,[6] he revealed his original instrumentation for "Psappha":

• Group A: Two bongos tuned very high and one self-constructed woodblock in Iroko wood. Xenakis originally wanted three bongos utilized. However, the upper bongo needed to be tuned to such a high tension that the head would routinely snap or tear. Gualda decided to replace the third bongo by employing a woodblock. Due to

Figure 3

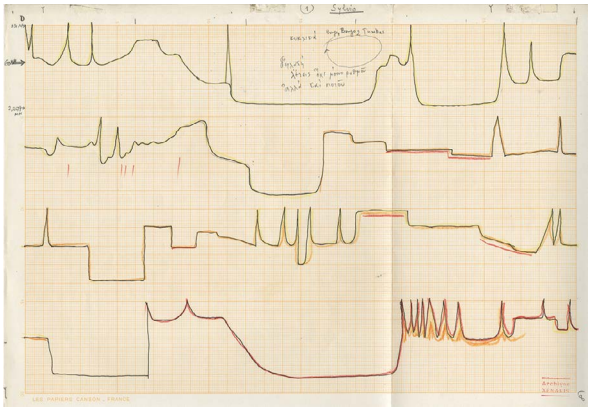
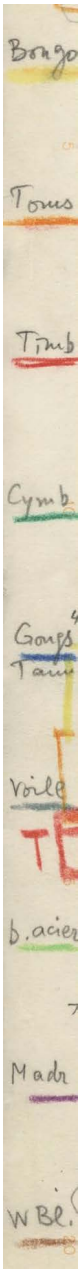


Figure 2



developments in drumhead manufacturing, a third bongo tuned tightly is now a possibility.

• Group B: Three "tumbas" or congas. Gualda replaced the toms Xenakis initially wanted with congas. According to Gualda, Xenakis never opposed the idea. Gualda suggested that, today, the congas or toms may be replaced by African or Asian drums,[8] as these instruments have ritualistic sonorous qualities that would fit the aesthetics of the piece well. Another alternative discussed was small tom-toms with natural skin heads.

• Group C: One 40-inch concert bass drum with natural skin heads and one Ludwig pedal bass drum for line C3, as well as one "tom contrebasse" and one medium tom-tom for C1 and C2 were employed. According to Gualda, Xenakis wanted the low skins to be detuned totally ("peau flasque, son écrasé"), because he liked the sound quality (see Figure 5). Xenakis also utilized this sound concept in "Persephassa."[9] Gualda presumed that Xenakis enjoyed this tuning style when playing the instruments softly and listening close by. This tuning style was not as applicable to the loud passages in "Psappha," so Gualda decided to tune all the low drums to the lowest possible tunings each drum would allow without losing the basic tension in order to avoid breaking of the heads and to obtain the volume Xenakis favored. The addition of a pedal bass drum was mentioned at tick 1180 in the original sketches by Xenakis, probably for practical playing reasons (see Figure 6).

• Group D, E, and F: In the preparation of the premiere performance of "Psappha," Gualda and Xenakis searched for pieces of scrap metal at the building site of Centre Pompidou in Paris, which was being constructed at the time. Gualda found some very interesting options for all three metal instrument groups at that site; furthermore, Xenakis had a special affinity for the sound of steel plates at the construction site. According to Anne-Sylvie Barthel-Calvet, Xenakis enjoyed other metal sounds, such as those of typical Balinese gamelan keyboard instruments.[10]

For the premiere performance of "Psappha," Gualda ended up with four different sizes of metal tubes for groups D and E, with a diameter of not less than 7 centimeters and a length of about 40 to 45 centimeters. The diameter is of importance, according to Gualda, so that he could perform the rolls in the piece by moving a mallet up and down inside the tube. For group F, Gualda had three totally different high-pitched scraps of metal; one of these scraps was a bent metal plate of about 40 centimeters. In our interview, Gualda agreed that it might be a better option to have three high-pitched metal plates of the same form, but with different measurements, which might also be a good option for the SIXXEN bars used in another Xenakis's work, "Pleïades."[11]

In terms of instrumentation and sounds, Gualda reiterated that Xenakis wanted sound extremes in "Psappha" through the use of high-tensioned bongos and a low-tensioned bass drum. Hence, Xenakis described the percussion setup as a "spectrum" of sound, in which the scale of the instruments and the internal tuning between them were very important in showcasing the compositional aspects of the work. Also, Gualda mentioned that he typically tuned the instruments at least a fourth apart to make sure the instruments could be perceived as separate instrumental entities.

## PREPARATORY SKETCHES AND EVOLUTION

Xenakis mentions possible skin instruments in his preparatory sketches for "Psappha" with the "✔" probably referring to the instruments Gualda had in his own instrument collection. The instrument choices indicated in preparatory

Figure 4

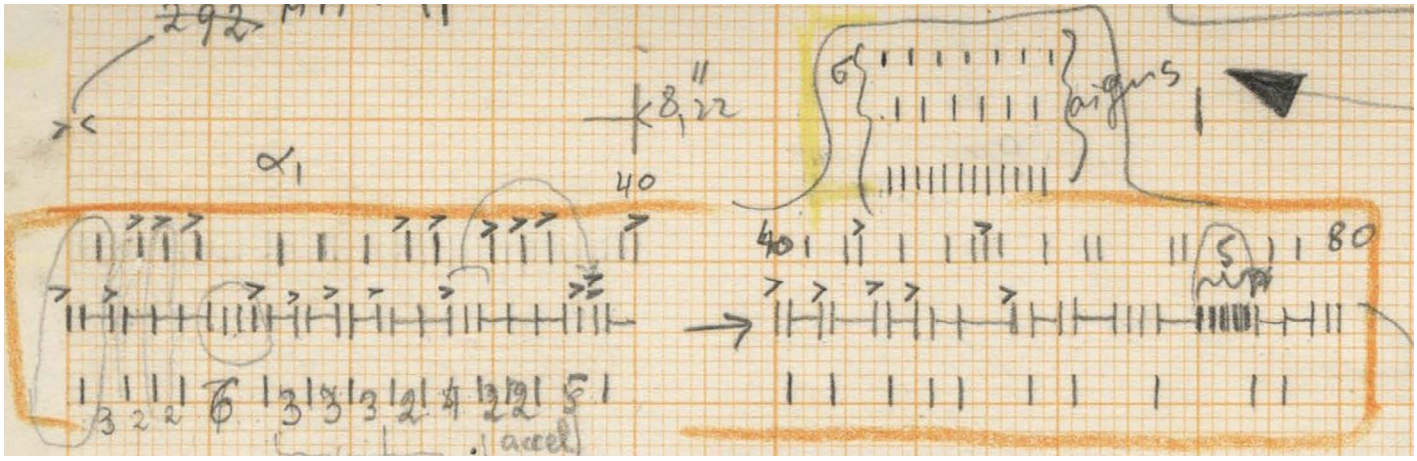


Figure 5

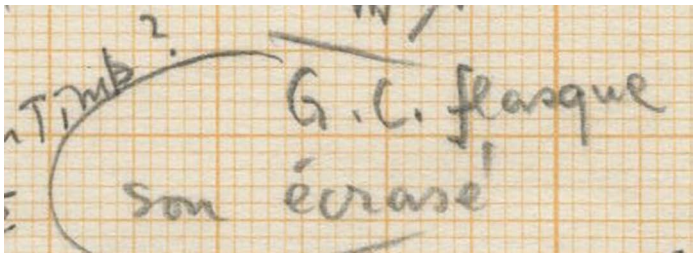



Figure 6

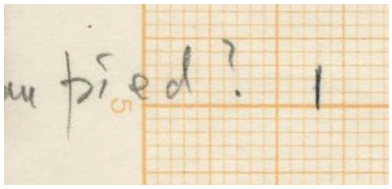


Figure 7

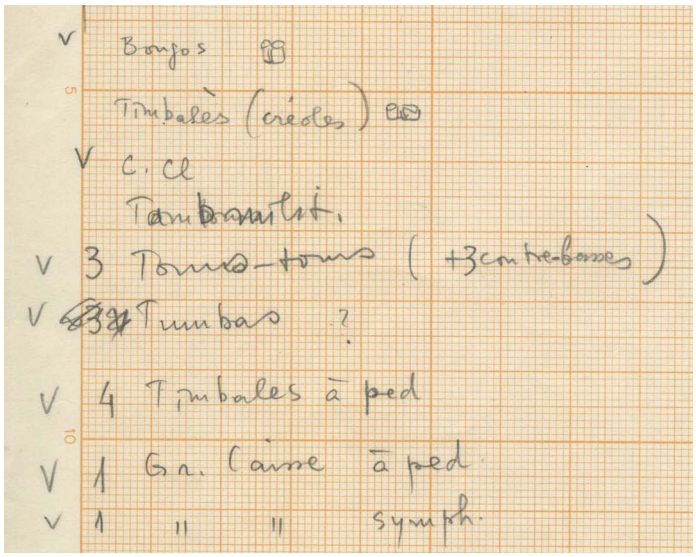


Figure 8

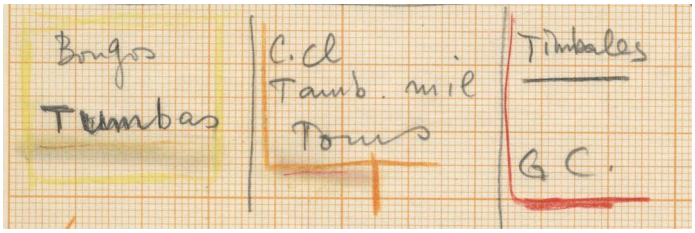



Figure 9

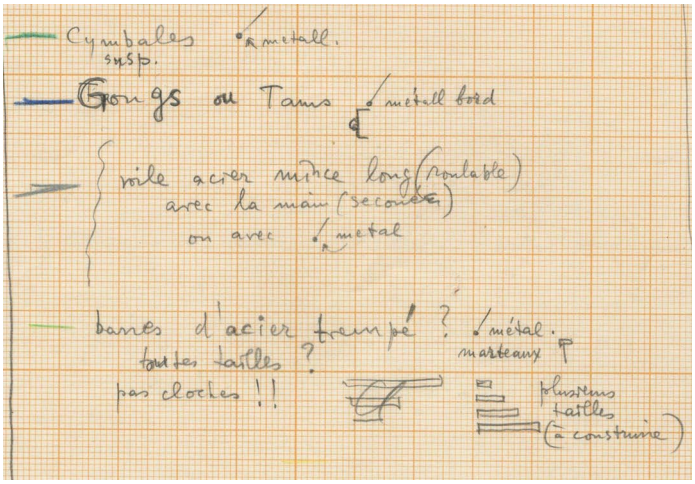



Figure 10

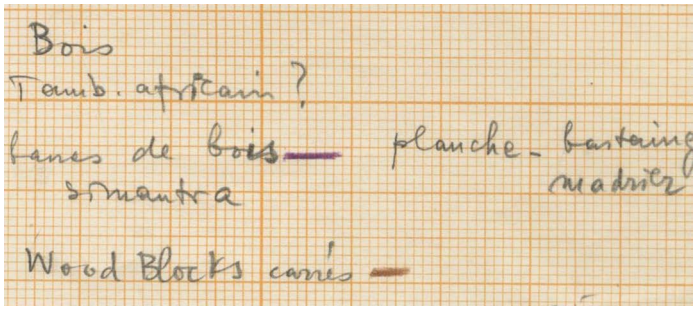



Figure 11

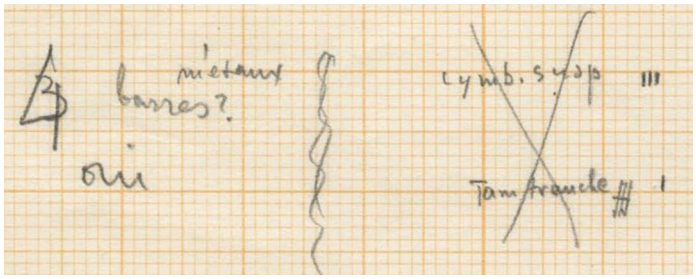



Figure 12

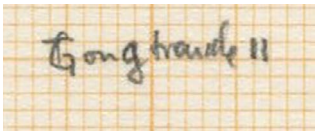
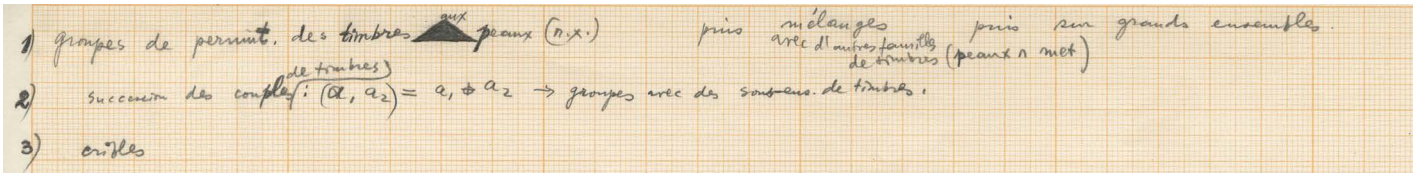



Figure 13




sketches of "Psappha" are similar to those in the sketches and score of "Persephassa," again reflecting the possible personal percussion collections in France at that time. These percussion instrument collections were probably quite limited and very characteristic for the French repertoire of the era (see Figures 7 and 8). In Figure 9, the possible metal instruments Xenakis initially had in mind as options for groups D, E, and F (i.e., cymbals, gongs, or tam-tams played on the edge, thunder sheet, and metal bars are notated). In terms of the metal bars, Xenakis scripts, "pas cloches"!! ("no bells"!!), as he did not want pitched metal instruments used.

In Figure 10, Xenakis sketches the possibilities for wooden instruments. The instrument choices are again very similar to the wooden instruments scored in "Persephassa" (i.e., simantras, barres de bois). Gualda only used a woodblock made of Iroko wood. In the edited score, there is only one instance where a wooden instrument eventually is mentioned in the score. At tick 1050, Xenakis asks for a woodblock.

At tick 1238 in the piece, Xenakis initially sketched suspended cymbals or tam-tams as metal instruments, but changed his mind probably in part due to his visit to the construction site of Centre Pompidou, where four metal tubes were selected instead (see Figure 11). Finally, further in the work as part of the E instrument group, Xenakis initially wanted to use the edge of a gong as a metal neutral instrument (see Figure 12).

## FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF THE INSTRUMENT GROUPS

The ways in which Xenakis wished to treat the instrumental groups in the compositional progress is described in his preparatory sketches (see Figure 13). The three phases that appear in this figure can be translated as:

- Groups of permutations of the timbre of different skin instruments. After this they are mixed with other timbral families, and finally they are applied to large ensembles of different timbres.
- Succession of couples of timbres—groups with sounds of timbral ensembles.
- Sieves.[12]

These permutations and the use of sieves in "Psappha" have been analyzed by Ellen Rennie Flint in her article "Metabolae, Arborescences, and the Reconstruction of Time in Iannis Xenakis' *Psappha*."[13] Also, Figure 14 displays the use of "cribles" or sieves to structure the musical material.

The last sketch we found concerning instrumentation suggests that Xenakis initially wanted to have all three instrument groups—skin, metal, and wood—of equal importance in the composition (see Figure 15). We believe Xenakis must have changed his mind, because the wooden instruments seem to be underrepresented in the final version of the piece.

Figure 14

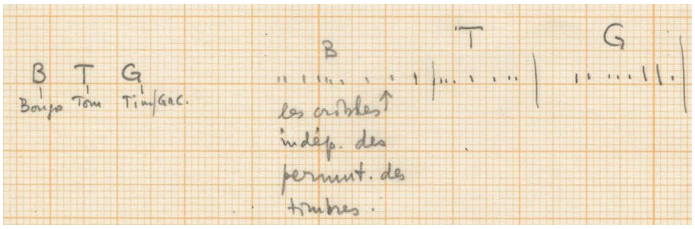
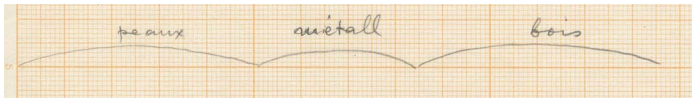



Figure 15



## CONCLUSION

Although Iannis Xenakis clearly leaves a free choice of instrumentation to the interpreter in the edited score of "Psappha," we found contradictions in the composer's preparatory sketches. After conducting interviews with early performers of his music and a noted musicologist, we believe that certain aspects of the work's instrumentation should be organized in a more historically informed way. For instance, we suggest using high-tuned bongos for the skin instruments in group A, small daikos or dunduns for group B, and a concert bass drum combined with an oversized pedal bass drum for group C.

In terms of group D, we came to the conclusion that steel pipes or square steel profiles would work well in terms of instrumentation. Additionally, steel plates with a length of 30 to 50 centimeters, a width of 10 to 15 centimeters, and a thickness of 3 to 5 millimeters provided the desired sonorous quality for instrument group F as well as fit the expectations of the composer through examination of his preparatory sketches and conducted interviews. The use of steel as sonorous material is primordial opposed to, for example, aluminum because of its overtone qualities. It is comparable in sound to brass (which is used in, for example, church bells, bell plates, gamelan instruments, cymbals, etc.) with considerably less expense.



## ENDNOTES

1. Anne-Sylvie Barthel-Calvet, "Le rythme dans l'oeuvre et la *pensée de Iannis Xenakis*," (thèse de doctorat. Paris, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2000).
2. Anne-Sylvie Barthel-Calvet, "La fin d'œuvre chez Xenakis : enjeux narratifs, "in *La fin d'œuvre en musique: sens et significations, entre création et reception*, edited by Grégoir Caux and Mathias Roger (Sampzon: Delatour, 2013), 73–82.
3. Iannis Xenakis, "Psappha," (Paris, Editions Salabert, 1975).
4. Post-1968 France and the influence of composers as John Cage or Franco Donatoni, who where experimenting with "ego-less" composing at that exact period.
5. Sylvio Gualda, telephone interview with Tom De Cock, Brussels, May 1, 2016.
6. Gabriel Bouchet, telephone interview with Tom De Cock, Waardamme, April 2, 2016.
7. Gualda interview.
8. Michael Rosen discusses Xenakis's affinity for these drums in "Terms used in Percussion," *Percussive Notes*, April 1986, 65–67.
9. Iannis Xenakis, "Persephassa," (Paris, Editions Salabert, 1970).
10. Especially the bars of the gendèr instrument: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gend%C3%A8r, 2016.
11. Iannis Xenakis, "Pleïades," (Paris, Editions Salabert, 1978).
12. Iannis Xenakis and John Rahn, "Sieves," *Perspectives of New Music* 28, no.1 (Winter, 1990): 58–78.
13. Ellen Rennie Flint. "Metabolae, Arborescences, and the Reconstruction of Time in Iannis Xenakis's Psappha," *Contemporary Music Review* 7, (1993): 221–248.

**Tom De Cock** is percussionist with the Brussels Philharmonic and percussionist and artistic advisor for the Ictus Ensemble. He is Assistant Professor of Music at the Conservatoire Royal de Liège. De Cock has performed with such groups as the Ensemble Modern, MusikFabrik, and Radio Kamer Philharmonie. He is also a regular member of Ensemble XII, Nadar Ensemble, and Triatu. Together with Vincent Caers, De Cock initiated the contemporary music platform Living Scores Learn (www.living-scores.com/learn).

**Simon Florin** earned his Master of Music degree in percussion performance from the Royal Conservatory of Brussels in 2016. He has performed with such ensembles as Oxalys, Spira Mirabillis, and Symphonia Assai. Eager to create new forms of performing arts, he is a founding member of the music theater duo Vice Versa. Florin is currently involved in an advanced master's degree program in contemporary music in Ghent under the guidance of contemporary ensemble members of Ictus and Spectra. PN

# Drumming with Dystonia

## By Paul Buyer

*"Typically, a musician develops this in their mid-30s when you're well into your career where you've dedicated your life to your craft and your art and you find it slipping away."* —Billy McGlaughlin, guitarist.

In early 2005, I was playing "Parcours en Duo" for vibraphone, timpani, and baritone saxophone by French composer Edith Lejet. My friend John Bleuel and I had been rehearsing intently for weeks preparing for our performance at the University of West Georgia Saxophone Symposium, where he taught saxophone.

One day during rehearsal, I noticed something was wrong in my left hand while playing two-mallet vibraphone. My index finger kept coming off the mallet shaft involuntarily, breaking my fulcrum. It felt like my middle finger was forcing my index finger off the stick, as if there was no room for both. There was no pain, but certainly a lack of control and uneasy feeling.

Over the next few days, I continued to monitor my left hand. I started noticing my index finger also coming off when playing matched grip snare drum and timpani rolls but interestingly, not four-mallet playing. I tried some creative measures like rubber banding my fingers to the stick, but nothing kept them there. I became concerned and my playing started to suffer. At the time, it affected me most teaching private lessons and giving some high-profile clinics at Florida State University and our state PAS Day of Percussion.

### THE DIAGNOSIS

After several months of research and searching for answers, I was diagnosed with *task specific focal dystonia* (TSFD), meaning the condition only occurred when playing percussion with two sticks or mallets in my hands and not during activities like typing, writing, or swinging a golf club.

According to the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, "Dystonia is characterized by persistent or intermittent muscle contractions causing abnormal, often repetitive movements, postures, or both." Could it be, I asked myself, that I developed dystonia because I practiced too much? According to the Dystonia Society, "Dystonias affecting the hand are often caused by performing repeated hand movements. They can affect any profession which requires repeated movements but are more common among musicians than any other professional group. Research has identified musicians who have intensively practiced their instruments over a number of years are a group most affected by this condition."

With practice pad and sticks in hand to show the doctors, I visited a chiropractor who tried acupuncture and a TENS-unit (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation), Emory University for Botox treatments, and a hand specialist who prescribed medication, all common treatments for TSFD to relax the muscles in my left hand and arm. Nothing worked.

I decided to take some time off from practicing. I thought getting away from it all would do me some good, but in the end it had no effect. My only option, I felt, was to find another way to hold the stick.

### LEARNING TO COMPENSATE

In my early research, everything I read about dystonia described it as a "neurological movement disorder" and that "a neurologist who specializes in movement disorders is the most appropriate physician to treat hand dystonia." Although there were treatments like Botox and medication, there was no cure. For the most part, I kept the condition to myself because I was embarrassed, feared for my job, and could not play at the level I was accustomed to. I simply had no control over my left-hand grip.

After several weeks of experimenting, I discovered my fulcrum would stay intact only when I took the middle finger *off* the stick. My choices were to play with my fulcrum only (with the back three fingers essentially sticking out), or to play with a fundamental grip *without* the middle finger. Although these options were not ideal and quickly led to fatigue in my hand and fingers, I managed to play at a respectable level.

Throughout the process, I kept thinking about the age-old debate between traditional versus matched, Stevens versus Burton, and the fact that if there was a screen in front of me, no one would care. However, I was a *teacher* and had to lead by example. I had to demonstrate to my students what a professional percussionist looked like when holding two implements in his hands. I felt like a hypocrite.

### FINDING A CURE

For over a decade, I accepted my dystonia and took comfort in the fact that it did not get worse. In 2015, I attended a dystonia support group outside Atlanta, only to witness first-hand how devastating dystonia can be in people's lives. My story of "not being able to play drums with matched grip" paled in comparison to the men and women sitting around the table who were wheelchair bound, struggled to move freely, and needed assistance with daily tasks.

Then, in spring of 2016, I received an article from my former professor, Gary Cook, about a drummer in New York City named Shaun Lowecki, who had a case of TSFD that included tremors. According to Shaun in 2011: "I had lost all control of my right hand. I was panicked and didn't understand why I couldn't move the way I used to. I had intense involuntary spasming, which worsened with frustration and anger. I experienced aggressive clenching and compulsively contemplated my fulcrum. I developed severe fear and anxiety and I began searching for an answer. I spent the better part of this year seeking out specialists to help find a solution. I saw a chiropractor, worked with an acupuncturist, visited an orthopedic doctor, had massage therapy, attended a physical therapy course…and nervously searched the Internet for an explanation. Unfortunately, none of the specialists I saw had an answer for the spasming or loss of control."

During his battle with dystonia, Shaun connected with Jon Gorrie, a professional trumpet player, author of *Performing in the Zone,* and performance coach on "the prevention of and recovery from Musician's Focal Dystonia (MFD) in players of all instruments." His website, musicians-focal-dystonia.com, offers excellent resources including an online forum, free webinar, Skype coaching, and blog featuring practitioners of Gorrie and MFD. Under Gorrie's mentorship, Shaun learned that the condition was not so much a neurological disorder but an *emotional* one. I contacted Shaun on Facebook and asked if we could schedule a lesson on Skype.

The goal of the lesson was to retrain and relearn how I think when I play. I had to change my focus, let go of control, and trust that, deep down, I already knew how to play everything. Following the lesson, Shaun sent me a link to an excellent YouTube documentary called *Focal Dystonia: Understanding and Treatment as an Emotional Condition.* The mastermind behind the documentary, which takes place in Madrid, Spain, is a man named Joaquin Fabra. According to *Focal Dystonia: A Musician's Resource,* "Fabra is a trombonist/euphoniumist who was struck with focal dystonia many years ago and managed to rehabilitate himself completely. Fabra believes that focal dystonia is a behavioural disorder and not a neurological one." For over twenty years, Fabra has been treating musicians who have traveled from all over the world to see him in search of a full recovery.

Through Fabra's instruction, I have learned to pay attention to the person I used to be when I enjoyed playing the instrument, not to fight against tension, and that doing it wrong is okay (this last point is especially tough). I am trying to shift my focus on playing freely, rather than on not playing badly and loosen mentally and physically. I am learning to trust myself, have a positive mindset, and accept that the tension will be there, even though I am not interested in it. I am only interested in the idea of playing

Dystonia is characterized by persistent or intermittent muscle contractions causing abnormal, often repetitive movements, postures, or both.

the instrument. Fabra says, "Take responsibility for your dystonia. In a bizarre way, you chose to have it. You can also choose not to have it, by changing the way you think and emotionally feel about yourself."

## BEGINNER'S MINDSET

While working on Shaun's and Joaquin's practice strategies, I came across an excellent website by Rob Knopper, principal percussionist of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra (robknopper.com). One resource in particular struck me, called "How to Develop the Perfect Snare Drum Grip." In it, Rob provides a video and five diagrams of the hand, showing *exactly* how he holds the sticks when playing loud singles, loud rolls, soft singles, soft doubles, and soft rolls. I started studying these diagrams carefully and tried modeling my grip after his, all with a beginner's mindset. By learning to hold the sticks again from square one, I was retraining myself to play. What I noticed—and continue to notice—is that the physical change in my grip, in conjunction with the mental and emotional skills I learned from Shaun and Joaquin, have resulted in moderate improvement in my playing. According to Shaun: "Over the course of my rehabilitation I learned many techniques to deal with the ups and downs of dystonia. I had to retrain the way I approached drumming on a physical, mental, and emotional level. In conjunction with my mentors, I discovered my own approach, which ultimately led me to a full recovery. There were times when I wanted to quit. There were times when I doubted I'd ever improve. There were times when I couldn't handle the intense emotional roller coaster. But looking back on the struggle, I can say that I am grateful. I have become a stronger player because of dystonia and look at it as a positive experience."

## MY ULTIMATE GOAL

Many professional musicians have been affected by "embouchure" or "hand" dystonia including classical pianists Leon Fleischer, Glenn Gould, André Previn, and Gary Graffman; Chicago Symphony Orchestra members Dale Clevenger (horn) and Alex Klein (oboe); guitarist Billy McGlaughlin; and Tokyo String Quartet violinist Peter Oundjian, just to name a few.

Despite playing different instruments, their stories are eerily similar, with dystonia failing to discern they are at the top of their game in the music world. After reading their stories, I immediately felt a shared bond with them. We are part of a club—a fraternity—who experienced confusion from the symptoms, shock from the diagnosis, and fear from not being able to play again—at least not at the level we want or need to play to do our job at the standard our audiences, students, and music deserve.

Author JJ Virgin said, "You grow when you're challenged and you're never better than when you're challenged." I have taken this mindset to heart, and for the first time in over a decade, I am hopeful. There are musicians, including drummer Shaun Lowecki, who have fully recovered from task specific focal dystonia. *Why not me?* My ultimate goal is to play better than I did before, and I firmly believe this is possible—with practice, trust, and the help and support of all those who stuck with me during this process.

## SOURCES


Dystonia Medical Research Foundation

"Dystonia Attacks What You Love the Most," video by Billy McLaughlin

Focal Dystonia: A Musician's Resource

Focal Dystonia: Understanding and Treatment as an Emotional Condition

http://focaldystonia.co.uk/#/joaquin-fabra

http://musicians-focal-dystonia.com

http://musicians-focal-dystonia.com/shaun-lowecki-focal-dystonia-story

The Dystonia Society.org

www.billymclaughlin.com/biography

www.jongorrie.com

www.robknopper.com



**Paul Buyer** is Director of Percussion, Director of Music, and Professor of Music at Clemson University. He is the author of *Working Toward Excellence* (Morgan James Publishing), *Marching Bands and Drumlines* (Meredith Music Publications), and co-author of *The Art of Vibraphone Playing* (Meredith Music Publications). He is also a contributing author to the second edition of *Teaching Percussion* by Gary Cook, and his articles have appeared in *American Music Teacher, Teaching Music, Jazz Education Network, Percussive Notes*, and *The PAS Educators' Companion*. Dr. Buyer serves as Second Vice President of the Percussive Arts Society and Career Development editor for *Percussive Notes*. His website is www.paulbuyer.com. **PN**

# My New Love: The Make Noise Black & Gold Shared System

By Amy Knoles

When I first began to write this article, I remembered what Danny Carey said in a video that we did to help promote Mandala Drums: "Any good drummer plays music, not just the beats." I think this really helps explain my approach to the Make Noise Black & Gold Shared System.

Make Noise represents B&G Shared System like this:

"At times it feels as though electronic music has become an overly automated form driven by simplified genre specific apps and software. What happens when the signal path is not pre-defined or optimized for a popular result? Tony Rolando, founder of Make Noise, first made the Shared System and then the Shared System Series of records to answer this question. The Make Noise Shared System is a modular synthesizer with no pre-determined signal path, and is not designed for any particular musical destination. The goal of the Shared System as an instrument is to allow the artist to illustrate purely their intentions. The very first Shared System was sent to five different artists for a few months each to record two live tracks, which we released on limited addition vinyl (see makenoiserecords.com). The Shared System is the deepest and most complex of our systems bringing together all of our synthesis techniques into one system. From classic analog FM to voltage controlled digital granularization, the Shared System will go to more sound destinations than most folks have time to travel to in a single lifetime."

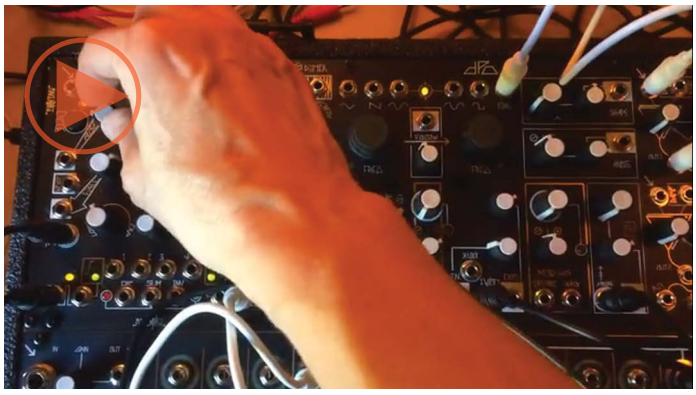
The Make Noise Shared System has no MIDI input, so my percussion controllers—DrumKat, MalletKat, Quneo, Mandala Drum, Push, etc., which I have been touring with since the "dawn of MIDI"—are not natively compatible. Yes, I could use some sort of MIDI to CV conversion, but the beauty of exploration outside of the safe, knowable, and controllable confines of MIDI has brought me back to my roots: listening to and recognizing wave forms just with my ears again, not my eyes! Tuning in to the utterly infinite possible combinations of frequency modulation, and essentially reinforcing the love that I have developed for chance in music ever since my early days of working with John Cage.

I often play it as a percussionist would but, most importantly, the system has reshaped how I, as a percussionist and drummer, might wish to perform! My approach to the Make Noise Shared System initially was not to use it as a sound source for triggering with percussion controllers but to "play" it as the instrument it was meant to be by its brilliant creators, with the infinite possibilities that it brings.

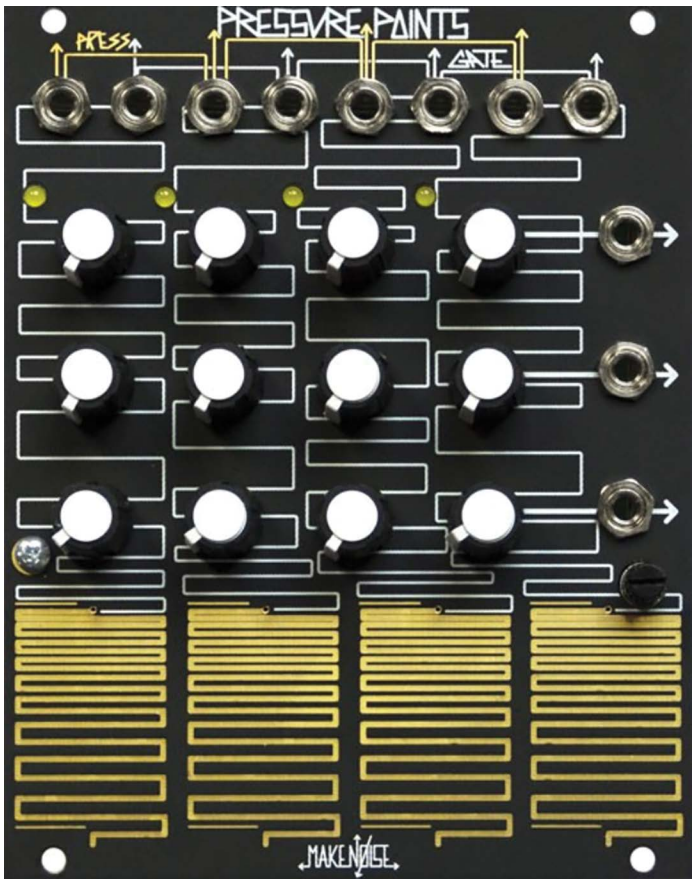
There are two modules (Pressure Points and René) that specifically allow for human triggering and manipulation. They both have *touch plates* where essentially one's touch completes a circuit, opening a gate (making sound happen). The benefit here is very tactile expressivity. The Pressure Points module is great for playing four different pitches or even chords, with much more expressivity than a normal keyboard, and each plate can be tuned however I wish—not necessarily in a low-to-high fashion, but in a way that might lie under the fingers better. I often tune the plates, tap lightly and staccato for short percussive sounds, and use the pressure output to vary the timbre. Funky!

René, named after René Descartes (remember those XY graphs? Yep, that's him!), is a Cartesian Sequencer that makes it possible to play through 16 different points in a seemingly infinite number of combinations, triggering pitches, percussive sounds, or samples caught on the fly by the Phonogene module (think early tape machine). Touching a plate will stop the sequence on the correspond-

Tap to play Video



This is an example of the "wobbly" performance possibilities of the Make Noise.

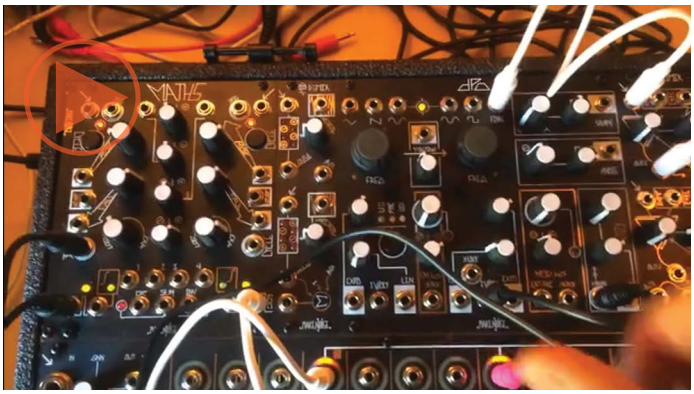



Pressure Points

Tap to play Video

This is an example of how expressive Pressure Points module can be.

Tap to play Video



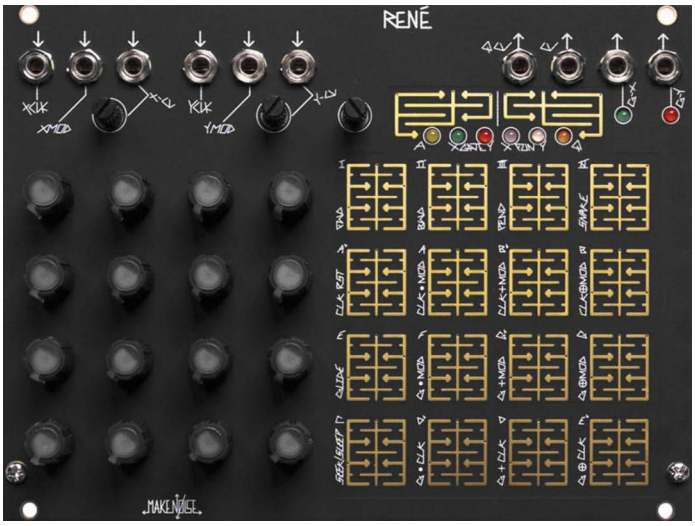
This is an example of "playing" the René Cartesian Sequencer live.

Tap to play Video

More of the same regarding expressivity.

ing pitch or sound. And if I touch multiple plates simultaneously (say, three) it will cycle through just those three until let go.

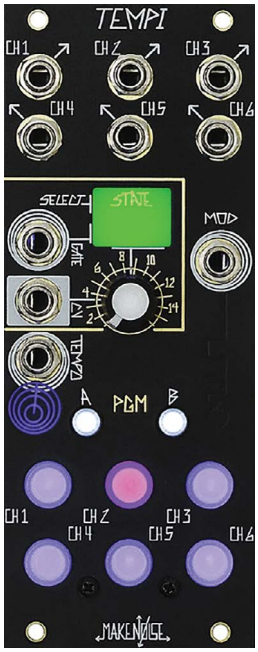
Since I can clock the Shared System with Ableton or any other D.A.W., I can easily incorporate the Make Noise with work that I am performing alongside my QuNeo and Push. The music that I make with these instruments has become a hybrid of layering long cycles of looped percussive and pitched materials (input live) with manipulation and modulation of multi-textured environments, as found in my latest work, "9:8:7:5:4:3:1."




René Cartesian Sequencer

The Make Noise does have extensive CV (Control Voltage) input, which can certainly be sent from a MIDI device, massaging it into that industry standard paradigm if needed, but since I'd been using alternate, often homemade electronic instruments to make or shape sound, I decided to embrace it as intended. I did make one very percussion-centric addition to the system: the Make Noise Tempi Module. The pink and purple buttons allow for playable input of six different clocks that can run simultaneously. How's that for polyrhythm?

There are so many amazing modules in this system that to truly understand all of it takes quite a lot of time (I'm not there yet), and the sonic possibilities truly are endless. My advice with this system, and probably many others out there, is yes, watch as many videos as possible. However, what really got me feeling the ground under my feet with this system was going through the tutorials in the manual the way that the creators of the instruments laid out for me. This brought insight to not just how it all works but why it works so well. Purpose, intent, content.




Make Noise Tempi Module

Next for me, the Elektron Analog Four 4-Voice Analog Synthesizer with Sequencer, a combination analog drum machine and synth that sends both CV and MIDI, oh yeah!

**Amy Knoles** is Director of the Electronic Percussion Studios, Interim Head of Percussion at California Institute of the Arts, and has headlined on major festivals throughout the world. Amy was ASCAP Composer-in-Residence at the Music Center of Los Angeles, received the Meet the Composer Commissioning Music USA, the UNESCO Prize-2000, the C.O.L.A and more. Knoles was the Executive Director of the California E.A.R. Unit for 30 years and has worked with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Kronos Quartet, Rachel Rosenthal, Robert Henke (aka Monolake), Frank Zappa, Morton Subotnick, Ensemble Modern of Frankfurt, Flea, the Bang On a Can All Stars, Alison Knowles, Michael Sakamoto, Basso Bongo, John Cage, Elliott Carter, Julia Wolfe, Morton Feldman, David Lang, The Paul Dresher Ensemble, Mauricio Kagel, Vinko Globokar, Michael Gordon, Louis Andriessen, Lucky Mosko, Charles Wourinen, Don Preston, Arthur Jarvinen, Steve Reich, Tod Machover, Quincy Jones, Ulrich Krieger, and many others.

Further information on the Black & Gold Shared System may be found here: http://makenoisemusic.com/synthesizers/shared-system. **PN**

# The Rudimental *Conguero*:
## A Collision of Traditions

By Matthew Geiger

Rudiments form the basis of the drummer's vocabulary, allowing for ease in reading and performing complicated rhythms on the snare drum. Rudimental drumming has been an important aspect of military music for centuries, becoming an American tradition in 1933 when the National Association of Rudimental Drummers convened to codify the 13 essential rudiments from the 26 Standard American Drum Rudiments. This has since grown into the collection of 40 rudiments compiled by the Percussive Arts Society. These rudiments are firmly integrated into the percussion musical culture of America.

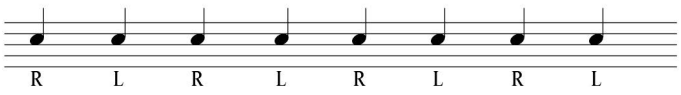
In a somewhat similar timeline, conga drums—influenced by the diaspora brought about by the slave trade—were being integrated into the Cuban musical culture. By the mid 20th century, the conga drums had become a crucial part of several styles of music emanating from Cuba and the surrounding region. Over the years, great *congueros* have been expanding the traditional techniques and thus increasing the possibilities of the instrument using various combinations of velocity, hand techniques, and sound-color variations.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the possibility of combining traditional rudimental stickings with traditional conga techniques to create a unique solo approach to the conga drums. This is demonstrated by first breaking down individual rudiments and mapping them onto the conga drum, followed by a process to create a brief solo composition for multiple conga drums. I don't mean to suggest this as an alternative to traditional conga techniques; however, it is a supplement to facilitate new ideas and habits that will expand the vocabulary of traditional techniques. There is no substitute, nor better approach to learning to play congas, than by studying the traditional approach used by the great *congueros* of the past and those performing now.

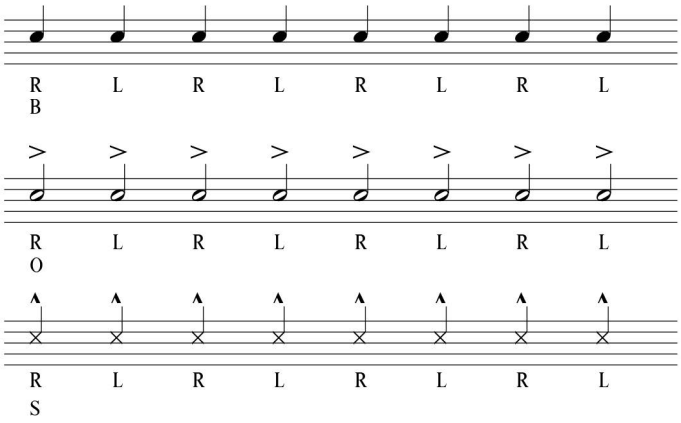
### BUILDING THE FUNDAMENTALS

The basis of the rudimental *conguero* is founded on the hybridization of traditional rudiments with traditional conga techniques, including slap tones, open tones, bass tones, and heel-toe techniques (for a great introduction to conga tones, see *Introduction to the Conga Drum* by Michael Spiro). For the purpose of restricting the composed solo at the end of this article, we will only look at five rudiments and their application to the conga drums: the single-stroke roll, single paradiddle, double paradiddle, triple paradiddle, and single paradiddle-diddle.

The single-stroke roll is the only non-diddle rudiment chosen for this solo, and it is comprised of alternating strokes at any tempo:

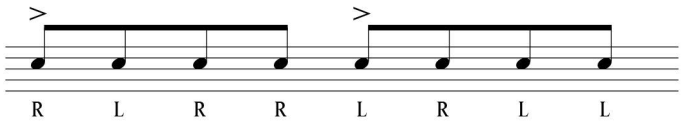



The single-stroke roll is important in any solo or exercise to help maintain fluid motions throughout the music. Play this on the congas using bass, open or slap tones:

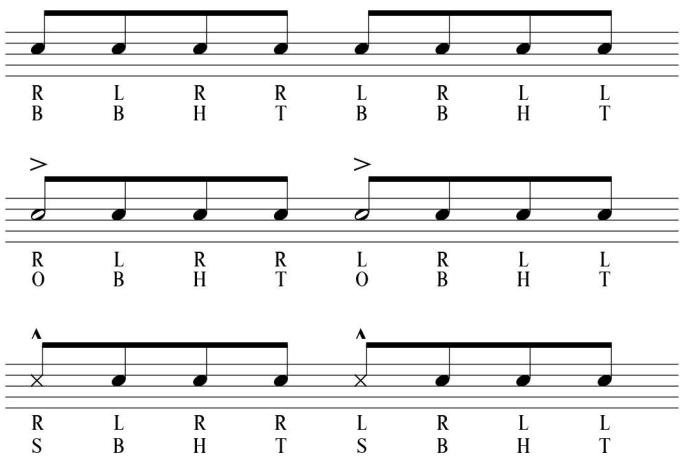



The types of accents do not necessarily imply a louder or more emphasized note, but are meant as a form of notation to aid in mapping a composed snare drum solo into a conga solo later in the process.

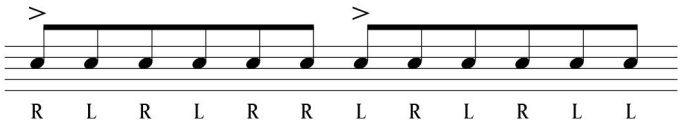
The single paradiddle consists of one pair of singles followed by one double:



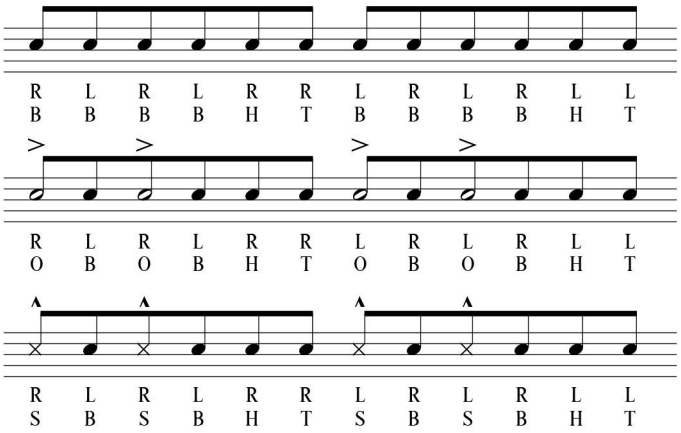

This can be transferred over to the congas by replacing the first note of every paradiddle with either a bass, open, or slap tone followed by a bass tone. The doubles will then be played using the heel-toe technique:



The double paradiddle consists of two pairs of singles and one double:

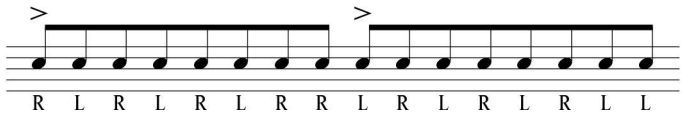



Because of the addition of a pair of singles in the double paradiddle, the first note and also the third note of each double paradiddle can be played with either a bass, open, or slap tone. The double can then be played with the heel-toe motion, and the remaining notes will be bass tones:

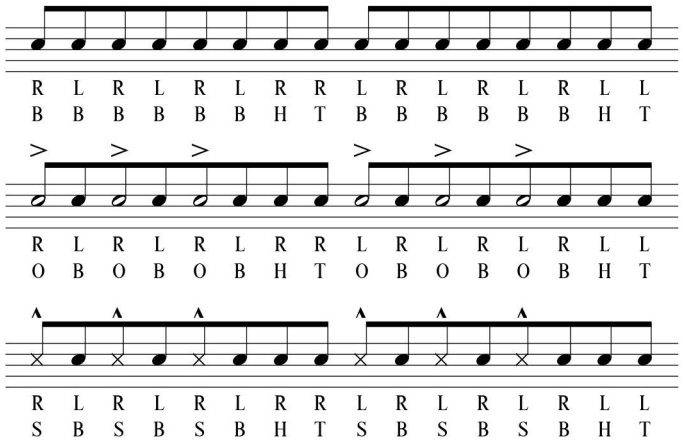



More possible tone combinations arise as rudiments grow in length, and this will be explored later in the composed solo.

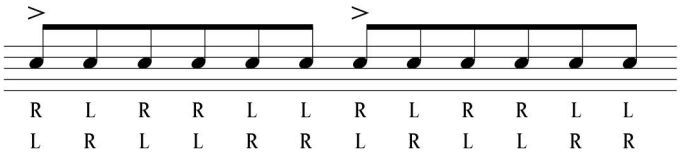
The triple paradiddle consists of three pairs of singles followed by one double:



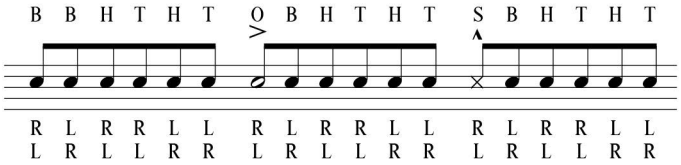

Keeping with the system already in place, the starting or leading hand of each rudimental pattern will either play bass, open, or slap tones, and the double will be played with a heel-toe. The remaining notes will be played as bass tones:




The final rudiment to be included in the solo is the single paradiddle-diddle. This contains one pair of singles and two pairs of doubles:




Following suit with the rest of the diddle rudiments, the first note can be interchanged among the three tones, and the doubles will be played using a combination of two heel-toe strokes in succession:




## SOLO APPLICATION

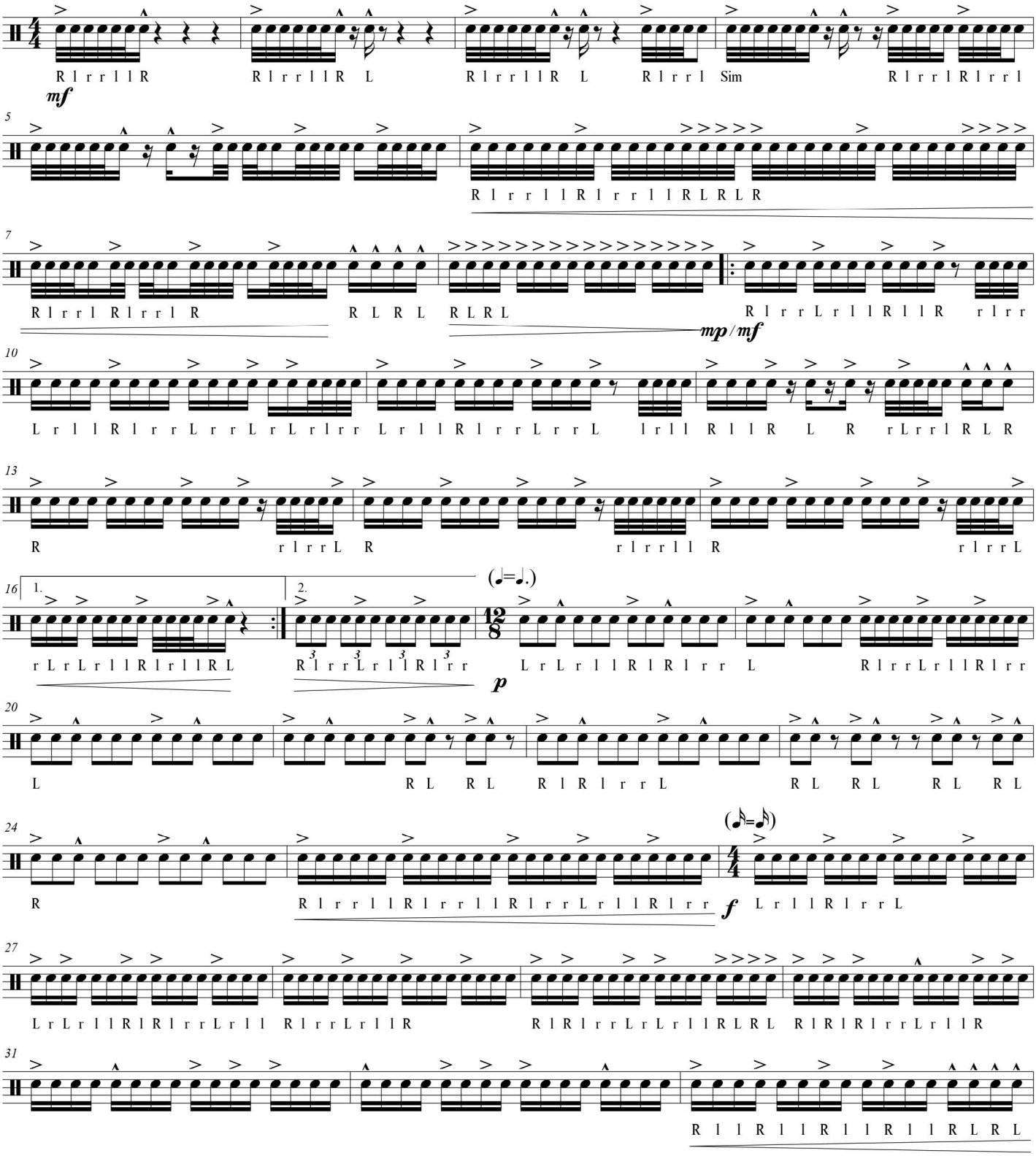
The goal of this system is to create and perform an unaccompanied solo, based around rudimental stickings and conga tone productions. The final product will consist of a multi-drum solo, demonstrating melodic and technical features of the conga drums. In order to demonstrate the transfer from rudimental snare drumming to conga techniques, I have written a solo for the snare drum that only employs the fundamental rudiments described above along with variations in accents and rhythms to create a stand-alone, interesting solo. The piece was intentionally written to feature the rudiments as the main method of composition; however, there was also the intent to include some patterns and rhythms typically found in traditional Afro-Cuban music. On the next page is the first round of the process, a technically demanding snare drum solo:

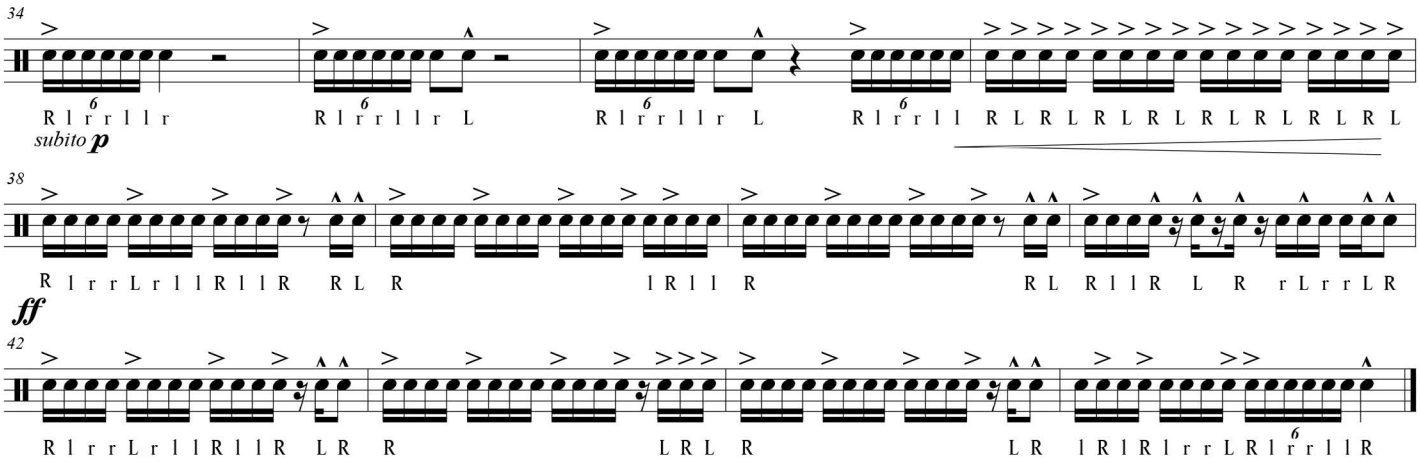
# Petey's Groove

Snare Drum Solo

Matthew Geiger

**Groovy (♩=96)**

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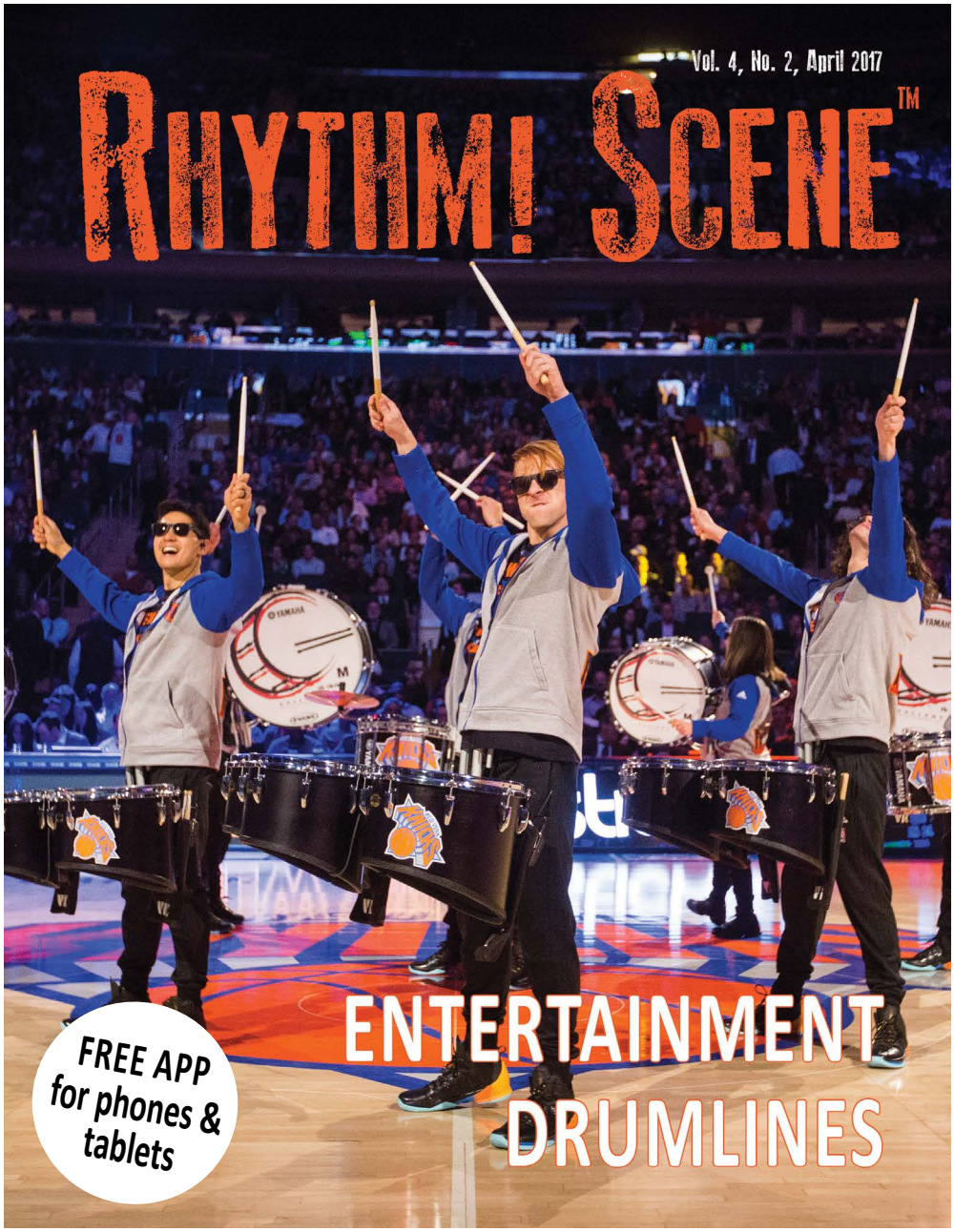
Vol. 4, No. 2, April 2017
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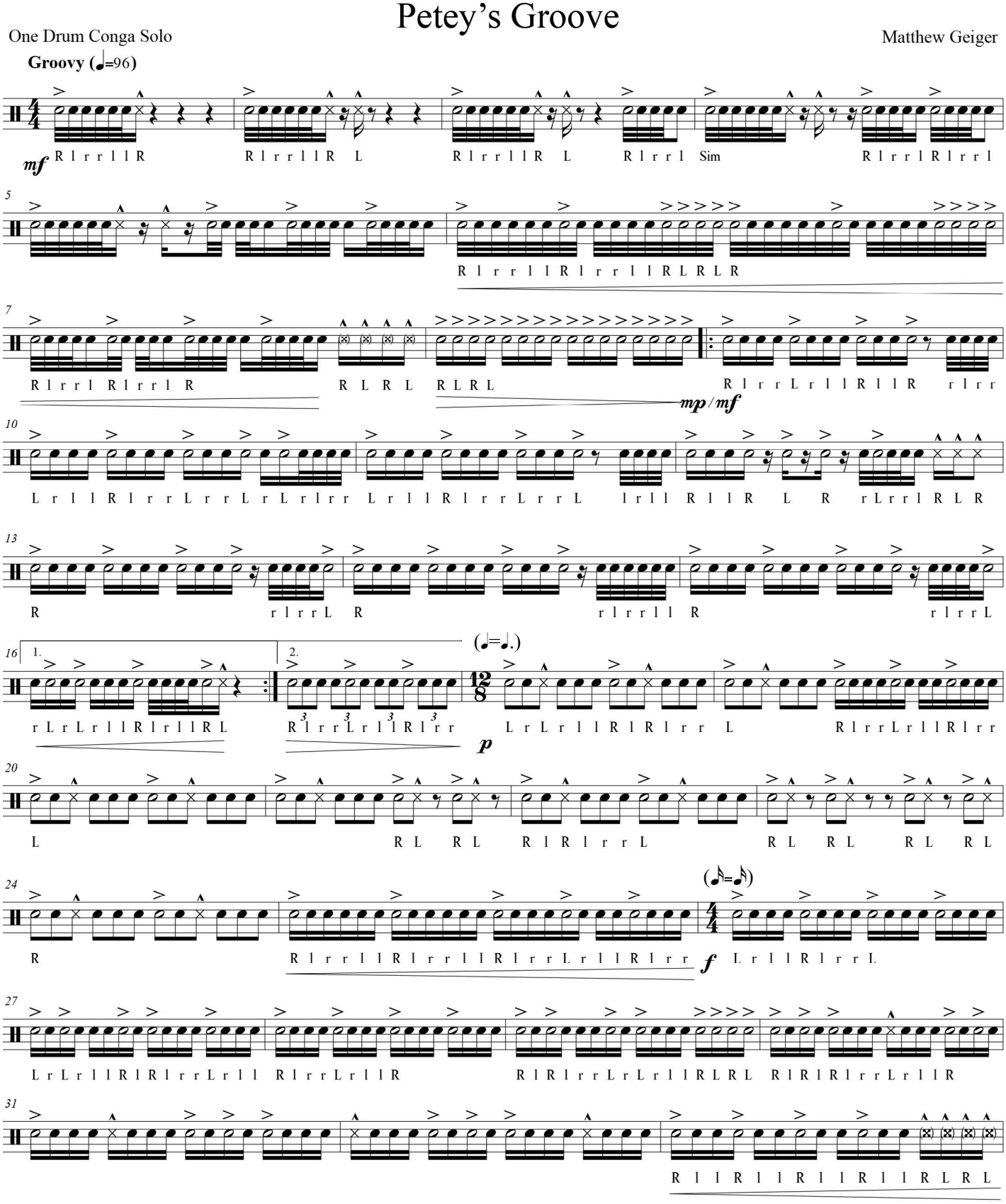
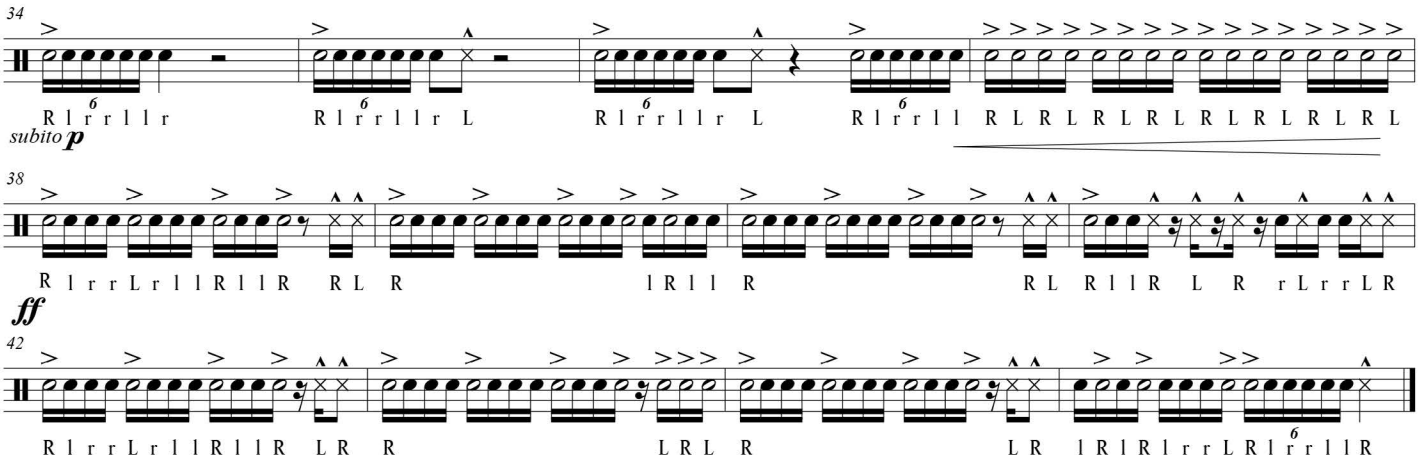
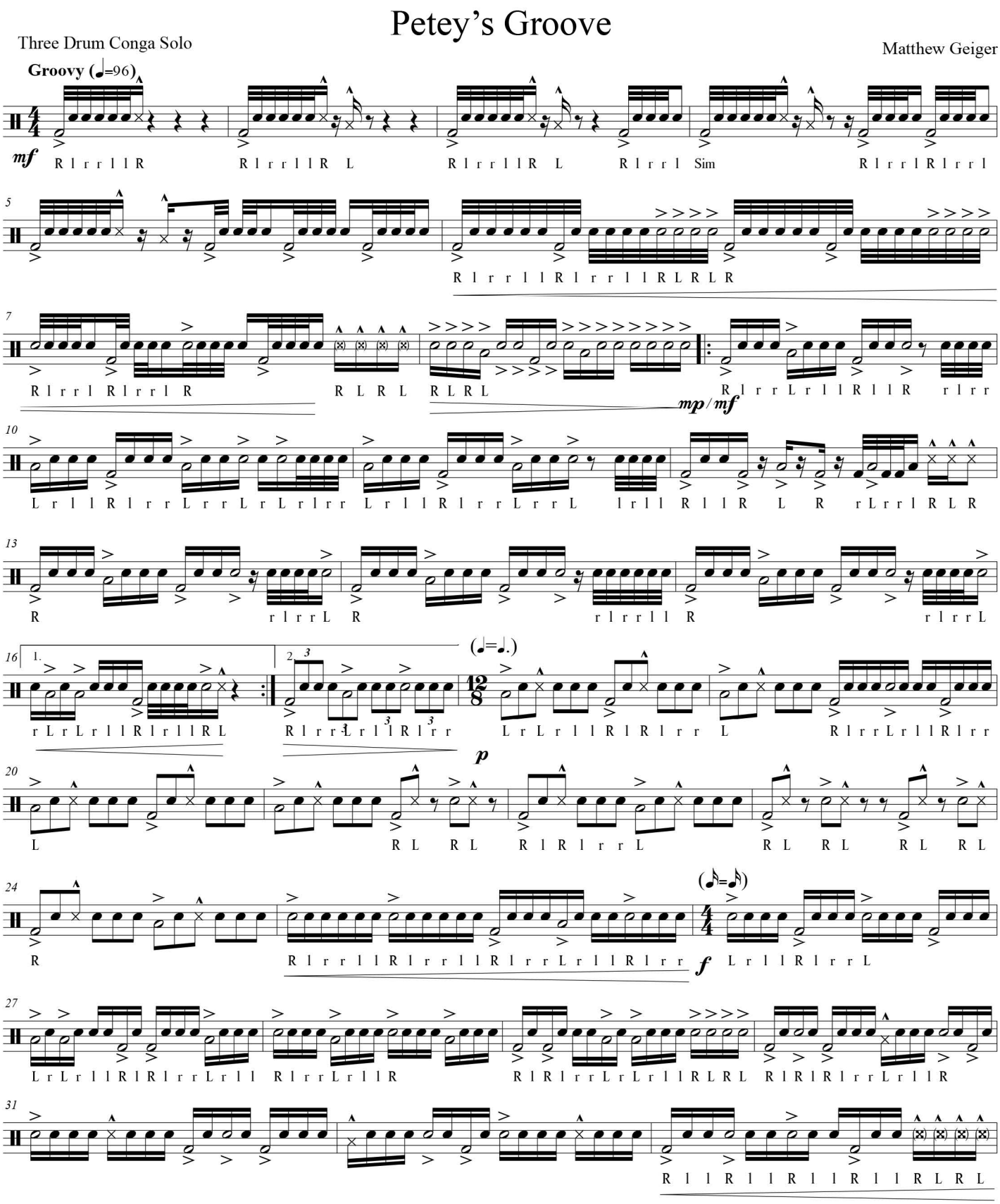
ENTERTAINMENT DRUMLINES

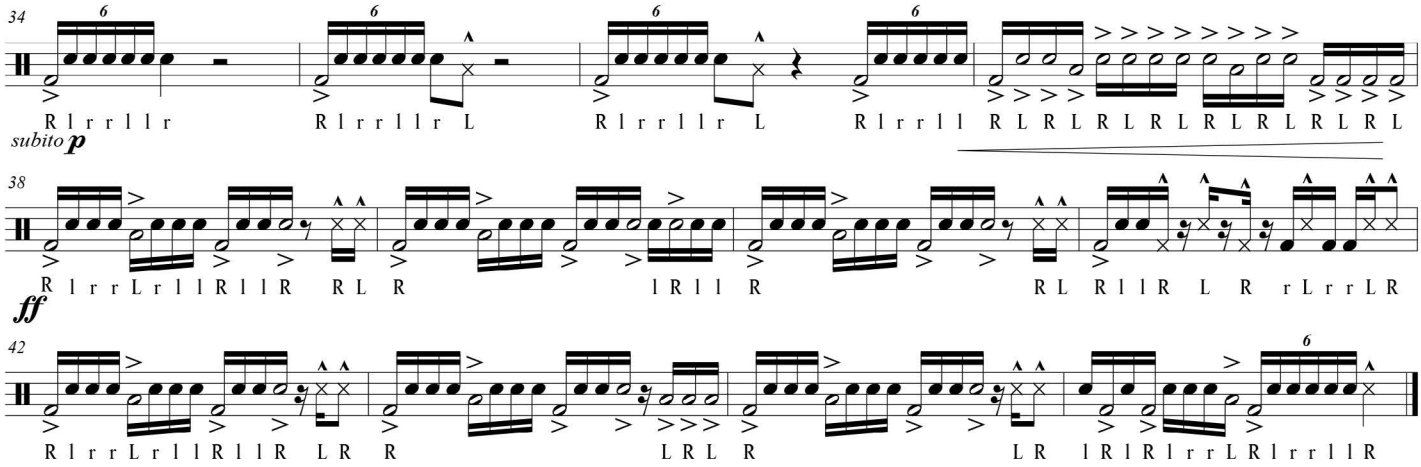
The next stage in the creation process is the manipulation of the snare drum solo into a conga solo on one drum. This part was simple for this example because the written snare drum solo included intentional levels of accents, dictating where to play open tones and slaps to create a varied melody for one drum. The stroke types and heel-toe motions in this solo can be inferred using the rudiments as a translation guide. The only tones that vary are shown with either an open notehead for an open tone, a crossed (X) notehead for a slap, and a normal notehead for a bass tone, keeping with the notation most commonly used. Reading conga solos can become easier when there is less written text on the page and more implicit information. Below is the second level of the process, a solo written for one conga drum:





The final step in creating a stand-alone, concert-caliber conga solo is to convert the single drum solo into a solo for multiple conga drums. For the most part, this is easily done by moving the open tones and occasionally the slaps from the single drum into two additional drums, creating melodies among the three drums. For the purposes of this solo, the *quinto* (highest drum, third space on the staff) is positioned in the middle and held by the performer, the *conga* (middle drum, second space on the staff) is positioned to the left, and the *tumba* (lowest drum, first space on the staff) is to the right. The final iteration of this process can be seen below, using the same material as the snare drum solo, just transferred to the conga drums, melodically enhanced from the single drum solo:






It is easy to transfer a snare drum solo written with the intention of becoming a conga solo from one instrument to the other, but the process can be transferred to many other existing rudimental solos. The intent of this system is to create opportunities to examine conga techniques in a new light, producing innovative ideas using rudimental sticking patterns. It is also important to note that the solo above is based around five basic rudiments, yet there are ways to transfer even more rudiments into the conga vocabulary. This means that the best Pratt, Stone, Wilcoxon, or other great rudiment-based solos and exercises can be manipulated onto conga drums for new approaches to the instrument. Practicing and performing rudimental solos on the congas will help to greatly enhance creativity and maneuverability around the drums in a fun and musical way.

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**Matthew Geiger** teaches at Morehead State University as a visiting instructor of jazz and percussion. He has taught courses for percussionists on Afro-Cuban instruments at the University of Kentucky, where he completed his doctorate. He holds a master's degree from the University of Michigan, where he studied Latin percussion with Pepe Espinosa and Jonathon Ovalle. His research interests include Afro-Cuban music along with solo vibraphone literature. He was the winner of the 2013 PAS international solo vibraphone competition. **PN**

# The Art of Bass Drum Tuning and Muffling

By Jason Hammond-Wood

In the field of marching percussion, it could be argued that no group can have as much positive or negative effect on the overall presentation as the bass drum section. This not only refers to the overall musical performance, but also the tuning of the drums themselves. The art of bass drum tuning and muffling that I have developed has come from several years of trial and error. I have picked up bits and pieces from friends and colleagues that have led me to what I use today.

My goal is to guide and help you achieve what I think is the best possible sound and supply you with knowledge for the success of your percussion program. The sound achieved in this method will create a good range of pitches while still being articulate and clear from the spectator's point of view. Please remember that the method of muffling and tuning that I am sharing is one of many and there is no right or wrong way as long as you have a process that works for you.

My experience in bass drumming started with the Glassmen Drum and Bugle Corps in 2003. While there I learned some traditions of how to muffle and tune drums that was utilized in the early and mid 1990s. Learning this process was very informative from both an educational and historical perspective.

In my teaching career I have been fortunate enough to work with Center Grove High School and the Troopers Drum and Bugle Corps for several years. Both programs allowed me the freedom to develop and fine-tune my skills. I also found that teaching my students about the process was helpful in the general maintenance of the drums. The students' knowledge allowed them to share these skills in their own teaching as well.

## GETTING STARTED

You will need a couple of things before you start muffling your bass drums—the most important of which is time. This process takes longer than I think every time I do it. You will get better with experience, but plan on a fair amount of time. I like to schedule about four to six hours of preparation time for muffling the drums. This does not include cleaning and maintenance of the drums if you are using older equipment.


You will also need plenty of clean space to make sure you can move around freely. Trying to do the muffling with a cluttered area or a small amount of space will lead to a longer timeframe and may result in a dirty finished product.

Two items that will help reduce cleanup time for this project are the old drumheads and the plastic cover the new ones come in. Another option could be to use a large, unfolded cardboard box. The old drumheads should be used to lay your drums down on the bearing edge. *Never* put the bearing edge directly on the ground. If the edge is damaged, the drum will need to be repaired or replaced! The plastic or cardboard can be used for when the spray adhesive is used. The adhesive can get quite messy, even for an expert.

Recruit three to five people to help you; this can reduce the amount of time needed to complete the entire job. Don't forget chairs either; this job is much easier to complete from a sitting position.

Organized materials before starting the process

**Supplies**

Items Needed:
2 cans of 3M 90 hi-strength spray adhesive
2 tubes of white lithium grease
1 roll of 3M tape (painter's tape)
1 jar of petroleum jelly
12 packages of air conditioner foam (2¼ x 2¼ x 42 in)
6 packages of air conditioner foam (1¼ x 1¼ x 42 in)
Total Cost: approximately $100.00

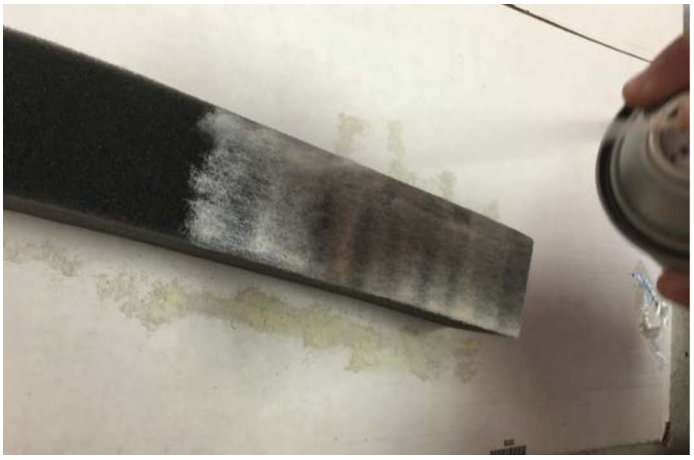

The items pictured give me the best results. You do not have to use these particular brands. These items were selected because of their availability at the local hardware store.

The hi-strength spray is durable in the hot and cold climates of the marching season. In my experience, the foam will not come unglued once it has been placed in position. The tube-style lithium grease is best; there are spray versions, but they don't last as long and can be unreliable at times due to overuse and clogging. The tape will aid in holding the foam to the shell of the drum while the glue dries. An inexpensive painter's tape will do just fine. The petroleum jelly is for the bearing edge of the drum. If you can find a small jar, go for it; you won't need very much. The air conditioner foam is obviously most important. Be sure to use the exact sizes listed. You will use the larger pieces for the bottom basses and the smaller ones for the remaining drums. That will be covered more in depth in the next section.

There will probably be some left over supplies upon completion of the job. These items can be used as general maintenance and upkeep for the future. It is always good to apply lithium grease and petroleum jelly after every head change. Be sure to wipe away any old residue as that can contribute to a buildup of dirt and grime; this tandem is bad for drums!

## LET THE FOAM BEGIN!

Hopefully, you are putting on brand-new heads while muffling the drums so that those drums can have the best possible tone. If so, you can use the plastic the drumheads came in for easy cleanup. Begin by laying down a strip of the foam on the plastic sheet (it doesn't matter which side) and spray the hi-strength adhesive along the whole strip (see Example 1). Be liberal with the amount you use. It will help the entire surface stick a little stronger to the inside of the shell.



Example 1: Applying the adhesive

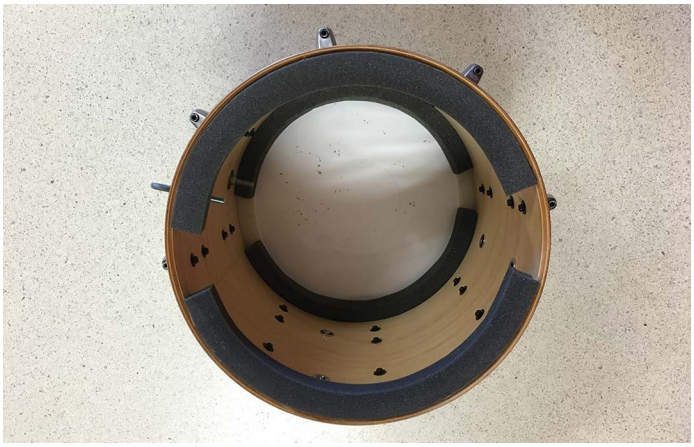
Once you have applied the hi-strength adhesive, slowly start applying part of the foam to the drum. It helps to have one person apply the foam while another person "feeds" the remaining foam to you. Your goal here is to get about 1/8-inch above the bearing edge (see Example 2). This will give the head plenty of contact without over muffling. If you set it too high, just remove as much of the foam as possible and start from the beginning.

Example 2: How high to seat the foam

After each strip of foam is applied, add some painter's tape to help hold the foam in place (see Example 3). I like to put a strip of tape over each lug casing. This makes sure I get enough support as well as giving it a unified look. After all, everything has to look good.


Example 3: Add tape for extra support

I like to use 2¼-inch foam all the way around the bottom two drums, and the 1¼-inch tape for basses one and two. For bass three I remove about 6–8 inches from each side. For bass one, take one strip of the 1¼-inch foam and cut it in half. Then spread it evenly side to side (see Example 4).



Example 4: Foam removal on smaller drum sizes

Use the diagram in Example 11 as a reference for the correct foam sizes for your drums. I like to use the larger 2¼-inch foam on drums that are 24 inches and up. For the smaller drums I use the 1¼-inch foam.

Once all the foam has been taped for support, let the adhesive set for a while. This is a good time to move on to another drum. By the time you come back to this drum, it should be fine to rest it on its side with the newly applied foam. The adhesive usually dries in a matter of minutes, but take your time; you don't want to redo this step, as it is very sticky!

When both sides of the drum are completed, stack them up neatly and let them set for several hours. This will give the adhesive time to set in and do its job.

## LITHIUM GREASE—A DRUM'S BEST FRIEND

Lithium grease will help keep your lugs happy and moving fluidly, thus allowing you to tune the drumheads better and sustain more life out of the hardware. Even with good care and maintenance, hardware may need to be changed every few years.

I like to start by taking an old drumhead and laying the drum on its side. This will help protect the bearing edge of the drum and avoid unwanted dirt. The first step in applying lithium grease is to put a small amount on the lug where you will be turning the drumkey. Applying grease here will help with torque and friction as you crank on the drumheads. Once you have applied a small amount of grease, be sure to rub it around the entire lug for even distribution (see Example 5). There will be some leftover grease when you are done. Be sure to clean the excess away to avoid unwanted dirt and grime.

Once all the lugs have been greased, it is time to add some to the lug casings attached to the drum. I like to use the smallest amount to help the lug glide through the threading (see Example 6). Too much grease will just be more of a mess to clean up. Once this step is completed, it is time to move to the drumheads.

## SEATING THE DRUMHEADS

It is now time for the petroleum jelly. Only the smallest bit is required. Think as if you were going to add it to your lips. The purpose of this is to give the bear-

Example 5: Appling lithium grease to the top of the lug

Example 6: Apply lithium grease to the top of the lug

ing edge a little bit of "give" when the drumhead starts getting cranked. I like to use just enough that I can feel my finger glide around the edge without any visible signs of clumps from the petroleum jelly (see Example 7).

Example 7: Apply a small amount of petroleum jelly

Next step is to crimp the head. Place your thumbs around the edge and push to "break in" the plastic a little bit (see Example 8). The popping sound that is created is pretty loud but harmless to the drumhead itself. Be sure to go all the way around the drumhead by using a logo as the starting point so you can keep track of how far you have gone.


Example 8: Crimp the drumhead to help "break" it in

Now for the scariest step: sitting on the drumhead. Yes, you read that correctly! The idea behind this is to add pressure to the head to stretch the plastic as we begin cranking the head later (see Example 9). I have never had anyone break a head by sitting on it. Use your best judgment in this process and be delicate. No more than five minutes on each head is needed. I have no science behind how effective this, is but it was something taught to me and, in my opinion, makes a difference. *Skip this step if you wish!*

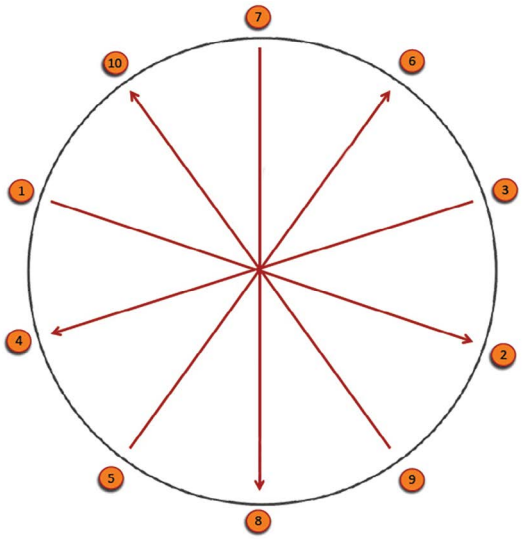
Example 9: Sitting on the head can help stretch it for ease of tuning

Next is to size the drum up for the person who will be playing the instrument. The lugs should be very loose so that you can rotate the heads in order to have the logos straight and uniform. Have the student wear the instrument and go to a "minus-one" position that simulates how the person marches. Most of us march differently than we stand, and we want to make sure the heads look good while the players are mimicking the movement posture they display during performance. Once you are happy with both sides of the drum, tighten down the lugs with your fingers until each lug is tight enough to the head that it doesn't wiggle on the rim. Then you are ready to begin tuning.

## DRUM TUNING SCHEME

Before you begin cranking, make sure that each lug is resting snug against the rim. There should be no movement when you wiggle it with your fingers. Once finished, each claw should be putting a very similar amount of pressure on the drum rim.

I always tighten the drumhead by making three-quarter turns with a high-tension drumkey. In the first turn around the drum, some lugs will become loose again. Simply tighten them enough that they are snug, then continue the same amount of quarter turns with the drum key as initially intended (see Example 10). Depending on the size of the drum and your ability to hear pitches, you may begin matching the pitch from lug to lug.




Example 10: I like to pick a lug and put my hand on it so I don't forget where I started.

I have found that the best way to match each lug individually is to apply my fingertips to the center of the drumhead so that I can hear the higher pitched overtones.

Be sure to balance the pitches on each side independently. Once you have all the lugs closely matched on both sides, pick a side that you like and begin to match the pitches from side to side.

Once the pitches are matched, you can tune the drum up a few more quarter turns. This step depends on the size of drum you are tuning. From here you will want your students to play on the heads for a while and ease your way in to the desired pitch scheme. This process could take several days and should only be done quickly if you are in a pinch.

The pitch scheme I prefer varies on the season and type of group. A younger or inexperienced group will sound better with a low tuning scheme (see Example 11). For an experienced group, a tuning scheme with more range or higher pitched drums is preferred so that they will "cut" through the entire ensemble. You will also want to consider the size of the entire battery and wind section. You aren't going to want high-pitched drums if you have a small ensemble, because there won't be enough depth of sound. The opposite is true for the indoor setting and large wind ensembles, as the bass drums can get lost in the overall soundscape.

The use of the low-C tuning scheme is only going to sound pure if your ensemble uses a 32-inch bottom bass drum, most often found in a drum corps setting. I have tried to use this tuning scheme with a 28-inch drum, but it sounds "splatty" or "flappy"—the drumhead isn't tight enough to get a great quality of sound. When you have a 32-inch drum, the head is nice and tight, and is much easier to play on.

The low-D tuning scheme is effective for a high school ensemble that has a 28-inch bottom bass. This is my favorite starting point in terms of pitches for my high school. I have tried a few times to take the 18-inch and 16-inch to G and B-flat to maintain the same intervallic relationship in Option 1. It may be unnecessary unless you have many intricate parts that need to cut through the rest of the ensemble. Remember that you have to ease the drumhead into higher pitches, and the higher the drumhead goes, the shorter the lifespan will be. If you are going to tune that high, you will want to budget for new heads at least once a year, if not twice!

I have found the low-E option to be effective for the indoor percussion ensemble setting. The drums will seem very high but will cut extremely well in a gymnasium or arena. This will also help eliminate that "muddy" sound within the ensemble. As bass drum education and performance is getting better, we need to make sure to let that voice be heard while still supporting the entire percussion ensemble with the instrument's depth of sound.

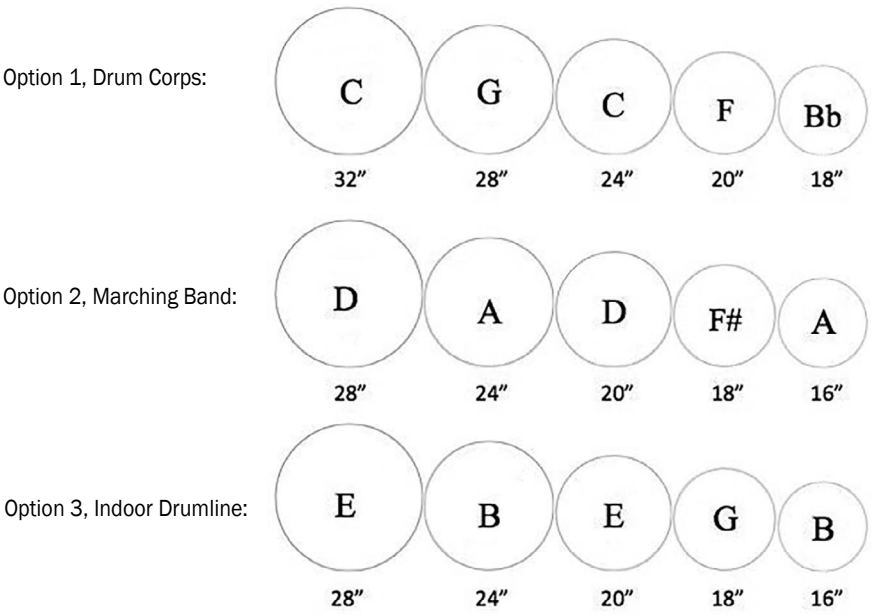
If your ensemble only has four drums, a tuning scheme of a perfect 5th followed by perfect 4ths will work just fine. Be sure to play with the pitches slightly, too. Sometimes a tonal center is desired and other times it isn't. Generally, I use my ear and my thought of the musical intent to make these decisions. Just make sure you aren't cranking too much past what is outlined in Example 11. Anything more than a half step above on the 16-inch, 18-inch, and 20-inch drums could cause damage to the lug casings and may cause the lugs to start bending.

Over the past 15 years I have tried several options for tuning and muffling bass drums for the marching percussion ensemble. What I like most about this method is that once you have applied the muffling, it is a fairly low-maintenance process to maintain; the foam stays on for several seasons, and there are rarely problems. I have also found that I can tune the drum a bit higher while still getting some low-end tone. This is nice for the performer as a tight drumhead is easier to play than a loose one (especially true in more difficult patterns with rolls or flams).

## CONTACT

For educators who have any questions or concerns, or who just want to talk about your experiences, feel free to contact me. I am available for conversation and look forward to hearing from you. For further questions or inquiries about bass drum muffling and tuning contact Jason at the following: www.jhwpercussion.com or jasonhammondwood@mac.com.

**Jason Hammond-Wood** teaches applied percussion lessons at Center Grove High School alongside Josh Torres. Since his arrival in 2008, students have performed at PASIC, Midwest Band and Orchestra clinic, the Superbowl halftime show, BOA Grand Nationals, and WGI World Championship Finals. He has also worked with the Troopers Drum and Bugle Corps from Casper, Wyoming since the 2011 season. Jason is president of the Indiana Percussion Association and vice president of the Indiana PAS chapter. **PN**




Example 11: These are three of my favorite tuning schemes:

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# Goal Setting in the Applied Percussion Lesson

By James W. Doyle

*"If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else." —Yogi Berra*

Setting goals is an essential part of success in life. Many college students begin their studies with a general sense of what they would like to do upon graduation. Developing a process of clear goal setting with continual review and revision can greatly aid students in realizing their initial goals. These goals will guide their progress and focus throughout the semester, and ultimately give shape to their entire college career. In addition, collaborative goal setting provides the applied instructor with the information necessary to create a flexible and individualized curriculum that will meet the unique needs of each student.

In this article, I will present several goal-setting techniques that have been successful in my percussion studio. I recommend goal setting as a consistent, structured, and integrated process in applied lessons, as well as in studio class and advising. A systematic method of documenting and record keeping can be organized to be both efficient and effective. Prior to the first lesson of every semester, each student should fill out a personal goals worksheet; I use Google Forms for this process, which allows access for both the student and me. The categories on the form could include semester goals, degree goals, and short- and long-term career goals. The information from this form is saved in a spreadsheet, which allows the collection and maintenance of this data for tracking throughout each student's degree program.

At the first lesson of the semester, the student and instructor review the information from the goal worksheet to ensure the student has established well-articulated, realistically attainable, and measurable goals. This also provides an opportunity to align semester and degree goals that support career goals. Connecting semester and degree goals with career goals lends motivation, relevance, and value to their current work. These goal worksheets are then reviewed together at mid-term, and again at the conclusion of the semester to evaluate what goals have been met, which goals are to be continued, which goals have changed, and which need to be adjusted and perhaps redefined.

Angela Myles Beeching, former Director of Career Services at New England Conservatory and author of *Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music,* says, "Careers are developed over time...and long-term career goals are realized through everyday choices about the use of time, energy, and money."[1] Throughout the year, goal setting should be part of regular conversations, formal lessons, and facilitated through group discussion in studio class. This thread is woven throughout the degree as well, providing ample opportunities for exploration and growth. Thinking about the future is an exciting, yet potentially intimidating process. It is through consistent reflection, practice, and application that students gain confidence and mastery in their goal-setting skills.

When I mentor students on goal-setting practices, I encourage them to start with the desired outcome in mind. Early goal setting should allow an individual to examine every possibility without thoughts of limitations. David Cutler, author of *The Savvy Musician,* suggests to "think big, and never forget what is truly important to you...don't allow yourself to put up roadblocks, making excuses for why these things can't happen."[2] Students begin the goal-setting process by defining their long-term degree goals. These will likely change over time; however, it is important to have a career goal in mind to allow for structuring immediate goals. These long-term outcome-based goals provide the inspiration and direction required to achieve the end result.

Often it is easier for students to envision a long-term goal than it is to learn to define short-term goals. This is when mentoring becomes an integral part of the process. When reviewing goals with students, I assist them in creating goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, and process-based.

Specific goal setting is always recommended and preferred over general goal setting. Goals should be clear, concise, realistically attainable, and measurable. For example, rather than, "I will memorize my assigned concerto," a student might say, "I will memorize measures 1–50 in the first movement of my assigned concerto by the 15th of the month, at quarter note equals 120 beats per minute." Specific goals are more attainable, and progress toward meeting these goals can be readily observed and measured, which is essential for evaluating progress. The specificity of goals allows for measurement in a way that generalized goal setting does not. Measurements can include auditions, juries, self-evaluation of recorded samples, peer evaluation in studio class, and self-reflections. Many students struggle with setting specific goals initially, but with guidance and mentoring they become adept at this skill.

Establishing a balance between moderate and more elaborate goals is essential to progress. Some students will need guidance in determining the right level of challenge. I recommend that students choose a goal that is a challenge, yet still attainable. Noa Kageyama, author of the blog *The Bulletproof Musician,* suggests "picking a goal that is exciting, motivating, and feels like a real challenge at the upper edge of what you believe you are capable of. When trying to figure out where your upper limits are, trust your gut and don't forget that we have a tendency to underestimate our abilities."[3] Discussion between the student and the applied instructor can be invaluable in establishing this balance.

Process-based goals and outcome-based, or long-term, goals are both important, but it is through achievement of the process goals that progress is made. The difficulty with outcome-based goals, such as, "I will win the principal timpani position with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra," is that much of it is out of our control. Someone else with the same outcome-based goal may have a better audition, be better prepared, or appeal to the panel in a particular way. These outcome-based goals serve as a focusing tool, and as motivation, but the process goals remain essential to individual growth. Mastering the tempos, articulation, intonation, sticking, phrasing, and dynamic range of the audition repertoire are examples of process goals. With careful attention to detail with the process goals, an individual can be as prepared as possible for an audition. Examples of process goals include developing technique and repertoire building, and ultimately it is the combination of process and outcome goals that will lead to success.

In music, as in life, success depends on more than having a specific set of musical skills. With fewer traditional jobs available to musicians, developing a broad skill base prepares students for a variety of career opportunities. Identifying strengths in areas beyond specific musical skills and developing these areas can be essential in today's job market. David Cutler recommends creating a "personal inventory" and evaluating your skills within the following categories: primary musical skill, secondary musical skills, non-musical skills, and unique skills.[4] In addition, evaluate personal qualities, identifying strengths as well as those in need of further growth. Ask for feedback from colleagues, teachers, and mentors

Thinking about the future is an exciting, yet potentially intimidating process.

who may have a different view of you than you have of yourself. Use this feedback to assist in refining your personal inventory.

A valuable exercise is the development of the "future résumé." Students are assigned the task of finding résumés belonging to musicians in careers to which they aspire and then reverse-engineer the résumé. Through careful examination, students determine what experiences, skills, and accomplishments they must gain before becoming competitive in their chosen field. Using their current résumé, they then create a future résumé, inserting in italics, or in red, their goals for the future. This document can serve as a guide to the specific goals and objectives to be achieved as they move toward their career goals.

Another valuable exercise is creating a career map, a professional road map that allows you to "visualize where you are, where you want to go, and possible routes to get there."[5] Examine your values, interests, personal inventory, and vision for the future. When you have a clear picture of where you currently are and where you hope to be in five, ten, or twenty years, look for potential obstacles between the present and the future, and brainstorm strategies to overcome these challenges.

Although these strategies require an investment of time beyond the teaching of repertoire, the value is exponential. Beyond the value inherent in becoming exceptional at primary skills, another reason for a student to complete a music degree is to get a job. With regular guidance, students can acquire the ability to set goals, develop a personal inventory and map their careers, useful skills for all pursuits, musical and otherwise.

## ENDNOTES


1. Beeching, Angela Myles. *Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music.* 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, 9.
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4. Cutler. *The Savvy Musician*, 14.
5. Still, Lauren. "A Guide to Mapping Out Your Career." *The Grindstone.* Accessed February 9, 2014. http://www.thegrindstone.com/2012/02/06/career- management/a-guide-to-mapping-out-your-career-696/



**James W. Doyle** serves as Associate Professor of Music at Adams State University where he teaches percussion, world music, and directs the Brazilian, steel pan, and percussion ensembles. He has performed and presented clinics throughout the U.S., Australia, Japan, Southwest Asia, Africa, and at PASIC. James served as principal percussionist with the USAF Band of the Golden West and was a member of the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra. He performs with the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra, San Juan Symphony, and as a commercial artist throughout the Rocky Mountain region. James earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and serves on the PAS University Pedagogy Committee. PN

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**Difficulty Rating Scale**

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

## MARIMBA SOLO

**First Impressions** III+
Andrew Patzig
**$16.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** 5-octave marimba
**Web:** score samples, audio and video recordings

Hinting at the compositional style of "Dance of Passion" by Robert Aldridge, and the slow permutation-based works of Burritt and Sammut, this four-minute solo is full of subtle rhythmic fluctuations, flexes in tempo, and a pleasing (although sometimes predictable) chord structure. Throughout the piece, the melody unfolds through a variety of techniques, including tonal-based permutations, a chorale, and a more intense and active permutation scheme towards the end.

Harmonically, the piece is built around only a handful of chords, which can aid in the learning process for younger musicians who are not quite ready to tackle more difficult or complex literature. Pedagogically, this work also introduces a variety of four-mallet sticking requirements, as well as the necessity of communicating musical ebb and flow across long phrases of chords. This is a perfect piece for performers wanting high audience approval ratings with low-risk technical challenges in the practice room.

*—Joshua D. Smith*

**Larkspur and Rubies** V
Eric Ewazen
**$7.99**
**Theodore Presser**
**Instrumentation:** 5-octave marimba
**Web:** score sample

Clocking in at one minute and 30 seconds, this exuberant work for solo marimba was written for percussion royalty Evelyn Glennie in honor of her 50th birthday. The title is a tribute to Glennie's July birth with the birth flower (larkspur) and birthstone (ruby). In addition, the composition is exactly 50 measures in length! Fans of Eric Ewazen's signature tonalities and lush textures will certainly find their expectation fulfilled.

Ewazen gives the performer his or her money's worth by moving between several recurring sections throughout this short work. The first section utilizes a 1-4-2-3 permutation that travels through several listener-friendly tonalities. This is followed by two short sections, one combining chordal and arpeggiated figures, and the next utilizing scalar runs. These ideas recur throughout the piece until interrupted by a majestic-sounding 6/8 section, marked "Heroic." The piece closes with abbreviated statements of the first two sections.

Although the marked tempo (quarter note equaling 120) might dissuade less experienced players, all the figures are idiomatic to the marimba and would be playable by intermediate undergraduate performers, as well as more advanced players looking to feature this piece as an encore on a recital.

*—Jason Baker*

**Summer Gardens** III–IV
Isaac Pyatt
**$14.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** 4.3-octave marimba
**Web:** score sample, audio and video recordings

"Summer Gardens" is a fantastic short work for the advanced high-school student or undergraduate looking to develop more dexterity with four-mallet technique. Similar in concept to Eric Sammut's "Four Rotations," Isaac Pyatt's solo emphasizes techniques such as lateral and independent strokes while providing an overarching musical landscape for the soloist and audience to enjoy. Running just under three minutes, "Summer Gardens" is a great piece for a jury or studio class.

The technical demands of the piece require the performer to execute triple lateral strokes in the left hand at a fairly slow and comfortable speed, with frequent interval shifts in the right hand, culminating with the use of octaves in the climax of the solo. Pyatt's use of repetitive rhythmic material allows for performers to focus on the technical demands while also shifting melodic and harmonic material underneath. One of Pyatt's compositional strengths is his ability to manipulate this repetitive thematic material in creative ways to develop long melodic lines and connect various elements in the short piece.

Although described by the composer as a potential teaching tool, "Summer Gardens" is much more than a pedagogical work. The solo creates a beautiful image of relaxation and reflection, allowing the performer to focus on musicality as well as technicality.

*—Matthew Geiger*

**unBENt** IV
Chad Floyd
**$20.00**
**Self-published**
**Instrumentation:** 4.3-octave marimba and single crotale (C)
**Web:** audio and video recording

"unBENt" is a roughly six-minute marimba solo that takes the listener through a number of different sections of varying character, while a single crotale note played with the shaft of the mallets provides connective tissue to most of the sections. The piece was inspired by the composer's friend Ben, and the composer states that, "The solitary tone provided by the crotale symbolizes the straightforwardness, unwavering, and 'unbent' characteristics of a good friend."

Sections run the gamut of character, from the thinly scored rubato section in the beginning to a more groove-oriented section of running sixteenth notes with short bursts of thirty-second notes interspersed within. Other sections of interest include portions that feel very similar to David Samuels' "Footpath" in the sense that it feels more improvisational, and areas that explore subtle color changes of the marimba such as playing over the nodes or the use of piano-roll style chords. All of these sections and more occur before returning to the opening rubato section, which closes the work.

Technically, a player will need to have some experience with four-mallet technique. The added use of the crotale (ideally mounted on a cymbal stand in front of the marimba) will require some small logistical challenges at times, but all the areas are well thought out and should be easily executed with a little practice. The music is meticulously notated so that the composer's intent can be easily interpreted, from the style or character of sections to coloristic techniques such as performing on the nodes or hitting the crotale.

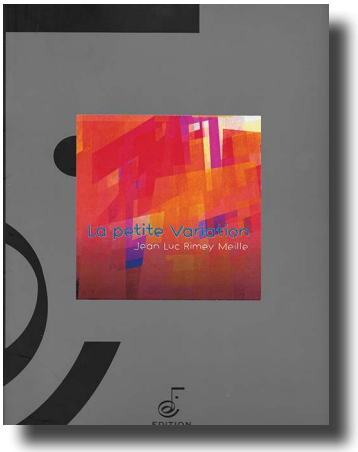
"unBENt" is a beautiful work that will be an audience favorite while providing a worthy musical challenge to an undergraduate student. The variety of sections along with the accessible, attractive harmonic language and identifiable themes would make this perfect for an undergraduate recital or jury piece.

*—Brian Nozny*

## MARIMBA DUO

**La petite Variation** IV
Jean-Luc Rimey-Meille
**€20.00**
**Edition Svitzer**
**Instrumentation (2 players):** two 5-octave marimbas
**Web:** score sample, audio and video recordings

"La petite Variation" is a constantly developing duet that expands on its complexity to the very end. This is the intention of the piece, as the composer states it is built



around a "rhythmic chasing that develops itself into a harmonic spiral cycle."

Beginning with a rhythmic ostinato of chords from the second marimba, Marimba 1 takes the spotlight with the first and, really, only melody of the piece. I say this because after measure 16 rarely is there much in the way of melody outside of a solo from Marimba 2 from measures 34 through 63. The rest of the work basically consists of one performer playing variations on the original rhythmic chord ostinato while the other player executes a repeated running sixteenth-note line with accents to establish some interplay between the players.

Following the solo from the second marimba player, the piece reverts to more of the same: one player playing a rhythmic chord passage (this time split between the two hands with double-stops to create full measures of sixteenth notes throughout) while the other player executes a running sixteenth-note line. These passages then change harmonically, but never do we get that sense of a melody or focal point again.

The final section puts the material through a number of odd-time signatures, creating variations on the opening rhythmic theme. Again, there is no clear focus for this section outside of the interplay between the players, but given that the audience has heard this for roughly six minutes at this point, nothing stands out, as it just feels like more of the same.

Technically there is nothing here that couldn't be handled by an upperclassman undergraduate performer. The highly-syncopated rhythms and interplay will require a good sense of time between the players, and both players will need to be comfortable with four-mallet technique. Otherwise there is nothing in the piece that a junior or senior undergraduate couldn't handle.

"La petite Variation" works as a duet, offering some lush harmonic colors, but offers little more than that. While the harmonic language and groove of the piece will be potentially pleasing to listeners, anyone looking for something deeper will be left wanting.

*—Brian Nozny*

**Sequoia** **V**
Alex Stopa
**$27.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** 2 marimbas (one 4.5- and one 5-octave)
**Web:** score sample, audio and video recordings

Much like composer Alex Stopa, I also remember the first time I saw the redwood forests in Northern California and was amazed by the awe-inspiring trees. "Sequoia" for two marimbas is an excellent portrayal of the emotions inherent when standing among the ancient giants. Also, his performance on the Tapspace website is phenomenal, giving a fantastic perspective to the piece.

Stopa's frequent use of recurring themes provides a connective tissue throughout the work as it weaves in and out of various tempi and time signatures. His use of polyrhythms is apparent from the very beginning, as accents are used to bring out a composite rhythm implemented throughout as a rhythmic motive. Specifically, the use of polyrhythms in the middle section is beautifully used to provide motion and contrast to the more aggressive beginning and end sections. Similarly, a melodic three-note descending line appears in various shapes throughout the work. This fragment is passed between both players and provides a consistent motive for Stopa's melodic development.

"Sequoia" lasts a little over seven minutes and is a great piece for a graduate or professional recital. Both parts require significant virtuosity at times, although the top voice frequently carries a more melodic role and the bottom acts as contrapuntal or harmonic support. The frequently shifting meter and harmony provide many unexpected turns, making the piece even more exciting. I highly encourage duos to check this piece out. Audiences and performers will love it.

*—Matthew Geiger*

## MARIMBA SOLO WITH ACCOMPANIMENT

**Downcycle** **IV**
Brian Nozny
**$30.00**
**Self-published**
**Instrumentation:** 5-octave marimba, 2 vibraphones, crotales (2 octaves), glockenspiel, ride cymbal
**Web:** audio recording

Brian Nozny's "Downcycle" is based on his previous work, "…folded…." The title refers to the process of recycling something for a lesser, but still functional, use. Nozny does an excellent job of taking the theme from the previous work and using it in a downsized setting. Along with the main theme, the accompanying ensemble has been downsized as well, utilizing only the metallic instruments.

The work has a contemplative feeling while using syncopated rhythms in both the soloist and accompaniment parts. While the solo part is not as difficult as the part in "…folded…," the performer must make large leaps around the instrument and execute ascending and descending grace-note figures. For these reasons the solo performer needs to be a slightly advanced player. The accompaniment parts add a wonderful tonal color to the soloist through use of the aforementioned syncopated rhythms. The use of tasteful dissonance really adds to the soloist's part, but does not overshadow it.

The performers should familiarize themselves not only with this work, but with the work it is based on to pull off a well-informed performance. Nozny has added another excellent work to the marimba repertoire that would be fantastic on a senior or master's level recital.

*—Josh Armstrong*

## VIBRAPHONE SOLO

**10 Short Pieces for Solo Vibraphone** **III–IV**
Olivia Kieffer
**$15.95**
**Living Creatures Press**
**Instrumentation:** vibraphone
**Web:** video recording

*10 Short Pieces for Solo Vibraphone* is a collection of works the composer states is "uniquely challenging music that is particularly well suited for a late high school–early college level percussionist." Kieffer's goal was to create modern music that positioned itself between the intermediate and difficult four-mallet keyboard music of today. She hit her goal squarely on the head and has provided us with a fun set of pieces that will be highly rewarding on many levels to performers and audiences.

While there are some similarities between a few of the pieces in the collection, each piece stands well on its own as a self-contained work with its own unique character. The composer states that the pieces may be performed in any order, and any quantity of them may be performed in a set. Styles range from the block-chord style of pieces 1 and 9 to the broken triplet feel of 2 and 4. Many of the pieces have a minimalist style, with a harmonic language that will be very approachable to a variety of audiences.

There are a number of things I really enjoy about this collection. Each piece is relatively short (the longest ones are around a minute and a half). This makes it perfect for using with students to teach pedagogical lessons, and makes it easy to create a short suite of the pieces for a recital. Also, Kieffer states that many of the elements to the pieces—such as pedaling, articulations, occasional dynamics, and mallet choices—are left up to the performer. This again makes for a great exercise for students to get their minds thinking about what choices they want to make, as well as making it fun for professionals to approach these and truly make the performance their own. As the composer states, "Creative experimentation is encouraged!"

This encouragement and openness to interpretation isn't to say that these pieces are just notes on a page. Each piece has an idea and character behind it. Kieffer has diligently provided style indications at the beginning of each that give a clear idea to the character behind the piece. Favorites of mine include "peace be with you" for solo 1, "the future; where humans can live for 100's of years" for 8, and my personal favorite: "Skywalker's childhood music box" for 3.

This collection provides a beautiful addition to the intermediate vibraphone repertoire. Its versatility allows for everything from small musical studies that can be individualized for each student through performing an assortment of them on an undergraduate recital.

*—Brian Nozny*

**Tesseract** **IV**
Francisco Perez
**$23.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** vibraphone and prerecorded electronics
**Web:** audio and video recordings, score samples

Tesseract is defined as "the generalization of a cube into four dimensions." This 4th dimension has been puzzling scientists for over 200 years. Written for solo vibraphone and prerecorded mallet keyboards, Francisco Perez creates a composition of fascinating multi-dimensional sonic exploration that is sure to get some attention.

The expedition into both rhythmic acuity and sonic possibility are very carefully and adeptly displayed as the work unfolds. Conceptually, the idea of a percussion soloist performing with a "canned" ensemble is very interesting and intriguing, as Perez opens yet another chasm of Pandora's box to endless possibilities with this "mallet ensemble in a carton" approach of composition. The score is presented with all markings being notated very clearly, including helpful cues that will aid the performer in aligning to where the prerecorded track is within the piece.

In making a mallet choice for this piece, the performer should first consider the space in which the performance will happen. The composer states in his performance notes that "the soloist [should] be another member of a balanced 'ensemble,'" so the acoustical properties of the performance venue should be considered.

To perform the piece accurately, "Tesseract" will require an experienced musician with a well-established internal clock because of (A) playing with the CD, and (B) the ability to feel and interact with subdivision that is prevalent throughout this piece. At 11 minutes, this piece would work well on a senior or graduate-level recital.

*—Marcus D. Reddick*

## VIBRAPHONE SOLO WITH ACCOMPANIMENT

**The Spirit of Life** **VI**
Csaba Zoltan Marjan
**€20.00**
**Edition Svitzer**
**Instrumentation:** vibraphone and piano
**Web:** audio recording and score sample

Works for vibraphone have, for the

most part, been associated with jazz, primarily because of the outstanding talents of such artists as Gary Burton and his collaborations with pianists Chick Corea and Makoto Ozone. Csaba Zoltan Marjan expresses his belief that the instrument can offer expression in other musical styles, and hopes that others may want to expand the use in various forms of compositions. This composition utilizes some jazz influences, such as harmonic materials and short embellishments, but also features influences by Ravel, Debussy, and Mussorgsky, combining to create an excellent work that is clearly a concert format of notated musical expression.

The work is presented in four distinct sections, each a contrast in color, tempo, and style. The opening is to be performed rather freely, almost in the style of improvisation. It closes with the content gaining in tempo and rhythmic articulation, which ends at a quarter note at 150 mm. The second section features several rhythmic motives that include different meters, including 4/4, 6/8, 5/8, and 3/8. This section wanes in density until the third section, which is much slower, and is written at a quarter at 45–60 bpm. Via a long accelerando, the work closes with a return of the fast tempo and meter changes.

This work is primarily written in G minor, but with accidentals and chord changes, there are other harmonic textures to make the solo expressive. The work requires four-mallet technique throughout, and the vibraphone and piano parts require mature players. This is an excellent work that could be featured on an advanced recital program.

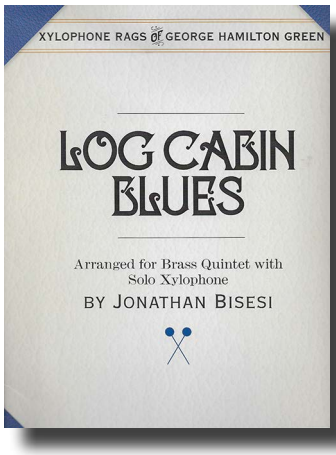
*—George Frock*

## XYLOPHONE SOLO WITH ACCOMPANIMENT

**Log Cabin Blues** **V**
George Hamilton Green
Arr. Jonathan Besesi
**$29.95**
**Meredith Music**
**Instrumentation (6 players):** xylophone solo and brass quintet
**Web:** video recording

Our early melodic percussion history features a number of xylophone pieces that were written and performed by George Hamilton Green and other ragtime performers. Many of these were often broadcast via radio to various parts of the country. Most of these were performed with piano or small instrumental groups. This publication presents Green's famous, "Log Cabin Blues," with an accompaniment written for a standard brass quintet consisting of two trumpets, horn, trombone, and tuba.

The xylophone part is in C major and follows the original publication accurately in style, dynamics, and syncopation. The




brass parts are nearly all notated on the staff, and there are no special requirements, except for the first trumpet, which performs a flutter tongue in measures 75–78. For those who are working on a recital program, this is an excellent way to present an older work with a fresh format.

*—George Frock*

**Rainbow Ripples** **V**
George Hamilton Green
Arr. Jonathan Bisesi
**$29.95**
**Meredith Music**
**Instrumentation (6 players):** xylophone solo and brass quintet
**Web:** video recording

George Hamilton Green lived from 1893 until 1970, and was a noted, premier xylophonist from 1904 until the late 1940s. His influence as a xylophone performer and composer became unparalleled—particularly in the realm of ragtime xylophone composition. Among his numerous ragtime hits was "Rainbow Ripples," which first existed as a xylophone solo with piano accompaniment.

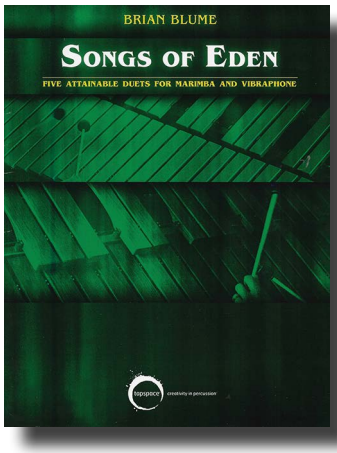
After the percussion group Nexus revived George H. Green's music in the 1970s, "Rainbow Ripples" was transcribed for xylophone solo with marimba-quartet accompaniment. An extension of this kind of transcription concept is now apparent with arranger Jonathan Bisesi's accompaniment for brass quintet (two trumpets, horn, trombone, and tuba), which provides the xylophone soloist a different set of timbres to accompany Green's timeless piece. Careful attention by Bisesi to the original scoring is evidenced by his not changing the original tonal relationships (G major and E-flat major). Attention to articulation for the brass players enhances the cross-metric accents that are so identifiable in this particular rag.

A full score (in the transposed, concert-pitch part-setting) and individual parts are included in this affordable package from Meredith Music. This scoring for xylophone solo and brass quintet will be quite accessible for the mature set of brass players and perhaps even work as a novelty diversion on a band concert to feature an outstanding xylophone soloist with brass quintet.

*—Jim Lambert*

## MIXED KEYBOARD PERCUSSION DUO

**Songs of Eden** **I–II**
Brian Blume
**$16.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** 4-octave marimba, vibraphone
**Web:** score sample and audio recording



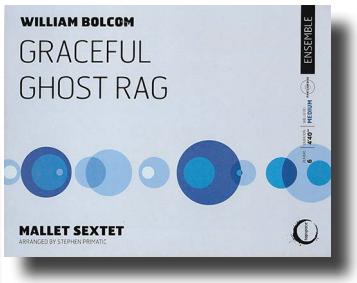

"Songs of Eden" is a collection of five easy duets for marimba and vibraphone. The movements are titled "Follow Me," "Afternoon Song," "Skip Step," "A Moment," and "Toddler Escapades." These brief vignettes would be appropriate for beginning mallet players. The movements are all roughly two to three minutes long. Two scores are included for the players rather than individual parts, which is helpful pedagogically so even young players might begin to think about how their parts fit together. Each duo is still short enough to be performed without a page turn.

The melodic and harmonic language is tonal, with familiar chord progressions for young ears. Most of the collection is paced at a moderate tempo, with one duet requiring a slower, more somber tempo and the final a spritely allegro. The meters are all in two, three, or four pulses per measure, and the key signatures span up to two flats. The parts stay largely within the treble clef staff with very few ledger lines, making these accessible for new readers. Brian Blume states that he has endeavored to imbue these duos with the qualities of "joy, beauty, fun, peace, and purity."

*—Phillip O'Banion*

## KEYBOARD PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

**Graceful Ghost Rag** **III–IV**
William Bolcom
Arr. Stephen Primatic
**$25.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (6 players):** glockenspiel, xylophone, vibraphone, 4.3-octave marimba, 5-octave marimba
**Web:** audio recording




This lovely arrangement from William Bolcom's "Three Ghost Rags" is a delightful addition to the chamber percussion repertoire. Clocking in a 4:30, "Graceful Ghost Rag" offers intermediate percussionists the chance to experience performing ragtime music in a relaxed, restrained style, and gives the ensemble the opportunity to experiment and learn about balance and implement selection.

The piece is structured in three contrasting sections, with the first section returning at the end. In each section, the tempo and general style remain the same, but the orchestration changes to add color and depth to the piece. I particularly like the orchestration of the glockenspiel, xylophone, and vibraphone throughout the piece, as they each takes turns playing main melodic material as well as acting to color the other instruments. Stephen Primatic has done an excellent job keeping the melody of the piece interesting throughout the arrangement.

"Graceful Ghost Rag" also offers younger percussionists the chance to start experimenting with mallet choice and drawing multiple timbres from one set of implements. In each of the main melodic instruments (glock, xylo, vibes) the players have ample time to make color changes or mallet changes to best highlight their changing roles. Keeping the glockenspiel and xylophone on the "muted" side seems to work best based on the general character of the piece, and percussionists will relish the opportunity to make more musically-based decisions as opposed to reaching for their standard or preferred set of mallets.

Technically, the parts are all manageable by freshman/sophomore college students, again allowing them to spend a majority of their time focused on musical sounds and textures as opposed to learning a lot of notes. "Graceful Ghost Rag" is a wonderful arrangement that would work well as a "palate cleanser" between longer works in a percussion ensemble concert.

*—Justin Alexander*

## PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

**Begin Transmission** **I–II**
John Herndon
**$30.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (8–13 Players):** glockenspiel, xylophone, vibraphone, 4.3-octave marimba, chimes, 4 timpani, snare drum, concert bass drum, 4 toms, China cymbal, tam-tam, other small accessory instruments.
**Web:** score sample and audio recording

The repertoire for beginning students is thankfully expanding, and "Begin Transmission" by John Herndon is a fantastic addition for providing students an opportunity to apply skills learned in the first year of percussion study into an accessible and lively piece. Although written for 13 players, Herndon provides the performing ensemble with options to omit parts for smaller ensembles of eight players.

"Begin Transmission" takes a fairly simple theme derived from the first five notes of the D-minor scale and manipulates the timbres and textures around it to create a very fun and engaging ensemble work lasting just over two minutes. It is the perfect piece for a young ensemble, using only eighth-note rhythms and larger—with the exception of the snare drum's use of sixteenth notes at the end of the piece. Another great feature of the work is Herndon's use of timbral changes for the percussion parts, where players are asked to either switch instruments or play on the rim instead of the head.

The mallet parts are simple and repetitive yet entertaining, providing a great experience for players and audience members. The accompanying players often lay a groundwork of steady eighth notes under the melody, providing the piece with constant forward momentum from beginning to end. Herndon successfully wrote an exciting piece for students to apply newly learned skills. This one is worth a look!

*—Matthew Geiger*

**Christmas Day** **III**
Brian Slawson
**$32.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (8+ Players):** glockenspiel, xylophone, vibraphone, chimes, 4-octave marimba, 3 timpani, other small accessory instruments
**Web:** score and audio recording

If you are looking for a fun piece to add to a holiday concert or just a cheerful and playful work, check out "Christmas Day" by Brian Slawson. It is well suited for the advanced middle school ensemble or high school group, providing many rhythmic challenges as the piece dances between a feeling of 12/8 and 6/4.

Slawson begins the piece with bells tolling in the distance, and the remainder of the ensemble joins in jubilation, setting the tone for the entire work. A vibraphone solo occurs after a repeat of the primary ideas and requires a mature player, as the solo uses quick arpeggios and some large leaps. All mallet parts are playable with two mallets, but require the performers to understand the different subdivisions within a bar of 12/8. The timpani part is rhythmically active, but requires no tuning in the middle of the piece if three drums are available.

"Christmas Day" presents some rhythmic challenges for a younger ensemble, but will provide a very rewarding experience for those willing to undertake the piece. This would be a perfect concert closer or opener for December concerts.

*—Matthew Geiger*

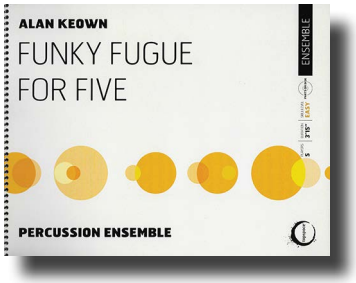
**Funky Fugue for Five** **II**
Alan Keown
**$30.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (4–5 players):** high snare drum, low snare drum, 2 high toms, 2 low toms, 2 timpani
**Web:** score sample and audio recording

"Funky Fugue for Five" is an entry-level piece for percussion ensemble requiring minimal instrumentation. Duration of a performance should be around three minutes, and it will require four or five players (the timpani part is optional). The two snare drummers must play rolls in the introduction to the piece, earning the work a difficulty rating of II rather than I. Other than the rolls, no rudiments are required (just alternating single strokes).

The tempo is 120 bpm throughout. Material is presented in mostly eight-bar phrases, with the form outlined by a rehearsal letter every section. Developmental ideas are simple and rather straightforward, with the fugal subject offset by either two beats or one measure, and the use of rhythmic augmentation. The longest phrase of the development section requires performers to play sixteenth-note figures on the rim with interjections on the snare drum in a "quasi-drumset" manner. My personal recommendation would be for teachers/directors to use all five parts if possible, as the timpani part adds some rhythmic tension to what is otherwise very simple counterpoint.

Pieces like this are often used to teach rudimentary musical principles and reading, ensemble timekeeping, and form. I'm not convinced "Funky Fugue for Five" adds anything to the genre not already represented by dozens of other beginning ensemble pieces, but it is simple enough to be played early in the first year of instruction, even in classrooms with a very limited instrument inventory.

*—Phillip O'Banion*




**Highway Soundscapes for Percussion Quartet** **VI**
Antonio Ballestin
**HoneyRock**
**$34.95**
**Instrumentation (4 players):** suspended cymbal, temple blocks (or 5 woodblocks), vibraphone (2 bows), bass drum, bass drum with pedal, rainstick, cabasa, tam-tam, 5 RotoToms, snare drum, 29-inch timpani, crotales/glockenspiel, 5-octave marimba, sleighbells (with pedal/hi-hat stand), suspended cymbal and bow
**Web:** score sample

Composed in five movements that flow seamlessly without pause, "Highway Soundscapes" is a programmatic composition for percussion quartet. According to the composer, "Highway Soundscapes" is based on "my own experience of driving weekly more than 600 km through different highways during the last three years. Through the four seasons and different hours of the day, the roads offered changing landscapes that gave inspiration for the program of this piece."

"Highway Soundscapes" will demand extraordinary attention to ensemble precision, timbral balance, and individual rhythmic control to have a successful performance. There are extended passages of integrated, delicate scoring among the four performers, which will take extended rehearsal time to coordinate. It is a 15-minute work that begins with non-keyboard percussion sounds but ends with a vibraphone cadenza followed by very sparse marimba and glockenspiel accompaniment.

This ensemble composition was the first-place winner in the 2012 PAS Italy Composition Contest. It would be appropriate for a mature university, conservatory, or professional percussion quartet.

*—Jim Lambert*

**Persistence** **III+**
Brian Blume
**$40.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (5 players):** two 4.3-octave marimbas, crotales (low octave), concert bass drum, 3 concert toms, China cymbal, tam tam, wind chimes, sleighbells, ribbon crasher, small shaker, trashy metal, resonant metal, semi-resonant metal, small metal pipe
**Web:** audio and video recordings

"Persistence" is a five-minute groove piece, opening and closing with identical motivic material that alternates between 7/8 and 3/4 and is played on a metal pipe, crotales, and two marimbas. Between these bookends, Blume seamlessly morphs the musical material through various textures and time signatures (primarily 3/4 and 6/16). The title refers to the almost continual presence of driving sixteenth notes played on the metal pipe with varied accents that either outline or accentuate the changing meters.

It is certainly an understatement to say that there are at least a few percussion ensemble pieces comparable to this one—pieces with often-changing meters, persistent ostinato figures, and drumset-like grooves. The incorporation of the two marimbas with "Steve Reich-ian" motives, however, distinguishes "Persistence" from others that may, at first glance, seem similar. In addition, the piece is not too difficult (with changing meters and a few polyrhythms being the most challenging aspects), and is appropriately written for a set of instruments that most small high school or college ensembles would likely own. Individual parts and MP3 recording are included on a CD-ROM that accompanies the score.

*—Julie Licata*

**Rattle the Cage** **V–VI**
Gene Koshinski
**$48.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (8 players):** glockenspiel, chimes, 2 small sleighbells, 2 large sleighbells, slightly resonant metal (brake drum or similar), xylophone, 2 suspended cymbals, glass wind chimes, 2 vibraphones, siren, 5 sets of plastic brushes, 5-octave marimba, 4.3-octave marimba, bass drum
**Web:** audio and video recordings

"Rattle the Cage" was composed for and commissioned by Dan Armstrong for the Penn State Percussion Ensemble and was premiered on April 20, 2015. The piece explores the use of extended techniques and varied implements on keyboard percussion. The piece supplements the use of keyboard percussion with an array of small non-pitched percussion instruments. Eight very well-rounded players are required to perform this piece.

Gene Koshinski describes "Rattle the Cage" as "not a program piece but instead an abstract exploration of timbre and texture. With this in mind, I made a conscious effort not to ignore familiar musical components such as melody, functional harmony, rhythm, groove, and counterpoint." The title is taken from sounds evoked throughout the composition.

The use of extended techniques and interlocking rhythms throughout is exquisite, and the melodic and harmonic content provides the perfect marriage of sophistication and accessibility. "Rattle the Cage" is unique in its own right, but elements of Maslanka, Zivkovic, and John Adams are all present.

I highly recommend, "Rattle the Cage" for any collegiate or professional percussion ensemble. It would serve as a great centerpiece and/or closer to any concert program.

*—Joe Millea*

**Rotating Brains** **IV–V**
Jason Lord
**$40.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (4 players):** glockenspiel, vibraphone, crotales (low octave), two 5-octave marimbas, ribbon crasher, 2 sets of bongos, 4 concert tom-toms, floor tom
**Web:** audio recording

Clocking in at just 3:30, "Rotating Brains" is highly energetic, fun piece that will push the rhythmic capabilities of intermediate to advanced college percussionists while also exposing them to electro-acoustic performance. Based around the idea of capturing the inner workings of the human brain, "Rotating Brains" makes use of "thoughts rushing by, synapses firing, and epiphanies coming to life within a fraction of a fraction of a second." In this respect, the piece is highly successful! The rhythmic ideas fly by and are often interrupted by contrasting ideas (fast sixteenth notes interrupted by 4-against-3 polyrhythms) that cycle back and forth repeatedly and quickly. The clever use of repeated melodic material in sixteenth notes versus triplets creates the illusion of a slowing tempo, and will challenge your percussionists to keep their interpretation and groove solid through a section that sounds like it's slowing down.

Technically, the most difficult part of "Rotating Brains" is comfort with the rhythmic shifts. The keyboard parts are repetitive and only require two-mallet technique. College percussionists should have no problem learning the notes. The addition of an electronic accompaniment also means that there's no room to slow down or "regroup" in a performance, heightening the need for advanced preparation.

My only suggestion would be for the composer to arrange the piece to require one 5-octave marimba. There are only a few spots where both instruments are in the bottom range of the instrument, and if one marimba could be substituted with a 4.3-octave instrument, I think the piece could enjoy many more performances.

"Rotating Brains" is a delightful, exciting piece that intermediate college percussionists would enjoy working on and putting together. It would make an excellent concert opener or closer on any percussion ensemble concert.

*—Justin Alexander*

**Tentacles** **II–III**
John Willmarth
**$36.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (6–10 players):** glockenspiel, claves, China cymbal, xylophone, high conga, vibraphone, tambourine, 4.3-octave marimba, low conga, 2 timpani, 2 suspended cymbals, snare drum, temple blocks, bass drum, triangle, tam-tam, brake drum, 2 concert toms, cabasa, wind chimes, ocean drum, shekere
**Web:** audio recording

"Tentacles" is a wonderful piece that is appropriate for a young percussion ensemble that is ready to go one step beyond absolute beginner. The composer states, "The piece depicts the flexible appendages found on some of the oceans' most mysterious and elusive creatures. Flowing, yet powerful, the work explores the different facts of tentacles."

John Willmarth's piece can be played by 6–10 percussionists and allows for flexibility in equipment situations. The minimum keyboard requirements are glockenspiel and xylophone, which most programs will have. As is typical in most beginning percussion programs, each player will develop at a slightly different pace. The parts are written to have varying difficulties ensuring all your students are challenged.

"Tentacles" is a very accessible yet mature sounding piece, as if it were pulled directly from a well-written movie soundtrack. This will, without a doubt, draw students in and get them excited immediately. The keyboard parts are repetitive, allowing for students with less pitched-percussion experience to be successful. The percussion parts leave room for timbral exploration—i.e. brushes on cymbal, triangle muting, and tam-tam played with triangle beater. "Tentacles" should be in every band program's beginning percussion library, as it would be a great piece to perform at concerts and festivals alike.

*—Joe Millea*

**When Worlds Collide** **VI**
Rick Dior
**$59.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (12 players):** glockenspiel, xylophone (1 or 2), chimes, vibraphone, two 4-octave marimbas, 5-octave marimba, timpani, drumset, concert snare drum, large marching bass drum, 2 congas, tenor drum or field drum, udu drum (optional), marching snare drum, bongos, surdo, small surdo, 14-inch concert tom, 2 djembes on a stand, darbuka, bass drum with cymbals attached, gong, 2 large suspended cymbals, 18-inch crash cymbals, 20-inch crash cymbals, mounted second hi-hat, large China cymbal, 3 pairs of claves, tamborim, shekere, berimbau, large Brazilian triangle, concert triangle, 2 metal crashers, waterphone or bowed cymbal, bass bow, small cowbell, medium shaker, agogo bells, medium metal shaker, high and low cowbell, foot clave or woodblock, wooden temple blocks, guiro, orchestral tambourine, slit drum with 6 pitches, 2 caxixi, djembe, 2 small caxixi, pandiero, paddle castanets, cuica
**Web:** audio recording

Composer Rick Dior has done an extraordinary job bringing jazz and world music together. He states, "Created in the summer of 2004, for the University of North Carolina Charlotte Percussion Ensemble, this composition is my statement on the global merging of cultures that is continually occurring in the music and percussion world."

The first movement, "Ethnic Jazz Minimalism," blends traditional jazz and improvisation with a berimbau groove. If a berimbau is not available, substitute suggestions are made. The middle movement, "Afro-Brazil/European Bombast," contains African bembe, Afro-Cuban nanigo, and Brazilian samba grooves. This movement is very fast and very loud (in a good way), and exposes players to a variety of styles, tempos, and grooves. The final movement, "Afro-Cuban/Rudimental Fusion," delves deeply into Afro-Cuban playing and is a great opportunity for soloists on several instruments, which can be substituted if the instruments are not available.

"When Worlds Collide" would be a great way to involve and introduce students to global percussion playing. Dior provides a well-written, incredibly authentic avenue for jazz, world music, and solo playing for any advanced group. This piece is a tour-de-force and is well suited for a guest drumset, rudimental, or world percussion artist, and would be a great finish to any concert, festival, or Day of Percussion event.

*—Joe Millea*

**Zenith** **V–VI**
Benjamin Finley
**$45.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation (8 players):** 5-octave marimba, two 4-octave marimbas, 2 vibraphones, glockenspiel, xylophone, 6 graduated tom-toms, high woodblock, medium woodblock, medium-low woodblock, 6 "spinning" metals, concert bass drum, kick drum, congas, high and low skillets, triangle, hi-hat, splash cymbal, drumset, bongos, high and low brake drums
**Web:** audio recording

"Zenith" is an exciting, groove-based piece that is a wonderful addition to the percussion ensemble repertoire. Suitable for advanced college percussion ensembles, this piece will challenge your group's rhythmic integrity while also developing chamber music skills.

Firmly rooted in groove, "Zenith" is similar in harmonic and rhythmic language to many of Finley's other compositions, notably "Evergreen" for solo marimba and "Cold Light" for solo marimba and percussion quartet. These pieces share a melodic and groove sensibility similar to the Pat Metheny Group, and "Zenith" sounds to this reviewer like a percussion version of a classic Metheny Group song. The addition of drumset and a driving ride cymbal help set up the mixed-meter grooves, while the primary melodic material is based on short ascending/descending scalar passages followed by rhythmic "vampin'."

Technically, "Zenith" is quite challenging. All keyboard players should be well-versed in four-mallet technique and exceedingly comfortable with quick mixed-meter changes. Finley does an excellent job of "masking" the mixed meter by elongating repeated melodic material. For example, an ascending scale in 7/16 may come back later as a 7/16 bar followed by a 5/16 bar with new material before falling back in the groove. Nevertheless, all players must be confident keeping up with the shifts so that the sense of pulse and groove is not lost.

Following the initial section, a brief but powerful percussion interlude takes over, focusing on unison rhythms and cascading rhythmic figures that are passed throughout the ensemble. The piece closes in an almost contemplative way, with the rhythmic energy of the drumset winding down while the keyboards trade off quintuplet figures—reminiscent of works by Blake Tyson.

*—Justin Alexander*

## SNARE DRUM METHOD

**143 Binary Algorhythms Applied to Paradiddles** **III–VI**
Steve Forster
**$14.95**
**Self-published**

In the preface of this method book, Forster explains that his teacher, Joe Morello, who often utilized exercises from George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control* as springboards to create new exercises, inspired the contents of *143 Binary Algorhythms Applied to Paradiddles*. The result of that inspiration is 143 exercises that apply double-strokes, triplets to thirty-second notes, flams, four-stroke ruffs, rolls, polyrhythms, and combinations of all these, to various paradiddle stickings. Though mostly written for two hands, there are a few drumset exercises inserted throughout. The book ends with several pages dedicated to applying similar concepts to the bolero rhythm.

In addition to being applicable to developing hand coordination, endurance, and balance, the exercises included in *143 Binary Algorhythms Applied to Paradiddles* are brain-twisters for even the most mathematically-minded percussionist. They can also be seen as ear-training tools for drummers, with exercises that play out similar to playing over chord changes (if you can see paradiddle stickings as chord progressions, and the variations applied to them as licks to play over chord changes). This book should not be considered a progressive set of exercises to work on from beginning to end; nor should it be seen as an exhaustive collection of all possible paradiddle variations. Rather, in the spirit of Joe Morello and all who have crossed his path (in person or otherwise), this book should be used as inspiration for drummers to come up with their own unique and challenging variations.

All praise aside, the downfall of this book is colossal: the layout (and the title) is

way too cumbersome to reach the wide audience for whom its concepts are beneficial. Open to any page of the book and you will be reminded of a PowerPoint presentation filled with too much narrative explanation. In its current format, I can only see advanced players and teachers utilizing this book, perhaps choosing to explain and/or demonstrate the concepts to their students rather than having them buy the book.

*—Julie Licata*

## SNARE DRUM SOLO

**Chopstakovich** **V**
Jesse Sieff
**$18.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** marching snare drum, optional P.A. system
**Web:** score samples, audio and video recordings

Do you watch videos of drumlines every chance you get? Do you always have sticks with you, ready to grid diddles at the drop of a hat? Then this solo could be your dream come true! Jesse Sieff has expertly written a marching snare solo with some serious technical demands and integrated it with music from a composer with some serious orchestral writing skills. The result is impressive.

While it can be played on its own, this three-minute work is designed to be played to a recording of Mvt. 2 (Allegro Molto) of "Chamber Symphony in C Minor" (Op. 110a) by Dimitri Shostakovich. No recording is provided, but the composer provides info on where to purchase it from iTunes, as well as speaking to the availability of streaming options. The original work by Shostakovich is dark, complex, and intense on its own, and to complement this, Sieff wrote rudimental music that is equally dense and complex, built to satisfy the appetites of every rising drumline star in the country. Sieff even included extensive instructions on how to perform optional stick tricks.

Great orchestral music coupled with measures of fast singles, doubles, and flams, combined with Sieff's slick performance video, will surely serve to elevate this work to one of the most talked-about pieces in the drumline world. What most impressive is that Sieff composed this piece for his own audition to the "Commandant's Own" United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps, and won the job. I can see this act of merging of an orchestral work with a marching solo becoming a trend at many solo festivals in the coming years.

*—Joshua D. Smith*

**Phylogenesis** **IV**
Russell Wharton
**$23.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** two snare drums
**Web:** score sample and audio recording

"Phylogenesis" is a new work for solo snare drum in three large sections, with a duration around 7½ minutes. It was commissioned by Francisco Perez. Extended techniques and strokes are carefully notated in the score, and while some are difficult to convey via the written word, they are easily understood by Perez's performance on the Tapspace YouTube channel.

In the beginning of the piece, the performer is required to create a dozen different sounds across two snare drums, with a normal drumstick in the right hand and a rasping/scraping stick in the left hand. The two drums are tensioned higher and lower in pitch, and the lower drum is prepared with a towel covering all but the top and bottom edges of the head. This first section of music is effectively a "groove" created by these extended playing techniques, with small rhythmic variations as the texture develops. I found the writing here highly effective.

After this first section, the audio playback is introduced. The track begins as a pre-recorded version of the groove created in the first section. Over top of this accompaniment the performer plays a lengthy solo on the lower drum without snares, using strictly traditional performance techniques. This music might feel improvised due to a lack of interaction with the mostly static audio track (there are accents at the peaks of some phrases), but is completely notated and includes a healthy dose of flams and diddles that one might expect from a snare drum solo published by Tapspace.

After the extended solo, the audio track morphs slightly to include some of the rhythms from the previous section. And then, it begins again. More notes on the snare drum (this time on the higher pitched drum with snares on). While this allows the composer to utilize closed rolls, this section of music is still remarkably like the previous in feel and character. Once the solo concludes, a very brief reprise of the opening material occurs and then the music fades into the sunset. After such interesting material at the outset, the rest of the work left my ears a bit unsatisfied.

Many works for snare drum and digital playback have been introduced over the past several years. While it begins with a bang, "Phylogenesis" is ultimately not the most sophisticated in the category. It could be one of the more technically demanding solos of this genre from a "chops" standpoint, and from that perspective may interest a great number of students and players. Only time will tell if it is to find a permanent place in the repertoire.

*—Phillip O'Banion*

## TIMPANI SOLO

**Warzone** **V**
Alexander Singer and Robert McClure
**$23.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** 4 timpani
**Web:** score sample and audio recording

"Warzone" is a timpani solo written largely to showcase the performer's technical abilities. Alexander Singer seems to be the composer/performer of the timpani passages, and Robert McClure the creator of the digital media for the work. Seeking to evoke the sounds, feelings, and images of battle, the soundscape consists largely of manipulations of warning sirens, helicopter propellers, explosions, and other battle sounds. A brief interlude involving a gamelan-like melody is a musical highlight of the work.

Stylistically, this solo sounds like a drum corps "I&E" competition piece rather than one intended for the recital hall. The performer is instructed to play with snare drum sticks (both tip and butt ends) for most of the work, and at times the writing seems akin to a rudimental snare drum solo spread across multiple drums. Contrasting musical sections present themselves as part of an emotional narrative, but seem to serve as vehicles for highlighting different performing techniques rather than as agents of purely musical development.

Some of the technical requirements are rather tenuous, including a section asking the performer to play a passage simultaneously between the 29- and 32-inch drums (both tuned to G) by rocking the left-hand stick back and forth between the edges of each drum. With the left hand busy, the right hand then plays a melody on top of this rhythmic ostinato.

The music is written creatively in several passages with more complicated pedaling. In these instances, each of the four drums is given its own stave, eliminating confusion about where to place the pitches across the setup. "Warzone" demands a good ear, good hands, and good pedal technique. But with a limited approach to traditional timpani tone and touch, its audience appeal might be rather limited.

*—Phillip O'Banion*

## TIMPANI DUET

**The Mysterious Barrier** **V**
Kirk J. Gay
**$25.00**
**Tapspace**
**Web:** audio and video recordings, score samples

Kirk Gay wrote this work as a sequel to his popular duet "Fear Cage," with the setup of nine timpani (two sets of four drums with one piccolo timpano joining the two sets) being the same for both pieces. Although there are no pre-recorded tracks with "The Mysterious Barrier," or other ancillary percussion for that matter, there is still plenty of excitement to carry the piece.

Overall, the composer did an excellent job at splitting the melody between the nine drums and two players, and has the performers moving comfortably around each. It is obvious, in these sections, that this composer is adept at writing for the instrument. Unfortunately, these moments of beauty and clarity are interspersed with episodes of technical indulgence, where the timpani are treated more like tonal bass drums in a DCI show and difficult rhythmic splits (in the spirit of Robert Marino's "8 on Three and 9 on Two") are presented. During these moments, the musical intimacy of the piece is lost. Because of these periods of rhythmic density, playing this piece in a resonant hall will not yield the most desired results, despite being marked to play with hard mallets, as the sustain from the drums will blur rhythmic clarity. I would have liked to see the thematic material, which is taken from François Couperin's "Les Barricades Mystérieuses," developed, explored, and expounded upon more.

There are no pitch changes throughout the composition, and the lines of demarcation as far as which performer plays which drums are stated very clearly. All markings in the score are clear and easy to understand. The piece would work well for a junior or senior percussion recital, or in a concert with diverse musical compositions.

*—Marcus D. Reddick*

## MULTIPLE PERCUSSION SOLO

**Amalgamation** **VI**
Luis Rivera
**$16.00**
**Tapspace**
**Instrumentation:** snare drum, pedal bass drum, hi-hat
**Web:** audio and video recordings, score sample

Commissioned by Tommy Dobbs, Director of Percussion at University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, this piece is quite literally, an amalgamation of three of composer Luis Rivera's biggest influences: the intricate ornamentation of Jacques Delecluse, the asymmetric rhythmic writing of New York-based composer Joe Tompkins, and his own affinity for American Colonial-style rudimental drumming.

Rivera challenges all comers in this interesting multi-percussion work. The piece opens with the snare drum playing solo in a rudimental style as if to announce the coronation. Eventually, through multiple dynamic and time signature shifts, he employs the bass drum, followed closely by the hi-hat, and then the fun really starts!

There are a few inconsistencies in the notation, however. There are times when the composer uses a slash mark to "diddle"

a particular segment of a rhythm, and then there are times when he writes out the thirty-second notes, and still other times when he writes both notational devices within the same rhythm to visually represent the rhythm. This is, at times, confusing. A possible compromise would have been to use the alternative notational style used in Scottish drumming to assist in understanding the sticking of these rhythms.

Advanced drumming skills will be required to even attempt many sections of this piece. Polyrhythms and variations thereof permeate the composition. Once the feet become involved, the performer will need coordination between the hands and feet. Fortunately, the feet are playing simple accompaniment patterns throughout the last two thirds of the composition. Unfortunately, the patterns played with the hands, on top of these ostinato, are, at times, incredibly difficult to play by themselves, never mind while also playing with the feet. Nonetheless, Rivera presents a very musical yet technically demanding composition that is a welcome addition to the repertoire.

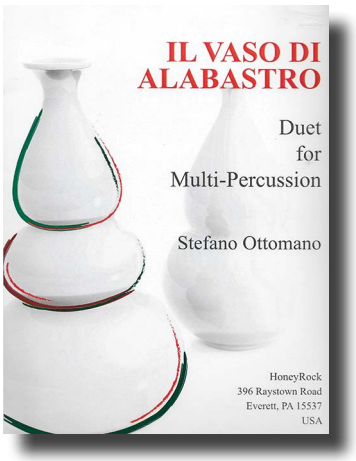
The reduced-sized setup of this piece and the duration of the composition (five minutes) lend itself very well to being performed in a host of different venues from solo recitals, to music school sampler concerts, to community concerts either indoors or out.

*—Marcus D. Reddick*

## MULTIPLE PERCUSSION DUO

**Il Vaso Di Alabastro** **IV**
Stefano Ottomano
**$24.95**
**HoneyRock**
**Instrumentation:** 2 concert bass drums, 2 bass drums with pedal, 2 snare drums, 2 high-pitched bongos or high-pitched toms
**Web:** score sample

This multiple-percussion duet was the winner of the 2015 Italy PAS Composition Contest. The work involves some extended techniques on the snare drum particularly. The players place the snare drum upside down on the stand and are instructed to play on the snares, on the end piece of the snares, and to scrape the snares with their sticks. The notation is clearly indicated in the opening notes. Regular snare drum hits are to be played on the batter head, which is underneath the drum.




The piece is based on an odd-meter motive and involves some very musical moments, along with some exciting jam sections. The players need to be advanced, as some of the rhythms are split between them. Although a kick drum and a concert bass drum are called for, the rhythmic nature of the concert bass drum would call for it to be muffled so the articulate rhythms can be heard. Although based on an odd-meter motive, the piece contains multi-meters throughout. The players need to be comfortable switching between duple and triple feels, and maintaining the eighth-note pulse.

Stefano Ottomano's award-winning piece would add excitement to a senior or graduate recital. The piece will definitely find a place in the multi-percussion repertoire over time due to its fun and energetic feel.

*—Josh Armstrong*

## WORLD PERCUSSION

**An American Approach to World Percussion** **III–VI**
Tom Teasley
**$16.99**
**Alfred**

With little over 20 pages of exercises, the first half of *An American Approach to World Percussion* focuses on hand/palm drums. The second half dedicates anywhere from half a page to three pages to each of the following instruments: doumbek, cajon, frame drum, riq, pandeiro, and shakers. The pedagogical threads that tie this book together are (1) applying rudiments and (2) interpreting exercises from Ted Reed's *Progressive Steps to Syncopation for the Modern Drummer* to the various world percussion instruments listed above. One rudimental example demonstrates how to play paradiddles on a palm drum utilizing open tones and the heel/tip technique. An example that applies a Reed exercises suggests playing the simple notated rhythmic pattern with the quarter notes as bass tones and the eighth notes as open tones. (Each application derived from Reed's book indicates the page number and set of exercises utilized from the original source.)

Additionally, there are exercises throughout that highlight non-Western grooves, such as the West African standard pattern and the cascara, and sections that focus on applying percussion techniques across various cultures, such as applying pandeiro technique to drums played with palms. There are also samples demonstrating how to apply the techniques to specific jazz tunes and to drumset playing. A one-hour instructional DVD that demonstrates most of the notated exercises accompanies the book.

This book/DVD combo packs quite the punch, and is densely filled with helpful gems that should inspire any students to find new ways to connect their experiences with Western and non-Western percussion instruments. In agreement with a note on the book's back cover, I will reiterate that this method should not replace traditional study of any instruments discussed, but rather it could be used as a supplement for the Western-trained percussionist interested in learning how to play instruments from other cultures, as it provides one way to bridge inevitable gaps in understanding.

*—Julie Licata*

**The Conga and Bongo Drum in Jazz** **II**
Trevor Salloum with Bobby Sanabria
**$19.99**
**Mel Bay**

I'm not anywhere close to an aficionado on conga or bongo method books, but even my initial quick glance can tell you this book is not designed for the 21st-century student. With very few pictures, long sections of narrative, and no musical examples without going to a YouYube page that you must type in correctly (no QR code to scan), it is not designed for today's young players. However, maybe that isn't the intent. After seven solid pages of single-spaced narrative, there are four pages of musical notation and terminology starting with whole rests. Perhaps this book is designed for the beginning adult who has more of an attention span for this type of instruction and who's really into swinging conga rhythms.

The primary focus in this book is swing conga and swing bongo rhythms, each with six variations. The best parts of the book include the pictures showing the hand placement and diagrams of what part of the hands hit each drum. The discography is extensive as well—especially for such a narrow focus. However, no need to purchase this if you own any of Ed Uribe's books. It just seems like a fairly shallow focus in an old-school format. Sorry, but I'm not a fan.

*—Julia Gaines*

**Concerto for World Percussion Ensemble** **V-VI**
Yousif Sheronick
**$60.00**
**Self-published**
**Instrumentation (5 players):** Soloist—cajon, riq, darbuca, tar (frame drum), lap-style bodhran, voice; Player 1—cajon, shaker, suspended cymbal, tar, 5-octave marimba, voice; Player 2—darbuca, shaker, tar, suspended cymbal, voice; Player 3—djembe (with grass brushes), tar, shaker, suspended cymbal, voice; Player 4—riq, ride cymbal, caxixi, tar, vibraphone, voice
**Web:** video recording

"Concerto for World Percussion Ensemble" by Yousif Sheronick is a 15-minute composition for quartet and soloist that was premiered at PASIC15. Sheronick has crafted a wonderful addition to percussion repertoire, as the composition has five sections with each addressing a pedagogical goal. The first section addresses ensemble call-and-response with the soloist while the second calls for all performers to employ independence in their respective parts with either shaker or cymbal parts in one limb and hand drum in the other. Section 3 features the traditional Turkish rhythm in 9/8, Karsilama, in which performers are required to embellish their parts. Section 4 involves a rhythm cycle in seven beats for which various complex cross rhythms in ratio are featured. Section 5 involves hand drummers needing to improvise based on melodic material in the respective marimba and vibraphone parts.

The package contains a bound score of 28 pages and five separate parts on high-quality paper. The notation is clear and well explained in accompanying performance notes. The piece is featured on YouTube, so students can listen to the piece during concert preparation. Compositionally, this concerto uses a liberal amount of changing meters throughout (including sections in 21/8, 28/8, and 56/8), repeated vamps with cues out, call-and-response, vocals for chanting timbral syllables, and some improvisation. As a vehicle for young performers, the piece is advanced mainly in the unfamiliar rhythmic motifs employed and some of the hand techniques required (riq, tar). For more experienced students, this piece will be more accessible.

The soloist part is very clearly written with a performer experienced in techniques for riq, cajon, darbuka, and lap-style frame drum, as well as in leading an ensemble (this is the most difficult part). Even with an advanced rating, I feel the piece has such pedagogical value that beginners can benefit from working on the parts/techniques, perhaps with a conductor (but that is not required).

"Concerto for World Percussion Ensemble" is musically very engaging and delightful to listen to. Coupled with its pedagogical value, this piece is a significant addition to world percussion repertoire that will serve well for recital and concert planning.

*—N. Scott Robinson*

**Instrumentos e Rimos Brasileiros Vol. II**
Vina Lacerda
**$40.00**
**Self-published**

The second volume of this collection covers the instruments and rhythms found in northeast Brazil, specifically those connected to the forró parties. Instrument-wise the book covers zabumba, triâgulo, pandeiro, and agogô. The rhythms covered include Baião, Xote, Arrastye-pé,

Xaxado, and Forró. Lead sheets for play-along opportunities are included at the end of the book. The sheets cover one song from each of the different styles covered.

Along with the book, an accompanying DVD contains video examples of each of the rhythms covered and includes videos of all the instruments performing the styles together. The different sections of the book offer a short historical lesson and a physical description of the instrument.

This book is not for someone wanting to learn how to play the instruments themselves. There is no technical advice given on the instruments, only the rhythms that the instrument plays. However, Vina Lacerda does offer references for those looking to delve into a specific instrument. The DVD contains videos of the different rhythms being performed, slow at first and then sped up. There is no technical discussion of how to play those instruments.

Lacerda's offering would be good for people wanting to learn a little bit about the different rhythms of Northeastern Brazil. For someone who is looking for a more detailed book on Brazilian instruments, this book would not be useful. Overall, I think this would be great for a world percussion teacher who wants to learn a new style, and who already has a firm grasp on the basics of Brazilian percussion technique.

*—Josh Armstrong*

## DRUMSET

**Beat Roots** **III–IV**
Steve Powell
**$23.00**
**Prepared Sounds**

This brief yet informative book contains 34 short transcriptions of R&B, soul, and funk grooves. Many of these patterns have been sampled for use in today's rap and hip-hop recordings. Powell sought out the original recordings to get to the "root" of the beats. The transcriptions are ones that are not readily found in other books, allowing the reader to potentially unearth some forgotten treasures.

The book is divided into three sections. Part one covers music from 1968–69. Some drummers covered in this section include Dennis Burke, Carl Burnett, and Grady Tate. Part two includes music from 1970–73, with transcriptions of grooves from Bernard Purdie, Ramon "Tiki" Fulwood, and James Gadson. The book concludes with music from 1974–81, with transcriptions of Willie Hayes, Idris Muhammad, and Paul Humphrey. There are other transcriptions of well-known drummers as well as "drummer unknown" grooves, where the band member or session musician was not documented on the original recording.

Most transcriptions are four measures or less, with just a few exceptions. While these are mainly groove transcriptions, fills are notated when applicable. These are usually opening fills, which precede the main groove. A time stamp is also included, so the reader can easily find the transcribed section on the original artist's recording. The author also lists contemporary songs that have used the original beats as sampled loops.

The book also contains supplemental material such as drummer profiles and an examination of R&B/soul music from all parts of the United States (including the West Coast, Midwest, South, and Northeast). While no audio is included, the author encourages the reader to find and analyze the original recordings to correctly recreate the drum beats. Usually a brief (36-page) book would only take a short time to finish. However, this will definitely provide the reader with many hours of practice material.

*—Jeff W. Johnson*

**Drum Trek: The Final Frontier of Rock** **II–IV**
Joel Rothman
**$19.99**
**J.R. Publications**

There are many ways to create linear patterns. In his previous books, Joel Rothman started with a cymbal pattern and filled in the spaces with the snare and bass drum (see reviews for *Drummin' in the Rhythm of Rock with Linear Patterns* and *Linear Jazz Drumming*, July 2016 PN). In his new book, he uses stickings as a basis to create linear patterns.

The book starts with eighth-note stickings on snare drum, reminiscent of the opening pages of *Stick Control*. The stickings are then applied to the drumset, utilizing the right hand on the hi-hat and left hand on the snare drum. The author replaces select snare drum notes with bass drum hits to create a three-limb pattern. The bass drum is also utilized in a non-linear fashion by adding it to existing hi-hat notes. The concepts are repeated throughout the book, however, the bass drum is now omitted. The reader is to add his or her own bass drum patterns. The snare and hi-hat patterns are created using a framework of eighth notes, sixteenth notes, eighth-note triplets, sixteenth-note triplets, and quintuplets. The rhythmic concepts are applied to various time signatures, including 4/4, 2/4, 3/4, 3/8, 5/8, 7/8, 8/8, 9/8, 11/8, 13/8, 7/16, 9/16, 11/16, 13/16, and 15/16.

The book does not include accents, but the author encourages the reader to add accents, double strokes, and ghosted notes. The cymbal hits can be orchestrated on the hi-hat, crash, or ride cymbal.

Does this book go where no book has gone before? To answer that question, just ask yourself, "When is the last time I practiced linear grooves in 13/16?" While those patterns may not be applicable on the average gig, they will certainly give the reader some extra practice material.

*—Jeff W. Johnson*

**Hexyl: for Solo Drumset** **IV–V**
Chad Floyd
**$14.00**
**Tapspace**
**Web:** video recording and score sample

"Hexyl" is an interesting piece written for a standard four-piece drumset. Chad Floyd takes a two-measure cymbal rhythm in common time and embellishes it throughout the work. The theme starts with off-beat sixteenth and eighth notes, ending with a spacious half note. The theme is embellished both rhythmically (through the use of thirty-second notes and diddles) as well as sonically (by adding the other cymbals and bass drum).

Instruments are incorporated into the piece one at time: small tom, floor tom, and snare drum (with snares off). Halfway through the solo, rhythmic intensity is built using sixteenth-note triplets. Later, the hi-hat is incorporated into the rhythm, giving it a linear, Steve Gadd-style feel. A repeated hemiola phrase is used to transition into a heavy, grooving funk feel (with snares on). The solo then lessens in both intensity and dynamics before restating the original cymbal rhythm.

The soloist is required to obtain multiple sounds from the instrument such as rimshots, ghost notes, dead strokes, ride cymbal crashes, crush strokes, flams between drums, and double stops. At less than 3½ minutes, this piece would be a nice addition to a recital program. It would also be a good way to introduce drumset players to multiple-percussion solos.

*—Jeff W. Johnson*

## RECORDINGS

**Crafty Hands**
Jerry Leake
**Rhombus Publishing**

What an eclectic recording! You've definitely never heard anything like this unless you own one of Jerry Leake's other six recordings. On every recording, Leake plays about six or seven instruments, including drumset and vocals, from more countries than I can name. His fusion of North/South Indian and West African is amazing, and his partners in crime (Randy Roos, Steven Hunt, Mr. Rourke, Santiago Bosch, Roni Eytan, and Max Gerl) make for an amazing band. Some tracks are mellow, some are upbeat, but almost every one contains an unexpected moment.

The two vibraphone solos, "Alchemy" and "Quarks," sound mostly improvised and contain some pretty crazy licks (especially "Quarks"). There is also an entire introduction to the song "Mr. Gong" of just gongs and thunder tubes. He uses turntables and speaking on several songs in ingenious ways. If you are into East meets West in the recording studio (it would be very difficult to do all this live), this is the CD for you. Congratulations on surprising me on almost every song! Very unpredictable.

*—Julia Gaines*

**Devils Garden/Angels Landing**
RoseWind Duo
**Equilibrium**

This is the second release of the RoseWind Duo (Scott Herring, marimba, and Clifford Leaman, saxophone) and offers a great selection of seven pieces that were written specifically for this duo. There are several different styles represented on the recording—some melodic, some more atonal, some rhythmic, some ethereal. I particularly like Adam Silverman's "Want it. Need it. Have it."—although it is a bit long. Several of the pieces have multiple short movements so even a young group not ready for a full recital of this literature could experiment with many of the possibilities on this recording.

The performing is exceptional. There are a lot of notes here with great wind playing by Leaman and excellent marimba work by Herring. They display a great sense of balance between these two instruments and easily trade between accompaniment and solo lines. This recording is definitely a must for anyone interested in this genre. RoseWind does exactly what any 21st-century musician should be doing right now: commissioning, recording, and publishing. Thanks for the great example Scott and Clifford!

*—Julia Gaines*

**Forty-One Seconds**
The Rita Collective
**Self-released**
**Web:** promotional video

Here is a CD that will take you to many unexpected places. The instrumentation will give you a hint that you are about to experience music that will *have* to sound unusual. The Rita Collective is Dean Keller, bass clarinet; Kristen Shiner McGuire, marimba; Kyle Vock, acoustic bass; and Matt Bevan-Perkins, percussion. Keller composed much of the music, but other members of the group also contributed pieces.

It isn't easy to describe this music. It has elements of Middle Eastern rhythms and melodies, along with what one would have to call jazz, complete with improvisation. Other parts are clearly inspired by more classical composers like Stravinsky or Bartok. These different styles and approaches are blended together smoothly and logically. Each selection is a complete musical statement

What immediately sticks out on track one, "Pentagonal Prism," is the sound of the bass clarinet with the marimba. What a great sound! Soon, congas and other percussion are added along with the bass, and the listener is drawn into the unusual textures that make this entire CD so compelling. A light, airy feeing is inherent to

the instrumentation here. As Keller states in his notes on the website, this piece is a mixture of funk and Middle Eastern styles juxtaposed in ways that are very natural and flowing. The marimba and bass clarinet solos sound improvised, played over a repetitive vamp.

"No Return" features a "jazz-head-like" melody accompanied by walking bass and brushes on drumset. A bass solo follows that is very much in a jazz vein. The marimba "comps" with Thelonius Monk-like chords, and the bass clarinet improvises a solo. Then there is a section that is prearranged (shout chorus?) that leads back to the original material, yet with more improvisation, culminating in a short ritardando.

Another piece with a Middle Eastern feel is "The Astounding Eyes of Rita." Again, we hear the bass clarinet combined with the marimba, accompanied with bass and hand drums. Shiner McGuire plays a passionate, improvised marimba solo that draws the listener into the atmosphere of something like an evening in Israel under the stars.

"Sky Sketches" adds Mark Collins on flugelhorn. Another Middle Eastern feeling is created here, and the flugelhorn fits in nicely as the tune morphs into a style where the distinction between jazz and the original Middle Eastern becomes blurred. "Healing," on the other hand, has a pseudo reggae feel that also seems to blend naturally into the Eastern groove. In this way, the music is delightfully noncommittal. The listener is taken on a musical journey that can lead almost anywhere.

It's not very often that I listen to a new CD that makes me want to immediately play the whole recording again. The textures are unique and captivating. The woody timbre of bass clarinet, especially when it is combined with the marimba and bass, is a sound I want to hear more of. Check out this recording; it's a refreshing experience.

—*Tom Morgan*

**Latin Jazz Project Vol. 1**
Ray Obiedo
**Self-released**

*Latin Jazz Project Vol. 1* by guitarist/composer Ray Obiedo is an infectiously rhythmic Latin-jazz CD. Most of the pieces featured are Latin-jazz classics, such as "Caravan" (Juan Tizol/Duke Ellington), "St. Thomas" (Sonny Rollins), "Pieadillo" (Tito Puente), "Vera Cruz" (Milton Nascimento), and "Sabor" (João Donato). Obiedo contributes several original compositions, but the clarity and quality with which the arrangements were done calls a Clare Fischer homage to my ear. Engaged for this project were a host of outstanding musicians including percussionists Karl Perazzo (congas, timbales), Peter Escovedo (bongos, timbales, percussion), Michael Spiro (congas, bongos, percussion), Phil Hawkins (steel pans), Sheila E. (congas), Paul van Wagentingen (drumset), and tenor saxophonist Bob Mintzer. The rhythmic styles range from Cuban and Brazilian to Caribbean. Although this recording doesn't break any new ground for the genre, listeners will find Obiedo's work solidly grounded in the Latin-jazz tradition in the styles of Clare Fischer and Tito Puente, making this CD worthy of attention.

—*N. Scott Robinson*

**Loci**
Sean Hamilton
**Self-released**

Sean Hamilton is a percussionist, composer, and improviser whose interests primarily lie in the conjunctions of new music, electroacoustic music, free improvisation, experimental music, and interdisciplinary projects. In his own words, this CD is a representation of an ongoing series of improvised compositions of varying length for solo drumset and electronics exploring the possibilities of the improvised music and real-time electronics. While there are sonic differences between the eight tracks, the unifying factor is that they all fall into the category of free improvisation.

With the exception of a 13-minute selection, each track lasts between three and seven minutes, and each contains some sort of acoustic drumset sounds combined with electronic interactions. These electronic elements usually consist of static, blips, and garbled sweeps and sirens, as well as manipulated sine waves. A couple of the tracks showcase some decent performance chops, with regards to having fast hands and feet coordination on a drumset, even if without a steady pulse and rhythmic scheme.

While Hamilton is clearly committed to the music and the performance aspects of real-time electronic interaction, a 47-minute recording of this type of performance is best suited for archiving the act of exploration. Hamilton demonstrates wonderful improvisation skills, as well as the ability to produce a creative electronic soundscape. In terms of this CD, it's important to note that performance nuances of abstract art like this translate much better when experienced live.

—*Joshua D Smith*

**MeiaMeia: New Music for Berimbau**
Projeto Arcomusical
**Innova**

In a breathtakingly stunning effort, the Projeto Arcomusical ensemble has crafted a work of such unique beauty, I find it difficult to focus my thoughts amidst a flood of adjectives that spring to mind in response to the auditory joyful discovery this CD provides. *MeiaMeia: New Music for Berimbau* brings the Afro-Brazilian berimbau out of its position as a traditional accompanying instrument for Capoeira and its use as an exotic solo instrument for jazz percussionists to an ensemble instrument truly capable of compositional depth and performative expression.

Having studied with Naná Vasconcelos, the foremost master of the berimbau as a creative instrument beyond Brazilian tradition, I used to think myself as fairly experienced with berimbau creativity. Now I find myself both pleasantly surprised and excited by the work of Dr. Gregory Beyer, Alexis C. Lamb, and the rest of the Projeto Arcomusical ensemble (Kyle Flens, Chris Mrofcza, Abby Rehard, Alexv Rolfe, and Daniel Eastwood). This work breaks new ground beyond the foundational artists who first pioneered the berimbau as a creative solo instrument in jazz contexts: Vasconcelos, Airto Moreira, and Okay Temiz, among others. The instruments used are specially made tunable berimbau, and the ensemble's precision performances throughout make it difficult at times to not hear this sextet ensemble as a single performer. The compositions explore minimalistic processes, harmonic development, and rhythmic and timbral contrast in such a way that I found myself drawn to each composition for its artistic merit and expressiveness.

This CD features 12 exquisite solo and ensemble compositions, equally attractive packaging/notes, and recording quality for the audiophile (with the Arcomusical website offering scores for 34 berimbau compositions). The compositions draw on diverse influences, such as Berimbau Quintet, No. 1, "Solkattu," which draws on South Indian rhythmic practice, Steve Reich, and Béla Bartók. Berimbau Sextet, No. 1, "Kora," draws on Mandinka kora practice of Mali. Berimbau Trio, No. 1, "Harmonia," involves a 12-bar structure in which no harmony is repeated. The solo "Um só," the only piece to include the traditional caxixi, was inspired by Brazilian Capoeira.

Projeto Arcomusical takes the berimbau way beyond Brazil in its path toward new musical expression while assuring the musical bow's zenithal connectivity to its roots in both Brazil and Sub-Saharan Africa. I find myself without hesitation in offering Projeto Arcomusical the highest recommendation I could humbly fathom.

—*N. Scott Robinson*

**Music in Me**
Little Johnny Rivero
**Truth Recordings Collective**
**Web:** sample recordings

*Music in Me* by Puerto Rican percussionist Little Johnny Rivero is an excellent tribute to tradition and variation in contemporary Latin-jazz. This CD is brimming with rhythmic and stylistic variety including jazz mambo à la Tito Puente on "Little Giants," folklorica on "Africa My Land," and hard bop swinging jazz on "Bombazúl," to a Latin-funk jam band on "Afro-Rykan Thoughts."

Rivero's gifted hands are skillfully applied on a variety of percussion instruments throughout the recording including congas, bongos, timbales, West African talking drums, udu, bomba, cajon, bata, and shekere. Percussive assistance is provided by Anthony Carillo, Luisito Quintero, and Ludwig Afonso (drumset). The CD is nicely packaged with liberal notes and credits on all the pieces. With over 100 recordings to his credit, there is nothing "Little" about Rivero's musicianship and career as this CD is exemplary of, which offers a "lot" of ingenious contemporary Latin-jazz.

—*N. Scott Robinson*

**Thoughts**
Electrum Duo
**Self-released**

*Thoughts* is a well-crafted debut from the Electrum Duo (Sophia Anastasia, flute, and Ralph Sorrentino, percussion). With 18 tracks, there is plenty of music to showcase this duo's versatility and excellence in performance. The recording quality is superb, and each player delivers thoughtful, musical, and sensitive performances throughout an array of repertoire.

Percussionist Sorrentino covers each piece with aplomb. Whether he is coloring the atmosphere created by flutist Anastasia, as on Alan Chan's "Rituals," or leading the duo on Payton MacDonald's "Devil Dance," his playing is always superb, musical, and appropriate.

Highlights of the disc include the aforementioned "Devil Dance," as well as Neil Deponte's "Thoughts," showcasing Sorrentino's abilities on vibraphone, and Karl Ahrednt's "Seven Modal Minatures," in which Sorrentino emphasizes a different instrument (glockenspiel, woodblocks, drumset, vibraphone) in each movement.

My only criticism of the disc is the relative shortness of each track. While there is a lot of music on the disc, much of it clocks at around five minutes or less. While it is only personal preference, this reviewer would like to hear more of the exemplary playing of Sorrentino and Anastasia in more substantial repertoire.

—*Justin Alexander*

**Two Hands One Heart**
Arthur Lipner
**Malletworks**

This two-CD set is a "best of" compilation by vibraphone/marimba soloist and composer Arthur Lipner. Spanning his creative output from 1990–2015, each disc contains 12 tracks, with one dedicated to acoustic performances and the other to electric. Lipner employs a host of notable musicians, such as Bob Mintzer, Glen Velez, Fred Hersch, Jerome Harris, Vic Juris, Nelson Faria, Harvie S., Joel Rosenblatt, and Tommy Igoe.

The most impressive aspect of Lipner's compositions and performances is his ability to move seamlessly between a variety of styles, often in a way that makes his music accessible to the casual listener while also landing solidly on the radar of serious musicians and critics. The first disc opens with his solo composition "Crystal Mallet," a straight-eighth-note showpiece with a "new agey" feel. This is contrasted by the delicate ballad "This is What the Silence

Sounds Like" (featuring solo marimba with sparse combo accompaniment) and the eclectic "Fortune Teller" (in which Lipner moves between vibes and marimba against the backdrop of Glen Velez's frame drumming), to name a couple.

The second disc features Lipner's compositions and playing in a fuller band setting, as well as mixed with electric instruments. "Lime Juice" is presented with a smoking rhythm section that should be a "must listen" for any school percussion ensembles looking to perform this popular soca chart. One of the few cover tunes on this CD, Al Green's "Let's Stay Together," is presented in a tight up-tempo funk setting over which Lipner's vibraphone performs the well-known vocal melody as well as smooth solo lines. "Mood Vibe" captures the essence of contemporary R&B perfectly as he skates effortlessly around the instrument.

Presenting a wide diversity of styles, collaborations with some of the best musicians in the industry, as well as world-class performing, arranging, and composing chops, this CD could just as easily have been titled "What Can't Arthur Lipner Do?"

*—Jason Baker*

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## Ludwig Standard Black Beauty Snare Drum

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

Due to its appearance, quality of sound, and rarity, the Ludwig Black Beauty snare drums manufactured during the 1920s and 1930s are some of the most prized and sought-after drums by performers and collectors alike. Until 1935, they were manufactured with a two-part, rolled brass shell joined at the center bead and coated with black nickel, which was then etched in one of several decorative patterns.

During this time period, the drums were available in several configurations and sizes, with first six, then eight, then ten tube lugs, a switch from the first "Professional" strainer (renamed the Pioneer) to a second generation "Professional" strainer, and options that included dual snares and nickel, chrome, or gold plating on the hardware.

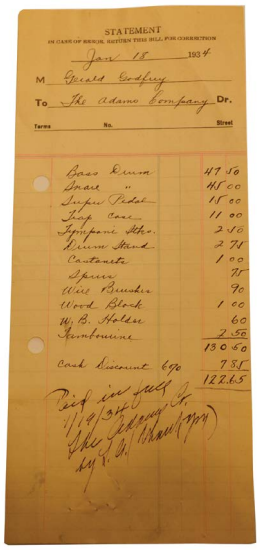
This Ludwig Black Beauty snare drum was purchased for $45.00 by Gerald Godfrey on January 18, 1934 while he was a student at Auburn Senior High School, in Auburn, N.Y. It was used by him in his high school band, in performances with the American Legion Band, and with a local dance band, the Danceolians. It remained with him his entire life, passing to his son at his death.

Godfrey's drum is a 5x14-inch Ludwig Standard Black Beauty with single-flanged counterhoops, 10 lugs, and chromed hardware. It features the second-generation Professional strainer, a 10-point floral engraving, an internal tone control, and wire Snappi-snares. The calf heads are period correct, and are likely original to the drum.

*—James A. Strain, PAS Historian*

Detail showing the Ludwig scroll engraving.

Detail showing the Professional strainer, with lever in reclining position for storage.



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Jan 18 1934

M Gerald Godfrey

To The Adams Company Dr.

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|---|---|---|
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| Trap Case | | 11 00 |
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| W. B. Holder | | 60 |
| Tambourine | | 2 50 |
| | | 130 60 |
| Cash Discount 6% | | 7 84 |
| | | 122 65 |

Rec'd in full
1/19/34
The Ludwig Co.
by G. Godfrey

Godfrey's receipt for purchase of the drum. $45.00 was the exact catalog list price for the drum that year.

Godfrey with his drum while wearing his band uniform during his senior year of high school.

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