



# Percussionist

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(PAS)

PURPOSE--To elevate the level of music percussion performance and teaching; to expand understanding of the needs and responsibilities of the percussion student, teacher, and performer; and to promote a greater communication between all areas of the percussion arts.

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## THE USE OF INDIGENOUS PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS IN THE MUSIC OF CARLOS CHAVEZ

By Jerrold M. Michaelson

### About the Author:

*Jerrold M. Michaelson is currently on the staff of Northern Michigan University where he instructs Percussion, Marching and Concert Bands. He received the degree BMEd. at Florida State University and the degree MEd. from the University of Florida. At present he is working on the Ph.D. at the University of Florida.*

Carlos Chavez, conductor, composer, pianist, educator and musical scholar is generally considered to be one of Mexico's foremost composers. As conductor of the Orquesta Sinfonica de Mexico (1928-1949), he brought about a rebirth of significant musical cultures.

The rebirth of these cultures has promulgated the realization that Mexican music has equaled the other arts, when inspired by aboriginal, rather than Hispanic, forces in the culture of Mexico.<sup>1</sup>

The aboriginal forces I speak of are essentially descendants of the present Mexican cultures. The profound influence of these cultures upon the musical accomplishments of Carlos Chavez, and the unique usage of indigenous percussion instruments is the thesis of this research.

As head of Mexico's Department of Fine Arts, Chavez initiated many programs with a major premise in mind. This premise that Mexican musical performance and composition should be relative to the life and musical needs of the population.<sup>2</sup> This is exhibited in many of his compositions, educational programs, and orchestral performances.

Carlos Chavez has influenced many Mexican composers to include native elements in their compositions. Chavez's influence is strongly indicative in the compositions of Silvestre Revueltas and Candelario Huizar.<sup>3</sup>

Of equal importance is Chavez's approach to Mexican musical style. It was his belief that by the performance of native music, on native instruments, he might bring about a Mexican musical nationalism. To this end his compositions reflect this view and their success is documented.<sup>4</sup>

The first appearance of this native influence is realized in an unresearched article Chavez wrote for *Gladios*, a Mexican publication, at the early age of sixteen (1914).<sup>5</sup>

Other noticeable nationalistic influences are observed in his piano pieces, *Cantos Mexicanos*, Op. 16, composed in 1914, which included arrangements of revolutionary Mexican songs, such as the popular *Cucaracha*.<sup>6</sup> Of note here is the fact that *Cantos Mexicanos* is Indian-influenced only in conception. The nationalism here is essentially Hispanic.

Several years later he composed a few large works with a preponderance of European Classical and Romantic characteristics. It has been

observed that these early compositions are not included in Chavez's listing of his own works, and contain little, if any, Indian influence.

In 1921 Chavez began work on a ballet, *El Fuego Nuevo*, commissioned by the Mexican Secretary of Education. This ballet includes several Indian motives and the effective usage of indigenous percussion instruments. The score of *El Fuego Nuevo*, requires thirteen performers for the mentioned percussion instruments.

The musical instruments, referred to above, are ancient Mexican instruments, and have been the subject of several archaeological endeavors. One such endeavor was that of the Mexican investigators Daniel Castaneda and Vicente T. Mendoza. Castaneda and Mendoza, after extensive research, have established several conclusions in regard to aboriginal Mexican instruments.<sup>7</sup> Two of these conclusions, pertinent to the present research, are as follows:

1. A similarity of instruments used, prevailed from culture to culture. Instruments of similar design possessed different names but are considered to be the same instrument.
2. All aboriginal instruments were classified as either idiophones, aerophones, or membranophones.

(As a result of the above conclusions, the following Aztec examples will be considered synonymous with all aboriginal cultures.)

One such aboriginal culture, the Aztec, employed six primary instruments. The idiophones included the Teponaztli, a cylindrical piece of wood with openings in the center, struck with two mallets; the Omitzicahuastli, a rasp of animal bone, with incisions, played by scraping; and the Ayachtli, a hollow bone filled with pebbles, played by shaking.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, the Aztecs also used the membranophone known as the Huehuetl, a primitive log-shaped drum, played with hands or mallets.<sup>9</sup>

Several of the aforementioned instruments, Chavez used in his ballet *El Fuego Nuevo*, and can also be observed in the score of *Xochipilli-Macuilxochitl*, named after the Aztec god of music and dance. This composition was introduced at the United States Museum of Modern Art's Mexican concert series, May 16, 1940, New York City.<sup>10</sup> Chavez scored *Xochipilli-Macuilxochitl* for piccolo, flute, e-flat clarinet, and an assortment of indigenous Aztec percussion instruments. The woodwind instruments are representative of Aztec aerophones, whereas the percussion instruments were originally reconstructed from factual archaeological investigations, Chavez had undertaken himself.<sup>11</sup>

Of his most significant orchestral works, Chavez's *Sinfonia India*, (1936), is perhaps a prime example of Indian influence.<sup>12</sup> Chavez intended the work to be an expression of the Indian soul, and, in particular, the Mexican Indian. Throughout this composition Chavez uses three reoccurring Indian melodic ideas. He also makes use of in-

indigenous Mexican instruments, similar in design to the Aztec instruments discussed previously.

Additional factual information of Indian influence comes to us in his score of *Toccata for Percussion Instruments*. This percussion ensemble also calls for indigenous percussion instruments, or the modern facsimile thereof. One observation of interest tells us the way the percussion melodic instruments are treated. The instruments here included: xylophone, orchestral bells and chimes, and are treated with much restraint. In other words, they are treated within the ancient limitations of their Mexican predecessors.<sup>13</sup>

Indian melodic influence is also present in several other notable compositions. The ballet *H.P.* (horsepower), is built on a dramatic contrast of the Latin America tropics and United States machine civilization. The ballet makes use of various Mexican-Indian folk tunes with rhythmic devices suggestive of mechanical sounds.<sup>14</sup>

It should be noted that as Director of Fine Arts, an additional amount of research was undertaken by Chavez. Much of the findings of this research culminated in the collection and study of native instruments; distribution in the public schools of simple arrangements of native folk melodies; the publication of a book on pre-Cortesian percussion instruments; performances of simple native compositions in the schools; and the training of children's chorus in the art and performance of native works. Lastly, Chavez, through his research, formulated plans for a division of national plastic art, dance and art schools for workers, and a theatre for children. These too, were centered in native elements.<sup>15</sup>

In conclusion, Carlos Chavez has exhibited a great amount of Indian influence through his musical composition and educational expertise. Aaron Copland has characterized Chavez as one composer that:

"has succeeded so well in using folk material in its pure form while also solving the problem of its complete amalgamation into an art form."<sup>16</sup>

Carlos Chavez, perhaps the most talented of the Mexican composers, has utilized the native history of Mexico and cultivated it into a national style.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Robert Stevenson. *Music in Mexico*, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1952), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>David Ewen, editor. *The Book of Modern Composers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), p. 442.

<sup>3</sup>Pan American Union. Music Section. *Carlos Chavez. Catalog of his Works*. (Washington D.C. 1944), p. xi. Preface by Hubert Weinstock.

<sup>4</sup>Ewen, *Book of Modern Composers*, p. 442.

<sup>5</sup>David Ewen, editor. *Composers Since 1900*. (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1969), p. 340.

- <sup>6</sup>Nicolas Slonimsky. *Music of Latin America*. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1945), p. 230.
- <sup>7</sup>Stevenson, *Music in Mexico*, p. 8.
- <sup>8</sup>Pan American Union, Music Division. *Music of Latin America*, (Washington D.C. 1964), p. 1.
- <sup>9</sup>*ibid.*, p. 2.
- <sup>10</sup>Herbert Barrett, editor, *Carlos Chavez* (Ediciones Mexicanas De Musica, Mexico City, 1951), p. 56.
- <sup>11</sup>Herbert Weinstock, "Carlos Chavez," *Musical Quarterly*, (October 1936), p. 440.
- <sup>12</sup>Slonimsky, *Music of Latin America*, p. 234.
- <sup>13</sup>Carlos Chavez, *Toccata for Percussion Instruments*, (New York: Belwin-Mills Inc., c. 1954), Largo movement.
- <sup>14</sup>Slonimsky, *Music of Latin America*, p. 14.
- <sup>15</sup>Weinstock, "Carlos Chavez," *Musical Quarterly*, p. 440.
- <sup>16</sup>Aaron Copland, *The New Music 1900-1960*. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), p. 148.

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## THE TABOR: AN ATTEMPT AT CLARIFICATION

By David S. Bittner

### About the Author:

The author received the B.S. degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania studying with Gary Olmstead and the M.S. degree with a concentration in performance at State University College at Potsdam with James Petercsak. He has also studied with William Schneiderman of the Pittsburgh Symphony. He is presently a member of the percussion section of the Albany Symphony Orchestra and the timpanist for the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra in Williamstown, Mass. He teaches elementary music in Guilderland, N.Y. and is the percussion instructor at The College of St. Rose in Albany, N.Y.

The tabor was one of the most important drums in the long history of membranophones, but unfortunately, the proper size, sound, name, and description of the instrument have often been badly confused. The problem stems from two areas: first, the physical dimensions of the drum changed radically from its inception to the present, and second, the drum existed in one form or another in several countries at different times which brought about myriad spellings and alterations of basically the same name -- *tabor*.

Of great antiquity, the word *tabor* is derived from the Spanish *atambor*<sup>1</sup> (Pulver, 216); it passed through the Old and Middle French *tambour* to the 13th century *tabour*. The "u" was dropped about the time of Shakespeare's play "Winter's Tale" (Act IV, scene 4). The spelling *taborn* was also seen in the 14th century. (Pulver, 216). Other spellings in English and French include *taber*, *taberet*, *tabret*, *tabrè*, *tabir*, *tabyr*, *tabur*, *tybour*, *thabour*, *tabouret*, *tabet*, *tabet*, *tabet*, *taburn*, and *tabarte*! All these terms were generally used to describe a small, shallow drum used from the 11th to the 19th century. (Although the spelling fits more closely with the following group, the *tamboril*, a Spanish drum, very much resembles the English *tabor* in size and use.) Real confusion begins to build with the appearance of the *tabourin* (and consequently *tambourin*), *tamborin*, *tamborim*, *tambor* and *tambour*<sup>2</sup>, with its many types. These terms generally refer to a deeper drum that some authorities say became the prototype for our present tenor and military snare drums.

The drum identified as the *tabor* was first used in the late 11th century as an instrument of the minstrels. It was sometimes hung on the left arm or wrist (which gives an indication of its small size and light weight) and played with a short stick in the right hand, while the performer simultaneously played a small pipe (flageolet) with his left hand. Hence the term "pipe and tabor", or as it was later called in England "whittle and dub". Some pictures (found in Kinsky) show the drum hung from the neck or waist and held in front of the body with pressure from the left forearm. Most authorities agree that it was a double-headed drum and could be roughly tuned by means of tension cords or ropes, although Geiringer contends it was a "tambourine-like drum" implying



only one head. The depth and diameter of the drum varied widely in different countries and at different times. The early instrument (11th and 12th cent.) generally was small and relatively shallow in relation to its diameter.

There is some doubt as to whether or not the early *tabor* had snares. Blades contends that at least one snare is consistently portrayed in the pictures we have, yet Peters says the early *tabor* had no snare and several important pictures in Kinsky (p. 46 7, p54 3, p75 4, p76

4) show no snare (or one head is covered which prevents positive identification). Many authorities simply mention a snare "on one head". Knowing that snares were definitely added to the bottom head by the 16th century (which would explain later pictures in which snares were missing from the top head), but not knowing when, or really if, the batter head snare disappeared, we must conclude that the early *tabor*s usually had a snare on the top head through the 15th century and some types, (e.g. the *tambourin*, which will be discussed later) kept that snare even up to the present.

As previously mentioned, the size of the drum varied a great deal. According to Anthony Baines in *Grove's Dictionary*, the early English *tabor* was quite shallow, the *Basque tabor* was roughly equivalent in diameter and depth, and the Provencal model (dating from the 16th cent. and surviving to the present) was approximately twice as deep as it was in diameter. By the 13th century, the *tabor* (specifically English) had increased its depth from approximately 2-3/4 inches to 5-1/2 inches, and its diameter from 8-1/2 inches to 14 inches. The reader must realize, however, that other sizes existed simultaneously on the island and the continent.

By this time the *tabor* was a very popular instrument used almost exclusively in conjunction with the flageolet or galoubet, a short pipe. The pipe and *tabor* were played at weddings, festivals, and other occasions, and some pictures show them in the hands of angels. The English *tabor* was particularly used to accompany the Morris Dance, a practice which continued into the 19th century. On the continent, the smaller *tabor* became an important member of the Renaissance dance orchestra.

During the 15th and 16th century drastic changes took place in the appearance of the *tabor*. While the small, shallow version continued as a folk instrument, a much larger instrument had appeared, apparently an influence of the Swiss fife and drum military groups; it was called a "Swesch" drum in Scotland and a "tambourin de Suisse" or "Tambourin de lansquenet" in France (meaning foot-soldiers' drum). This drum, used primarily as a signalling and warning device, was at least 24 inches in height and 20 inches in diameter and was the forerunner of our present military marching drums (or side drums, if you will). Peters states (p.31) it became part of the British Military by 1557. Thoinot Arbeau, in his *Orchesography*, refers to two different drums used in

France around the 1580's. He describes (p. 18) a "big drum" (*tambour*) used as a military signalling instrument (although he mentions it can be used with hautboys for recreative dances) and measuring approximately 2-1/2 feet in diameter and depth with two snares on the bottom head. He also mentions a smaller drum (*tabourin*) of the pipe and *tabor* variety (p. 46), measuring 12 inches in diameter and 24 inches deep with snares on both heads. This description fits closely with the authentic description of the French *tambour de Provence* since Arbeau says it was used to accompany folk dances. Blades, in *Early Music*, erroneously refers to this drum as a military *tabor*, though he refrains from this association in his book *Percussion Instruments*. Michael Praetorius (1620) and Marin Mersenne (1636) illustrate military *tabor*s in great detail which resemble Arbeau's "big drum". Praetorius also shows a small *tabor* (13th cent. type) and Mersenne illustrates a deep *tabor* with a snare on the top head (like a *tambour de Provence*). He also mentions the shell can be made of brass or wood although Baines (*European and American Musical Instruments*) contends that brass was not introduced until ca. 1700.

The question of snares is still that -- a question. Peters contends the Dutch added the snares to the bottom head early in the sixteenth century and called their drums *snaartrommeln* because of the loud, coarse sound. No factual evidence concerning which nation -- German, Dutch, Swiss, French, or other -- first positioned snares on the bottom head, can be found. The evidence implies that the Swiss mercenaries were the first and their influence spread to the other countries.

In any event, by 1547 (Galpin, *Old English*) the name *tabor* (military type) in England had changed to *drome*, *drom*, *dromme*, *drume*, etc., and players were called "dromslades". In France it was called the *tambour*. As the *tabor*, or *drome*, grew larger in size it became impossible to suspend it from the wrist, so it was slung from the shoulder and hung at the side, usually at a 45 degree angle. Hence the name side drum.<sup>3</sup> Rembrandt shows a perfect example of the 17th century military drum in *The Night Watch* (1642) (Blades plate 103). Baines (*European and American*) shows several Swiss side drums from the 16th, 17th, and 18th century. The tendency is for the drum to get slightly deeper in relation to its diameter. It is interesting to note that by this time the military drum was played with two sticks which were held (as evidenced by the Rembrandt) in the grip referred to today as "traditonal."

Towards the latter half of the 19th century the shallow snare drum began to reappear under the name of *tabor* (Bessaboroff, p. 31-32) or more accurately, small drum. The Crosby Brown Collection contains a small snare drum from the 19th century with a depth of 6 inches and a diameter of 15 inches. This description seems to coincide with what Geiringer, Brindle, White, Tourte, and Scholes call a *tarolle* (Fr.) -- a shallow snare drum with a brass shell and tuning screws. Rosen, however, reports that modern French percussionists say a *tarolle* is

smaller in diameter but deeper than a regular snare drum. Eventually the evolutionary process took place and the smaller snare drum became our present orchestral snare drum, while the deeper military version was retained for parades, military-type music, etc.

A particular type of *tabor* had been developing in provencal France since the 16th century. Its name included *tambour de Provence*, *tambour Provençal*, *tambourin de Provence*, or just *tambourin* (not to be confused with the English tambourine) and was usually very deep and narrow, 28 inches and 14 inches respectively. It was characteristically played with one stick in the right hand and a long pipe in the left hand, much like the English pipe and *tabor*. This drum has a single gut snare across the top head (Blades, *Perc. Instru.* p376) and is traditionally cord tensioned. Unfortunately, many modern percussionists use a tenor drum when a *tambourin* is specified and therefore lose the characteristic rattling sound of the authentic instrument. The *tambour de Provence* is the instrument called for by Bizet (*L'Arlesienne Suite*), Copland (*El Salon Mexico*), Milhaud (*Suite Provençal*), and many others, although Elgar (among others) refers to this drum as a *tabor*. (See the literature list at the end.) Confusion results when the German and Italian word *tambourin* is used because it can denote either the tambourine (with jingles!) or the 20th century *tambour de Provence* in those languages. The reader is advised to be sure and pick the correct instrument!

Because of the great variety in types and uses for these instruments, much confusion has been generated. In several of the more recent publications discrepancies in descriptions and pictures caused this author to spend considerable time trying to simply identify different opinions. Charles White, quoting a reliable Hollywood source, claims (p. 128) a *tambour Provençal* has snares while a *tambourin* doesn't. Vic Firth (p. 14) says usually the opposite is true. In his dictionary, Wottan (p. 194) says, "the instrument possesses as a rule no snare, and in the rare cases when this is present it is a single cord stretched across the upper end of the drum". Firth contends a *tambourin* sounds higher than a tenor drum, yet Milhaud (recognized as one of the leading composers for the instrument) consistently places the drum lower on the staff than the tenor drum. Goldenberg refers to the *tambour Provençale* and pictures a deep cocktail-type drum with snares on the bottom head, (p. 88). On page 87, however, he says the defining characteristic of the *tabor/tambour de Provence/tambourin* is a single snare across the batter head, and adds that it may be substituted by a tenor or field drum! On that same page he speaks of the tenor drum and pictures a marching drum! Peinkofer (p. 78) pictures an instrument similar to Goldenberg's *tambour Provençale* but writes that the drum was played with or without snares, the latter being the past and present tradition of the French opera. Brindle really confuses the issue by referring to a *provençal tambourine* (sic) with a depth greater than its diameter and only one head!

He also says it is attached to, and played by, the right hand. (p. 132-133). The height of this name game is reached with Beatrice Edgerly who equates a *tambour de Provence* with a *tambour of Basque* (tambourine) and a *tambourin a cordes*, which is a hollow box with 6 strings mounted over the top!!

\* \* \*

The intent of this article is to present the opinions of many authorities on this debatable topic. The reader may draw his own conclusions, but through my research I have concluded that the medieval *tabor* survives in the modern orchestra through the *tambourin* or *tambour de Provence*. Along with *tambourin Provençal* and *tambourin de Provence*, these terms are interchangeably used to describe a deep, narrow drum with one gut snare across the batter head.

If an authentic (or reconstructed) instrument is unavailable, the player should find a deep tenor drum, tune it low but not flappy, and stretch a gut string or snare across the top. This can be accomplished by mounting the bottom counterhoop from a like-sized snare drum on the batter head of the tenor drum. The gut snare can be tied to the tension rods. An *emergency* substitute for the *tambourin* would be a tenor drum.

For further interesting reading on this subject see James Blades' book *Percussion Instruments and Their History* and E. B. Gangware's dissertation *The History and Use of Percussion Instruments in Orchestration*. Also, Jeremy Montague's article "Capriol's Revenge" gives an interesting account of how to construct a medieval *tabor*.

#### **Partial List of Pieces Using the Tambourin**

- Auber -- Le Philtre (1831)
- Berton -- Aliné (1831)
- Bizet -- L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2 (1872), Pastorale and Farandole
- Cópland -- Appalachian Spring, El Salon Mexico (tambour de Provence)
- Elgar -- Falstaff (tabor)
- Getry -- Cephale et Procris (1775)
- Gluck -- Iphigenie en Tauride
- Gluck -- Iphigenie en Tauride
- Honegger -- King David
- Jolivet -- Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
- Lully -- Amadis
- Marais -- Alcione (1706) Act III
- Massenet -- Le Cid
- Messiaen -- Turangalila Symphony
- Milhaud -- Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra, La Creation du Monde, La Mort d'un Tyran, Les Choephores, Salade, Suite Francais, Suite Provençal, Symphony No. 8
- Rameau -- Les Fetes d'Hebe

Sessions -- Third Symphony (1962) (Long drum -- tambour proven-  
cale)

Stravinsky -- Petroushka (original score)

Wallace -- Villon

<sup>1</sup>According to Marcuse, the basic word is the Persian *tabir* from which the Old Spanish (14th cent.) *atambor* was derived. However, the Old French *tabur* (also from *tabir*) was first recorded in the 11th century, and from this was derived the English *tabor*, *tabour*, (as it was commonly spelled in the 14th cent. Eng. literature) and *taburn*. *Tabouret* is the diminutive of *tabour* while *taborel* and *tabret* are diminutive of *tabor*.

<sup>2</sup>Marcuse derives *tambour* from *tabour*, in direct conflict with Pulver. She says *tambour* was in use from the mid-14th century and on, and was used in the 17th century to denote a snare drum, tambourine, or kettledrum.

<sup>3</sup>Editorial note: I believe the time has come to drop the term side drum from present use because of the confusion associated with choosing an instrument with or without snares and whether to choose a deep or shallow drum. The concert instrument should be called a snare drum, the marching snare drum should be termed a street, field, parade, military, or marching drum, and a deep marching drum without snares should be called a tenor drum.

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## THE RISE OF THE SCOTTISH STYLE OF SIDE DRUMMING

By W. G. F. Boag

### About the Author:

*Mr. Boag is assistant to the Keeper of the Scottish United Service Museum in Edinburgh Castle. He has been a percussionist for over forty years and has performed with top Pipe and Drum Bands such as the Edinburgh Special Police Band. Mr. Boag is also a leading orchestral percussionist, instructor and music historian.*

Sometime during the years immediately following the Crimean War, an event took place which was to have the most surprising effect on the playing of street or marching drums. This was the employment together, for the first time, of bagpipes and drums by some Scottish regiments in the British Army. Probably inspired by the resounding success of the French "Field Music" and the authority, granted for the first time in 1854 for the official employment of pipers in the army, some enterprising Commanding Officer put his regimental pipers and regimental drummers on parade together. Despite its recent occurrence, it is not known who the enterprising officer was, nor which regiment was responsible. From this simple beginning, an entirely new style of side drumming technique was to evolve within 50 years, and within 100 years was to become a tradition in Scotland and was to make its mark world wide as being probably the most skillful and phenomenally difficult style of playing to be heard anywhere as a purely side drum technique.

It is sad that for many years, the British army side drummers had been taught, not by music, but by rote and had learned their rhythms and beatings purely by ear. For this reason, not a great deal is known about the early styles of playing, but it is probable that these were closely akin to those used by the Fife and Drum Corps of Williamsburg and the NARD exponents. Bagpipe music had changed greatly during the 19th century and that time had seen the emergence of many marches, the first collection of which was published in the early 1800s. The very nature of this music, containing, as it does a multiplicity of grace notes, gives bagpipe tunes a characteristic all of their own which is not easily described in words, but which can turn a simple melody into an extremely foot tapping, lilting series of extraordinary rhythmic patterns which are linked as much to the grace notes as to the basic rhythms of the melody. Indeed, a pipe tune played without its grace notes can be dull and repetitive rhythmically and yet, after the addition of the ornaments, can become excitingly different.

To suit the needs of this music, the drummers of the Scottish regiments had to think afresh about what they played. As with all marching music, these tunes were in 2/4, 4/4 and 6/8 meter with the odd 3/4 piece and most of them were in quick time. Because this art was new, no one was able to think beyond reapplying the existing techniques, to sit as

comfortably as possible on the melodies, and it was rapidly realized that a simple basis of short rolls, paradiddles, flams and drags could be made to supply all that was required. In retrospect, it would appear that nobody in the drumming world had yet realized the potential of the opportunity provided by these grace notes, or that if they did see it, they did not know how to exploit it. In fairness, it must be remembered that the purpose and function of these early pipe bands was to provide a good basic rhythm to assist men to march and the public spectacle and display aspect had not even started to develop. Indeed it is necessary to leave the army at this point and look to the area in which the greatest innovation took place, namely, the civilian pipe bands, which began to make their appearance very shortly after the regimental pipe bands, and upon which they were and are modelled. As a pure digression, the question could be asked about how many people realize that when they call themselves pipe major or drum major or drum sergeant or whatever, they are using army appointment titles which have no meaning and no function outside the army.

There were certain civilian organizations with a disciplined structure, such as the Police which rapidly developed pipe bands, the earliest being probably in Govan (a suburb of Glasgow) in the 1860s. The highly elaborate dress of these bands was a "natural" for public spectacle and it is in them that the drumming style began to evolve. However, they were closely based on army bands and often contained ex-army pipers and drummers. The evolution was long and slow and was due principally to the arrival of Pipe Band Contests which became a feature of Highland Games. In those early days, before World War I, the bands were simply judged as bands with no specialization with pipes or drums, but following 1918, when the World Championships at Cowal Highland Games became a Mecca for bands, a few bold enthusiasts began to develop special techniques for the drums, by using accented strokes in unusual places and linking basic rudiments to give a new effect. There can be little doubt, that the emerging specialization of the percussion demands by modern classical composers and the rag-time and dance band scene had an influence.

Until the 1930s, the majority, if not all, pipe bands had rope-tensioned drums, which had a fine resonant sound, but relatively poor tension. In 1930, the Premier Drum Company produced a full depth, rod tensioned side drum suitable for pipe band work and, it appears that one was sent, or loaned to Jack Seaton of Glasgow City Police Pipe Band. James Catherwood of the Dalziel Highland Pipe Band in Motherwell managed to convince his committee that they should purchase a full set of these drums. In 1931, at Cowal Highland Games, they won the World Championship using them. This is the first recorded instance of a pipe band appearing with bass, tenor and side drums, all rod tensioned, all individually tensioned. Jimmy Catherwood told this author that they were laughed at by the traditionalists because of their "biscuit tins".



After playing and winning, the laugh was on their side and by the following year, all bands who could afford it, had reequipped with the new drums. The changes in style of playing which had been coming, suddenly erupted and the whole pipe band drumming movement leaped into the 20th century, except for the army and a large number of little local town bands who were not interested in, or capable of competing. For these players, the old tried and proven steady army beatings were good enough and truth to tell, there is still a dignity and cadence in these, which is effective and moving when played with a good sense of dynamics and style. Not one of these army beatings required more than the ability to play rolls, accented rolls, the paradiddle, flam, drag and the triplet, and the triplets were frequently used in such a way as to sound like a four-stroke ruff.

The civilian competitive bands however were using "big" tunes, i.e., tunes difficult for the pipers to play and on which the standard accepted simple beatings sat idle or not at all. This forced their drum sections to try other tactics which lead to innovations in composing rudiments, using accents, drag and flam paradiddles, 6,8, and 10-stroke rolls and to abandonment of the steady four in the bar accents of the Strathspeys, but rather writing special parts for individual tunes. The older beatings had simply been omnibus 2/4 or whatever rhythms could be used with any tune in a given meter signature. As these bands were not really marching bands in the army sense, they had more freedom to exploit unusual patterns and place accents and stresses in unusual positions all helping to "point" the melody for the pipers and therefore, approaching greater ensemble playing. Names began to appear in the drumming world of the pipe bands -- Jack Seaton of Glasgow City Police, Jimmy Catherwood of Dalziel Highland, Paddy Donovan of Fintan Lalor. All of these men made a contribution which can never be forgotten and despite being keen rivals, were also good friends who shared some, but not all of their secrets. This author has a little scrap of manuscript paper with an idea for using accented ruffs in Strathspeys, written by Paddy Donovan and across the top is inscribed "Not to be given to anybody". It is now interesting for this author to realize that this was the forerunner of a much later development wherein open six-stroke rolls, preceded by an accented stroke, were used with telling effect in jigs. By the end of the 1930s, the pipe band drummers were using a wide variety of rudiments, linked together, played in unusual sequence, accented in the "wrong" places, and had already produced a style which was exclusive and specialized. By today's standards, it was still fairly simple, but the seeds sown by the giants were sprouting and the harvest was ripening. During these years, those of us who were not fortunate enough to come under the tuition of the great men stood and marveled at the playing they did and the effects they achieved. It was also a period when we learned to use our eyes as well as our ears, trying to see how they played their material by

relating hand and stick action to the sound.

In 1939, the Second World War began which delayed progress for a year or two because many of the men in the bands were called up for duty and naturally, activity was at a lower pitch. However, many of those called for service took their sticks and went into army bands and thus, introduced the first stirrings of modern techniques to that section of pipe bands.

After the cessation of hostilities, the activities of the Scottish Pipe Band Association took on a new lease of life and, starved of colour and ceremony for years, a complete new generation of enthusiastic youngsters came into the movement and many new bands grew to join the ranks of the resuscitated and well-established top class bands. The majority of the competing bands, freed from the shortages and restrictions of the war, purchased new drums and the final days of the rope tensioned drum were numbered. New names appeared — Gordon Jelly, Teddy Gilchrist, George Pryde, Alex Duthart, Frank Ross, James Blackley — all of these players were not only remarkable executants, but clever and inventive innovators who talked, lived and ate drumming. Prior to this time, the writing of drum parts for pipe bands had been a fairly hit and miss affair with as many ideas about the writing of certain things as there were drummers writing them. Now, however, these men got together and discussed notation, sticking and execution techniques and, with the experience of the older school, laid a new foundation for the structure. It is perhaps significant that none of these players had had any formal musical education and possibly this left them freer to explore and experiment.

The advent of the rod-tensioned drum had two important effects. The first was that the higher tension and higher pitch made it easier to play more advanced technical parts, but the counter effect was that a certain amount of volume was lost. The classical rudiments were looked at again and the use of open rudiments and the single-stroke roll came in with very telling effect. By now, late 1940s and early 1950s, the manufacturers had realized that there was a big market in the pipe band world and began to produce more improved drums in an attempt to give the players what they thought they required. Metal counter hoops had been used before 1939, in fact most drums of 1931 had them, but now, orchestral-type floating heads, wire and silk and wire snares were tried and in attempts to push the pitch of the drum higher with greater snap and crispness to the playing, batter-head snares were introduced. Probably due to methods of manufacturing and greater production lines, these were fitted with snare releases like dance band drums and they brought their own problems. Dance band drums had never been designed to take the hammering that field drums received, nor were they designed to take the extremes of tension applied by the drummer, therefore, much work and research remained to solve these problems.

Another development began to manifest itself in the 1950s. The

enthusiasm for sheer technical brilliance by players began to run away with them and by fitting rhythms into big, complicated tunes, they began to write material which supposedly fitted the melodies, but which, in fact, was frequently over complicated. This led to excesses where rolls became tighter and tighter, with as many strokes pushed into a measure as it was possible to get. The beatings became extremely elaborate, and in many cases, quite tasteless.

Jimmy Catherwood was not only an enthusiastic pipe band drummer, but a keen all-round percussion player and for various reasons, had been in correspondence with, and had met many international authorities on the subject. He had developed an interest in American Rudimental Drumming and also in the highly distinctive and specialized Basler Drumming of which the late Dr. Fritz Berger was the leading exponent. It was largely due to this contact that many of the newer names in pipe band drumming were able to meet and hear Dr. Berger on his visit to Scotland shortly before his death. Some of his style rubbed off and was utilized by the Scots so that pipe band techniques, by the late 50s and early 60s had become an amalgam of traditional styles from many parts of the world. It is probably true to say that it was upon the Basle type of notation, that Alex Duthart based his method of writing parts for the pipe band — a single line stave with all strokes of the left hand notated above the line and right hand beneath.

A further change came about with the development of close and active co-operation between the leading exponents and the Premier Drum Company. Alex Duthart in particular, commented and advised on the shortcomings of the field drum as then produced. Research, largely of necessity and by trial and error, was attempted in an effort to produce a drum for pipe band purposes which had a brilliant, snapping tone, but which was not deficient in volume. There existed a serious problem for many years due to the snare mechanism, particularly for batterhead snares which never seemed to lie absolutely flat and evenly against the head. Additionally, it was difficult to get really accurate adjustment of these and, as a result, they often tended either to kill the tone, or to produce a nasty buzzing effect which destroyed the whole effect of the playing. The collaboration produced a very fine drum, suited exclusively to pipe band work in the field.

Sticks too, had presented a never-ending series of problems and fashions changed rapidly over the years as each band copied the type of sticks used by the most successful Grade I competitive bands. Danga, parrot, hickory, lancewood, mahogany, oak, laminated and a wide variety of materials were used. Acorns were large, then small, then almost non-existent as attempts were made to produce a first class stick suitable for the type of playing needed. Eventually, Alex Duthart designed a stick which is most popular today and which is vaguely reminiscent of the incredible sticks of the Basle school. These latter were long and heavy with a very thick shaft and an acorn about the size

of a large grape. The Duthart stick is 413mm in length, completely tapered from butt to acorn. It has a large acorn and is about 24mm thick at the butt. Despite its clumsy appearance, this is a remarkably good stick, fast and clear. This author uses them for orchestral playing with great success. On the very highly tensioned pipe band drums they are lively and produce a first-class response.

A further change has been taking place over the past five years in the actual style of beatings. The Scottish drummers use generally what can best be described as a melodic style, being closely linked to the melody played by the pipers. As we have seen, this became elaborated and in an attempt to do something different with an already complex style, the 1950s saw the growing use of dynamics and "light and shade". During these years, this author cried as a voice in the wilderness for a return to simpler styles, but with great dynamic control and lots of expression. This has, in fact, come to pass and today's pipe band drummer is no longer guilty of "rivetting" techniques, but is a master of the ppp-fff. Material is still highly complex, but of simpler and better construction and played with great style. The future looks bright for this odd mixture, this hybrid style which is now recognized as being "purely Scottish".

As an interesting final thought, it should, indeed, be pointed out that 99% of all civilian pipe bands in Britain are 100% amateur players. There have been few professional pipe bands and these amateur drummers give up their nights and weekends to learn and to impart the skills of their art. Anyone in Scotland can learn this art provided he has a certain degree of ability, the enthusiasm to work hard and to practice arduously. It will cost him very little, usually the shoe leather to walk from his home to the rehearsal hall.

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### THOUGHTS ON DEVELOPING AN "OPEN" TECHNIQUE AND CONCEPTION ON DRUM SET

By Ed Soph

#### **About the Author:**

*Mr. Soph has studied with David Wuliger of the Houston Symphony, and Thomas Gwin and Ron Fink at North Texas. He taught at North Texas for a year and then moved to New York, where he teaches privately and does free-lance recording and playing, mainly with Clark Terry and Lee Konitz. Mr. Soph is presently on the faculty of the National Stage Band and Combo Camps and does considerable clinic work.*

A study of the development of drum set techniques and conceptions in jazz improvisation reveals a departure from the traditional role assignments to hands and feet. The hi-hat no longer has to be played in a repetitive pattern; nor the bass drum, ride, and snare. The modern jazz drummer (I speak of artists like Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes, Jack DeJohnette, and Andrew Cyrille--to name only a few) no longer plays "time." He plays "pulsations."

Unfortunately, teaching techniques outside the realm of the player-private teacher have not kept pace with this development. Aside from a few books which deal with four-way independence and coordination, there is little in the way of material which explains, logically and coherently, "how" and, more importantly, "why?"

Ideally, a student should learn to play all the styles encompassed in jazz drumming. For only in this way will he grasp the roots of the music and of the instrument on which he wishes to express himself.

Following this, the student should never be told that such and such is always played this way or that way. Each style has its own guidelines, its own identity. But to say that certain technical considerations inherent in one style apply as Gospel to all styles is ridiculous. The music could never have evolved if some brave souls hadn't broken the "rules." The only constant consideration in all styles is musicality. One wouldn't play Krupa-style drums with the Chicago Art Ensemble.

Realistically, one has mastered a degree of four-way independence when he can play, for example, the hi-hat on two and four, the bass drum on all four beats of the measure, the left hand on two and four, and some similar repetitive figure on the ride. All four elements are playing repetitive patterns.

Hopefully, both student and teacher realize that this isn't the only way and they move on to something like Chapin, volume 1. Now, the left hand and right foot (obviously, this is written from the vantage point of a right-handed player) are freed to play fragments, often non-repetitive, while the ride and hi-hat continue in their repetitive roles. This is where a new way of thinking must enter if one is to continue to develop into that relatively uncharted land of playing with the "pulsations" of the time.

The first step is the abolition, no matter what the style of jazz being played, of the idea that one or more elements of the set, and thus of the body, is/are the "time-keeper(s)." One should realize that what is played by all four appendages is the time. They are the instruments of the time. The time-keeper is you. The teaching technique of assigning dogmatic roles to the hands and feet is restrictive. For example, one's technique and musicality cannot be built around, or upon, the time-keeping ability (or lack of it!) of his hi-hat playing on two and four. Such an approach becomes a crutch (and a disaster if one is called upon to do something else with his hi-hat), and forces the player to rely upon an auditory as well as physical manifestation of the time rather than upon what should be his ability to internalize the time. In other words, the player must be the time-keeper. One's technique must be built upon the inter-relationships of all four appendages. One must think, and understand that  $1 = 1/4 + 1/4 + 1/4 + 1/4 = 1$ .

Most jazz drumming improvisation is a combination of repetitive and non-repetitive patterns. Especially for those of us who cut our conceptual teeth on Chapin, volume 1. But if we call the repetitive figures

"time-keepers" and the non-repetitive patterns something else we have shut the door on further development and must be content with an approach which at best could be called schizophrenic. Actually, all four appendages are already playing fragments of one basic pattern. And if one thinks of his playing in this way the old dichotomies between hands and feet, feet and foot, and hand and hand will begin to vanish.

As an example, consider this pattern:

If the student approaches this by considering the ride and hi-hat as repetitive or "time-keeping" figures, and proceeds to put those non-repetitive figures of the snare and bass "against" them, he will have difficulty. It is not a matter of putting something "against" something else, but "with" it. And this is a lot easier if, of course, one realizes that all of the patterns are manifestations of the time, and that each element in the pattern is a fragment of a basic pattern which gives the exercise its rhythmic identity. Obviously, the basic pattern which materializes when the fragments, repetitive and non-repetitive, are related to each other is—

Any "independence" pattern can be reduced to a basic pattern or patterns. Not only does this method make the development of independence easier (Simpler would be a better word. It remains difficult, especially with the introduction of tonal variations), It also allows the student to conceive and hear the pattern in its entirety, or wholeness, rather than as an awkward juxtaposition of what are presented as unrelated elements: time-keepers vs. non-time-keepers; repetitive vs. non-repetitive. And we know that the set player must regard his instrument and what he plays on that instrument as a whole and not as a desperate combination of four parts.

All of what this author has written encompasses the first step towards pulsation playing: the equality of all four appendages and the beginning of a conception in which one understands and feels the inter-relationships of those appendages.

## **PERCUSSION RESEARCH**

**By**

**Dr. Sherman Hong**

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The following is a review of a recently completed study. Reichelt, Keith Herbert. EXAMINATION OF THE SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERCUSSION STUDENT IN MIXED ENSEMBLE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC LESSONS AS REFLECTED IN CURRENT TEXTS, Unpublished graduate research paper, DePaul University, 1975.

This research paper is a compilation of information on seven band methods books and five specialized percussion texts. The books reviewed were:

1. First Division Band Method
2. Belwin Band Builder
3. Smith-Yoder-Bachman Ensemble Band Method
4. Visual Band Method
5. Hal Freese Elementary Band Method
6. Silver Burdett Instrumental Series
7. The Individualized Instructor
8. Haskell Harr Drum Method
9. Ludwig Drum Method
10. Roy Burns Elementary Drum Method
11. All American Drummer
12. Rubank Elementary Method for Drums

Reichelt listed twenty musical elements he felt should be presented in a text intended for a well-rounded percussion curriculum. The researcher included headings such as 1) care of the instrument, 2) simple meters, 3) compound meters, 4) mallet keyboard instruments, and 5) timpani. Reichelt also dealt with text explanation, examples, length, pacing, and readability.

After a critical analysis of the books in the study, the author made suggestions for improved instruction:

1. Use books which conform most closely to a model scope and sequence presented in this paper.
2. Have students play all percussion instruments.
3. Encourage private lessons with a qualified teacher.
4. Have sectional rehearsals.
5. Attend percussion clinics.
6. Include percussion performances on concerts.

This study is worthwhile to those who plan to teach beginning percussionists, either in heterogeneous classes or privately. This study is contained in the PERCUSSION RESEARCH COLLECTION and is available for use.

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
PERCUSSION RESEARCH COLLECTION  
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**"TIMPANI TUNING"**  
**A MUCH TOO NEGLECTED AND MISUNDERSTOOD SUBJECT**  
**By Eric Remsen**

*Editor's Note: This article was originally printed in the Texas State Chapter Newsletter.*

**About the Author:**

*Mr. Remsen is from Southern California -- his teachers were William Kraft, and Cloyd Duff -- he was percussionist with the Milwaukee Symphony one year and has been with the San Antonio Symphony for five years.*

Before we begin the discussion on tuning, it must be pointed out that the effects of which I shall speak are possible only on quality instruments, well maintained, with heads in good condition. Bowls which are out of round, tuning mechanisms which have suffered mechanical damage, and old, worn out heads will make the production of a good sound impossible. Warped bowls or hoops can be repaired, as can most superficial mechanical damage, but heads that are worn, damaged, or stretched out of shape *must* be replaced. The timpani which I use in the San Antonio Symphony receive about the same amount of use as the average set in a Texas high school, and I find that I must replace the heads once a year in order to achieve a consistent high quality sound.

For those who are interested in instruments of major professional symphony quality, the following companies are currently manufacturing authentic Dresden-style timpani:

American Drum Co.  
Box 4403, Santa Fe Stn.  
Denver, Colo. 80204

Hinger Touch-Tone  
P.O. Box 232  
Leonia, NJ 07605

Harlan Drums, Inc.  
9421 Stansberry Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63134

Ludwig Drum Co.  
(Ringer design)  
Chicago, Ill.

Instruments of lesser quality (although adequate for most schools) are manufactured by most commercial drum companies.

Assuming that all of the above factors have been taken into consideration, there will be only two things that will have any bearing upon the sound that will be produced: The technique of playing (striking the drum) and the technique of tuning.

The technique of timpani tuning involves two major factors, one dependent on the other. First is the accurate mounting and tensioning of the head. Everything else depends upon this, for a false head can never produce a clear pitch or a beautiful sound, regardless of the skill of the person playing upon it. The second factor is the skill of the player in hearing pitch intervals and transferring them to the instruments.

Let us proceed from the beginning and establish a method for mounting a new head. Before removing the old head, observe whether the counterhoop is above, at, or below the level of the head surface. If the top of the counterhoop is level with the head surface at any point in the drum's range there will be no problem. If the top of the counterhoop is above or below the head surface, a pair of blocks (of wood, plastic, or whatever) must be fashioned to make up the difference. It is absolutely essential that these blocks be identical. Now remove the old head and making sure the bowl is round, the counterhoop is round and flat, and the new head fits properly in the counterhoop, if so, clean and lubricate the edge of the bowl.

Put the head and counterhoop on the drum, so that the distance from the edge of the bowl to the counterhoop and flesh hoop is identical at all points i.e. make sure the head is centered. Lubricate each of the tension rods and gently screw them into the lugs until just before the point that tension would be applied to the head. Note: If your drums are equipped with "T" handles rather than key rods, make every effort to replace them. Key rods make the physical mechanics of playing much easier and practically eliminate the possibility of unauthorized tampering with the head. After all, we don't want some meddlesome fool to lay waste to all of the care which we are taking!

The next step is the most critical to the evenness of the head. Place a straight (!) yardstick on its edge across the surface of the head, lining it up with a pair of tension rods which are opposite each other. If the counterhoop comes above the head surface, the blocks mentioned above will go between the yardstick and the head at each edge of the bowl. If the counterhoop comes below the head surface, the blocks would be taped to the counterhoop and the yardstick would rest on them. Now tighten the two rods adjacent to the yardstick until everything is flush. Repeat this process with each pair of tuning rods that are opposite each other. When this is done, make sure that the head is still properly centered on the bowl.

If all of the above has been done correctly, the head will be mounted evenly and centered. Now the tension of the head must be

adjusted so that proper range will be set on each drum. The following ranges should be easily obtainable without making any extra adjustments: 30" (32") D - A, 28" (29") F - C, 25" (26") B-flat - F, 23" D - A. When adjusting the head for these ranges, make sure to turn each tuning rod *precisely* the same amount. Note: Ludwig timpani which use the "balanced action" tuning mechanism may need to have all of the notes in the above ranges. Be sure that the head has been brought into playing range tension before adjusting the pedal spring!

Up to this point the heads have been centered, "ironed out" and brought up to playing range. Now they must be "cleared". A timpani head does not vibrate as a single unit; it vibrates in sections, and if these sections are in conflict with one another it will be false and dead. A properly cleared head will sound rich, pure and resonant. To properly clear a head one needs a discerning ear and stubbornness.

Place a muffler (a 4" - 6" circle of chamois, a folded handkerchief or a wallet) in the center of the drum and place a chair next to the drum so that you can sit with your ear at the level of the head. Tune the drum to the center of its range (32", 29", 26", 23" to G, B-flat, D, F respectively). Tap next to each tuning rod *very lightly* with a hard mallet (a soft one will not produce enough pitch definition at the low dynamic level required) and adjust each rod until all are identical in pitch. It is important to tap very softly so that only a localized section of the head will vibrate, and it is essential to keep the ear as close as possible to the section being tapped so that no distortion of pitch will be heard. It is also advisable to have a stable pitch source (e.g. piano, vibraphone, tuning fork) at hand, as the ear may tend to become confused.

As the heads "break in", they will need periodic re-clearing. Be sure to check them at least once a week.

Now we can settle down to the business of pedal tuning. One must practice this as carefully as the other mechanical and aural aspects of playing. A well trained ear is absolutely essential if one is to consider oneself a timpanist. It is impossible to change a drum from one pitch to another unless one has the ability to recognize and sing intervals. There are any number of methods for developing this ability, but I personally recommend the study of solfeggio. This is a lengthy subject in itself, and one which is worthy of developing, but is considerably beyond the scope of this article.

In changing from one note to another, it is first necessary to sing the established pitch, then to sing the interval to the new pitch, then move the drum to the new pitch. It is advisable to always approach a new note from the flat side, as descending directly to a lower note may leave some slack in the head which could cause the pitch to flatten when the drum is played upon. In addition, it seems to be easier to hear the pitch coming into focus from below rather than from above.

It is, of course, absolutely imperative that the process of tuning be done so that only the timpanist is aware of it. There has been much dis-

cussion as to the merits of tuning with the mallet vs. tuning with the finger. Tapping lightly with a mallet tends to set the whole head in vibration whereas tapping lightly (as opposed to "flicking") with the finger tends to set only a small portion of the head into vibration. This should make no difference if the head is perfectly clear. Tapping very lightly combined with hearing the pitch in the "mind's ear" rather than singing it aloud should make the tuning process quiet enough so as not to be objectionable.

I have found it advantageous to be seated at all times while playing. There are numerous reasons for this, among which it is possible to maintain constant contact with the pedals. This is necessary in order to adjust to minute changes in intonation, either within the ensemble or from the instruments, due to changes in dynamic level, etc.

Of paramount importance is "learning" your instruments, becoming familiar with their idiosyncracies and limitations. Most of the current timpani methods and etude books contain excellent exercises for the development of rapid and accurate pedal tuning, but one also has to be able to approach a new piece of music with other knowledge and skills as well. Do high E and F sound best on your 26" drum or your 23" drum? Does your 23" drum go down to a good D? Will your 26" drum get a good high F sharp? If you have to pedal B-flat, C and D in rapid succession, would it work better on your 26" drum or your 29" drum? Only through practice and experimentation can these questions be answered.

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## *Letters to the Editor*

Dear Neal,

Would someone who has experience in the reheading of congos & bongos please write to me & let me know anything special about head selection. What type of skin is best? Do you want a thick or thin head? Are there any special tricks to mounting the heads? Any information would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Best Regards,

Owen Clark  
No. 507-1833 Pembina Hwy.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3T 3x8 Canada

On Saturday, April 23, 1977 Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire PAS will present a "Day of Percussion" at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut.

This event will feature Paul Price and Ed Soph as clinicians. For further information contact:

Howard Zwickler  
University of Bridgeport  
Bridgeport, Conn. 06602

Dear Neal,

I would like to see the Clinics at the PAS Conventions take a different or perhaps additional approach. I don't claim to have any kind of a monopoly on intelligence or experience, but it seems to me that a huge part of the "Art of Playing" is being consistently ignored.

I attend Conventions, and hear excellent players; I learn four exercises that "Gordon Stout uses" (and maybe if I learn those exercises, I'll play just like G.S.). I learn how Sammy Smith holds four mallets, etc., etc. These things are all fun, and interesting and educational, but I seem to be leaving Conventions with few new ideas. I hear about this technique and that technique, but no one talks about-- or even hints at musicality. I don't subscribe to the concept that "you are naturally musical or you can never play musically." Nor do I believe that it's something that "just happens" -- that one day God looks down on you, and touches you, and from that day you will play musically. It is, rather a valid and crucial part of music education as one learns to be an excellent musician. Yet no one discusses this aspect of performance. I would like to see that changed. Why does one person's playing "sound better" than another's? What does movement have to do with it? How many ways can you play something? How do you choose the "best way?" What kind of feeling do you want? How are motion & feeling related? How will they make me play better? What about commitment to the piece performed? What do emotion and sensitivity have to do with good playing? How can I portray a motion or a mood in my playing? How do I combine all the motions and feelings I heard in all the phrases into a single, unified, musical performance? . . . . .

It seems to me that this area needs as much, if not more, consideration than pure technique. Yet I hear only about technique.

Sincerely,

Anne Detzner  
Box 10, McClintock Hall  
A.S.U.  
Tempe, AZ 85281

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Watch future publications for further information.

We would like to express our appreciation to these outstanding organizations in the music industry for their support of Percussive Arts Society, Inc. and hope they will continue to consider PAS as a worthwhile and stimulating force in the percussion world.

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