

Vol. 5, No. 4, August 2018

RHYTHM! SCENE™



**LOUISVILLE LEOPARD
PERCUSSIONISTS
RIDE THE CRAZY TRAIN**

RHYTHM! SCENE™

FEATURES

- 6 **Louisville Leopard Percussionists Ride the Crazy Train**
by Rick Mattingly
- 14 **Hands, Head, Heart**
by Jerry Leake
- 16 **What I Wish I Had Known Sooner Part 1: Silence is Golden**
by Alex Fragiskatos
- 18 **Hotlicks: Groove Facility: From Motion to Groove**
by Rob Hiron
- 22 **R!Solo: Martian Postcard for Rudimental Snare Drum**
by Dr. Brian Graiser
- 28 **Driven to Drums Overcoming Physical Challenges**
by David Segal
- 30 **The “E” Word: Building an Entrepreneurial Skillset in Music**
Part 2: Success Traits
by Drew Worden
- 34 **Spirit of Ubuntu: International Marimba and Steelpan Festival**
story by Mark Stone . photos by International Marimba and Steelpan Festival

COLUMNS

- 4 Society Update
- 40 PAS Profile – Justin Ramirez
- PAS Hall of Fame Spotlight
42 Jacques Delécluse
43 Warren “Baby” Dodds
44 Sandy Feldstein
- 45 Tech Scene #2: Syncing Audio and Video
- 46 People and Places
- 48 KoSA 23 Drum Camp in Montreal
- 50 Product Showcase
- 54 Industry News
- 57 From the Rhythm! Discovery Center Collection:
Yamaha MTS-9214 Marching Snare and 8200 Bass Drum 57

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Rhythm! Scene is published six times a year: February, April, June, August, October and December by the Percussive Arts Society.

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SUBMISSIONS

Rhythm! Scene accepts brief information about recent performances and events for the "People and Places" section. Information must be received within two months of the event. Newsworthy company information may be submitted for the "Industry News" section. Performers are welcome to send news about recent tours for the "On the Road" section. Other news items may be submitted and are used at the discretion of our editors. For more information, email publications@pas.org.

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

SOCIETY UPDATE

BY JOSHUA SIMONDS

Summer is coming to an end here in Indianapolis, and with that we are ramping up our PASIC 2018 planning. We are excited to welcome some incredible artists to our great city and can't wait to share those with you! In the meantime, make sure to check out the [Drum Corps International](#) World Championship events held at Lucas Oil Stadium August 9–11. This is one of the most exciting outdoor events that take place throughout the summer, providing world-class experiences for the DCI audiences and membership. Indiana residents are eligible for a discounted ticket, so don't miss out!

Last month we were honored to visit the [Music For All Summer Symposium](#). The Summer Symposium welcomed students and educators from all over the country to one place to share knowledge and learn more about their field. The Percussion Track at the Summer Symposium brought in some of the highest level educators the percussion world has to offer and created a completely unique place for students and educators to learn from the best of the best. [Music For All](#) is now gearing up for its Bands of America Marching Championships. This event is the highlight of the fall marching band season and another outstanding event held here in Indianapolis. All of our Strategic Partners go above and beyond to elevate the percussive arts, and we couldn't be more pleased than to stand among them.

With inspiration from our strategic partnerships, PAS has taken steps to bring more of the Marching Arts to [PASIC](#). I am pleased to announce that PASIC 2018 will now include [MarchingFest!](#)—the place to see all aspects of the Marching Arts in one location. From Tony Nunez and Kevin Shah of Arcadia High School representing [WGI Sport of the Arts](#) to [Boston Crusaders Percussion](#) bringing you up close and personal with Drum Corps International, PASIC 2018 has you covered. One-time-only clinics and events, individual and small ensemble competitions, drumline battles, and interactive clinics are just a sampling of what you can expect to see during MarchingFest at PASIC 2018!

I encourage you head over to our [PASIC Facebook page](#) for more PASIC 2018 artist announcements, and I hope to see you at PASIC November 14–17 in Indianapolis!



Joshua Simonds



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LOUISVILLE LEOPARD PERCUSSIONISTS RIDE THE CRAZY TRAIN

BY RICK MATTINGLY

On a cold day in February five and a half years ago, Louisville Leopard Percussionists director Diane Downs was sitting on her couch, bored to death. It had snowed the night before and the schools were closed, so she wasn't at her job teaching music at an elementary school. But then her email started erupting with messages regarding a YouTube video of the Leopards playing a medley of songs by Led Zeppelin.

"The emails were saying things like 'So cool that Jimmy Page shared this video on his Facebook page,'" Downs recalled.

"So I got on Jimmy Page's Facebook page and the video was there, and it said, 'Too good not to share. Have a rockin' weekend.' That video went from 6,000 views over a four-month period to over five million views in about a week. Then DrumTalk TV put it on their site, and that got 40 million views. And then something called Lunkerville, which is devoted to fishing, put it on their Facebook page, and that got over 50 million views. Then a lot of stuff started happening. I did interviews with PBS, *Time* magazine, Buzzfeed, Al Jazeera, BBC World News, and some others."

It was tremendous exposure for the Louisville Leopard Percussionists, a group of elementary school children that Downs had started 20 years earlier. In that time, they had recorded several CDs, appeared at PASIC four times (with such guest soloists as Louie Bellson—who wrote a piece for the group—Zoro, Emil Richards, Brad Dutz, and Joe Morello), played at several MENC conventions, been the subject of an HBO Family show, and had a number of their arrangements of jazz, Latin, and pop tunes published by Hal Leonard. This July, the Leopards performed at the Forecastle music festi-



val on the same day as Modest Mouse, Father John Misty, and Rainbow Kitten Surprise. But having Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page, and soon after, Zeppelin bassist John Paul Jones, post their video on their respective Facebook pages kicked the group's national profile quite a bit higher.

And that hasn't been the Leopards' only brush with rock stardom.

"We did a video of 'Crazy Train,' which had been up for about three years," Downs says. "Then Ozzy Osbourne saw it and we got a \$10,000 check in the mail from Ozzy with a note that said, 'Myself, my whole family and my fans all loved your rendition of 'Crazy Train.' Keep up the good work. God Bless, Ozzy Osbourne.' One of the kids was like, 'Look, the Prince of Darkness said God Bless!'"

As a result of that exposure, the Leopards were invited to do the Tedx-KC convention in Kansas City, and they played at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland. Then, this past winter, Downs got an email from a producer at A&E wanting to know if the Leopards would like to be on a TV show. She didn't give any details, however, and it was only three weeks before the scheduled taping that Downs found out that they wanted the Leopards to play "Crazy

▶ Tap to play Video



Louisville Leopard Percussionists and Steel Leopards performing "Crazy Train"

Train" for *Ozzy and Jack's World Detour* show on A&E.

That presented a challenge. Most of the Leopards who had made the video several years earlier had graduated from the group, and the current Leopards didn't know "Crazy Train."

"We declared a 'Crazy Train' emergency," Downs said. "All the staff came in and we learned 'Crazy Train' in one rehearsal. We even used the beginners; they blew wooden train whistles at the beginning. So then we took 50 kids to Nashville and played 'Crazy Train' for Ozzy."

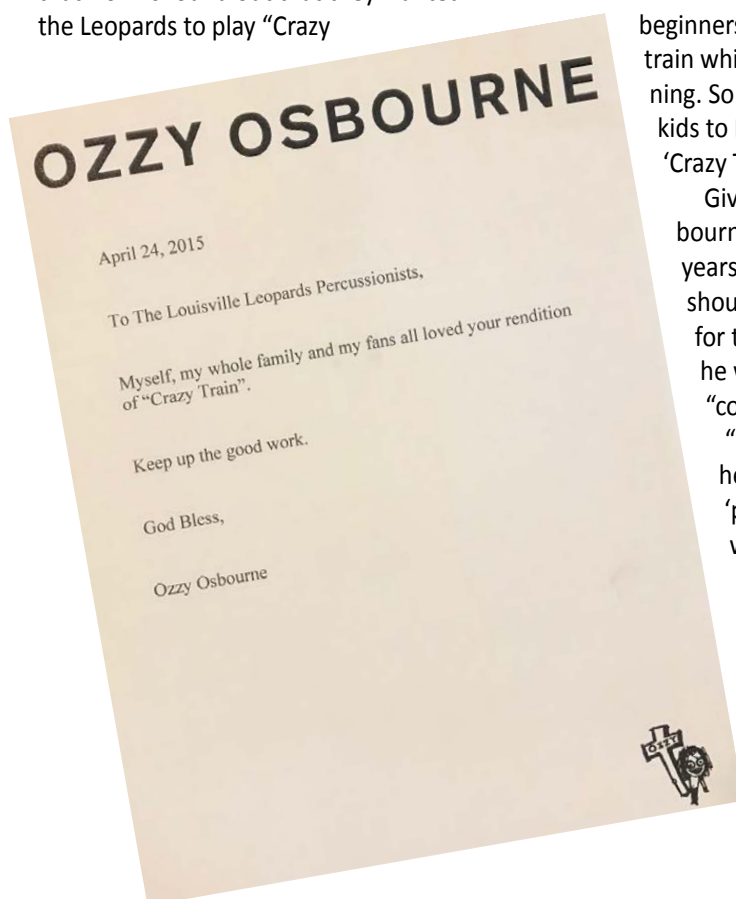
Given some of Osbourne's behavior over the years, Downs thought she should prepare the kids for the possibility that he would use some, er, "colorful" language.

"I told the kids that he might say some 'potty words,' but it wouldn't be anything they hadn't heard at school, so just let it go. But he was so kind and sweet, and his children, Kelly and Jack, were so attentive to the kids.

When it was over, one of the Leopards fussed at me: 'You said he was going to say potty words, but he didn't.' So they were kind of disappointed. But he was wonderful."

Ozzy and Jack's World Detour show with the Leopards premiered July 25 on A&E. The show will be re-run periodically. "We're not the entire show," Downs explained. "We're just a little piece of it. Ozzy and Jack are traveling around in their camper, and all of a sudden, 'Hey look, some kids are playing "Crazy Train." And we are being advertised as a 'xylophone orchestra.' We only have two xylophones, but okay."

The group, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, began when Downs, who was then a general elementary school teacher, was trying to find bulletin-board paper for her classroom. While rummaging through a storage closet at her school, she came across some abandoned Orff instruments. After taking the instruments back to her classroom and teaching her 2nd- and 3rd-grade students to play a couple of songs, she realized she was onto something. The students formed a group identity and wanted a name for themselves. They became the Fabulous Leopard Percussionists, and one of the students created a logo featuring cartoon Leopards behind marimbas.



In the meantime, Downs started looking for better instruments. "The Orff instruments break easily," she says. "If you expect kids to play like real musi-

cians, you have to give them something real to play on."

The first "real" instrument the Leopards acquired was a beat-up Kelon

marching xylophone. Next they bought an old Leedy xylophone for \$75. Then somebody donated an old Deagan pit xylophone. A couple of years after starting the group, Downs received a teaching award sponsored by a local TV station and PNC Bank. The award included a cash prize, which she used to buy a marimba. In addition, the Leopards were raising money however they could. "We probably washed every car in Louisville, but we never sold stuff," Diane says. "We just tried to play gigs and beg for money. If someone offered me a beat-up old bell kit, I'd say yes. I would take anything."

In 1997, the group was invited to perform at the Indiana Music Educators Association (IMEA) convention. Eric Chandler, who worked for Pro-Mark at the time, noticed that the group was using homemade mallets. "The kids' parents would get together and have parties where they would make mallets out of Superballs and dowel rods, because we couldn't afford mallets," Downs explains. Chandler arranged for the Leopards to get an endorsement from Pro-Mark. After that company was sold, Vater began supporting the Leopards with sticks and mallets.

Chandler also helped the Leopards get a gig at PASIC '98 in Orlando, Florida. "After we played, everything just exploded," Downs says. "People were lined up to talk to the kids and to me. I remember this man came up to me and shook my hand and said, 'Hi, I'm Dave Samuels, and I really enjoyed your show.' I didn't realize that what we were doing was so extraordinary. It was just what we do."

"If they represent the future of percussion," Samuels said afterward, "I'm very optimistic."

Downs also met Dave Levine at PASIC '97. He got the group involved with the Percussion Marketing Council and helped them get connected with Sabian, LP, and Evans.

The Fabulous Leopard Percussionists were going strong. They were getting lots of local gigs along with invitations to perform outside the state. Through it all, the group was receiving tremendous support from Diane's school principal, Mae Kennerly. "Mae saw what was

▶ Tap to play Video



Louisville Leopards performing their arrangement of "Santana!"





The Fabulous Leopard Percussionists performing “Sidewinder” with special guest Dave Samuels

happening with the kids, the community, and the parents—how it kind of brought everybody together. Mae would drive the equipment truck sometimes; she would go to gigs with us, even when they were out of town. We’d have rehearsal after school, and she would stand in the doorway and listen, and she would cry. Mae was incredible.”

Then, suddenly and tragically, Kennerly died. Things quickly changed for the Leopards. “The new principal never really understood what the group was about,” Downs says. Besides losing Kennerly’s support, there was another problem. Elsewhere in the school system, someone had stolen money. So the school system started clamping down on everyone. “Things started getting very difficult,” Downs says, “from going out to play gigs to raising money for instruments to buying pizza for the kids.”

Downs kept things going as well as she could, but eventually it became too much of a struggle. “In January of 2003, after having done this for ten years, we stopped performing in public—but we didn’t stop playing. We started composing our own music and ended up with 17 original tunes. The kids wrote all of it. So we did a concert in May at the University of Louisville with all of our original tunes. It was one of the best shows we ever did.”

But Downs had decided to transfer to

a different school. “The kids were very upset, and they were asking me, ‘What are we going to do?’ I kept telling them, ‘We’ll think of something. We have to keep doing this.’ But I had the best group of parents, who were there with me the whole time. That validated what I was doing. The parents told me, ‘We’re going to work this out.’ That made me realize I really need to be doing this. It wasn’t about me teaching kids how to play music; it was so much bigger than that. And how can you tell kids they can’t play music anymore? People who aren’t musicians don’t get it, and you can’t explain

it to them if they haven’t felt it. But you can’t tell musicians—even if they’re only eight years old—to stop playing music. Once they started doing it, music was part of them.”

The parents turned the group into a non-profit organization that would be run outside of a school. In some respects, the group had to start over. First, they had to find a place to rehearse. University of Louisville music professor Jerry Tolson, who was a big supporter of the group, arranged for the group to rent practice space and a storage room at U of L.

The move cost the group some of their instruments, however. The elementary school claimed ownership of all the instruments that had been purchased in its name with the money its students had made playing gigs and washing cars. The Leopards were able to keep all the equipment that had been donated to them from Pro-Mark, LP, Evans, and Sabian, but they needed to replace the equipment the school had kept, so the parents ordered \$14,000 worth of instruments, which the Leopards paid off in four months between gigs and donations.

Although breaking away from the school system had been difficult, there was a big benefit to going independent, which was reflected by the group’s new name: The Louisville Leopard Percus-





Steel Leopards

sionists. Instead of Leopard membership being restricted to students from a single school, kids from anywhere in the Louisville area could be part of the group. In addition, the group was no longer limited to elementary school students. Members now range from second to sixth grade in the Leopards, and sixth to ninth grade in the Steel Leopards, a group made up of Leopard alumni.

After two years at the University of Louisville, the Leopards outgrew the space. They moved into a former high school that was vacant, which was owned by the Salvation Army, but then the owners decided to use the building as a homeless shelter. When a Leopard parent saw a "For Rent" sign on a large building, she asked if they could rent part of it. The owner said okay, and the Leopards were there for seven years until the building was sold.

The Leopards then moved into a space they called the "meat building" because it was next to a butcher shop and always smelled like meat. It didn't have air conditioning, no hot water, and very little heat. "It was horrible," Downs said, "but it was a home." Then they found a building that had a big, empty room, and they rented that for about a year and a half. But it was in a part of town with a large homeless population, and the parents

had to escort the kids from the door to their cars.

Currently, the Leopards are in the best space they have ever had. The building was formerly a church, and it is owned by the nearby Spalding University. The Leopards have a three-year lease with two, one-year options to renew. "I hope we can stay there forever because it's perfect for us," Downs said. "Finding a permanent, safe home for these kids is the hardest part of the job. We've got so many requirements that it's hard to find a building. We've got 18 drumsets; would you want to be our neighbor?"

Several of the Leopards arrangements are published by Hal Leonard, but the young musicians do not learn tunes by way of printed music. Those arrangements were notated after the group had worked them out. Although Downs was never trained in Suzuki or Orff, her teaching method is similar in the sense that she does not teach the kids to read music. When she introduces a new song to the Leopards, the first thing they do is listen to it.

"I can't just learn music from dots on a page," Downs says. "I want to hear it, I want to feel it. So when the Leopards start out on a song, we listen to it. And then I teach them about the composer, what the song means, what they were trying to convey. The kids get a better feel for what they are playing and what the composer was thinking.

"When we're playing something by Thelonious Monk, for example, I'm going to let them hear Monk, because you have to hear all the strangeness and dissonance. If you just start playing it off a page, it's not going to sound right. And they like to know about the composers. You know how Thelonious Monk would sometimes stand up and spin around when somebody else was playing a solo? One time when we were playing a Monk tune and someone was soloing, I saw another kid spin around like Monk. He's nine years old and he knows who Thelonious Monk is! That's cool!



"But listening—that's what you do with music, you listen to it. So why wouldn't you start with listening when you're playing a piece of music? Give the kids something to shoot for. It's not going to mess up their ability to learn to read music. You have to let them know how the song is supposed to feel. And my kids can hear when they're wrong because their ears are tuned and they can tell that it didn't sound right.

"I'm not in the least bit pooh-poohing learning to read music or saying that's the wrong way to learn," Downs quickly adds. "But teaching that way is not my strength."

To teach rhythmic patterns, Downs uses words and phrases, much like the way rhythms are taught through the Orff method. But she lets the kids come up with their own phrases to fit the rhythms, and kids being kids, those phrases often involve words like "boogers" and "maggots." To remember the first half of the clave rhythm (the measure with three notes), the kids chant "I'M a STINK-y ROACH." To learn a standard conga pattern, girls will say "I hate boys; they are stink-y." (The guys substitute "girls" for "boys.") "You've got to put words to the rhythms," Diane says. "They don't understand the counting and subdivisions. If you try to explain syncopation to eight-year-olds, they just glaze over. But once my kids get into the real percussion world, they can already feel all that stuff.

For many years, Downs taught the Leopards by herself. Gradually, she added assistants, but much of the instruction comes from the older Leopards in the group. "I start with the top kid who is going to learn it the quickest," she explains. "Once that kid learns the part, he or she is going to teach it to the next top kid, who will also learn it really fast. Then those two teach two more, and so on. While the top kid is teaching the next top kid, I teach the kid who is going to take the longest to learn it. By the time I get finished with the kid who struggles, everyone else has learned it. So I only teach two kids: the kid who learns the fastest and the kid who learns the slowest.

"The first few times we play a tune together, I'll sometimes see a kid who isn't as sure about it look over at someone who has it, and that kid will motion the other kid to come over, and he or she will help the kid get it. So they teach each other. We'll stop, and I'll say, 'If you don't know the part, raise your hand,' and I'll see kids walking over to somebody else to teach them the part. I tell them it's okay if you don't know the part yet, but it's not okay if you don't ask for help. So they don't have any problem saying 'I don't know it.' They all help each other."

Now that she has retired from teaching school, Downs says she would like to expand the reach of the group. "I'd like to have the kids play for music-ed students at universities to show them

what's possible," Diane said. "The way they are being taught to teach music works, but this works, too. When you develop your program, you can teach music reading, but you also need to do some improv, and our group is the perfect example of ear training. Do a piece like that to go along with the traditional way of doing it, because that's going to help develop what written music doesn't: their ears and their feel, so they learn to listen and fit in with somebody else. They need to develop their ears so they can identify a wrong note, not because it's written on a piece of paper but because they can hear it. So I'd like to reach the people who are going to teach the kids."

Two former Leopards have made it big in the professional rock world. First



Hannah Ford Welton: left, as a Leopard; right, today



Dani Markham: left, as a Leopard; right, today

was Hannah Ford Welton, who was a member of Prince's final backup band, 3rd Eye Girl, before his untimely death. "I cannot even begin to explain how learning to play mallet percussion developed my ear as a vocalist," Welton said in a 2014 *Rhythm! Scene* article. "I am so beyond thankful to have had the education and ear training that I did at such an early age, all thanks to Diane Downs and the Louisville Leopards!"

Another Leopard alum who has recently received some national exposure is Dani Markham, first with TuneYards and recently with Childish Gambino, with whom she appeared on the Grammy Awards telecast and on *Saturday Night Live*. While in the Leopards, Dani performed at PASIC several times and also took 2nd place in the PAS International Marimba competition in 2003.

"Dani started the second or third year of the group when she was a second-grader," Downs recalled. "I remember teaching her a little piece on an Orff instrument. She was sitting on the floor, a grubby, scrawny little kid with a ponytail. She played that song with such musicality when she was seven. I remember looking at her thinking, 'What am I going to do with this one? She's better than I think I can handle.' She played 'Log Cabin Blues' with us at PASIC when she was 11; she didn't know it was hard. She went to the Youth Performing Arts High School [in Louisville] and studied with Ney Rosuaro at Miami University in Florida. Then she moved to New York City, then to L.A. for a while, and then went back to New York and things started to happen. She got a gig with TuneYards, and I saw her play with them at Forecastle. When I saw her up there playing and singing I was so proud. So she did it right. She's educated, she's smart, she can play, and she's living the dream."

As proud as Downs is of Hannah and Dani, her goal is not to produce professional musicians. "I just want to make good people who have a deeper experience of things through music. I've had mothers contact me and say, 'My child is a gifted drummer and I want him to play in your group.' But if someone is already a gifted drummer, then they're not going

to have any trouble finding places to play. I lean more towards the kids who don't know they're gifted drummers yet. They never had a chance to do it, or their parents don't know where to go to give them this opportunity. I want to take regular B-flat kids and help them realize their potential. I'm always welcoming great kids, but 'regular' kids deserve to be able to do this, too.

"A lot of Leopards have gone on to play in high school and college bands, and some of them have garage bands and still play a little bit. But a lot of them just turn into good people who had this experience in their background. I'd like to think it helped them become who they are. I've had comments from kids who have talked about self-confidence and getting to do things that most kids don't get to do. Like today I'm taking a group of kids to [radio station] WFPK to talk about playing at Forecastle. And then the show on A&E comes out with Ozzy Osbourne. Most kids are just going to the pool in the summer or playing computer games. Our kids get to do different things, and I hope that when they become adults they look back and remember what they did when they were kids. I tell them to make sure that when they become the leaders of the world, make sure other kids get to have opportunities like you had. Having art and music in your world makes your world better. So when you get to be the leaders, you've got to make sure that keeps going." **!S**

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HANDS, HEAD, HEART

BY JERRY LEAKE

After four decades of teaching students of all ages and backgrounds, I have come to observe a consistent process through which each evolves into a professional: Hands, Head, and Heart.

In the early stages of a study, the focus is on technique: learning to execute the essential snare drum rudiments, gaining command of the sticks, building muscle strength and independence, and navigating around the drumset. Playing from the *hands* is a critical first stage that all drummers must experience, and without good technique, a drummer is unable to develop a clear sense of musical time in order to play a clean and consistent groove that is the engine of every ensemble. During the learning process, this technique is controlled by the *head*, deciding how and where the sticks move. However, overthinking and micromanaging the hands can manifest in stiffness, hesitation, or even performance anxieties. Additionally, a mental focus on chops and technique can interfere with allowing the *heart* to guide the drummer into truly making music, rather than just precisely striking an instrument.

The phrase “get out of your head” never had more meaning than with students who are perpetually stuck in the early phase of their evolution, depending upon a tunnel-vision focus on the hands, possibly due to the insecurity of their command or an ego-driven desire to impress. This approach will only sustain the player for a limited time, potentially reinforcing the cliché that drummers are not really musicians.

NEW MIND/NO MIND

Every student of the performing arts is taught a set of rules to follow, the vast history of a given tradition, and essential repertoire to learn and absorb. In this, students are developing a *new mind* that allows them to shut off all memory that compels them to fall back on familiar and detrimental patterns of how to create. Ultimately, with time, devotion, and experience, the training will create habits that allow the mind to open and allow the music to happen. Travelling this path to *no mind* does not happen by deciding how to get there. You cannot think about not thinking; it either happens or it doesn't! Out-of-body moments of brilliance always begin in the heart and can never be intellectually forced to the surface. The goal is to allow the discipline of the head-to-hands connection to guide you to the heart. Let the *new mind/no mind* process reveal a new truth that will set you free.

There are astounding technical drummers in the world, but many of them are unable to earn a living due to their inability to tap into the heart of their musical soul.

REVERSING THE H'S

Experienced professional drummers, those able to make a living as reliable band members or band leaders, and in demand to perform with others, have instinctively learned to reverse the order of the three H's, where the *heart* assumes complete control of the head and hands. Where technique is not an “ends to a mean” but a “means to an end.” There are astounding technical drummers in the world, but many of them are unable to earn a living due to their inability to tap into the heart of their musical soul. Time, awareness, and experience will place you safely onto the path where technique and music partner as one. Music aficionados do not want to hear how clever you are with your ego-driven technique of the head and hands. All the listeners or colleagues really care about is how your drumming makes them feel and how their own heart responds to the mood and emotion you convey.

Jerry Leake is an Associate Professor of Percussion at Berklee College of Music and the New England Conservatory of Music. He is leader of the world-rock-fusion octet Cubist, which has released an acclaimed studio and live CD. He is also co-founder of the world-music ensemble Natraj and the dub/trance groove collective Club d'Elf. Jerry performs regularly with R.A.R.E, C-Jammers, Another Realm, and the Agbekor Drum and Dance Society. Jerry has written eight widely used texts on North Indian, West African, Latin American percussion, and rhythm theory; manuals for playing world rhythms on drumset; and articles published in *Percussive Notes*. Jerry is former president of the Massachusetts PAS Chapter and has been a composer and member of the Portland Symphony Kinder Konzert percussion ensemble since 1984. **RIS**

WHAT I WISH I HAD KNOWN SOONER

PART 1: SILENCE IS GOLDEN

BY ALEX FRAGISKATOS

Have you ever been caught in this situation? You are playing snare drum or bass drum in band or orchestra. It is a loud, bombastic section that ultimately gives way to a quiet and more serene passage. You need to grab the tambourine in preparation for the next section, but it is upside down! You must spend the next few moments trying to figure out how to turn it over without it jingling all over the place, but unfortunately, your efforts are overmatched by gravity.

As percussionists, we contend with a lot of noisy instruments. We often don't have the luxury of holding one instrument for a whole piece, like a wind or string player (but we do have more fun!). As we switch from one instrument or implement to another, carelessness can lead to unintended noises that can detract from a piece of music. However, with a little forethought, we all can avoid being that percussionist bumping the thunder sheet during an ensemble silence.

First, consider how you pick up and lay down instruments, mallets, and sticks. Always use mallet trays to reduce the amount of noise sticks make. You do not need anything more than a music stand and a black towel to help absorb extraneous sounds. Avoid setting mallets on instruments as they can easily



Padded mallet trays and trap tables can help you avoid making noise when changing implements or instruments.

Mark your music to remind you of upcoming instrument or mallet changes.

roll off or make extra noise, and use trap tables for instruments like tambourines, crash cymbals, claves, etc. Unless the composer specifies, do not set instruments on top of other instruments. For a larger table or heavier instruments, use a folding tray or keyboard stand topped with a piece of wood with some cushioning foam or carpet. In addition to *how*, consider *when* you pick up and lay down instruments, mallets, and sticks. Especially with noisier instruments, try to do this during a louder section of the piece. That way, if any extraneous sound is made, it will be hidden.

Spatial awareness with instrument setup is also critically important. Make sure your instruments are not crammed next to each other, unless you are playing multiple instruments from the same position. This will reduce the opportunity to acciden-

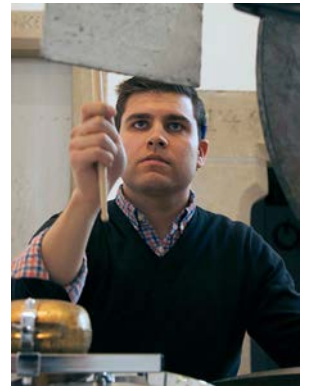
Percussion is just as much
about choreography as
about making music.

tally bump one instrument with another or with yourself. Often, percussionists must share limited space at the back of the stage, so be considerate and cooperative in your setup to avoid competition over the space and instruments. Percussion is just as much about choreography as about making music. Have a game plan and write notes in your music telling you when to go where and when to pick up what. Often, it is beneficial to prepare an instrument, mallet choice, or tuning change many measures in advance, when the music allows you to do so with minimal noise and distraction. It may seem silly at first to write these kinds of directions, but midperformance, it can be easy to forget or diverge from the best plan of attack.

Finally, make extra copies of music if needed. The last thing we need to worry about is shuffling pages of music back and forth to different instruments. Having multiple copies of music already set in place where they are needed will get rid of a visually distracting and potentially noisy variable.

As with most anything in life, playing percussion is about preparation. It is easy to forget about these seemingly minute details when worrying about an upcoming solo *pianissimo* snare drum roll or a wicked-fast xylophone lick. However, a little care goes a long way, and taking into consideration things like when and how instruments and sticks are picked up and set down can greatly improve your total performance. The last thing we want to do is minimize the intended effect of a piece of music with unintended distractions. With a little planning, we can not only sound good when playing, but sound good when not playing, too.

Dr. Alexandros Fragiskatos is Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music at Missouri Valley College. A proponent of contemporary music, he has commissioned, premiered, and performed new works across the U.S. and Europe. Alex plays percussion and drumset for musical theatre, and also plays steel pan, having directed the Arizona State University Pan Devils Steel Band while earning his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in percussion. For more information about Alex, visit fragiskatospercussion.com. **RS**



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GROOVE FACILITY: FROM MOTION TO GROOVE

BY ROB HIRONS

HOT LICKS

Take a look at the two-bar funk-style groove below:



When written out, this groove appears to be very busy. However, when played correctly, the audience should hear a groove with some syncopated bass drum notes and a steady, solid snare drum backbeat. To make this work, it is essential to manage dynamic intensity between the ghost notes and the accented backbeat.

Applying different volume levels for the ghost notes and the accented backbeat is not a case of applying different levels of muscular force, but actually different stroke motions. This means that we need to develop and utilize pre-defined movements that allow us to move quickly from soft to loud or vice versa. These movements come in the form of up strokes, down strokes, and tap strokes.

The down stroke is a loud stroke that prepares for a softer stroke. The stroke comes from a higher distance, resulting in greater velocity. When finished, the stick remains close to the head.

The tap stroke is a soft stroke initiated from a much closer distance to the head with lower velocity. When finished, the stick remains close to the head.

Finally, the up stroke is also a soft stroke, but one preparing for a louder stroke to come. The ghost note is produced by the same close proximity stroke as the tap stroke, while at the same time, the hand moves upwards to prepare for a down stroke.

With this context in mind, instead of talking about volumes, we're talking about movements or motions. As follows, each of those motions can be indicated by a symbol underneath the note: an accent for the down stroke, a dot for the tap stroke, and an arrow for the up stroke.



The key to using these movements in a groove is understanding how they work together when they are linked. In this first exercise, we'll use our left hand on the snare to play different variations of up strokes, down strokes, and tap strokes over a quarter note pulse.



▶ Tap to play Video



The next exercise employs the same concept using eighth notes. This will get us used to managing those movements with a faster note value. There are also some great exercises for developing this technique in Joe Morello's book *Master Studies*.



▶ Tap to play Video



Now we can take the very first part of our two-bar groove and apply this system to it. There are two ghost notes. The first is a tap stroke and the second is an up stroke. Why an up stroke? Because on beat 2 of the bar we apply the down stroke for our solid back-beat.



▶ Tap to play Video



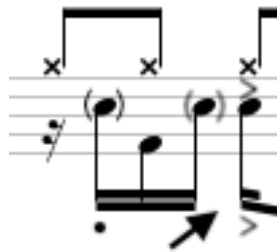
The third beat of the bar works in just the same way. However, when we get to beat four, we have a down stroke followed by two tap strokes. Ensure that the stick remains close to the head after the down stroke so as to correctly produce the soft tap strokes.



[▶ Tap to play Video](#)



The first beat of bar two is a little tricky because that second ghost (an up stroke) is just one sixteenth note ahead of the backbeat snare on beat 2. Your movements will need to be relaxed so that you can play the up stroke and down stroke in quick succession.



[▶ Tap to play Video](#)



Now, finally to beats 3 and 4 of the second bar. Once again, both strokes in beat 3 are ghost notes; the first is a tap stroke, the second is an up stroke. After the down stroke on beat 4, the stick stays close to the head to play those two soft tap strokes.



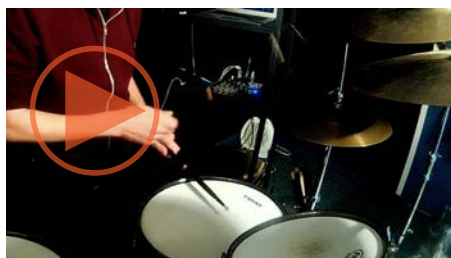
[▶ Tap to play Video](#)



This all sounds easy enough, but it will take time and repetition to make it comfortable and allow the groove to sound smooth. Let's now apply these movements to our full two-bar groove.



▶ Tap to play Video



Work patiently and carefully on your independence, so that what you're doing with your left hand on the snare will not interrupt the smooth hi-hat pulse you are playing with your right. Once everything with this groove is running smoothly and sounding good, try the next groove! There are no symbols in this to allow you to work out where you need to play up strokes, tap strokes, and down strokes. Good luck, and have fun allowing your groove to come from attention to your motion!



Rob Hiron is a drummer, drum clinician, and drum educator. His experience includes performances, tours, and albums with St. Christopher, the Rob Donnelly Band, Watcha Clan, Rona Hartner, Jean Michel Kajdan, Therese Themlin, Hofmann Family Blues Experience, The Page, and his own jazz fusion trio Isnard – Tomi – Hiron. Rob maintains an intense teaching schedule, and recently he launched the educational website RobHironsDrums.com, dedicated to providing online drum tuition for drummers of all levels. Having a desire to share modern drumset techniques with others, Rob wrote *Groove Facility* in collaboration with Dom Famularo. **RIS**



MARTIAN POSTCARD FOR RUDIMENTAL SNARE DRUM

BY DR. BRIAN GRAISER



“**M**artian Postcard” is a challenging intermediate rudimental snare drum solo that incorporates more than half of the 40 PAS International Drum Rudiments. I call it a “postcard” because the solo is no longer than a minute and a half, and the piece is Martian because its foundation is the driving 5/4 rhythm from the “Mars” movement of *The Planets* suite by Gustav Holst. If you aren’t familiar with the piece, you should stop reading this article right now and find a recording! Besides informing your interpretation of this solo, *The Planets* is one of the most influential works of the 20th century, and “Mars” has one of the most rock ‘n’ roll endings in the history of classical music. With the current wave of renewed interest in Martian exploration by NASA and several private enterprises, I don’t think it’s entirely ridiculous to hope that I might one day receive a video message of someone playing this piece from the surface of the Red Planet (or at least from within a protected habitat).

In writing “Martian Postcard,” I wanted to strike a balance between traditional and modern rudimental/marching snare drumming, while still creating something that is musically satisfying. Performers at all levels, even beginners, should be selective in choosing the projects in which they invest their time, and perhaps the most important thing to consider is what musical rewards they will receive for their efforts. I feel that the primary purpose of an intermediate musical work is to teach the performer something (a concept, a skill, a technique), and being fun to play and/or listen to is an added bonus!

Of the 40 PAS International Rudiments, 27 are found in this piece. For the performer’s convenience I have labelled each rudiment’s first appearance and provided sticking when appropriate. The performer must first be able to play all of the incorporated rudiments with relaxed, fluid motions; if you find yourself unable to play something at tempo without tensing up and “muscling” your way through, you should slow things down, isolate the fragment of music that is causing you difficulty, and figure out how to play that fragment while remaining relaxed. Here are a few additional, more specific tips:

Measure 1: Clearly define your dynamic levels, starting at the very beginning. Most of the growing dynamics in the piece are terraced, rather than linked by crescendi, and if you don’t have your softest and loudest levels already determined in advance, you will likely play yourself into a corner with no more room to grow.

Measures 4–6: Be very deliberate about which notes are accented and which are unaccented; your hands may naturally want to add accents at the beginning or ending of certain rudiments, but doing so will disrupt the piece’s slowly-building intensity and take away from the significance of the accents that *are* intended.

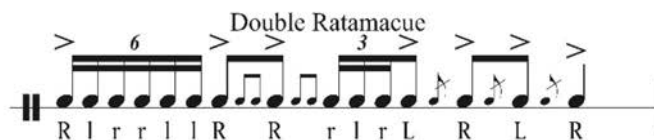
Measure 9: The temptation will be to ignore the inverted flam taps and play them as normal flam taps, but don’t do it! This is one of the trickier rudiments, but at this speed you should be able to develop some fluidity through that passage.

Measure 11: You may be accustomed to thinking of the 17-Stroke Roll as having the duration of a half note, but as you can see here, that isn’t always the case. This roll (and all the other rolls in this piece) are played with a triplet skeleton. If you count up the strokes, you’ll realize that you haven’t been lied to; this is a 17-Stroke Roll, despite being longer than a half note.

Measures 25–26: The challenge in this passage is to keep your diddle speeds well-regulated. Think of it like a car switching gears; each change is an abrupt and complete new rate of speed, rather than a smooth *accelerando* or *ritardando*.

For each issue of R!S, a member of the PAS Composition Committee submits an original work composed specifically for our readers. Post a video of YOU playing this new composition with the hashtag #RSolo to be featured on PAS social media!

Measure 28: This is an instance where I chose to use traditional rudimental swing drumming notation, rather than a modern marching style. The measure in question looks like this:

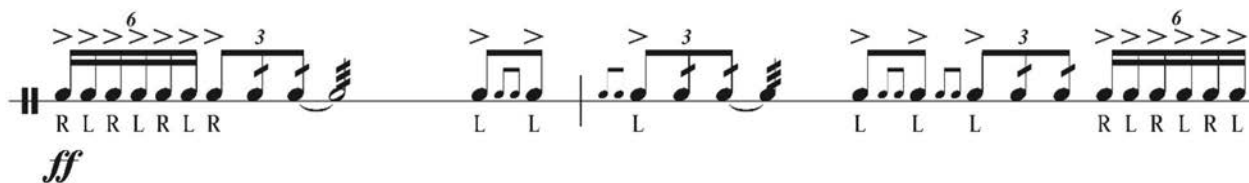


But it could also be rewritten (and should essentially sound) like this:

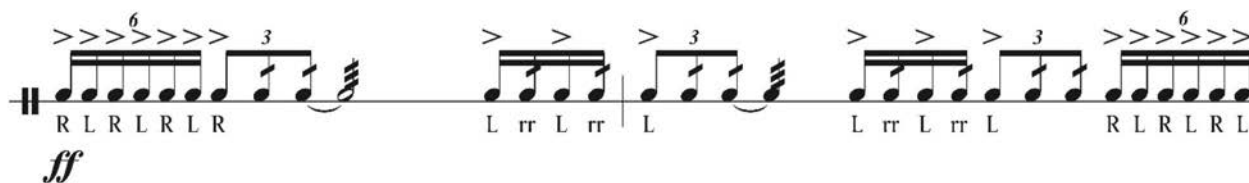


The important thing is that the music continues to flow smoothly and without interruption. Try playing the measure without the grace notes, then find a way to fit them back in without changing the rhythm.

Measures 31–32: Here is another example of traditional swing drumming notation. The section looks like this in the music:



But using modern notation, it could also be rewritten like this:



As before, the important thing is to keep the tempo steady and to fit the ornaments around the rhythm without any push or pull. Try playing just the “check pattern” (the triplet skeleton rhythm of the roll without any grace notes) in order to figure out the underlying rhythm of the passage in time, then add the diddles and grace notes back in.

Measure 35: Hopefully you took my earlier advice and listened to a good recording of *The Planets*, or at least the “Mars” movement. If you are familiar with the ending of “Mars,” you know exactly what is going on from measure 31 to the end of the piece. Use Holst’s music to inform your decision about how to play the roll under the fermata in regard to its length and character.

One final performance note: The given tempo of the piece (132–144 bpm) is indeed the appropriate range to consider. Don’t worry about pushing it any faster; you might be able to play it at 152 bpm after a full night’s sleep, a hot shower, a great breakfast, and a nice long warmup, but the music will sound too rushed to be correctly understood by the audience (especially the last three lines). Similarly, playing the piece at 120 bpm might make some of the trickier spots easier to play, but the rolls will be too open. I hope you enjoy playing “Martian Postcard” and are able to use it as both a vehicle for developing your playing skills as well as a satisfying and effective performance piece! I invite you to post recordings of yourself playing this piece (and all other pieces written by members of the PAS Composition Committee for *Rhythm!Scene*) on YouTube and other social media. Maybe one day, someone really will play this on Mars!

▶ Tap to play Video



Dr. Brian S. Graiser is a contemporary percussionist, composer, and teacher, and serves as the Adjunct Instructor of Percussion and Marching Percussion Director at Sam Houston State University. His musical exploits are highly diverse, although he takes pride in being at the forefront of advocacy for the extended-range vibraphone, highlighted by such efforts as his DMA Project "Concerto No. 1 [Lulu]: Creating the World's First Concerto for Four-Octave Vibraphone." Dr. Graiser regularly tours and performs with his wife, Alaina, as the Reflect harp+percussion duo. He is a member of PAS and BMI and his compositions are available through Keyboard Percussion Publications, Strikeclef Publishing, Alfonc Productions, and self-publication (distributed through Frontier Percussion).



~1:20

Brian Graiser (BMI)

Martian Postcard

Snare Drum Fantasy on a Theme by Holst

$\text{♩} = 132-144$

5/4

pp

p

4

Drag 3

Swiss Army Triplet 3

Flam Tap

Flam Accent 3

Flamacue

mp

7

Single Ratamacue 3

Lesson 25

Double Drag Tap 3

Inverted Flam Tap

mf

10

Flam Paradiddle

17-Stroke Roll

f

12

Single Stroke Seven 6

subito p

mp

15

Double Paradiddle 6

Single Paradiddle

Triple Paradiddle 6

17

Paradiddle-diddle 3 6

mf

Martian Postcard - 2

19 *f* **Single Stroke Four**

21 **11-Stroke Roll** **5-Stroke Roll**

23 *subito p* **Flam Drag**

25 *mf* **Single Flammed Mill** **Pataflafla**

27 *f* **Dragadiddle** **Double Ratamacue**

29

31 *ff*

33 **7-Stroke Roll** **Multiple Bounce Roll**

The musical score is written on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It consists of 33 measures. The notation includes various percussion techniques such as rolls, flams, drags, and bounces, each indicated by specific rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings. The dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *ff* (fortissimo), with a *subito p* (suddenly piano) marking at measure 23. The score is divided into measures by bar lines, and some measures contain multiple rhythmic patterns. The techniques are labeled above the staff: 'Single Stroke Four' (measures 19-20), '11-Stroke Roll' and '5-Stroke Roll' (measures 21-22), 'Flam Drag' (measures 23-24), 'Single Flammed Mill' and 'Pataflafla' (measures 25-26), 'Dragadiddle' and 'Double Ratamacue' (measures 27-28), and '7-Stroke Roll' and 'Multiple Bounce Roll' (measures 33-34). The notation includes various rhythmic patterns such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and triplets, as well as rests and accidentals.

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DRIVEN TO DRUMS

OVERCOMING PHYSICAL CHALLENGES

BY DAVID SEGAL

I was born with Arthrogryposis, which affects the development of bones, muscles, and nerves in the extremities. It left my hands and feet clubbed and required 12 corrective surgeries. These obstacles haven't stopped me from aspiring and dreaming of great things.

I grew up in New York City and began to play drums as a kid in 1983 to the sounds of U2. One of the things I had to figure out was how to hold the drumstick with my left hand. My right hand had normal strength with no wrist-flexion, but my left hand was virtually non-functional.

Around 1985 I met my first drum teacher, Fred Klatz, a great player who helped lay a good foundation to grow upon, teaching me to read drum notation and getting an introduction to the basic elements of Latin, jazz, and rock. Fred and I came up with a wristband and Velcro straps that would allow me to hold the stick. Fred introduced me to the music of Mahavishnu Orchestra, Frank Zappa, Elvin Jones, and Buddy Rich.



A chance meeting with Buddy Rich at Fred Segal's in California led to a friendship with him late in his life. He told my father, "Have David call me when I'm in New York." Fred acted as my chaperone to see Buddy at SoB and the South Street Seaport. Buddy invited me on the bus after a gig to talk and hang out, and I also got a pair of his sticks.

In the 1990s I continued to study and develop as a player and moved toward rock. I joined the indie rock band the Sin Taxes and helped produce and record their debut CD. We performed at numerous venues in Greenwich Village and received airplay on 30 radio stations in some top markets around the country. I also did the radio promotions for the recording.

In 2002 I began to go annually to the KoSA drum camp



run by Aldo Mazza, and that would forever change my life. There I met and became friends with many of my idols that I grew up listening to. I studied with Dom Famularo, Mario Monaco, Memo Acevedo, Liberty DeVitto, Kenwood Dennard, Bernard Purdie, and other legends in the drumming industry. Completely inspired, I went back to school and received a B.A. in music from City College, and then a master's degree in Music Education from Lehman College.

In 2004 I started to study with Dom Famularo, who further enhanced the original wristband idea. I consider him a great friend, teacher, and now colleague. We started Candomusos.com in March 2013 at Dom's WizDom Drumshed in Long Island, New York. Present at this summit, of sorts, were myself, Dom, Mike Mignogna, and Andrew Hewitt.

Mike was born with Cerebral Palsy and in town from Tennessee. He's played drums since he was 11 years old and has limited functions in his legs. Mike has not let this stop him from playing, and he chronicles it in a book titled *Look Ma, No Feet*. It is a practical approach to the drumset for those with limited or no use of their legs.

Andrew, who hails from Australia and also has Cerebral Palsy, had just flown in from California to meet us after giving a presentation at The Rhythm Arts Project (TRAPs). Despite being in a wheelchair, he has traveled all over Australia giving clinics and performing. Andrew, Mike, and Dom played together at Australia's Ultimate Drummers Weekend 2009 in Melbourne, Australia.

Dom Famularo, a great ambassador of drumming, saw the

drive the four of us had and helped channel our energies into a new organization that, although started by four drummers, was created to empower all musicians with disabilities.

In 2008 I was fortunate enough to run into Liberty DeVitto, Billy Joel's drummer for 30 years, and Jules Follett, as they were putting together the drumming photography book *Sticks 'n' Skins*. After taking pictures and playing for them, I was included in the book, which is now in the Smithsonian.

In 2011, friend and teacher Memo Acevedo introduced me to two incredible people and supporters, Carol Calato from Regal Tip Drumsticks and Dr. Louis Gaston from G.R.I.P. Solutions. At the time they were working on a device that would allow drummers with physical limitations to grip a stick. I was able to travel to Pittsburgh in March of 2012, where Dr. Gaston made a custom splint that significantly improved the mobility in my left hand to get around the drumset.



On January 24, 2014 I played Carnegie Hall in New York with the NYJA 40-piece Jazz Orchestra as part of the China Meets



Playing at Carnegie Hall

America Cultural Festival. In the summer of 2014 I began working as the drum instructor at the well-known Bucks Rock Performing Arts Camp, where I taught and performed over 200 hours with ensembles and students, of which I had over 40.

Currently I teach drums at a top private school in Connecticut and have my own home studio for individual/group lessons and recording sessions. In October 2014 I performed at a drum festival sponsored by VSA Vermont—a not-for-profit arts and education organization that uses the arts to engage the capabilities and enhance the confidence of children and adults with disabilities. The BOOM VT Drum Festival brought together disabled and non-disabled musicians to perform and inspire. I had the great pleasure to perform with KoSA faculty-member Jeff Salisbury in a duet.

In 2015, the Candomusos team, along with our newest Associate Board Member, drummer Joe Hardy, presented our global vision at NAMM 2015 in Anaheim, California.

Websites

Candomusos: Candomusos.com

David Segal: www.davidsegaldrums.com

Sticks 'N' Skins: www.sticksnskins.com

Regal Tip Drumsticks: www.regaltip.com

GRIP Solutions: www.mygripsolutions.com

The Rhythm Arts Project (TRAP): www.traponline.com

Candomusos Team

Dom Famularo: www.domfamularo.com

Andrew Hewitt: www.drummerstix.com.au

Mike Mignogna: www.lookmanofeet.com

Joe Hardy: www.candomusos.com/profile-joe-hardy.php

David Segel has studied drums and percussion with Fred Klatz, Dom Famularo, Mario Monaco, Memo Acevedo, Bobby Sanabria, Charli Persip, Arnie Lang, Alex Alexander, Aldo Mazza, Jonathan Mover, Kenwood Dennard, Jim Chapin, Bernard Purdie, Jason Anderson, and Bernard Davis. He received his B.A. in music from City College and his Master of Music Education degree from Lehman College. An internationally recognized drummer, David plays in a variety of genres with his signature unique stylings—from leading a 16-piece big band to trios playing Brazilian, Latin, and bebop, along with the quasi-punk music of indie-rock bands. He has performed with the Simone Bolivar Big Band at Dizzy's Club Coca Cola in Lincoln Center, leads his own trio, and is a freelance musician in the tri-state area. He has worked with such noted musicians as Yoham Chiqui Ortiz, Itaguara Brandao, Bob Stewart, Stanley Banks, Memo Acevedo, Marcos Santos, Victor Rendon, Mario Monaco, and Gerry Eastman. **RIS**

THE “E” WORD: BUILDING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLSET IN MUSIC

PART 2: SUCCESS TRAITS

BY DREW WORDEN

Two years ago, I took a job at the New England Conservatory, where I get to help students build a life in music. Working in our Entrepreneurial Musicianship Department, I’ve helped students earn more than \$60,000 in grants and paid performances and led 500 student advising sessions in project creation and career support. Two-hundred and fifty advising sessions per year really brings clarity to certain patterns that emerge, both in terms of common pitfalls as well as common traits of success for building a career in music. In my last article (*Rhythm! Scene* June 2018), I presented three common pitfalls I see often: holding an idea too long before testing it out in the real world, confusing DIY with DIAY (do it all yourself), and not using real numbers to make real decisions. In this article, we’ll explore five common success traits that I hope will be helpful in your own projects.

SUCCESS TRAIT NO. 1:

Communicate clearly

The good news about the arts is that if you can communicate your ideas clearly, there are people in this world who will give you money to bring those ideas to life. Yes, ideally everyone would value the arts and pay for them, but we actually don’t

need everyone to pay for them. We need a few people to invest in the arts, and they’re already doing it; it’s your job to find them. For grants, consider using resources like:

- Foundation Directory (fconline.foundationcenter.org). Your local library might have a membership for this!
- Bridge at NEC (necmusic.edu/bridge)
- American Composers Forum (composersforum.org)
- New Music Box (nmbx.newmusicusa.org)
- A Google search for “music grants in [your area]”

As musicians, we’re often very good at envisioning how to bring ideas to life, but as soon as we start talking or writing about those ideas, they can become less clear. The projects I see succeed most in our Entrepreneurship Grants Program at NEC (necmusic.edu/em/grants) are often from the students who present their ideas most clearly in their written applications and verbal pitches.

To practice these skills, I recommend talking about your projects and ideas with your family and friends. Listen to the questions they have after you share. Watch for when they appear to tune out during your pitch, and continually try out new ways of communicating your idea until you find one that seems to land. Then, when you have an opportunity to pitch to a future employer, grant panel, or potential collaborator, you’ll have found compelling language to describe your work. Plus, you’ll likely feel more comfortable in those higher-pressure scenarios because you’ve said it all before.

How do you practice and refine your pitch? If you had to describe a project you’re working on in 140 characters, what would it say?

SUCCESS TRAIT NO. 2:

Google it

I met with a student last week who was planning to create an app to solve her music making problem. She was ready to apply for grants and business-plan competitions and was surprised when I showed her versions of this idea that already existed. Can you imagine if she had invested a bunch of money and time developing this project only to find out that she wasn’t the first to do it? Yikes! Always Google your idea first, see who else is doing it, and decide how/if you can distinguish your idea.



Rayna Chou Project: Rayna's EM grant project—Music, Distance, and One Minute of Just Us—brought music, visual arts, and architecture together to create a social experimental exhibition that welcomed over 4,000 visitors in Taichung, Taiwan.

If fear of rejection is holding you back from trying, remember that rejection is normal in our industry.

SUCCESS TRAIT NO. 3:

Persist

At some point, you will likely experience rejection. This is part of the process and is not necessarily a reflection on you or your work. Maybe the panel was in a bad mood that day, maybe your writing wasn't clear—it could be anything. If fear of rejection is holding you back from trying, remember that rejection is normal in our industry.

I've applied for way more grants than I've been awarded, applied for more jobs than I've been offered, and auditioned for more gigs than I've won. Those rejection letters are never fun, but in the long run they've helped me build resilience and refine my ideas. The musicians I see succeed are the ones I see reframing their mistakes, rejections, and failures as information for how to make their next try better. Persistence is key.



2018 MIT Creative Arts: Matthew Shifrin's EM grant—Project Daredevil—won the Creative Arts Competition and \$15,000 at MIT this year. Matthew is developing Virtual Reality for the blind using 3D radio-dramas with motion simulation via a worn vestibular-affecting device.

Pro Tip: I sat on a grant panel one time where the final decision came down to two applicants. The applicants were tied equally until someone on the panel noted that, "This person has applied three years in a row, and I remember them. I think they really want it, and wow do they persevere." Guess who got the grant?

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Below is a quote I printed out and keep above my desk at home. I glance at it whenever I get rejection letters. What do you do in those moments? Any quotes or stories you come back to?

"Nothing in the world will take the place of persistence. Talent will not. Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not. The world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race." —Calvin Coolidge

SUCCESS TRAIT NO. 4:

Set goals and measure them; what gets measured gets managed

Many of my students come in and say, "I want more people at my community concerts! How do I get a bigger audience?!" The first problem here is that they are asking the wrong question! If it's not measurable, how will you know if you've succeeded meaningfully or not?

I recommend students attach numbers to goals like these. For example: if my first community concert had an audience of 100, say I'd like to double that and have 200 at my next concert. Great! Now that I've named my goal, I can strategize on how to reach it. What channels did I use to advertise that first concert? What additional channels could I use for this second concert? And, how can I refine my existing efforts?

When I'm doing this process myself, I find an additional benefit when I specifically name my goal and write it down. When I do this, my subconscious seems to keep looking for ways to reach the goal even when I'm not actively thinking about it. I may see ideas in news articles, or from other musicians, or in conversations I hear on the train, and all of a sudden, solutions seem to start appearing. It's wild!

SUCCESS TRAIT NO. 5:

Ask for help and be curious

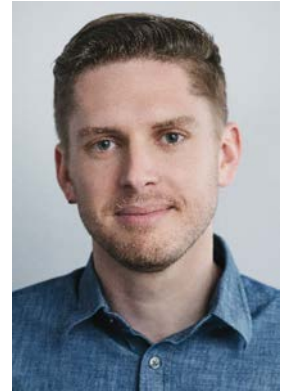
It is okay not to know all the answers and to ask for help; in fact, it's perfectly normal. It took me a long time to learn this. I encourage my students and anyone reading this to be open to learning what you don't know, and to surround yourself with people who are smarter than you, those who have strengths different than your own. Individually, you can accomplish much, but surrounded by other experts with talents and experience that complement your skillset, you can accomplish so much more.

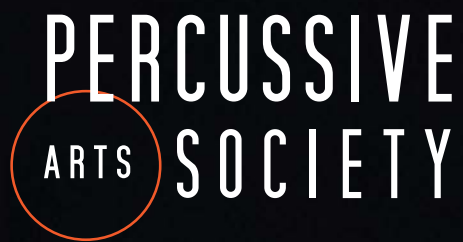
CONCLUSION

As I wrote in the last article, building a life in music and developing an entrepreneurial skillset to go along with it is a process, so be patient with yourself. I hope these articles help you consider some approaches you might take on your own musical path. I'm always open to hearing about your projects, so if there's anything I can do to help, or if you have questions, drop me a note and say "hi" on social media. You can find

me at [@D_Worden](#) or [drewworden.com](#). Cheers, and happy drumming!

Drew Worden is a percussionist, drummer, and composer in Boston, Mass. where he is Faculty and Assistant Dean of Entrepreneurial Musicianship at the New England Conservatory. Alongside composer Ivan Trevino, Drew recently started The Big Trouble, a band focused on creating music for percussion and vocals in an indie-rock aesthetic. The Big Trouble was the recipient of a Boston Foundation Arts Grant in 2017 and has since released their debut album on Spotify and iTunes. As a composer, Drew has written for the Paris Percussion Group, Michael Burritt, Escape Ten, the Virginia Tech Percussion Ensemble, and the Eastman Percussion Ensemble. His percussion music is programmed frequently around the world with recent performances in France, Greece, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, Malaysia, Colombia, and across the United States. Drew earned an MM and Certificate in Arts Leadership from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Michael Burritt, and a BM from Northern Arizona University, where he studied with Steve Hemphill. **RIS**





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A photograph of four students, three men and one woman, dressed in black uniforms, performing on a stage. They are all playing triangles. The background is dark with some stage lights visible. The students are positioned in a line, facing right.

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SPIRIT OF UBUNTU: INTERNATIONAL MARIMBA AND STEELPAN FESTIVAL

STORY BY MARK STONE . PHOTOS BY INTERNATIONAL MARIMBA AND STEELPAN FESTIVAL

Every year in Johannesburg, South Africa, an extraordinary event brings over 2,000 marimba and steelpan players together. A signature event of the NGO Education Africa, the International Marimba & Steelpan Festival is the largest festival of its kind in the world. Last year, the festival featured 269 performances and 90 workshops over two days. Steel bands and marimba groups traveled to Johannesburg for the festival from throughout South Africa as well as from neighboring Zimbabwe, Botswana, Swaziland, and Lesotho. One steel band came from as far away as Nigeria to participate. Festival organizers actively encourage “a spirit of *Ubuntu*—a spirit of caring for each other” leading up to and during the event. According to the 2017 festival report, this event “is known for its special spirit! This has become the magical ingredient that sets it apart from all other festivals of its kind around the world!”

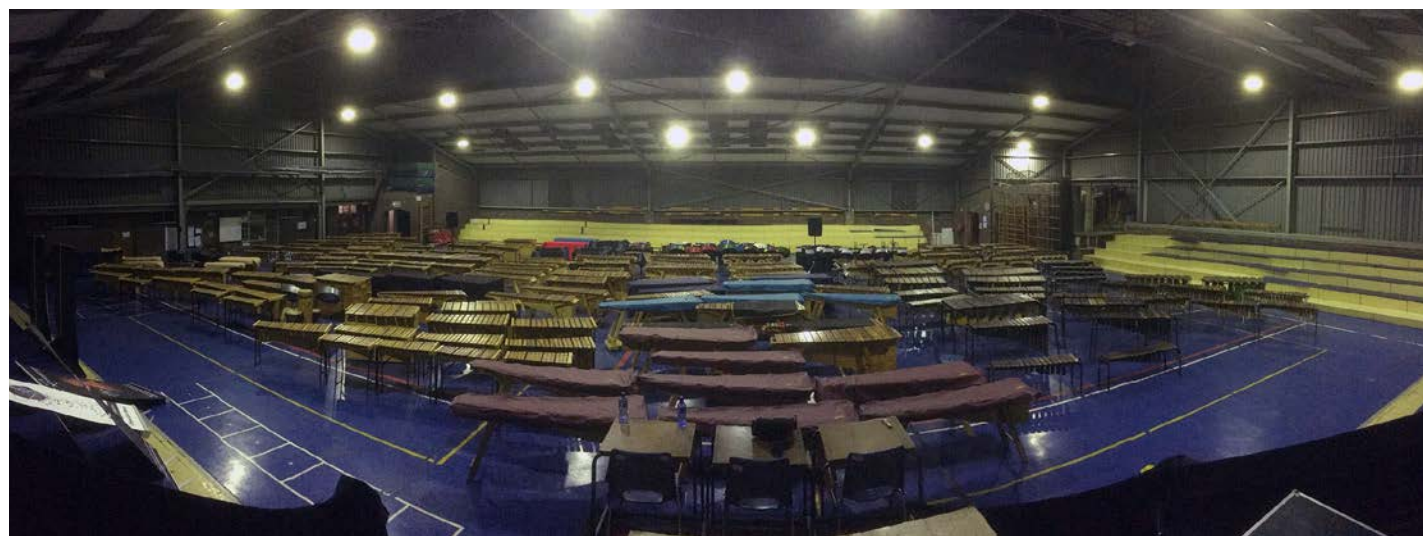
Now in its seventh year, the festival truly embodies the African philosophy of *Ubuntu*. Rev. Desmond Tutu defines *Ubuntu* as a state in which, “My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours. I am human because I belong, I participate, I share.” By embracing the core *Ubuntu* virtues of generosity, hospitality, and compassion, the International Marimba & Steelpan Festival powerfully reflects this ideal.

My first exposure to this event came through renowned American steel pan artist Andy Narell. As the festival patron, he has served as an adjudicator and featured clinician at four of

the six festivals to date. Narell describes the joy of participating as a “rush for two days.” In his *Patron Letter* he writes, “Adjudicating the previous four years at the festival has been among the most unforgettable and inspiring experiences of my life. To watch 2,000 young musicians playing marimbas, percussion, steel pans, singing, and dancing with so much joy, I feel privileged to be there to listen, give them comments on their performances, and encourage them.”

During the third International Marimba & Steelpan Festival, Narell made the following video that beautifully captures its *Ubuntu* spirit:

▶ Tap to play Video



Festival setup

PAS members click [here](#) to read this article in traditional Chinese, simplified Chinese, Polish, or Italian.



The International Marimba & Steelpan Festival was launched in 2012 by South African marimba specialist Joan Lithgow. It is an extension of NGO Education Africa and was created to “give South African bands some international exposure and a platform to play and improve.” Lithgow also wanted to “highlight the importance of marimba playing.” She is passionate about the power of marimba music as an agent for social change, both in her country and in the lives of thousands of young marimba players. In a recent conversation she explained that, “The more I work with marimbas, the more I realize the very important cognitive and social development that happens as a result of marimba playing.”

Social transformation is clearly on display and celebrated by all who attend the festival. Marimbas and steel pans become a vehicle to unite players of diverse race, ethnicity, religion, age, ability, gender, and socio-economic background. This is a major accomplishment in a country where the racist apartheid system of mass segregation and disenfranchisement was brought to an end just over two decades ago. In fact, creating “social cohesion” is a clearly stated and intentional goal of Education Africa when planning and implementing the festival. “It’s all very well talking about social cohesion, but social cohesion isn’t something you talk about. Social cohesion is something you create,” says Lithgow. “We’re constantly trying to find ways where we can make social cohesion actually take place. Because in South Africa, social cohesion has to be the cornerstone of what we do.”

Lithgow works for Education Africa together with Thami Ngwenya, the festival’s assistant organizer. In a recent conversation, Ngwenya further described Education Africa’s important work with marimbas in South African communities. “Through our work with marimbas we’re creating spaces for children [of diverse backgrounds] to make friends. They actually have each other’s numbers, and whenever they meet you can see the camaraderie between them. Through music and through marimbas, we’ve been working towards social cohesion and creating these platforms and spaces, and the festival is the biggest platform where we actually see that happen.”

It is most evident by the spirit of unity on display that social cohesion is happening on multiple levels at Education Africa’s International Marimba & Steelpan Festival. In addition to performers from wide ranging ethnic and racial backgrounds, the festival has a clear gender balance and features a number of all-female marimba bands. It is also a multi-generational event, with participants ranging from four-year-old preschoolers to musicians in their 70s. The festival’s inclusivity also extends to students with disabilities. Several mentally and

physically handicapped bands participated in last year’s event, including a deaf marimba band. “These children truthfully had never been integrated into society because of their deafness. They were fantastic, and taught many other bands how to sign,” said Lithgow.

Andy Narell is also excited by the unifying power of music in South Africa, as exemplified by this festival. “It’s a country in the middle of a revolution,” he said. “Everything is changing so fast. One of the most exciting things is just seeing how the kids born in the in the new South Africa [post-apartheid] are coming together and how music is a force to bring them together. You can’t help but walk away encouraged by the perception of what is happening there, especially in a time when we are confronted every day with division. You’ve got something that flies in the face of all of that.”



L to R: Andy Narell, Candice Parkin, Mark Stone



Student receiving a chocolate prize from Philile MaSibiya Ngono



L to R: Philile MaSibiya Ngonelo, Haruna Walusimbi, Joan Lithgow, Mark Stone, Magda de Vries, Michael Sibanda, and Millicent Khemese



Mbira workshop with Chris Timbe



Thami Ngwenya and Bradley Lithgow in a sea of marimbas



Dance workshop

To my delight, I was invited to serve as an adjudicator and workshop presenter for festivals in 2015 and 2017, where directors Joan Lithgow and Thami Ngwenya certainly kept me busy. Before each festival began, there was a composition competition for marimba and pan ensembles, allowing composers to showcase a wide range of musical styles and creativity. The winning pieces were performed on the eve of the main event. Then, during the two-day festival, there was a non-stop stream of marimba and pan performances in multiple age divisions and categories that included *Proudly South African/African*, *Strictly Classical*, *Battle of the Bands*, and *In the Mix*.

Although these competitive performances are the centerpiece of the festival, the event itself never felt like a competition. Festival organizers have intentionally avoided the intensely competitive atmosphere, common to other performing arts competitions, in favor of creating a fun *Ubuntu* vibe. Ngwenya aptly describes the feel of the competition: “The festival is a competition at the end of the day, but you never see that until someone gets an award. Everyone is there to play music and have fun together. We are just playing music, and everyone is cheering for everyone, and everyone is there for everyone.”

Personally, I value this relaxed approach and the range of performance categories that give participants an opportunity to explore many different musical traditions. The *Proudly South African/African* category importantly requires groups to explore the rich traditional African roots of the marimba. Likewise, the *Strictly Classical* category allows groups to realize the depth of European classical music and its charm when arranged for marimba and pan. The *Battle of the Bands* competition gives students the opportunity to let loose and play popular music they’ve grown up hearing. And while all the competition categories call for creative musical arrangements, the requirement of including additional melodic instruments as part of the *In the Mix* category inspires groups to really push the creative envelope of marimba and pan music.

In addition to giving awards at the end of the festival for each section of each category, some light-hearted awards are given throughout the competition, designed to inspire a joyful mood. First, the chocolate award is given after every performance by a judge to an individual performer who captures the spirit of the festival. Lithgow explains, “The chocolate award immediately has a fun element. The children are amongst themselves all hoping to win a chocolate.” The chocolate can be given for a wide range of reasons, at the judge’s discretion, such as performing with a big smile or executing a smooth recovery after a mistake. Category awards are also given by the festival organizers at the end of each competition category. These awards are given to one of the bands for something out of the ordinary that, as with the chocolate award, captures the *Ubuntu* spirit of the festival. “We are creating a different perspective because groups are now thinking they can still win an award even if they are not the best,” Lithgow explains. “And that means a lot to a lot of people.”

When asked what they find special about the marimba,

Lithgow and Ngwenya unanimously agree. “No elitism!” Lithgow exclaims. “Being non-elitist means that anybody can play music and, in our country, it hasn’t been like that. We are trying to break the mold and say, ‘Hey, you can play the marimba, and you can be a great musician on the marimba.’”

“There is no elitism,” Ngwenya concurs. “When you talk about marimbas, the biggest thing for me is that anyone and everyone can do it. It’s just a matter of applying yourself, and it can connect all of us. For me, the power of marimbas is that we can come from different worlds and start playing this instrument, and then suddenly when we leave this room we are best of buddies because we just connected.”

South African steel pan artist Dave Reynolds introduced Lithgow to Andy Narell in 2000, and Narell began teaching Lithgow’s students during his regular South African trips. Given Narell’s strong commitment to music education in South Africa and international acclaim as a pan artist, Lithgow invited him to be the patron of the International Marimba & Steelpan Festival. In addition to serving as festival patron and adjudicating the competitions, Narell presents steel drum workshops and performances at each festival. Workshops bring everyone together on a level playing field and are an essential part of the festival. There are also workshops on mbira, dance, and drum traditions. Lithgow describes their importance: “A lot of social cohesion takes place in the workshops at the festival. You would have ten kids from one school, five kids from another, three kids from a different school, and suddenly they’re all leveled and having fun. Later, they see each other performing at the festival, and they are recognizing each other and becoming friends, and the teachers are doing the same thing.”

In both festivals I’ve adjudicated, I also had the opportunity to present my own workshops. At the 2015 festival, I shared the Ghanaian gyil (West African marimba) tradition with participants. My audience at this presentation was incredibly enthusiastic and most appreciative of what I had to share. At last year’s festival, I performed embaire (East African marimba) and akogo (East African lamellaphone) music of Uganda together with celebrated Ugandan musician Haruna Walusimbi. I left these workshops with my heart overflowing, as festival participants of remarkably diverse backgrounds all came together in a joyful and unified fashion.

The festival activity that most fully expresses the spirit of *Ubuntu* is the *Massed Band*, directed by Lithgow. During this session, all 2,000 performers come together to play marimbas, pans, and drums while singing and dancing. It is an absolutely brilliant display of the oneness of humanity and always a festival highlight. Each year, Lithgow creates a new piece of music for the *Massed Band* based on a different theme. This year’s music celebrates the centenary of Nelson Mandela’s birth.

The wide scope of festival events described here can be seen in the following video produced by CNN for the program *Inside Africa* during 2016 festival:



Festival organizers Joan Lithgow and Thami Ngwenya



Massed band



Djembe workshop



Pan workshop with Candice Parkin and David Reynolds



Festival participants between sessions



Student performers

While Narell told me in advance how awesome the festival would be, the whole experience still took me by surprise. Taking part in the International Marimba & Steelpan Festival was truly a life-changing experience. Having grown up playing the marimba in Michigan as the only young marimbist in my community, it was incredibly refreshing to witness such a large and united community of marimba players. In the United States, marimba is largely at the periphery of our music culture. However, in South Africa, the marimba is clearly part of the lifeblood of the community and at the core of an ever-expanding music culture. In addition, I've been a steel pan player since college and have participated in both Panorama and the World Steel Band Festival in Trinidad. It was also quite inspiring for me to observe how the steel pan has firmly taken root on the other side of the world.

This festival is all about creating a space for musicians to work their magic with pan and marimba while capturing the spirit of *Ubuntu*. It is a culminating event in Education Africa's nonstop work with marimbas, pans, and communities. My own experience participating in the 2015 and 2017 festivals was transformative as I reveled in the unity created through the brotherhood and sisterhood of pan and marimba.

One goal of Education Africa is to "let international players know what is happening with marimbas and pans in South Africa." As Narell affirms, "The whole percussion world needs to know what is happening in Southern Africa. There are thousands of kids and hundreds of bands. It is just fantastic! Music is a very powerful force. It's bringing people together from all over Southern Africa to share with one another."

The accomplishments of Education Africa through the International Marimba & Steelpan Festival are far-reaching and even more impressive given their limited resources. While they have already accomplished an astonishing amount in just seven years, there is much work yet to be done. They welcome collaborations with partner organizations interested in assisting the festival to create an *Ubuntu* spirit where everyone participates, everyone shares, and everyone belongs!

Education Africa would love to see the participation of more groups, both from within Africa and the worldwide percussion community. If you are interested in getting involved, bringing a group to the festival, or supporting the festival, please contact Joan Lithgow (joan@educationafrica.org), Thami Ngwenya (thami@educationafrica.org), or visit internationalmarimbafestival.org.

Mark Stone is a musician-educator from Michigan with a passion for using music to bring diverse communities together. As an Associate Professor of Music at Oakland University, Stone coordinates the school's world music and percussion programs, and he is recognized internationally for his work in global percussion performance and education. He has performed with the foremost musicians of Uganda, Ghana, South Africa, India, Trinidad, Ecuador, and the United States. His highly original musical style results from innovative performance practice rooted in a deep knowledge of multiple world traditions. Stone was a

Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar at Makerere University, where he researched traditional Ugandan music and performed with the Nakibembe Xylophone Group. He has performed at festivals in Ghana and gyl concerti with the world's leading orchestras as a member of the Bernard Woma Ensemble. In 2012 and 2014, he was a featured artist in India at the Bharat Sangeet Utsav Pan-Indian Music Festivals. As an American Baha'i, Prof. Stone is dedicated to promoting equity, diversity, and a world embracing vision of humanity. **RIS**

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PAS PROFILE – JUSTIN RAMIREZ

Justin Ramirez has served as the PAS Membership Services Manager since 2011. A graduate of Indiana University with a degree in Music Education, he also continues to teach as a member of the percussion staff at Avon High School in Indiana. Justin currently resides in Avon with his wife and son, their two dogs (Lucy and Linus), and two cats (Gizmo and Gigi).

Rhythm!Scene: *How did you get started in percussion?*

Justin Ramirez: There was always music playing in my house, whether it was the radio or my mom playing the piano, so I always enjoyed listening and making my own music. My mom started me on piano, but I didn't have the patience to keep it up. Not long after I started school, I found out that my older cousin played drums and was in a band. My parents would go see him play and would bring home recordings of him performing. I would watch these religiously and eventually started drumming along. As soon as I

was in 4th grade and school band became an option, I took up percussion and jumped into private lessons.

RIS: *What was one of your most memorable performances as a student percussionist?*

JR: Performing with the 1998 All-Eastern Band, under the direction of Peter Boonshaft, in Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, Baltimore, Maryland. The performance was great, and I clearly remember an amazing moment of resonance following the last notes of "To Tame the Perilous Skies," after which the audience erupted. My grandmother actually gave me a hard time after the concert, teasing me by saying that if I was going to keep making her cry at my performances, she was going to stop coming.

RIS: *Who were key or memorable teachers in your musical education?*

JR: Jeff Ward, Steve Breffitt, Tom Sabatino, Tom Alderson, Stephen Pratt, Gerry Carlyss, and Jim Bailey.

RIS: *What is your favorite percussion instrument and why?*

JR: Timpani. At first, it was because of the ability to contribute tonally to the performance of the ensemble while still playing a drum. It also didn't involve counting as many rests as other percussion parts. Over the years, I came to love and appreciate the versatility of the instrument, from being low-end support, to the challenge of more melodic parts and tuning changes, to the energy of bombastic passages. While I enjoy timpani as a solo instrument, being part of an orchestra or other large ensemble is where my heart is.

RIS: *What sort of music activities are part of your job?*

JR: While I get to engage with a lot of musicians for my job at PAS, there isn't much in the way of actual musical activity going on. However, I do get to work with the drumline at Avon High School and still do some arranging and composing for a few other groups.





Avon Bassline prior to WGI 2015 Indianapolis Regional performance.

RIS: *What is your most prized percussion-related souvenir?*

JR: For the past number of years, my graduating students have done a group photo together and framed it for me. A few years ago, they put together a small album featuring a number of hilarious candid photos and whatnot from the previous season. I love that thing!

RIS: *What was your introduction to PAS?*

JR: I joined PAS my freshman year of college, which was the first time I had heard of PAS. I also attended a Day of Percussion held at Indiana University around that time.

RIS: *What's the first section you read in a new issue of Percussive Notes or Rhythm!Scene?*

JR: I usually start with the Society Update and plow straight through—unless something really interesting catches my attention in the Table of Contents.

RIS: *If you aren't playing or teaching percussion or working at PAS, what are you doing?*

JR: Cooking or going out to eat. My wife and I are huge foodies, and we have gotten our son into helping with our garden and cooking. We have eight

raised beds, plus raspberry, blackberry, strawberry, and blueberry bushes, so we have a good amount of fresh produce throughout the summer and fall. Here's a simple recipe we tried recently: sliced pink lady tomato, with drizzled olive oil, splash of white wine vinegar, topped with chopped fresh basil and goat cheese. Maybe we should we start a column for recipe suggestions in *Rhythm!Scene*.

RIS: *What music or station is playing when you turn on your car?*

JR: Usually classic rock, unless it's the morning and there's nothing but talk shows. In that case, I'll put my James Brown Pandora station on. It's always a good morning when you go from JB, to Tower of Power, to Stevie Wonder, to Galactic, to Curtis Mayfield, to Maceo Parker, and on and on.

RIS: *What's the first app you open on your phone or first program you start on your computer each morning?*

JR: First app on my phone is AccuWeather; I'm so boring and practical! The first program on my computer is Chrome so I can open the Pandora website.

RIS: *What is one thing you wish all student percussionists knew about PAS?*

JR: I wish I could let them all know how much money is available in scholarships and grants through PAS, both for school and to attend PASIC.

RIS: *If you could tell your 18-year-old self one piece of musical advice, what would it be?*

JR: Listen to as much music as possible. Ask your teachers what they listen to. Ask your family. When you get to college, ask your new friends, then go listen yourself. Keep searching for new genres and sounds. You might not like all of it, but you'll definitely learn more about your own tastes and a heck of a lot of music history. **RIS**

HALL OF FAME SPOTLIGHT

JACQUES DELÉCLUSE, WARREN “BABY” DODDS, SANDY FELDSTEIN

PAS
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The Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame was established in 1972 and recognizes the contributions of the most highly regarded professional leaders in percussion performance, education, research, scholarship, administration, composition, and the industry. In each issue of *Rhythm! Scene* we will feature selected members of this distinguished group. To read the full articles about all PAS Hall of Fame inductees, [tap here](#).

JACQUES DELÉCLUSE

BY FREDERIC MACAREZ

Jacques Delécluse often told his students at the Conservatoire de Paris in France, “Don’t play percussion but play music—MUSIC—with phrases, articulations, dynamics, etc.” He set an excellent example of that philosophy through his playing with the Orchestre de Paris and through the etudes and compositions he wrote for snare drum and other percussion instruments.

Jacques studied percussion with Felix Passerone, principal timpanist of the Paris Opera and teacher at the Conservatoire of Paris. Jacques also studied piano and received the First Prize for piano at the Conservatoire in 1950. Just one week before he got the First Prize for piano, Jacques received the Second Prize for percussion. Years later, when he was teaching percussion at the Conservatoire of Paris, he was playing all the piano accompaniments much better than most of the pianists.

At the Conservatoire of Paris, Jacques also studied harmony, counterpoint, and composition, and he received the First Prize for percussion in 1951. It was then that he chose to become a percussionist and timpanist. He subsequently took part in the creation of the Domaine Musical with Pierre Boulez and was appointed to the Paris Opera and the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, which ultimately became Orchestre de Paris in 1967.

In this same year Delécluse left the Paris Opera to become a full member of the Orchestre de Paris—as a pianist! However, he started to play percussion again very soon, and he became timpanist of the orchestra in 1993.

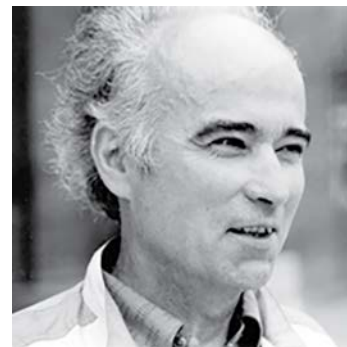
When Jacques started to write his etudes in 1964, there was almost nothing in the repertoire for snare drum in France: no methods, no books, no etudes, no solo pieces. Percussionists had to study from orchestral excerpts, military drum books, and a couple of low-level standard pieces. Delécluse did not merely revolutionize the pedagogical writing for percussion, he invented it! From nothing, he built a real school for percussion

and created a pedagogical repertoire for snare drum, xylophone, timpani, and vibraphone.

In 1964, Jacques released his famous *12 Etudes for Snare Drum*, published by Alphonse Leduc. Like many of his works, these etudes are inspired by the orchestral repertoire. But contrary to the majority of the other books, Delécluse’s studies are completely musical—no mindless technical patterns, no measures without artistic sense, but rather expressive dynamics, intelligent phrases, useful foundations from which to progress on the instrument, and a wonderful source for exams, auditions, and performance repertoire. Each etude has its own musical character and has to be played not only with a perfect technique but also with a real musical expression.

To increase the repertoire, Delécluse published additional snare drum etudes: *Keisleiriana 1* in 1987 and *Keisleiriana 2* in 1990. In these etudes, the reference to orchestral repertoire is even more evident. For example, No. 2 of *Keiskleiriana 1* is inspired by Ravel’s “Daphnis and Chloé” and No. 1 of *Keiskleiriana 2* is inspired by Shostakovich’s “11th Symphony.” With all of Jacques’s books—timpani etudes, xylophone etudes, and various other pieces—musicality is always the central point of the compositions.

Click [here](#) to read Jacques Delécluse’s full PAS Hall of Fame bio.



WARREN “BABY” DODDS

BY RICK MATTINGLY

During a career that began with New Orleans street bands around 1916 and continued into the 1950s, Warren “Baby” Dodds paved the way for much of the jazz drumming that followed. His press roll evolved into the standard jazz ride-cymbal pattern, he was the first to use a cymbal as a timekeeping element, and he gradually moved away from the use of “traps” to a selection of drums and cymbals that foreshadowed the modern drumset.

Born in New Orleans in 1898, Dodds acquired the name “Baby” early in life. When Dodds’ older brother, Johnny, took up the clarinet, Baby got a job, saving his money until he could get a snare drum, some sticks, a rope-tensioned bass drum, and some “traps,” all of which came secondhand from pawn shops.

Soon, Baby was doing street parades with Bunk Johnson’s band. Dodds also learned to read music and do a press roll. “I did it in my own way,” he said. “I used to study the rolls of different drummers and worked out a long press roll, which I preferred to the shorter ones.” Dodds’ way of playing press rolls evolved into the standard jazz ride-cymbal pattern. Whereas many drummers would play very short press rolls on the backbeats, Dodds would start his rolls on the backbeats but extend each one to the following beat, providing a smoother time flow.

In 1918, Dodds started working with Fate Marable’s riverboat band, which included a young Louis Armstrong. “On the riverboat I began using the rims instead of the woodblocks,” Dodds said. “The woodblock gave a loud sound, and I substituted the shell of the drums, and it sounded so soothing and soft, and it still would make the number lively.”

Dodds was also involved in the invention of the sock cymbal, which later evolved into the hi-hat. “William Ludwig, the drum manufacturer, came on the boat. I used to stomp my left foot, and Ludwig asked me if I could stomp my toe instead of my heel. I told him ‘I think so.’ So he measured my foot on a piece of paper and the space where I would have it, and he made a sock cymbal.”

Early in 1922 Dodds joined the band of Joe “King” Oliver in San Francisco. “One day Joe bought me some wire brushes,” Dodds remembered. “It was a new thing and I was probably the first guy that ever worked with wire brushes in this part of the country.”

Oliver gave musicians the chance to work out their own ideas, and Baby took advantage of the opportunity to develop a sense of color. “I tried to play different for each instrument in the band,” he said. “With the piano I tried to play as soft as I could with a low press roll. For my brother [clarinetist Johnny] I would play the light cymbal on the top. And for [trombonist Honore] Dutrey I would hit the cymbal so it would ring, but not

too loud. For [trumpeters] Joe and Louis I would hit the cymbal a little harder and make it ring more.”

Around 1940 a revival of New Orleans jazz put Dodds in great demand, and he played with several traditional groups. In 1946 Dodds recorded several drum solos along with spoken explanations and demonstrations of some of his techniques. Those recordings were issued by Folkways as *Baby Dodds, Talking and Drum Solos*.

In 1949, Dodds suffered a stroke. He still played from time to time until 1957, and he died in February of 1959.

Click [here](#) to read Baby Dodds’ full PAS Hall of Fame bio.



SANDY FELDSTEIN

BY LAUREN VOGEL WEISS

You've probably seen Sandy Feldstein's name on a snare drum book, a keyboard book, or the back of a DVD. Whether it was published by Henry Adler, Alfred Publishing, Columbia Pictures Publications, Belwin Music, Warner Bros., Carl Fischer, or PlayinTime, Sandy Feldstein's name—as either author, editor, or producer—is on thousands of publications.

Born Saul Feldstein in 1940, the baby with the sandy-colored hair was quickly nicknamed “Sandy.” While in elementary school, Sandy became a performing mascot for the Freeport High School Marching Band on Long Island in New York. By age 12, he began studying mallets, and later studied with Henry Adler. During high school, Feldstein had his own band and worked at least two nights a week. After high school, Feldstein enrolled at the Crane School of Music, State University of New York at Potsdam.

After being asked to score something for the marimba to fill out and support the lower woodwinds, Feldstein started writing articles about using the marimba in concert bands and wind ensembles. *Mallet Technique for Two Mallets and Four Mallets* and *Mallet Technique for Treble and Bass Clef* were soon published by Henry Adler (eventually taken over by Belwin). During the summers, he taught at Adler's studio.

Upon earning his Bachelor of Science in Music Education degree from Potsdam, Sandy returned to New York to earn his Master of Arts in Music Education degree from Columbia University. During that time, SUNY-Potsdam invited him back as a full-time percussion teacher. As one of the few full-time college percussion instructors in the country, he soon became involved in a new organization, the Percussive Arts Society, serving as the society's third President from 1968–72. “PAS changed the industry,” Feldstein says. “The organization has had a vital role in building the awareness of percussion and the percussion industry, as well as percussion education.”

When the president of Alfred Publishing saw the books Sandy had written, he offered Feldstein a job. Sandy began as Alfred's Educational Director and then became Executive Vice-President. He stayed with Alfred for 20 years, and then became president of Columbia Pictures Publications, which also owned Belwin and the Henry Adler catalog, for which Sandy had edited or proofread almost every book. Around that time, educational videos were becoming popular, so Feldstein arranged for Columbia Pictures Publications to buy the DCI video company.

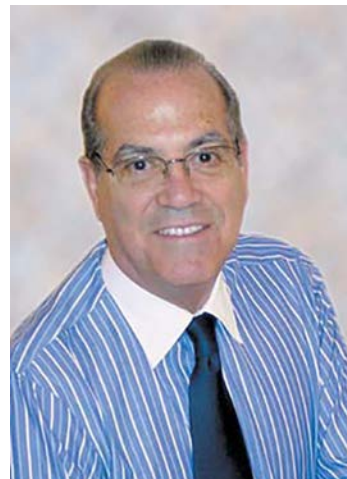
In 1995, Warner Bros. bought the business and Feldstein remained on as President of the combined company (Warner Bros., Columbia Pictures, and Belwin). Three years later he left and soon started PlayinTime Productions. But he was soon

drawn back into the corporate world to run Carl Fischer, which he ran for four years.

As an author and/or composer, Sandy has over 700 books or pieces published. One of his most well-known books is *Alfred's Drum Method*, co-authored with Dave Black. Some of Feldstein's other “bestsellers” include his Practical Theory books; his band methods, both the *Yamaha Band Student* and the *Yamaha Advantage*; his *Practical Dictionary of Musical Terms*; and his *Snare Drum Rudiment Dictionary*.

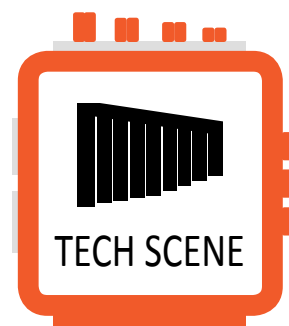
What does Feldstein consider his greatest accomplishments? “I've had the opportunity to work with some talented people who are now in high positions in our industry—in education and performance as well as manufacturing and publishing,” he says. “I hope I've given them some inspiration and maybe some information that has helped them be successful. And the same holds true for the artists I have collaborated with. I hope I have inspired musicians to want to give back by developing materials that will help others learn.”

Click [here](#) to read Sandy Feldstein's complete PAS Hall of Fame bio. **RIS**



TECH SCENE #2: SYNCING AUDIO AND VIDEO

BY CHASE BANKS AND PETER SOROKA



Have you ever recorded a performance and found that the video recording looks great but the audio recording was terrible? The fact is, most video cameras have very cheap built-in microphones, frequently resulting in great video but poor audio. In this article we'll discuss how to sync audio and video files and replace poor audio with quality audio recordings.

What you'll need:

- Video camera: even most cell phones can now record HD video
- Condenser microphones/recording interface: even "cheap" microphones will provide a better recording than the built-in microphone on your camera
- Video editing program: in this article we've used Adobe Premiere and Apple's iMovie

The "tried and true" method to syncing audio and video files is to line up the waveform of your two audio tracks in the video-editing program (the audio track from the camera and the audio track from your condenser microphones). This method works with any video-editing program on Mac or PC.

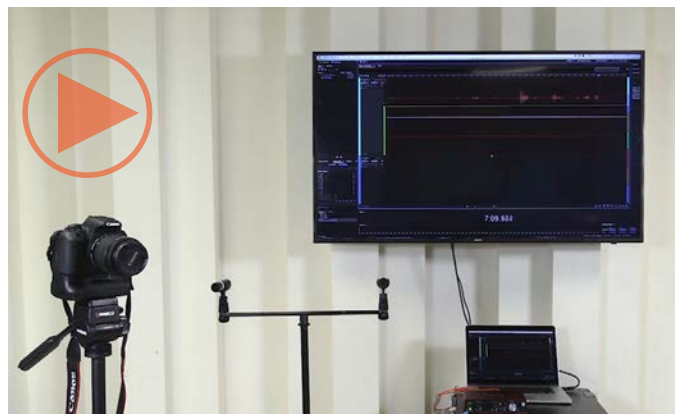
Additional Tips:

- Look for the Zoom function in your video-editing program that will allow you to see a more detailed view of the audio waveform.
- Finding "hard lines" in the audio waveform will make syncing your files much easier.
- Make a project folder on your hard drive for all files pertaining to the project.
- Remember to save your work!

Chase Banks is a freelance educator and percussionist in South Carolina and holds a Master of Music degree from the University of South Carolina and a Music Education degree from Florida State University. Chase is the Assistant Drumline Instructor at USC, winner of the 2017 USC Concerto Competition, and has performed with the South Carolina Philharmonic, Symphony Orchestra Augusta, and the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra.



▶ Tap to play Video



Peter Soroka is a percussionist with the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" in Washington, D.C. He holds performance degrees from the University of North Texas and Virginia Commonwealth University and is finishing a Doctor of Music degree at Florida State University. He has performed with the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra and Sinfonia Gulf Coast in Destin, Florida.



The PAS Technology Committee is proud to produce the "Tech Scene" series. Chase Banks and Peter Soroka will be consulting with professionals and performers in the fields of audio/video recording, live production, and post-production. This resource is intended to help students, private teachers, and band directors learn the ins and outs of technology related specifically to the percussion world. **RIS**

PEOPLE AND PLACES

JAPAN

PAS Hall of Fame member and co-founder of the Nexus percussion ensemble **Bob Becker** recently toured Japan. On May 12, he performed a sold-out concert at the Hyogo Performing Arts Center Recital Hall. The first half included Becker's compositions "Prisoners of the Image Factory," "Unseen Child," "Bloodwood," and "Turning Point," as well as his arrangement of Toru Takemitsu's "Wings" for vibraphone, marimbas, and string quartet.

The second half of the program opened with traditional fife and drum music performed by Becker and (Canadian) **David Burns** on snare drum, **Yurika Kimura** on bass drum, and **Keita Maeda** and **Yoshiko Ozawa** playing the fife parts on glockenspiel. Next was Becker's "Away without Leave," followed by Takemitsu's "Rain Tree." The last four pieces featured Becker as soloist in his arrangements of George H. Green's "The Ragtime Robin" and "Just A Kiss from You," "Whispering Medley" by Schoenberger/Fischer, and Dvorak's "Castle Valse Classique" (paraphrase of "Humoresque," arranged by Dabney/Kimura).

Becker's second concert was on May 19 at the Kuremona Concert Hall in Hakodate. That program consisted of "Caprice Valsant" and "Just A Kiss From You" by Green (arr. Becker), "Castle Valse Classique," "The Ragtime Drummer" by Lent (arr. Cahn), "Bloodwood," "Dotty Dimples" by Green (arr. Cahn), and Becker's arrangement of Green's "Alabama Moon." Becker was joined onstage by **Sumako Ichikawa**, Yurika Kimura, and **Akiko Mizugai**.

Becker also gave a series of master classes in Fukuoka on May 25. Topics included cymbals, Steve Reich's "Nagoya Marimbas," ragtime xylophone, and West African drumming.



(L-R) Yurika Kimura, Bob Becker, Sumako Ichikawa, and Akiko Mizugai on stage at the Kuremona Concert Hall in Hakodate, Japan

Marimbist, composer, and arranger **Yurika Kimura** was recently appointed interim President of the Japan PAS chapter. She hopes to increase communication among percussionists in her country and encourage more Japanese percussionists to attend PASIC.

USA

California

Studio legend **Hal Blaine** and **Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste**, of the award-winning band The Meters, were honored with a Special Merit Award in the Grammy Salute to Legends at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. Zigaboo is a trailblazer in the invention of funk grooves and new musical concepts, making his drum patterns and the music of the Meters some of the most sampled in history. Considered the inventor of modern pop drumming, Hal's original, extrovert style and his talent to craft the perfect drum part have helped make him the most recorded drummer in history.

This year sees Zigaboo and the Meters celebrating their 50th Anniversary. Their Lifetime Achievement Award honors the contribution of outstanding artistic significance the band has made over the last five decades. Their unique style makes the Meters and Zigaboo the benchmark numerous musicians seek to attain, inspiring a wide range of music genres across the years. Voted the 18th Best Drummer of All Time in 2016 in *Rolling Stone* magazine, Zigaboo is highly respected by musicians and fans and has played with Keith Richards, Robert Palmer, Dr. John, and many more.

During his impressive career, Hal Blaine worked with more than 100 top artists including Frank Sinatra, the Beach Boys, and Elvis Presley, recording more than 40 number-one hits in the process. An inductee of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, he has spent his career inventing distinctive percussive hooks and laying down some of the most identifiable beats in popular music. The primary drummer of the infamous "Wrecking Crew," Hal's true legacy is the adaptability of his drumming to the musical session or genre, regardless of difficulty or era.

Connecticut

Drumset artist **Gregg Bissonette** presented a clinic at Dynamic Percussion in East Hartford (Richard "Gus" Guastamachio, host) on May 18. His visit was sponsored by Dixon drums, Sabian cymbals, Vic Firth drumsticks, Remo drumheads, LP accessories, DW pedals, and Direct Sound headphones. **RIS**

Attend PASIC for FREE

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The Percussive Arts Society is seeking numerous hard working and enthusiastic individuals to share their time, talent, and knowledge with our exciting international event. PAS works hard to ensure that this convention is a huge success for both the performers and attendees. Please join us; we need your help to make PASIC an amazing experience!

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pasic.org/volunteer/ PASIC Registration Desk . PASIC Badge Checkers

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logistics

pasic.org/logistics-team/ members work directly with some of the best drum-

mers and percussionists in the world by helping to move gear and setup stages. Team members are eligible to win prizes from PASIC exhibitors and receive many complimentary rewards from the Percussive Arts Society.

marching crew

pasic.org/volunteer/ As a member of the PASIC

Marching Crew, you will work behind the scenes along side the judges and Marching Committee. Your primary responsibility is to ensure the festival runs smoothly and that the participants have a positive experience.

KoSA 23 DRUM CAMP IN MONTREAL

The KoSA International Percussion Workshop and Drum Camp celebrated its 23rd edition in Montréal, Québec Canada this past June at KoSA's year-round music school: the KoSA Academy. KoSA's co-founders and directors, **Aldo Mazza** and his musician wife, **Dr. Jolán Kovács**, hosted a jam-packed room of eager participants who came from different parts of Canada and the United States to attend this inspiring and intense event.

KoSA prides itself in offering a total percussion immersion (40 hours of drumming in five days) in a variety of world percussion instruments (congas, bongos, djembes, cajon, drumset) and a variety of styles (Cuban, African, jazz, funk, rock). This year's theme, "Play Better," was a fitting message about taking control in your life by studying with the top masters and applying what you are learning in achieving the ultimate goal of playing better and improving one's self. The students this year ranged in age from 11–67 and had a diverse level of ability from one year of training to advanced professionals, and yet despite these marked differences, an intense bond and camaraderie was immediately formed.

The week kicked off with a very informative clinic on drumset techniques by Montreal jazz musician and McGill and Concordia University professor **Jim Doxas**, who was accompanied by bass player Adrian Vedady. **Yves Cypihot**, who teaches at the KoSA Academy's year-round music school, shared his expertise in African drumming and gave a highly energetic class on African djembe techniques. The week continued with the legendary rumba group from Cuba, **Clave Y Guaguancó** (the famed group that was formed in Havana, Cuba nearly 50 years ago), and participants were transported straight into rumba, the traditional Cuban culture of songs and rhythms. Aldo Mazza's classes in Cuban techniques promoted his recent book, *Cuban Rhythms for Percussion & Drumset: The Essentials*. He also wowed his audience as he performed on his unique hybrid drumset. This hybrid performance practice mixes African drumming, Cuban drumming, hand percussion of all types, electronic percussion, and looping live in performance.

On Thursday, the KoSA camp was graced with the presence of **Larnell Lewis** of the Grammy-award fusion group Snarky Puppy. Larnell spoke straight from his heart about his beginnings in music and what it takes to make it in the music world. He was very touched to





receive from KoSA a Lifetime Achievement Award for “his creative and innovative drumming concepts and techniques.” All participants received a complimentary ticket from KoSA as part of their tuition to see Snarky Puppy and Larnell at the Montreal Jazz Festival that evening.

The week continued with **Glen Velez**, who taught Arabic frame drum techniques and hypnotized everyone with his interactive vocalization and Central Asian overtone singing. First-time KoSA Faculty member **Emmanuelle Caplette** shared her talent on Friday morning, putting participants through a grueling regiment of drumset techniques stemming from her background in the drum corps world. The participants then showcased their own passion for drumming in concert on Friday afternoon.

Each evening, the classes consisted of playing with the KoSA rhythm section and getting coached on how to improve their performances. This permitted participants to form ensembles and play together at the concert in various formations: duos, trios, quartets etc., and all participants had a chance to perform alongside KoSA’s talented rhythm section: Juan Carmona from Cuba on bass and Montreal artist KoSA Academy faculty member **Yoel Diaz**.

On the last day, long-time KoSA faculty member and Berklee College instructor **Sergio Bellotti** spoke to participants about the importance of music education and gave an extremely inspiring clinic on musical application of the rudiments on drumset. Sergio was then joined in a panel discussion alongside **Jim West** (founder of Justin Time Records) and **Aldo Mazza** in a discussion of “Success in the Music Business World.” The camp wrapped up with **Mark Guiliana** (drummer for the late David Bowie), who was invited for the second time as a member of the KoSA Faculty and who was also a KoSA participant when he was 16 and 17 years old—a fun fact and sheer inspiration for the current 16-year-old participants to know!

The KoSA International Percussion Workshop and Drum Camp was sponsored by Ludwig/Musser, Sabian, Evans, Yamaha, Promark, Gretsch, Vic Firth, Alfred, Zildjian, and Sonor. The KoSA world is continuously in expansion with programs in Canada, the USA, Cuba, Europe, and China. For more information on KoSA, visit www.kosamusic.com and at facebook.com/kosamusic.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE

DECIBULLZ

Molded Professional Acoustic Filters

Decibullz has launched a new product for music lovers and audio professionals: Professional Custom Molded Acoustic Filters. These new filters provide a true, tuned, and flat attenuation that reduces loud noises evenly across all frequencies to safe levels. Users can play and enjoy music without experiencing muting, muffling, or distortion of higher frequencies while wearing the filters.

"Traditional foam earplugs make everything sound worse," said Kyle Kirkpatrick, CEO of Decibullz. "Our new Professional Filters allow customers to hear every note of a song without sacrificing acoustic quality. The filters turn the volume down on real life, with everything sounding exactly like it's supposed to, but at lower and safer levels."

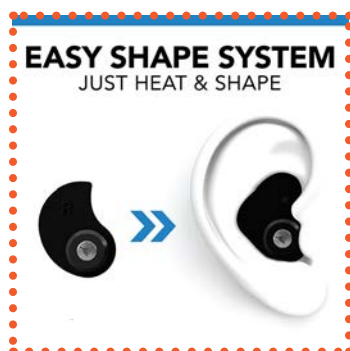
Decibullz's Custom Molded Professional Filters are perfect for musicians, concert goers, performers, recording professionals, and anyone who wants to enjoy great music without sacrificing quality and risking hearing damage. The filters have an SNR value of 17dB and are suitable for music up to 102 dB. Users simply heat the patented Decibullz earpieces in water and form them to the exact shape of their ears. The result is a comfortable noise-isolating fit that can be worn all day. Decibullz's products are the only re-moldable earpieces on the market and are available at decibullz.com or on Amazon.

INNOVATIVE PERCUSSION

Christopher Lamb Snare Drum Sticks

Innovative Percussion is proud to relaunch the Christopher Lamb Concert Snare Drum Sticks, now available in four models. Designed to the specifications of Christopher Lamb, Principal Percussionist with the New York Philharmonic, each model is constructed with laminated beech with varying weight distribution and tip designs to cover a variety of orchestral situations.

The highly popular CL-1L, now built with laminated beech, has been crafted into a bolder and more daring stick. While the specs remain the same as the original version, the heavier material enables the stick to act with a much livelier feel. The original profile still features a long taper and a barrel-shaped bead for a signature, full sound.



The CL-2L features an extended taper and elongated bead resulting in a darker, more legato sound and greater sustain. The unique design works extremely well for roll passages on a wide variety of drums, snares on or off, and for orchestral tenor drum passages. The added weight of the laminated beech assists in the execution of these excerpts.

The CL-3L is slightly modified from the original model. The new design features a slimmer diameter, quick taper, and small, round bead. These features, along with the heavier laminated beech, assist the player in executing the most detailed passages with the utmost clarity.

The CL-4L is a bit more compact than the CL-1L but still serves as a lively and versatile stick. The heavier weight and high density of the laminated beech give the stick a quick and lively response, while the long taper and bullet-shaped bead give a full, round sound.

PROPELLERHEAD

Umpf Club Drums Rack Extension for Reason

Umpf Club Drums is a next-level dance music beat-creation device, bursting at the seams with cutting-edge sounds and techniques for the modern dance floor. Featuring everything you need to make banging electronic beats in Reason, Umpf Club Drums is packed with over 750 samples, powerful signal processing, and 100 drumkit presets tailor-made for four-to-the-floor house and techno.

"Making club-ready drum tracks has always required producers to hand-select samples and set up complex routing for side-chain processing or modulation," said Lukas Lyrestam, Product Manager of Propellerhead. "Finally, there's a solution that does it all with one device, right in the Reason rack. By combining cutting-edge drum sounds with powerful processors and easy-to-use controls, the aptly named Umpf Club Drums allows you to quickly dial in powerful, evolving electronic beats."

Capable of creating custom beats in seconds, Umpf includes eight drum channels with drag-and-drop sample loading, and an intuitive dynamic waveform display for creating custom sounds with unique envelopes. Featuring an onboard mixer with impressive signal processors and an advanced Modulation



Matrix, Umpf Club Drums can transform your beats using LFOs, custom filters, and more.

Take Umpf to a whole new level with the complementary Drum Sequencer. Featuring velocity, repeat, and probability controls, Drum Sequencer is one of the fastest and most creative drum production tools available.

ROLAND

TD-17 Series V-Drums

Roland announced the TD-17 series, the latest addition to the V-Drums lineup. Combining flagship-level sound with newly developed pads, the TD-17KVX, TD-17KV, and TD-17K-L kits deliver an experience that's authentically close to playing acoustic drums, accurately mirroring the physical movement, stick coordination, and hand/foot control that every drummer needs. They also include integrated access to an array of motivational coaching functions, plus built-in Bluetooth for playing along with songs and video lesson content streamed wirelessly from a smartphone.

When using a TD-17 series instrument, drummers can play with the same techniques they'd use on acoustic drums, freely and without compromise. At the heart of each kit is the new TD-17 sound module, which provides a superior drumming experience with advanced Prismatic Sound Modeling inherited from Roland's top-of-the-line TD-50. Its sounds faithfully reproduce the character and tone of acoustic drums, with lightning-fast response time, wide dynamic range, and natural tonal changes that vary depending on where and how hard the pads are played.

The TD-17KVX and TD-17KV kits come with the new PDX-12 snare pad, which features a dual mesh head and 12-inch playing surface that supports the development of stick control and proper playing techniques. The head tension can be adjusted for satisfying natural rebound, while the height of the snare hoop enables the player to hit open rimshots with a natural stick angle. The TD-17KVX also includes the new VH-10 V-Hi-Hat, which mounts on an acoustic hi-hat stand and replicates the natural feel and swinging motion of a real hi-hat cymbal.



Offering advanced triggering with continuous open/close detection and bow/edge sounds, the VH-10 allows users to execute traditional playing techniques to perfection. All three kits in the TD-17 series include the new KD-10 kick pad, which combines rock-solid feel with a noise-reducing design that offers quiet operation while playing at home. The KD-10 can be used with any standard kick pedal and supports dual pedals as well.

The TD-17 module includes 50 ready-to-play kits suitable for any music style, plus a wide range of easy-to-use training functions that encourage skill development and make practice fun and productive. Players can improve their time with various Coach Mode exercises, use the warm-up menu to work through a daily exercise routine, and capture progress with the onboard recorder. By pairing their smartphone via Bluetooth, they can wirelessly stream audio from songs and video lesson content through the module and play along. The TD-17 also integrates with Melodics for V-Drums, a Windows/Mac software application that offers a growing selection of free drum lessons to develop rhythm, timing, and muscle memory.

To learn more about the TD-17 series V-Drums, visit [Roland.com](https://www.roland.com).

V-Drums Lineup Expanded with Full-Size Bass Drums

Roland announced four V-Drums products that take their electronic percussion lineup to new levels of acoustic realism. The KD-220 and KD-180 Bass Drums feature full-size wood shells with Roland's advanced trigger electronics built in, allowing drummers to bring the commanding stage presence and familiar feel of an acoustic kick to any V-Drums kit or hybrid setup. The KD-220 is also included in the new flagship TD-50KVX V-Drums kit, while the KD-180 is included in the new mid-level TD-25KVX V-Drums kit.



The 22-inch KD-220 features a high-quality maple shell, while the 18-inch KD-180 features a high-quality birch shell. Both models come with custom chrome hardware and offer compatibility with double-kick pedals. Roland's innovative air-damper mechanics work alongside the acoustic shell to move air and provide resistance as the beater hits the head, delivering stable and accurate triggering with real acoustic feel.

The flagship TD-50 series offers Roland's latest advancements in drum technology, delivering the ultimate V-Drums experience for stage playing, practice sessions, and studio work. The TD-50KVX is the new premier set in the TD-50 range, adding the dynamic presence of the KD-220 Bass Drum to top-flight components like the TD-50 module with ultra-realistic Prismatic Sound Modeling, snare and ride pads with multi-element sensor systems, and more.

With the TD-25 series, drummers can tap into high-end V-Drums playability at a mid-level price point. The TD-25KVX is

the new top-line kit in the range, combining the KD-180 Bass Drum with the expressive TD-25 module and a full complement of Roland's mesh-head pads.

To learn more about the KD-220, KD-180, TD-50KVX, and TD-25KVX, visit Roland.com.

Limited-Edition TD-50KV-RM Custom V-Drums with Randall May Hardware

Roland announced the TD-50KV-RM Custom V-Drums, a limited-edition professional electronic drumset. Based around the flagship TD-50 V-Drums platform, the TD-50KV-RM offers customized performance with a unique pad configuration, full-size 22-inch bass drum, and the next-generation MAATS AIRlift electronic drum rack from Randall May International. This powerful combination takes the premier V-Drums experience to new heights, further enhancing the class-leading playability and expression of the TD-50 series.

The MAATS AIRlift incorporates two patented technologies that partner seamlessly to create the ultimate electronic drum rack. "For the first time, electronic drum pads now respond and feel like performing on acoustic drums," said Randall May, inventor of the hardware. AIRlift technology allows the player to maintain complete control of the pads through the height adjustment range, while the Magnetic Air Adjustment Tom Suspension (MAATS) isolates the pads for both sonic isolation and true acoustic feel. The rack also eliminates the crossbar over the kick drum, providing a more authentic drum kit aesthetic.

MAATS AIRlift hardware has received glowing reviews from many professional V-Drums users. "The Randy May magnetic tom mount is brilliant," said session and touring drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, whose credits include Sting, Frank Zappa, Joni Mitchell, and numerous others. "I sat down at the V-Drums kit and played exactly as I would play any other kit and didn't need to do anything. I could just be myself."

This innovative drum rack system is a perfect match for Roland's TD-50 series, which delivers the most advanced V-Drums experience ever. The TD-50 module with Prismatic Sound Modeling provides the most impressive and wide-ranging sounds to date, and the snare and ride pads are equipped with multi-ele-

ment sensor systems for detailed playability that forever blurs the lines between digital and acoustic.

The rack may be purchased separately to pair with other V-Drums kits. Similarly, the MAATS tom mounts can be purchased as individual components and are compatible with the racks for these V-Drums kits as well.

The TD-50KV-RM set features a custom pad configuration that includes two PD-108-RM V-Pads (one rack tom and one side snare) and two PD-128-RM V-Pads (floor toms). Also included is the custom 22-inch KD-A22P-RM Bass Drum, which offers big acoustic presence with its all-maple shell and chrome hardware. The bass drum comes equipped with Roland's innovative air-damper mechanics, providing stable and accurate triggering with authentic acoustic feel. The bass drum and pad shells in the TD-50KV-RM feature stylish silver matte wraps that nicely complement the brushed-metal look of the MAATS AIRlift rack system.

To learn more about the TD-50KV-RM Custom V-Drums, visit Roland.com.

TOCA

World Percussion Jamal Drum Series Introduced

Toca Percussion has announced the release of the new World Percussion Jamal Drum Series. Designed in collaboration with doumbek Master Jamal Mohamed, the new Jamal Drum Series features Mazhar Drums, a Riq, and three new Frame Drums. Each of these drums are adorned with Jamal's signature logo and constructed of durable, lightweight PVC with a dark red painted finish.

One of the most popular and ubiquitous world percussion instruments, the frame drum is commonly defined by the fact that the drumhead's width is greater than the depth of the frame. Jamal's frame drums also include a tunable system and come in 10-, 12-, and 14-inch sizes that are sold individually or as a set of three.

The Riq is a traditional, Middle-Eastern instrument similar to a tambourine and is an important instrument in both folk and classical music throughout the Arabic culture. It traditionally has a round frame, jingles, and a thin, translucent head. The Jamal Riq comes with five sets of dimpled jingles and a 10-inch durable, synthetic head that produces a time-honored, classic sound.

The Mazhar is a large, heavy tambourine, again traditionally used in Arabic music. Its single head is considerably thicker than that of the Riq. The Jamal Series Mazhar has a 12-inch head and is available with or without dimpled brass jingles.

Born in Lebanon and raised in Chicago, Jamal Mohamed takes advantage of his wide cultural experiences, transporting them into diverse musical experiences which include live and studio



work with Sting, Mark O'Connor, and Giovanni Hidalgo. These are but a few of his credits, augmenting a long list of recordings for film and television documentaries and specials. In addition, Jamal is a widely acclaimed educator and clinician whose work has carried him literally across the globe: numerous percussion appearances in Bali and Jakarta festivals, opera soloist spots in Hong Kong and Beijing, and a variety of rhythmic roles from Yukon to Mexico City.

Jr. Cajons

A full-sized cajon can be too much for smaller bodies and small hands to play without trouble. With this thought in mind, Toca has introduced their Jr. Cajons.

The Maple tapa, or playing surface, is slanted for easy playing. The body features bright colors that pop in the classroom. It measures in at 13 3/4-inches tall, which is considered to be the perfect size for early childhood learning. Further benefits of having cajons in the classroom are the ability to teach improvisational skills, playing together in small and large groups, and discovering and participating in music from around the world.



Two New Boomwhacker Sets

Boomwhackers Tuned Percussion Tubes are one of the most popular instruments in music education and music therapy around the world. Durable and easy to grip, there is no limit to their uses or fun. They come in many different set arrangements that cater to specific types and sizes of groups.



The first new addition to those sets is the Boomwhackers 16 Tube Activity Pack, which is great for smaller groups and has activities you can start right out of the box. It includes two sets of the basic C major Diatonic set along with two CDs featuring games and two books with CD sets featuring activities that can be done indoor or outdoors and feature movement. This set is great for libraries, day camps, schools, or wellness activities.

The second new set is the Boomwhackers Classroom Activity Pack, and it has everything a teacher or group facilitator could need to get started with Boomwhackers. Good for up to 25 players and a facilitator, this set includes a free DVD, *Play Boomwhackers*, that features Boomwhackers Beatz: colorful, bouncing Beatz that let kids know when to play. This set also includes two sets of the basic C major Diatonic set, a set of five Chromatic notes, a C major Pentatonic set, eight Octavator Caps that lower the pitch of a tube by an octave when placed on one end of the tube, and a pack of Chroma-Notes Stick-Ons.

New Percussion Tray and Lightweight Stand

The Toca Percussion Tray is great for holding multiple percussion accessories such as shakers, cowbells, tambourines, and even bongos. It includes a fully adjustable stand with double braced legs and is perfect for any drumset player or percussionist.



Generally speaking, the drummer and percussionist have the biggest and most complex instrument setup in any band. Multiple drums, stands, cymbals, clamps, and foot pedals make for many heavy trips to and from the equipment truck. Toca's new Lightweight Percussion Stand helps alleviate some of the drudgery without compromising on sturdiness. Made of solid, black powder-coated steel, this stand holds djembes and doumbeks. It is 12-inches in diameter, weighs just 2½ pounds, and features a cushioned rubber top ring that prevents shell damage, while a rubberized bottom ring prevents slippage. **RIS**

INDUSTRY NEWS

GRETSCH

135 Year Anniversary

Founded in Brooklyn, New York in 1883, Gretsch Drums is an iconic American drum brand manufactured in Ridgeland, South Carolina. In 2015, American drum designers and manufacturer Drum Workshop (DW Drums) acquired the rights to develop, produce, market, and distribute Gretsch Drums. For 135 years, this award-winning company has been providing “That Great Gretsch Sound” to drummers around the globe. Noted artists include Phil Collins, Charlie Watts, Vinnie Colaiuta, Cindy Blackman, and Taylor Hawkins, among others.

For more information, visit gretschdrums.com.

Gretsch Brings Drum Making Heritage to Asia

Mike Johnston took the Gretsch 135th Anniversary drumset on tour throughout Asia this July. The six drum clinic dates, in association with Aquarian and Vater, saw Mike visiting China, Taiwan, Thailand, and Indonesia.

Gretsch, one of America’s oldest drum manufacturers, celebrated 135 years in the business with the launch of its 135th Anniversary drumset. This limited-edition Broadcaster kit has been finished with Exotic Ribbon Mahogany outer ply in either Dark Emerald or Classic Mahogany. Evocative of the forties, the anniversary drumsets are completed with the Gretsch Round Badge and etched single-flange 301 hoops with vintage-style claw hooks—the epitome of old school drum styling, with modern construction.

Mike Johnston revolutionized drum education when he introduced his award-winning online drum lessons. Mikeslessons.com offers both live and pre-recorded drum lessons as well as international drum camps. He left touring in 2006 to concentrate on education and has since taught and performed in hundreds of clinics and festivals including PASIC, The London Drum Show, and La Bag Show, Paris.

Commenting on the tour, Mike said “I am so incredibly excited to share my teachings and my enthusiasm for the drums with the amazing people of China, Thailand, Taiwan, and Indonesia! More than just grooves and fills, I look forward to introducing the clinic attendees to the many benefits that the drums can bring to your life. My goal for this clinic run is that there is an equal combination of inspiration and information.” He will be also playing songs for the first time from his new band, Man on The Moon.

INNOVATIVE PERCUSSION

Jasso Named Digital Marketing Coordinator

Innovative Percussion, Inc. is proud to welcome Nick Jasso as the company’s Digital Marketing Coordinator. Jasso will oversee the company’s digital media design efforts and assist with customer and dealer relations.

Jasso earned his AA in Fine Arts from Victor Valley College and was also a part of the Riverside City College Marching Band. Jasso’s musical background includes marching with Impulse Drum & Bugle Corps and Phantom Regiment Drum & Bugle Corps. Nick has experience teaching with The Academy Drum & Bugle Corps, Sacramento Mandarins, Phantom Regiment, and most recently with the 10-time WGI World Champion Ayala High School drumline.

He has designed and created video commercials for music industry companies that include Innovative Percussion, Remo, The Xymox House, KHS America, and Hoshino USA, along with performance groups such as Ayala High School and Matrix Indoor Percussion. Additionally, Nick has been an Educational Artist for Innovative Percussion since 2013.

IP Welcomes Marimbist Wei-Chen Lin

Wei-Chen Lin is a respected marimba performer and chamber, contemporary, and orchestral musician. Born in 1982 in Tainan City, Taiwan, Wei-Chen is currently based in Los Angeles and Shanghai, China. Wei-Chen began to study piano at the



Nick Jasso



Wei-Chen Lin



Pete Escovedo



Karl Latham

age of five and percussion at the age of 12. Wei-Chen's recent marimba repertoire includes the music of J.S. Bach, Camille Saint-Saens, Francesco Tárrega, and Lyle Mays. His passion for new music led him to form Hai-Dao Contemporary Ensemble. Wei-Chen is a member of the board committee for the Taiwan Percussion Association, a member of the PAS Keyboard Committee, and a percussionist for the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra.

Pete Escovedo Joins IP

One of the most influential percussionists in music, Pete Escovedo's career spans more than 50 years of collaboration with such artists as Santana, Tito Puente, Herbie Hancock, Mongo Santamaria, Bobby McFerrin, Woody Herman, Stephen Stills, Billy Cobham, George Duke, Boz Scaggs, Al Jarreau, Chick Corea, and more. He performed twice for President Obama at the White House, has been on countless recordings with seven albums to his own credit, and has received numerous awards over his prestigious career.

IP Welcomes Karl Latham

IP is proud to welcome award-winning, exceptionally versatile jazz drummer Karl Latham. Karl's drumming has allowed him to collaborate with some of music's most influential artists including Bernie Worrell, Clark Terry, Michael Urbaniak, Edgar and Johnny Winter, The Dizzy Gillespie Alumni All-Stars, Dave Samuels, and many others. He's performed on Broadway shows like *Bring It On*, *Hamilton*, and *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. Latham often partners with bassist Mark Egan, collaborating on years of creative projects together, and is currently an adjunct percussion instructor at Drew University, County College of Morris, and Passaic County Community College. He's been voted the number seven Drummer in the Annual Jazz Station Awards—Best of Jazz and is also in Drummerworld's Top 500 Drummers.

PROTECTION RACKET

New Artists Join Roster

Protection Racket is delighted to announce that Daisy Palmer (Paloma Faith), Josh MacIntyre (Marmozets), Ollie Sears (Albert Lee), Darren Beckett (Brandon Flowers), Dave Anderson (The South), Che Albrighton (Jamie Lawson), and many more have become part of their artist family.

Daisy Palmer is currently touring with Paloma Faith and her own band, Mesadorm. Her many achievements include being co-writer of the soundtrack for the first season of the award-winning *Peaky Blinders* along with members of the band Feverish, with whom she also plays drums.

Voted number seven in MusicRadar's Best British Rock Drummers in November 2017, Josh MacIntyre of the Marmozets exhibits the perfect combination of technique, showmanship, and hard-hitting power when putting down his thrilling drum parts. He can be seen with the Marmozets at Download this summer, and their new album, *Knowing What You Know Now*, is expected soon.

Ollie Sears is currently the drummer for Grammy award-win-

ning guitarist Albert Lee, who recruited him after seeing his YouTube videos. Master beats composer Darren Beckett has a talent for creating original ground-breaking beats that has made him the drummer of choice for The Killers front man Brandon Flowers, Madeleine Peyroux, and Emile Simon. David Anderson is currently the drummer with The South, the latest incarnation of The Beautiful South, who will be touring the UK this summer. Che Albrighton, drummer with the Ivor Novello award-winning singer-songwriter Jamie Lawson, will be playing with Jamie on his sell-out tour supporting Ed Sheeran across the UK and Europe.

Other new members of the Protection Racket clan are Dex Muldoon, currently touring with Haux; professional session drummer Pete Bill, who is currently working as drum tech and engineer with Kaz Rodriguez; Samuel Oyeniyi of the three-piece band Dreaming of Jupiter, who just released their first single "Let Me Down" and will be touring Ireland this summer; and Leo Friere with the American rock band Wheatus, currently working on their seventh studio album and playing live dates across the summer in the USA.

ROLAND

New Artist Relations Centers

On May 8, Roland held a grand-opening celebration of its Artist Relations Center, located at its U.S. headquarters in Los Angeles. The event included a ribbon-cutting ceremony that also kicked off the company's #TotallyDrums party, the culmination of a day-long event where Roland launched several new products in its V-Drums line.

On June 27, Roland held a grand opening celebration of its Nashville Artist Relations Center, located within Love Shack Studios in Nashville's Music Row neighborhood. The event, which was attended by leading members of the Nashville music community, included a ribbon-cutting ceremony that also kicked off Roland's activities around the annual Summer NAMM Show in Nashville. The facility's co-location within Love Shack Studios will give Roland especially close access to the artists, producers, engineers, instrumentalists, and music business professionals who often work in Nashville's Music Row and Berry Hill neigh-



L-R at center: Terry Lewis, Leslie Lewis, and Jimmy Jam cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the official opening of Roland's Los Angeles Artist Relations Center

borhoods, which are well-known as a hub for state-of-the-art recording studios and as a close-knit community of top music talent.

Founded to serve the needs of current and prospective Roland artists, both centers will be a hub for a variety of activities, including product support, content creation, social media initiatives, interviews, sessions, unique streaming events, photo shoots, gear demos, rehearsals, and much more. The Los Angeles center is staffed with audio and video product support specialists, artist-relations liaisons, and administrative personnel. The Nashville center is staffed with personnel specializing in Roland and BOSS equipment. Both are under the direction of Brian Alli, Roland's Vice President of Global Influencer Relations.

The opening of these centers is part of an updated corporate artist relations strategy. This ongoing initiative will bolster Roland's global network to better serve Roland's artist community. These facilities join other Roland artist relations centers in Vancouver and Toronto, Berlin, and Tokyo.

To learn more, visit Roland.com.

TOCA

Anthony Almonte Added to Artist Roster

Currently on tour with Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul and having performed over the past four years with Kid Creole and the Coconuts, Anthony Almonte has signed with Toca Percussion as an endorsing artist.

Anthony's work around the New York music scene is well known, having recorded as a percussionist/vocalist for Kid Creole and the Coconuts, Edwin Bonilla y Su Son, and New York-based salsa bands Grupo Arcano and Los Hacheros. Anthony also recorded on Little Steven's single and music video, "Merry Christmas (I Don't Want to Fight Tonight)" and the recently released *Soulfire Tour 2017 Live* album.



In addition to his current gig, Almonte has performed with a wide range of artists, including Bruce Springsteen, Paul McCartney, Peter Wolf, Paquito D'Rivera, Andy Montanez, and Dave Valentin. At Thalia Spanish Theater, he performed in Cali Salsa Pal Mundo's "History of Salsa" as well as for AfroTango with world renowned bandoneonist Raul Jaurena.

Efkay Selected as Canadian Distributor

Since RBI Music purchased Toca Percussion in 2017, it has experienced rapid growth, and demand for its product has been strong around the world. To help meet those demands, RBImusic has appointed Efkay Music as the new distributor for Toca products in the Canadian marketplace.

Lane Davy, Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing

for RBI Music, says "The response to the Toca brand that we have received from dealers and consumers has been nothing short of remarkable. We knew that drummers and percussionists had been anxious to get Toca products for some time before we purchased the company, but we were overwhelmed by the outpouring of demand."

"We've been in business since 1956 and have this market covered with best sales force in Canada," said Howard Kalinsky, President of EFKAY Music. Being the distributor of choice for such marquis brands as Ibanez, Tama, Kurzweil, and Orange, among others, made the choice of working with RBI Music and Toca Percussion an easy one. "Toca has an excellent reputation for quality and sound, and there is great enthusiasm for their products up here in Canada."

Sean Paddock Joins Artist Roster

Playing on tour with Kenney Chesney for the past 22 years has given Sean Paddock a special perspective on the music industry. He knows what it takes to keep a good gig and be in demand. "Your playing has to be on point and your gear has to not only sound great, but stand up to the rigors of the road," he says. While he just signed with Toca as an official endorser, Sean has been using Toca percussion in his rig for the past 20 years. "Their products sound phenomenal and really fit into my style of playing. I use the aluminum shakers on stage as it fits with the acoustic live setting, and I have a set of congas to give some Latin flair when working in the studio."



Sean caught his break in 1996 when he traveled to Nashville and a friend let him know that Kenny Chesney needed a drummer. He auditioned and landed the gig, which he's been playing ever since. When not recording or touring with Kenney, Sean has been playing with such rock and country icons as Vince Gill, Sammy Hagar, John Mellencamp, Steve Miller, and George Strait, among others. His televised appearances include *The Grammys*, *Austin City Limits*, *Sound Stage*, the ACM, CMA, and AMA award shows, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, *The Late Show with David Letterman*, *Good Morning America*, and *The Today Show*. Sean can also be seen in many of Kenny Chesney's music videos, as well as the *Summer In 3D* movie. **RIS**

FROM THE RHYTHM! DISCOVERY CENTER COLLECTION

YAMAHA MTS-9214 MARCHING SNARE AND 8200 BASS DRUM

Donated by Yamaha Corporation of America
2010-05-01 and 2010-05-02

To celebrate the 2009 opening of the Rhythm! Discovery Center in Indianapolis, The Yamaha Corporation of America contributed two drums used by World Champion DCI organizations. The first, used by the seven-time DCI World Champion Cavaliers in their 2004 DCI Championship show, is an MTS-9214 SFZ snare drum. This 12-lug, 14x13-inch drum was custom designed for the Cavaliers with a 6-ply, all-maple shell finished in a silver lacquer. The theme for their show that year was James Bond, so the color was intended to emulate the finish of Bond's car. In addition, the standard hardware on the drum was customized with a Dark Chrome finish. The drum also features a quick-release, 10-strand snare strainer for ease of changing heads, die-cast aluminum suspension rings and rims, thick-walled aluminum lug posts, and Stabilizer Power Posts, which assist in the quick-release process for changing the bottom head.

The 8200 series 18x16-inch bass drum was used by the nine-time DCI World Champion Cadets in their 2003 and 2004 shows. Made specifically for the Cadets, it features a 7-ply maple shell with a custom bronze finish. The drum also features birch hoops, eight aluminum die-cast lugs, and solid, ribbed-steel claws.

