

PERCUSSIVE NOTES

Vol. 62, No.5, October 2024



PIA S I C 2024

NOV. 13-16 | INDIANAPOLIS



PREVIEW EDITION

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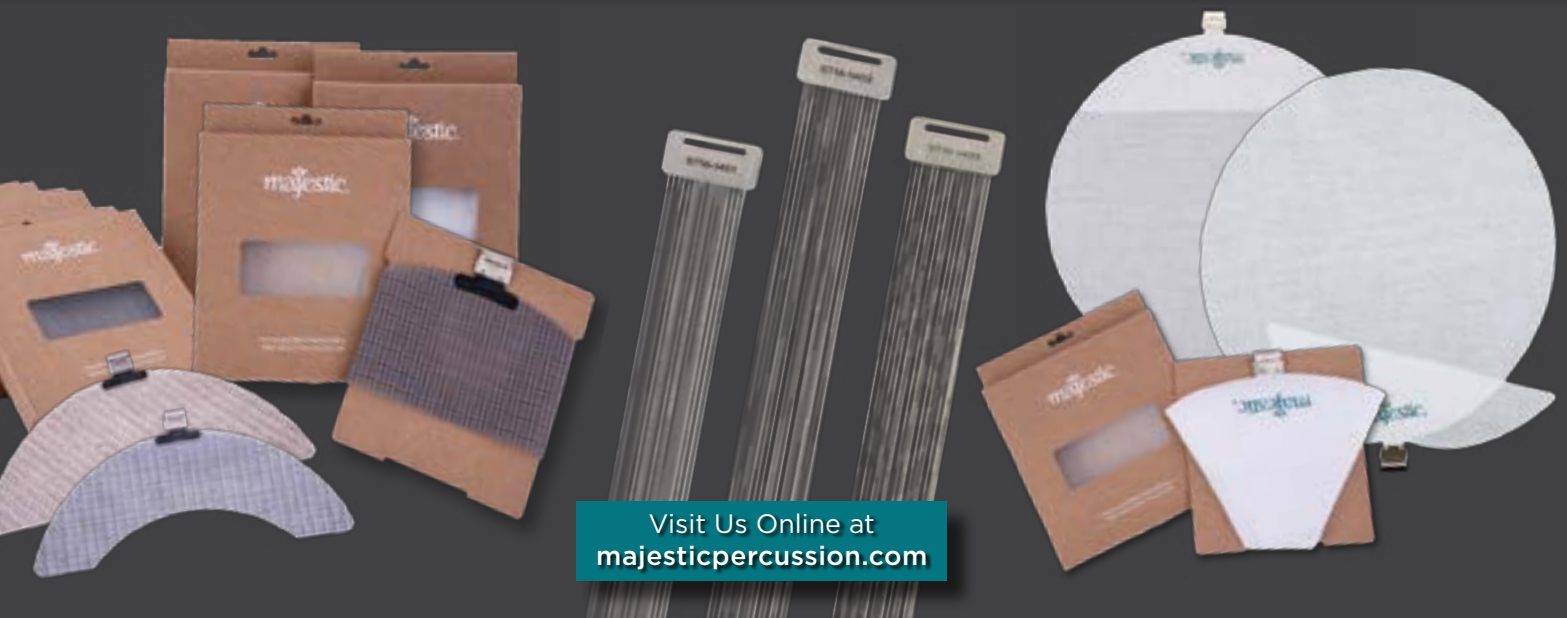


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Contents

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DRUMSET

- 6 Peter Erskine: The Use of Melody in Teaching Drumset
By Colleen Clark
- 8 A Conversation with Gregory Hutchinson
By Colleen Clark
- 10 Practice to Performance: A Drummer's Journey to Broadway and Beyond
By Quinton Robinson

NEW MUSIC/RESEARCH

- 12 Drumset Beyond its Roots
By Logan Ball and Sean Hamilton

TECHNOLOGY

- 20 Dipping Your Toes into Madness: Living with Bipolar Disorder
By Dr. Kathryn Irwin

KEYBOARD

- 22 Traveling With Audio
By Dr. Lynn Vartan
- 24 Exploring the Marimba Repertoire
By Adélaïde Ferrière
- 28 Ninkasi Percussion Group, Garrett Arney, Daniel Berg & Anders Åstrand
- 32 Xylophoning in the Kitchen with Jonathan Singer: Celebrating 100 Years of George Hamilton Green Lessons
By Nancy Zeltsman
- 36 Texture Over Melody: Creating Sonic Landscapes
By Austin Keck

COLUMNS

- 5 President's Message
- 88 New Percussion Literature and Recordings

RESEARCH

- 38 PASIC 2024 Scholarly Research Sessions

INTERACTIVE DRUMMING

- 40 Experiential Wellness and Interactive Drumming
By Robert Damm

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- 44 PASIC 2024 Health & Wellness Sessions
By Hannah Weaver

EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 46 Teaching Percussion to Students on the Autism Spectrum
By Sean Neely
- 48 I Got Stuck as a Self-Made Percussionist – And Then Realized Why
By Adam Tan
- 51 FUNdamentals First!
By Oliver Molina
- 54 Enhance Drumming Education with Psychology
By Frank Ferraro, Ph.D.

MARCHING

- 56 Exploring the Great Indoors: RCC Indoor Percussion's PASIC Debut
By Genevieve Hilburn
- 60 The Evolution of Philippine Drum & Bell Lyre Traditions
By Satur Tiamson
- 64 The Lost Works of Charley Wilcoxon
By Dan Piccolo

SYMPHONIC

- 66 Orchestrating Your Dream Gig: How to Get a Drumset Gig with an Orchestra and Get Called Back Again!
By Sean J. Kennedy
- 68 Playing the Cymbals
By Edoardo Albino Giachino
- 70 Principal Percussion Duties
By Josh Jones
- 72 "Histoire Du Soldat": the Original Setup
By David Valdés
- 76 A Complete Timpani Curriculum: Understanding the ideas and skills you need to master this instrument
By Duncan Patton

WORLD

- 79 Dancing on Steel
By Dr. Jeannine Remy
- 82 Solo Ideas for Timbales, Bongos, and Congas: Victor Rendón, Wilson "Chembo" Corniel, Yasuyo Kimura
By Victor Rendón
- 86 Famoro Dioubate and the Bala from Guinea, West Africa
By Michael Markus

PASIC 2024 Daily Schedule



PERCUSSIVE NOTES

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Opening the *Percussive Notes* PASIC Preview issue is exciting as that means PASIC is right around the corner.

In a few weeks percussionists from all over the world will travel to Indianapolis to attend what many consider the greatest weekend of the year!

What makes PASIC truly exceptional is its blend of world-class performances, renowned artists, educational masterclasses, student competitions, and vibrant late-night hangs. Beyond the professional recharge, I think most agree what energizes us all is the nurturing of lasting friendships and the strong camaraderie among our members. The synergy and energy are electric! We have begun a tradition of celebrating membership milestones before the Friday evening concert at PASIC, honoring "legacy" members who have attended 40 or more conventions. It is profoundly moving to see these long-standing members recognized in front of a diverse audience. My hope is that attendees feel this deep connection and pride in being part of PAS, and that it inspires many to continue their journey with PAS.

I always look forward to reading the highlights in the preview issue, which sparks excitement as we enter the final stretch of preparation. Joshua Simonds, the PAS staff, the Board of Directors, and the Committee Chairs have done an outstanding job curating PASIC 2024 with a rich array of genres, artists, and programming, ensuring a convention that caters to a wide range of interests. I encourage our younger members to not only explore their personal areas of interest — the aspects of percussion that first captivated them — but also to use this concentrated

weekend as an opportunity to branch out and discover new facets of the percussion world.

New this year is a partnership with WGI to bring the incredible "RCC Drum Line" from Riverside, California to the PASIC international stage. In addition to a showcase performance, the RCC staff will lead an interactive Movement for Drum Line masterclass, a Culture Building/Program Management session, and a design clinic.

In addition to featuring numerous outstanding sessions, the popular exhibit hall is shaping up to be one of the largest in the history of PAS. There is nothing quite like the experience of walking through the exhibit hall, where you can immerse yourself in the industry scene and witness the latest innovations in product development, new compositions, and the continually evolving craftsmanship of the percussion industry.

Regarding what I refer to as "PAS 360," a term that reflects the full year of PAS programs and initiatives, I am excited to announce that PAS leadership has dedicated the past nine months to rigorous strategic planning. For the first time in our organization's history, we enlisted an external consulting firm to conduct an audit, reflect on operations, and guide the staff and Board of Directors in aligning vision and enhancing clarity for the future of PAS. The Board of Directors has unanimously approved a dynamic plan that will provide a solid framework for moving our organization forward. We owe much of this progress to those of you who participated in our surveys and contributed to our discussions with Taylor Advising over the past nine months. We look forward to sharing more details as



we enter the action phase beginning in 2025

As my tenure as PAS President comes to a close, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the trust you've placed in me. It has been an honor to serve our organization over the past 30 years in various roles, particularly on the Executive Committee for the past eight years. I extend my thanks to Past-Presidents Michael Burritt, Chris Hanning, Brian Zator, and Julie Hill, as well as Executive Director Joshua Simonds, for their support and council.

Lastly, PAS is in excellent hands with the leadership team — Thad Anderson, Lamon Lawhorn, Megan Arns, and Jules Thomas. Their dedication, combined with an exceptional Board of Directors and a forward-thinking strategic plan, promises to chart a bright future for PAS.

See you in Indy!

Julie Davila

Peter Erskine: The Use of Melody in Teaching Drumset

By Colleen Clark

Peter Erskine; the name is synonymous with legend. Winner of two Grammy awards and nine nominations, having played on over 700 albums and film scores, and with the biggest names in music, Erskine continues making his mark in music to this day. As a bandleader or co-leader he has released over 50 albums (and counting).

What is perhaps most intriguing about Erskine's output and career is the diversity of styles he has mastered. From Stan Kenton to Maynard Ferguson, Steps Ahead, Joni Mitchell, The Yellowjackets, Weather Report, The Brecker Brothers, Steely Dan, and numerous symphony orchestras, including Chicago, L.A., Berlin, and London, (this is a very short list), his career continues to span styles and spaces. There is no question that Erskine has been part of some of the most influential groups in music. His ongoing output will continue to stand the test of time.

Colleen Clark: Please provide a preview of your PASIC clinic for those who will be able to attend, and add a little more information for the folks who may not be able to attend PASIC this year.

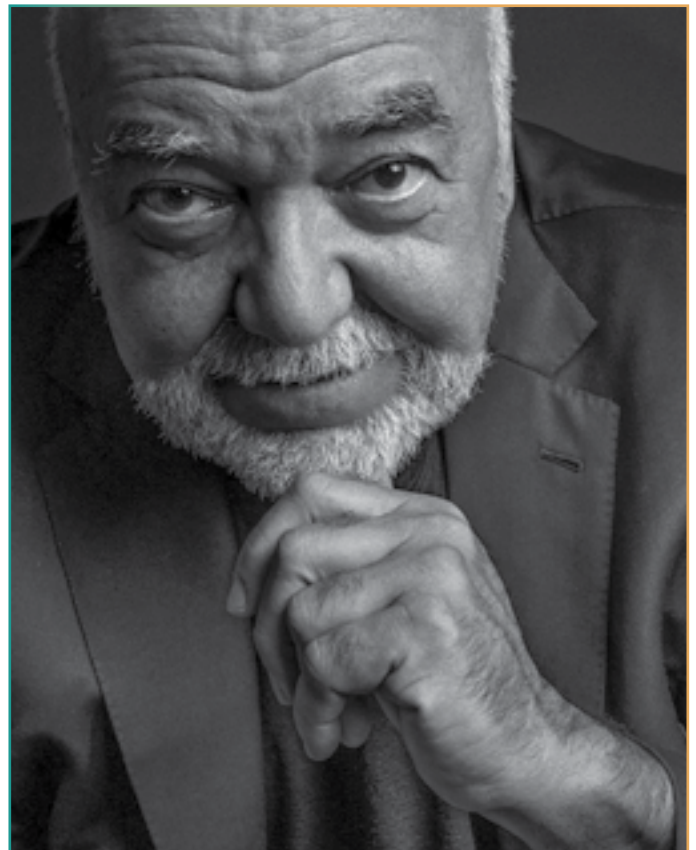
Peter Erskine: Here's an overview or context to what I'll be speaking about. Melody is something that is not taught so often to drummers. It's not even taught so often to saxophonists, trumpet players, pianists, or anyone else in jazz institutions. We've gotten so concerned with teaching improvisation and helping students navigate harmonic landscapes, but we have overlooked the simple act of being able to play a melody.

For horn players, where can they take a breath? When should they take a breath? Which notes should be rearticulated versus tied or legato? What kind of emphasis or accent?

As you know, I asked you how to pronounce "Colleen"; I don't know how else you might pronounce it, but it seemed good form to ask. And so, musicians should ask themselves, "How do I pronounce this?" or "What story am I trying to

convey here? How should this melody be played?" In terms of general musicality, this addresses what I think has been an oversight.

On a more practical level for drummers, it's very easy to get wrapped up with technical concerns. Students at any number of stages are wrestling with the instrument and with themselves: "What hand do I start this with?" for example.



PETER ERSKINE

If a drummer is thinking melodically, I'll suggest that we consider Joe Morello. Think of the solo he plays on the Bru-beck studio recording of "Take Five." Where did Joe Morello's playing come from? And then we can go back further.

Thinking in melodic terms takes away the pressure of the technical expectation. A pivotal recording was made by Max Roach and Buddy Rich called *Rich vs. Roach*. They both have their own bands on either side of the studio in the stereo imaging. The two bands play the melody, and then Buddy takes the first solo. In typical Buddy fashion, it's a snare drum-centric solo. It's exciting. It's great. It's all the more amazing when you realize he's playing on calf [heads], and bass drum pedals were not marvels of technology back then. And yet, somehow, he's managing to play lots of amazing stuff. Okay, so wow, that was great.

Then the band comes back in, and now it's Max Roach's turn. For his solo, the bass player starts walking steady quarter notes. The bass player is playing the changes – the harmonic structure of the tune. Max's solo is like a horn solo. Now, as a young drummer – I think I was six or seven when I heard this – this made a very strong impression because the Buddy solo was amazing, but I couldn't even begin to identify with it. But the Max thing, I immediately sensed, "I can do that. That's attainable." That's not beyond the scope of imagining. So that ignites a creative spark in a young drummer because he or she goes, "That I can do. That's possible."

In the teaching of playing a melody, I've approached it by utilizing the drummer's dominant hand for playing the higher notes of the melody. Horn players will generally emphasize those notes, because it takes a bit more air pressure to play the higher notes [sings a Charlie Parker melody as an example]. It also creates in the mind's eye a melodic shape. It's kind of a cheat or a trick to choose the dominant hand for the higher notes. That will help the drummer play a more convincing melody instead of just using alternate sticking, the goal ultimately being not training drummers to be able to play bebop melodies, but the goal being that when they improvise, they don't have to search for a sticking. It's automatic because, hopefully, they've spent enough time practicing melodies, so then when they start [sings and emphasizes higher notes of the phrase], they're free from any technical considerations or second guesses or doubts. It will come naturally.

It's like when we tell our students, "Being in this class is not so that you can recite these little arcane bits of historic data or trivia ten years down the road, but so you learn *how* to learn." You learn "how to"; that's why you have to learn all this stuff. Even though it's annoying, it's not to turn you into an expert in something you're not interested in, it's to turn you into an expert in what you want to do.

The ultimate goal is to free the inner voice of the drummer so that he or she doesn't need to be concerned with the "how." You study mallets; you've got a run – a scaler passage. When

you're first starting out, left or right? After a while you can see it coming and you just know, right-hand start. Then you don't get tangled up at the end of it. And that's just purely from the doing. That's basically the approach. It's creating three-dimensional melodic playing on basically what is considered a two-dimensional instrument – the snare drum – and then turning that into a whole universe of musicality on the kit.

Clark: That's fantastic. You had mentioned one record that highly inspired you, *Rich vs. Roach*. Can you recommend some other records for listeners who aren't as familiar with Max?

Erskine: The *Freedom Now Suite* recording has some terrific examples. Any recording of the quintet Max had with Clifford Brown would qualify. Let's not just limit this to Max. The things we hear first tend to make very strong impressions. I'm going to throw in a couple of others. The Art Blakey album *The African Beat*. It starts off with a prayer. And then there's a song; the English title is "There is Happiness in Love." Blakey plays one of the greatest drum solos I've ever heard. As a melody, it's not an aria from an opera, but thematically, it's so powerful, and that's an important component of melody. For me, that would qualify.

Another one is *Gretsch Night at Birdland*, where Blakey and Philly Joe [Jones] accompany one another and trade solos. Despite the fact that one gets the ride cymbal pattern turned around for a minute, the melodic content of both of their solos is so great.

On another note, I came across an image of the Louie Bellson *Drum Primer* book. On the cover it says, "Stick control, music counting, and reading thru the melody way." One thing Louie said, which really stuck with me, was at a PAS convention. He said, "Chick Webb: we got it all from him, Pete." It was unsolicited. I didn't ask him, "What do you think of Chick Webb?" He just said, "Chick Webb: we got it all from him." If Louie Bellson says so, I believe it. **PN**

DRUMSET

ART CRUZ Drumset Clinic/Performance Rhythm Alchemy: Collaboration and Personal Expression

This session will be a musical journey and timeline of Art's career with Lamb Of God and review Art's 5 mindsets: Facing the challenges while entering an established act; navigating pivots in your career; getting uncomfortable; building relationships; and taking your playing to the next level.

Art Cruz rose to prominence as one of the metal genre's top touring drummers. With Lamb Of God he made his recording debut. Cruz commands his position with passion, sweat, and expansive dynamics, reenergizing Lamb Of God's overall sound.

A Conversation with Gregory Hutchinson

By Colleen Clark

Gregory Hutchinson will go down in history as one of the quintessential drummers in music, having made over 200 recordings, ranging from Betty Carter in the late 1980s, to Ray Brown and Roy Hargrove in the 1990s, and into the present with Joshua Redman, Kurt Rosenwinkel, and beyond. Check out the recent release of Roy Hargrove's previously unheard 1993 live performance of *The Love Suite: In Mahogany*, from Jazz at Lincoln Center's Blue Engine Records. You'll hear a fiery Hutchinson alongside longtime Hargrove rhythm section bandmates Marc Cary and the inimitable Rodney Whitaker.

Known simply as "Hutch" in the jazz world, Hutchinson is not easily definable. As a 53-year-old, he released his debut album, *Da Bang*, a tribute to hip-hop. Hutchinson's indefinability is rooted in his deep understanding of what it means to be a rhythm-section player — a supporter. Hutch always puts the music first, making him one of the top-call sidemen in the world. This is part of Hutchinson's fabric and a topic that he'll cover in his PASIC clinic.

Colleen Clark: I'm so excited to speak with you. On behalf of PAS, we are over-the-moon thrilled that you have agreed to be at PASIC with us.

Gregory Hutchinson: Thank you. I'm totally into it. It's going to be a lot of fun. I do a lot of teaching, a lot of online lessons and such. So I have a way of communicating the joy and the love of what we do — especially what I've been able to do.

You know, the business is so weird. I always feel like I'm putting myself in this underdog position because I love what I do. The thing that matters to me the most is the respect of my peers, which I have. Sometimes I just say, "That's what it is." I like what I've been able to do, the people I've inspired, and the generations of musicians after. So we have to keep the music alive, you know? That's so important.

Clark: Could you provide some insight into the premise of your PASIC clinic and add a little more for the folks who won't be able to attend PASIC this year?

Hutchinson: I've been fortunate enough to play music for a long time, and in doing that I've had the opportunity to play with Common, Ledisi, Harry Connick Jr., Joshua Redmond, Diane Reeves, Betty Carter, and so on, and the thing about music is that all music is the same. It doesn't matter where you come from. It's the pulse and the soul of it. In my clinics and play-alongs, I like to show that as a percussionist-drummer, I pride myself in being able to play any style of music. That's what we should really gear ourselves towards.

Most people know me for playing a lot of straight-ahead,



GREGORY HUTCHINSON

but we also are here to show people that you have to listen, understand how to program the MPC or the SP404, or whatever. At the same time, what I love is what I love. I'm a fan of the instrument. I try to show all sides of the instrument and how you can have a good time. I also like to talk about what it takes to be consistent. Consistency is the thing that separates a lot of people. You have to be consistent — not over a three-week period, but over a long period of time. It's a long game. A lot of young people don't understand that. The short game is for people whose minds aren't able to deal with the fact that it's a long game.

Clark: When you sit down to practice, do you have a specific goal or are you making sounds and then adjusting around that goal?

Hutchinson: I haven't been able to sit down and practice in years. I've been so busy teaching and being on the road. But through my teaching and my students, I'm able to work out all the stuff I want to work out. I'll have my best student do all the things I'm hearing and thinking and see how it sounds. And then I know how I'm going to apply it. Now when you see one of the Instagrams, I like to show how you have to go from zero to ten — how you have to be able to get on the stage and be right there. It's not like I've been sitting down all day. I just put the camera on like, "Okay. Let's go!" Whatever happens, happens.

I practiced so many years growing up and in college, but practice is practice. If you can't do what you're trying to pull off in the moment, then why practice? My whole thing is to be able to do that stuff in the moment. Why sit in a room for seven or eight hours trying to do something when in the moment you freeze up? No, I'm about, okay, let me try this. Let's see what happens. And if it doesn't work the first time, I understand where it didn't work. And then I come back. That's something Tony [Williams] taught me. That's something I learned from Elvin [Jones], [Art] Blakey, Art Taylor, being around of all these masters growing up in New York City.

Clark: What do you hope attendees will take away from your clinic?

Hutchinson: First, I want them to walk away understanding that the instrument is a beautiful thing. Second, it's for everybody. Everyone can do it. Anything that you want to do in life — let's forget about the music — are you disciplined enough to chase your dreams? That's the thing I talk about. You've got plenty of people to talk about drums. The thing is, people who are successful are the ones who mentally have the capacity to pursue the dream and don't give up when things don't go the way that they *hope* they would go. I mean, all of friends can play. What separates one from the other? It's just the mental capacity. That's what I hope that

the people take away, not a paradiddle or a flam. That's not what's it's about. It's about, "Am I showing you a way that mentally you could do what you want to do no matter what level you play the instrument on?" That's the key.

I don't cater to people who can already play. I cater to the ones who are like, "I only have time to do it on the weekend," and so then I'm going to teach them to be the best weekend drummers in the world. That's how I play the instrument. We're in the rhythm section, so we'll talk about that, too. How do you play and do what you like to do, but not get in the way and just stay in the rhythm section? So we talk about the way it's done in pop music and the differences of being in jazz music and doing it that way, which are two different things, but it's all musical.

It's not a mystery; it's not magic. The time you put in is what you get back, but also the imagination you have is what leads you to be different. We have a lot of people who sound like each other, but when the day is done, do you want to say Greg Hutchinson sounds like so-and-so? No, Greg Hutchinson influenced these people, and Greg Hutchinson was influenced by these people. When he left, these are the people he influenced. So that's what we want. **PN**

DRUMSET

ERIC BOUDREAULT

Virtual Drumset Clinic/Performance

Drumming, Band Leading, and Technology on a Big-Scale Production

In this workshop Eric Boudreault is going to discuss several important points related to the job of Musical Director (Band Leader) in a large production. He will explore the following points: Musicality, knowing your digital music programs, using the right tools for the job (computer, DAW, music instruments, etc.), playing your musical instrument in the service of the music and the show, how to maintain a very high level of performance at all shows, and collaborating with everyone involved in a show. He will look at how you can build up a small session quickly at home to practice playing and adapting the music to the action on stage, and he will play a few pieces to demonstrate the subjects he discusses.

Eric Boudreault completed his music studies at Alma College, Sherbrooke University, and Concordia University. Eric has received two honorary degrees in music performance from Gmartell and the Conservatorio de música de Mexico. He has worked with such renowned production companies as Cavalia, Cirque du Soleil, Baldyga Group Entertainment, Samajam and many more. Eric has collaborated with many talented musicians and projects, including Michel Cusson, John Patitucci, Alex Acuna, Ron Di Lauro, John Beasley, Maria Menounos, Les Parfaits Inconnus Circus, WAZA, and many others. He spent time recording in Los Angeles as a session drummer tracking movie and television soundtracks. He published two drum books over the past 10 years, and is also a clinician and drum teacher.

Practice to Performance: A Drummer's Journey to Broadway and Beyond

By Quinton Robinson

As I prepare for my upcoming clinic at PASIC 2024, "Practice to Performance: A Drummer's Journey to Broadway and Beyond," I am excited to share the experiences and insights that have shaped my career. This clinic is designed to guide aspiring drummers through the critical steps needed to transition from practice rooms to professional stages. Throughout the session, I will emphasize four key principles that have been instrumental in my journey: disciplined practice, musical versatility, professional networking, and performance consistency.

DISCIPLINED PRACTICE

The foundation of any successful musical career is disciplined practice. My journey began with a structured practice regimen that focused on technical skills, reading music, and developing a strong sense of rhythm and timing. I encourage drummers to create a practice schedule that balances various aspects of drumming, such as rudiments, groove playing, and soloing. Consistency is crucial. Even on days when motivation is low, maintaining a routine helps build muscle memory and technical proficiency.

MUSICAL VERSATILITY

In the competitive world of music, versatility is a valuable asset. My career has spanned various genres, from jazz and gospel to musical theater and pop. This diversity has not only kept my work exciting but has also opened up numerous opportunities. I advise drummers to explore different styles and genres, learning their unique rhythms, techniques and nuances. Being able to adapt to different musical settings makes you a more valuable and sought-after musician.

For example, my work on musicals required a deep understanding of different musical styles. Each show has its unique sound, and being able to switch seamlessly between them is crucial. This versatility also extends to the ability to read and interpret complex scores quickly and accurately.



QUINTON ROBINSON

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

Building a successful career in music involves more than just playing well; it also requires effective networking. Throughout my career, forming relationships with other musicians, producers, and industry professionals has been essential. Networking can open doors to gigs, collaborations, and other opportunities that might not be accessible otherwise.

I recommend attending industry events, joining music organizations, and participating in workshops and clinics. Social media is also a powerful tool for connecting with the broader music community. Sharing your work online, engaging with other musicians, and staying active in online forums can significantly expand your professional network.

PERFORMANCE CONSISTENCY

Transitioning from practice to performance requires a high level of consistency. Performing live is a different skill set that involves not only technical proficiency but also stage presence and the ability to connect with an audience. Over the years, I have learned that every performance, whether in a small club or a large theater, demands the same level of commitment and energy.

To achieve this, I incorporate performance simulations into my practice routine. Playing along with recordings, rehearsing with a band, and even practicing in front of a mirror can help prepare for live shows. Recording practice sessions and critically reviewing them can also identify areas for improvement. Additionally, understanding the importance of mental and physical health is vital. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and sufficient rest are necessary to maintain peak performance levels.

REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS

In my clinic, I will perform numbers from my current show, *Hamilton*, and demonstrate the principles in action. I will also discuss real-world scenarios where networking has been crucial in landing gigs and advancing my career. Additionally, I will offer tips on maintaining performance consistency, including handling performance anxiety and adapting to different performance environments.

CONCLUSION

“Practice to Performance: A Drummer’s Journey to Broadway and Beyond” is not just a clinic; it is a reflection of my personal journey and the lessons I’ve learned along the way. By focusing on disciplined practice, musical versatility, professional networking, and performance consistency, I hope to inspire and equip drummers and percussionists to achieve their own musical goals. Whether you aspire to play on Broadway, tour with a band, or simply become a better musician, these principles will provide a solid foundation for your journey.

Join me at PASIC 2024, and let’s take this journey together.

Quinton “Q” Robinson is the drummer for the North American tour of the Broadway musical *Hamilton*, a role that showcases his dedication, skill, and passion for music. Q’s journey began with a natural talent for drumming, which he honed through years of practice and performance. His expertise made him a top choice for musicians and producers alike. Beyond drumming, Q is a master of Ableton Live, using the software to enhance live performances and studio recordings. Q frequently steps up as a musical director. His ability to write drum scores for musicals and lead performances with precision and creativity sets him apart. Q’s positivity, love for music, and strong sense of purpose make him a beloved figure on and off the stage. His resume includes touring with such notable artists as Avery*Sunshine, Anthony David, Bobby Brown, and Peabo Bryson. **PN**

DRUMSET

ADEWALE ADEYEMI

Drumset Clinic/Performance

African Rhythm, Groove And Improvisation

Rhythm is the foundation and principal component of which melody and harmony is based on in African music. Rhythm can also be found in the languages in Africa. Groove is simply an orchestration of African rhythms, which are mostly danceable, and improvisation in African music is based on concepts like call-and-response, intonation, repetition, etc.

Adewale Simeon Adeyemi, popularly known as Wale Adeyemi, studied music at Lagos State University and has been performing for three decades. He is one of the most sought-after musicians in Nigeria. Wale is a drummer, songwriter, composer, and producer. He has shared the stage with such musicians as Adlan Cruz, Onyeka Owenu, Hugh Masekela, and others. Wale is also a music educator, teaching in such institutions as the Creative Music Academy, Rhythm and Groove Academy, and others. He continues inspiring and impacting a new generation of drummers through his teaching platform, Creative Drummers Academy.

TREVOR LAWRENCE JR.

Drumset Masterclass

Versatility, Authenticity, and the Contemporary Drummer

Trevor will explain the concepts that he has embraced to be able to exist in multiple musical situations as a drummer. As technology progresses, we are losing the value of skill, and he will explain how important that is as well as musical and genre integrity.

Trevor Lawrence Jr. is a highly acclaimed drummer, producer, and songwriter who is a sought-after musician in the music industry. His production credits include Alicia Keys, Eminem, Herbie Hancock, Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Lionel Richie, and Bruno Mars, among many others. He has been a key contributor to several critically acclaimed albums and live performances, including touring the world with Herbie Hancock and performing at the 2022 Super Bowl halftime show with Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg. He earned Grammy recognition for his work on Eminem’s *Relapse* album along with various works he contributed to as both songwriter/producer and drummer. Trevor is also a respected educator and mentor.



Drumset Beyond its Roots

By Logan Ball and Sean Hamilton

The New Music/Research Committee is excited to present *The Drumset Beyond its Roots*, a celebration of the modern drumset outside of its traditional role as a staple in popular music. For this concert series, we sought out proposals that showcase various contemporary approaches to drumset aesthetics and performance through four broad categories:

Compositions: Covering a wide spectrum of works from solos to ensemble works, including concerti, works for percussion ensemble, chamber ensemble and mixed instrumental ensembles, and works utilizing a “deconstructed” drumset.

Improvisations: Artists whose work particularly resonates with the hosts include Milford Graves, Chris Corsano, Gerald Cleaver, Lesley Mok, Leo Suarez, Ed Blackwell, Paal Nilssen-Love, Roy Brooks, Susie Ibarra, and Han Bennink.

New Techniques: Works that extend the sounds and aesthetics of the traditional drumset. Examples of this include those by Ted Byrnes (“Tactility”), Sean Baxter (“Solo Drumkit Improvisations”), Claire Rousay (“It Is Just So Much More Difficult”), Lisa Cameron, Shigeto, and William Pasionfruit Hicks’ “Blank” project.

Transcriptions or Influence Works: Original and published transcriptions of notable and/or iconic playing, either note-for-note or as works that pay homage to a particular style or person. This category also includes work that expands upon the work/style of a specific artist, including those in the jazz avant-garde. Unpublished

and original transcriptions are especially encouraged.

We are thrilled to showcase five themed concerts highlighting drumset performance in solo, ensemble, and electroacoustic settings, featuring 25 soloists and ensembles from the United States and abroad at all stages of their career, from students to seasoned professionals. All concerts will take place on Thursday, Nov. 14.

COLLABORATIONS: INHERENT AND INVENTED

9:00 A.M.

The day kicks off with Collaborations: Inherent and Invented. This concert features the drumset in various roles in the ensemble, including as a solo voice, a voice among a broader many, and as a

broken-down or reimagined instrument. It aims to present a concise overview of some of the many ways the drumset may integrate into collaborative and group roles.



AARON RAGSDALE



JOSEPH VAN HASSEL AND ALEXANDROS FRAGISKATOS

Opening this concert is “Deluge” for flute, percussion, and fixed media. Written by Joshua Clausen and performed by flutist Tammy Yonce and percussionist Aaron Ragsdale, the percussion part includes kick drum, toms, and cymbals in a sort of deconstructed drumset that integrates beautifully with the flute and fixed media parts. “Deluge” was composed for this duo in 2019 and recorded at the Tank Center for Sonic Arts in Rangely, Col., a silo space known for its lengthy and unique reverb.

Joseph van Hassel and Alexandros Fragiskatos will then present one of David Macbride’s rarely performed works, “Face” for two drumsets, from 1986. The work includes composed and improvised music “that it is as visual as it is aural,” according to Macbride, with the players often mirroring each other. Macbride asks the performers to play in such a manner that listeners should not be able to tell what’s written down and what’s not.

Next, we will hear Morris Palter and

Greg Harrison performing Harrison’s work “Woven” for two drumsets and electronics. Composed with both fixed and indeterminate qualities, Harrison creates a piece that truly feels like the two parts are an interconnected singular being. The piece ultimately is a structured improvisation where each player triggers electronics to create a unique realization that will inherently be different from any other performance.

Though programmed on our Collaborations concert, “A Near-Empty Space” is performed by only one player: active contemporary musician and highly applauded Nick Terry. Nick says that he “serves as

an improvising duo partner to the spoken word of philosophers, scientists, poets, and mystics” through this performance, which “converges at the intersectionality of music improvisation, composition, movement.” “A Near-Empty Space” is performed on an array of acoustic and electronic instruments (including an electronic drumset and effects pedals).

Closing out this concert is the largest work of the day, Jamie Wind Whitmarsh’s “Concerto for Drumset and Percussion Ensemble.” Divided into three parts that showcase the drumset in various roles and styles, each of which treat the drumset differently, the work was the first-place winner in the 2012 PAS Composition Contest. This performance for the 2024 New Music/Research Presents will be presented by soloist Justin Alexander alongside the Virginia Commonwealth University Percussion Ensemble, and is a welcomed addition to the day, showing off the drumset in a soloistic and ensemble setting.

FLYING SOLO: WORKS FOR A SINGLE PLAYER

11:00 A.M.

The drumset as a solo instrument is not a new idea. However, considering the instrument’s popularity, an alarmingly low amount of repertoire exists. This concert is charged with highlighting a wide array of solo works for the drumset.

The Flying Solo concert opens with Igor C. Silva’s “Your Trash,” performed by Reed Puleo. The composer’s goal was to blur the lines between acoustic sounds, electronics, and video. The performer is instructed to insert videos of themselves into the piece, creating a new version for every performance.

Evan Chapman will then perform “Bird Fish” by Anna Meadors. This piece features processed loops created by the composer through improvisation on tenor saxophone, her primary instrument. “Bird Fish” was inspired by Maurits Cornelis Escher’s “Bird, fish” (1938), a graphic piece of visual art. In Escher’s work, birds and fish drawn with the same ink and in similar shapes, can be seen interlocking



MORRIS PALTER AND GREG HARRISON



NICK TERRY



JUSTIN ALEXANDER

and stacked one on top of the other – the essence of which is captured in this work from Meadors.

The third piece will be Carlos dos Santos's "Cenas instantâneas dispersas," performed by Nath Calan from Brazil. This piece is described by Calan as a work for drums and scenic music. The title translates to "Scattered snapshot scenes." Facial expressions, drawings/pictures, and spoken word are all part of this intriguing piece.

"Time and Money" by Pierre Jodlowski will then be performed by Victor Pons. "Time and Money" was composed as an

"interrogation about our society, our behaviors with time and money," says Jodlowski. He begins the piece with a wooden cube sequence, which symbolizes a basic object that contrasts modern technologies. As the piece continues, music begins to loop; cycles of rhythmic patterns appear along with interjections of radio and movie sounds. The piece culminates in faster activity, representing our hectic lives.

Kate Neal's "Self-Accusation," performed by Melissa Wang, will be the final piece for this concert. It features the drumset used as part of a large multi-percussion instrument, complete with woodblock, an-

vil, pipes, and several metal trinkets, with spoken text of Peter Handke. As with several of Neal's pieces, choreography plays a role in "Self-Accusation" (head scratches, shoulder shrugs, turning the head, etc.). The performer is also required to make various vocal sounds, such as tongue pops.

INFLUENCES: AN HOMAGE TO... 1:00 P.M.

Each work on this concert pays tribute to an artist, style, or genre. We are especially excited about the contrasting styles and aesthetics this concert features, which tips the cap to various players and styles ranging from electronic music to jazz, pop, and metal.

Von Hansen's "The Breaks" is a perfect fit for the "deconstructed" drumset category and serves as the Influences concert opener. Through its scoring for acoustic instruments and fixed media, "The Breaks" serves as a nod to electronic music artists and such drummers as Squarepusher, Venetian Snares, Jojo Mayer, Glenn Kotche, Billy Martin, and more. To kick off this concert, Emily Salgado, Hannah Weaver, Von Hansen, Tommy Dobbs, and Daniel Albertson will present this energetic and seamlessly arranged composition, characteristic of the drum'n'bass style of sampled and programmed drums.

Well-seasoned in contemporary music,



REED PULEO



NATH CALAN



EVAN CHAPMAN



VICTOR PONS



MELISSA WANG

and especially familiar with the music of Stuart Saunders Smith, Jude Traxler has performed and premiered many of Smith's works. In keeping with that, Traxler will give the world premiere of "Violets," a three-movement solo for four-piece kit, hi-hats, and ride based on Max Roach's recorded drum solos. Traxler says the piece "is both simpler AND more complex than Smith's previous drumset compositions (exceptional single-movement works that truly legitimize the kit on a concert stage)" that "beautifully blends Smith's experimental/improvisational spirit with a conservative look back at one of our

instrumentarium's very first performer-composers."

Andy P. Smith will then present Alexis C. Lamb's "Trigon" for drumset and fixed electronics. Smith commissioned this work recently, which, he says: "exemplifies a compositional-improvisational hybrid, demanding the performer to realize complex combinations of written material with conceptual improvisations." Smith also notes allusions to the playing of David Garibaldi and "almost-marches" that nod to early drumset use.

Next, we will hear "TLC," composed by Juri Seo and performed by Mark Eichen-

berger. Composed in 2022, the work was commissioned as part of the Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History members, led by Emily Salgado. A virtuosic solo work written for a groove drumset and Roland SPD-SX, the work is inspired by jazz drummer Terri Lyne Carrington. Seo states, "My goal was to create a piece that pays homage to jazz while pushing the boundaries of solo drumset performance." This is an exciting and effective work that integrates the now often-seen SPD and acoustic drums.

Closing out this concert is Brant Blackard's "Until Flesh is Torn From Bone," a trio directly influenced by death-metal drumming. Blackard says: "I've attempted to explore several aspects of this music, which I adore: the speed and endurance required of the musicians, the surprising and unpredictable metric modulations, and the often-relentless pacing." This high-energy piece does just that, alluding to the quick, aggressive, and technical nature of metal drumming in a trio format that includes djembe, cajon, and drumset.

NEW APPROACHES: BEYOND THE ACOUSTIC

3:00 P.M.

This concert will feature performances by five artists incorporating digital voices and/or electronics in a variety of ways,



VON HANSEN



ANDY P. SMITH



JUDE TRAXLER



MARK EICHENBERGER



BRANT BLACKARD

showcasing the possibilities of drumset augmented with technology.

Olivia Cirisan opens this concert with a performance of “37 Across 39 Down” for drumset and electronics, a piece she commissioned in 2023. Composed by Ancel Neeley, the piece is written as a translation of a crossword puzzle into music for drumset, and it includes snippets of videos/media that showcase the particular words within the puzzle.

Following that, Andrew Toy will present a performance of his work that intersects improvisation with technology through automation. In this work, Toy controls things such as looping parameters and effects in order to influence his improvisation in differing ways. Toy says, “As musicians, the notion of automation may seem to run contrary to improvisation and creative expression. But when used in new and interactive ways, automation offers a bridge between acoustics and digital sound worlds and can become an invisible collaborator for the creative drummer to improvise with in meaningful new ways.” This is a novel technique that approaches electronic interaction from a different path than typically seen.

Without Borders Percussion Quartet features four musicians from the United States and Taiwan that perform works composed and arranged by members of the group for percussion, technology, and mixed instrumentation. As part of New Approaches, they will perform “Bird,” a tune by Alex Smith in collaboration with Will Alderman, Kathryn Irwin, and Yun Ju Pan. “Bird” is a guided improvisation for percussion, drum triggers, original samples, vocoder, and glockenspiel processed live, where the drum triggers recognize different zones and velocities of the acoustic instruments that results in various manipulations of transposition, panning, and processing of the samples.

Martin Daigle will then perform “Freeze!” by Jason Noble. The 2022 winner of Music NB’s “Innovator of the Year” award, Daigle is an interdisciplinary performer, composer, researcher, and producer from New Brunswick, Canada. In

“Freeze!” listeners can experience Daigle’s “augmented drumkit,” which combines acoustic drum sounds, digital samples, and visual manipulations exemplifying Daigle’s cutting-edge research and approach to percussion music.

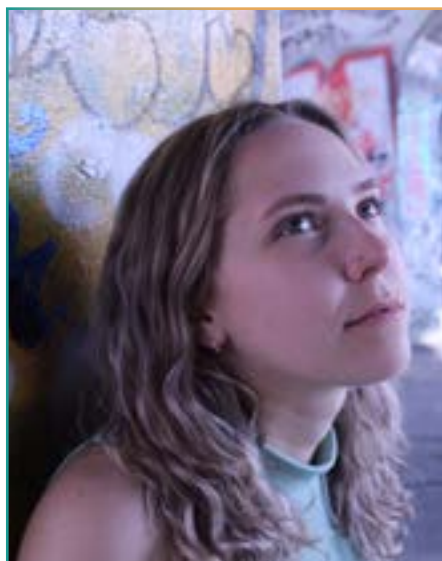
To close this concert, dedicated contemporary musician Dustin Donahue will perform Paul Hambree’s “Grapple” for drumset, glockenspiel, and live electronics (developed in collaboration with the performer). As discussed by Donahue, Hambree seeks to merge the disparate worlds of pitched and unpitched by splitting the

percussionist in half, playing glockenspiel and drumset in unison. Further, Hambree explores what he calls “unnatural synthesis” throughout the piece in the interaction of glockenspiel, drums, and electronics.

CHRONOLOGY: COMPOSITIONS THROUGH TIME

5:00 P.M.

Our final concert of the day is a survey of the drumset through time. Here, the instrument is showcased in ensemble and solo settings through five unique pieces,



OLIVIA CIRISAN



ANDREW TOY

PHOTO BY JASMINE WILLIAMS



WITHOUT BORDERS PERCUSSION QUARTET

spanning from the 1960s until as recent as 2015.

Live performances of William Zickos's drumset duets, quartets, and quintets were taking place as early as 1962. In this concert, you will hear some of the earliest

precisely notated drumset compositions. Attendees at this concert will receive a two-page program that offers a brief biography of William Zickos, examples of his notation style, and an outline of some of his innovative compositional concepts.

Janis Mercer's "Air," performed by Kevin Nichols, will follow. Mercer uses the drumset to voice a dramatic struggle. Nichols states, "She identifies the drumset's musical, aesthetic, and philosophical potential, and then leverages the instrument to convey aspects of her own personal and professional life." This piece is motivated by several ideas, such as suffocation (in a musical and intellectual sense), the inability to breathe during asthma attacks, the challenge of writing a "melodic" percussion piece with just one pitched instrument, and a general response to the question of writing "pretty" or "tonal" music.

"Straitjacket" (2009) by Mark Applebaum is the next piece on the program. This piece, made up of four movements, has been privately subtitled by Applebaum as "four restraint systems for solo percussion and percussion quartet." Movement I, "Palindrome," will be showcased here. A palindrome reads the same way backwards and forwards; for example, "a man,



MARTIN DAIGLE



DUSTIN DONAHUE



THE WILLIAM ZICKOS DRUM SET QUARTET: DOUG AUWARTER, JOHN BRAZELTON, RON VAUGHN, NORMAN WEINBERG

a plan, a canal - Panama." In "Palindrome," the scheme is a bit irregular. The composer notes, "Perhaps it is clearer to imagine that my task is to first compose a number series and its retrograde: 12345-54321. But in this piece, the palindrome is distilled as 125-541." Here, thematic/recognizable bits (such as 1 and 5) are noticeable and heard in both directions. However, the "2" and "4" themes are only heard forwards and backwards, respectively. Certain parts ("3") exist conceptually but are never sounded.

Next, Ben Wahlund will present his composition "Tassa" (2011). This drumset solo is loosely based on a "Wedding Hand" in the Tassa tradition of drumming from Trinidad and Tobago. At the same time, a nod to jazz fusion drumming is made. This piece was composed in collaboration with NIU Distinguished Teaching Professor and Professor Emeritus Robert Chappell, who spent two months in 2004 studying Tassa drumming in the West Indies.

The final performance of the day will belong to Doug Perkins, as he showcases John Luther Adams's "Ilimaq." Adapted from an earlier work for percussionist Scott Deal, "Ilimaq" is a five-movement work for percussion and electronics written for Wilco drummer Glenn Kotche. This performance will display the final three movements, "The Sunken Gamelan," "Untune the Sky," and "Ascension." Adams,

a rock drummer in his early days, calls on the ferocious energy and virtuosity of a rock 'n' roll drummer. Cantaloupe Music, in a recent review, called the piece "an immersive, mesmerizing, and deeply musical journey for the listener, as well as a spectacular vehicle for a pivotal talent from the world of rock."

CLOSING

The drumset is a cornerstone of percussion, with its iconic and immense reputation as a prominent rhythmic figure in all kinds of music. In presenting The Drumset Beyond Its Roots, our aim is to highlight the seemingly endless aesthetics of the drumset through its utility, versatility, and sonic possibility. Please join us on Thursday, Nov. 14 to celebrate and explore the drumset! [PN](#)

2025 New Music/ Research Day Call for Proposals

"Percussion & Movement"



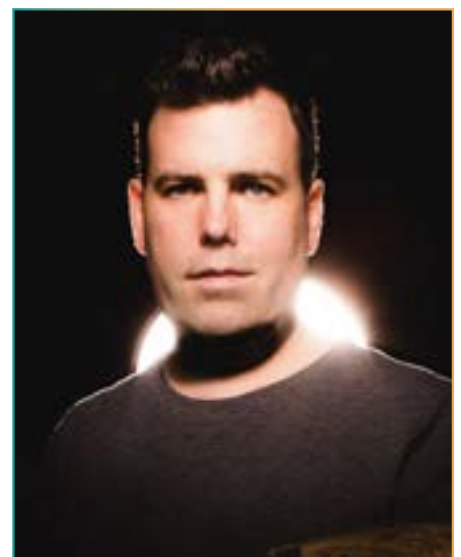
GARZA VON KAMPEN AND THE WOU-USF PERCUSSION GROUP



KEVIN NICHOLS



BEN WAHLUND



DOUG PERKINS

Algorithm
TAKEDOWN
ANIMATION BY ALEX BUDOVSEY

- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2024)
- BEST SONG (2023)
- BEST ANIMATION (2023)
- BEST MUSIC SCORE SHORT FILM (2023)
- BEST EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- WINNER (2023)
- BEST MUSIC IN SHORT (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- BEST ANIMATION (2023)
- BEST COMPOSER (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- BEST ANIMATION (2023)
- BEST INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- BEST MUSIC SCORE (2023)
- BEST ANIMATION SHORT (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- DIRECTOR'S CHOICE AWARD (2023)
- BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION BOGUSHORTS (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION (2024)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION CLEVELAND (2024)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION FILMETS BADALENA (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION VEGAS SHORTS (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION TOKYO (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION MARTIN'S VINEYARD (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION LOS ANGELES (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION COURAIN 3D (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION OXFORD (2024)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION PRAGUE (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION ROME (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION DUBLIN (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION BEST SHORT AWARD (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION BUDAPEST MOVIE AWARDS (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION MONTREAL (2023)
- OFFICIAL SELECTION TOKYO (2024)
- NOMINATION BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- NOMINATION BEST ANIMATION (2023)
- NOMINATION BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- NOMINATION GENTLE INDEPENDENT MOVIE AWARDS (2023)
- NOMINATION AMSTERDAM MOVIE FEST (2023)
- NOMINATION BEST MUSIC VIDEO (2023)
- NOMINATION BEST HIP HOP (2023)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER AND HIP HOP TIMPANHIST
JONATHAN HAAS
MUSIC COMPOSED BY LENNY WHITE
LYRICS AND RAP BY WALTER WEST
EXECUTIVE CONSULTANT ANNA KEPE-HAAS



WATCH HERE



Dipping Your Toes into Madness: Living with Bipolar Disorder

By Dr. Kathryn Irwin

Tripper Warning: The performance of “is this madness?” may contain potentially triggering material for some audience members. Please do what you need to protect your space when watching this Virtual Session.

THE FACTS

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, bipolar disorder affects approximately seven million adult Americans, or about 2.8% of the U.S. population 18 and older, which is up from the 5.7 million and 2.6% from the start of this project in 2017. One in five of those diagnosed will *succeed* with a suicide attempt. The rate of suicide is higher for patients with bipolar disorder than sufferers of unipolar major depression, panic disorder, or schizophrenia (NIMH).

What do you do when your best friend calls you and tells you she has a bipolar disorder diagnosis, and you read these statistics?

I wanted to do *something*. No, I *had* to. “is this madness?” was born.

THE IDEA

“is this madness?” by Joe W. Moore III was commissioned in 2017 as part of a

mental-health awareness project. The project was led by me and included a member of the community with bipolar disorder, Carly Tynes, along with Associate Professor in the Psychiatry Department at Michigan State University, Dr.



DR. KATHRYN IRWIN

Brian Smith, and composer Joe W. Moore III. “is this madness?” is based on interviews conducted with Carly after she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. The purpose of this project was, and always will be, to open healthy, kind conversations about mental illness and mental-health treatment options.

THE ILLNESS

Bipolar disorder (formerly called manic-depressive illness or manic depression) is a mental illness that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, concentration, and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks. Bipolar is characterized by manic episodes, depressive episodes, or a “mixed state” with qualities of both mania and depression. During manic episodes, people may have a sense of intense joy, excitement, or euphoria, have little need for sleep, take on more new projects than they can handle, talk very fast, or participate in impulsive or high-risk behaviors (e.g., spending sprees, gambling, unwise investments, and otherwise unsafe behaviors). During depressive episodes, people may have problems with concentration, decision-making, or forgetfulness, experience significant weight loss or gain, feel fatigued with no energy,

have feelings of worthlessness, experience suicidal ideation or attempt suicide, and have difficulty sleeping or sleep too much. Mixed States involve symptoms of both mania and depression, making it a uniquely dangerous state. (DSM-5) (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition)

Bipolar disorder seeps into every aspect of one's life. It is a sneaky illness that constantly seeks paths around the medication used for its treatment. It is an ongoing battle to stay in front of it and to stay healthy. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, it is estimated that more than one in five Americans lives with a mental illness. Kindness, empathy, and compassion are the name of the game here.

THE MUSIC

The Electronic/Technology Daytime Showcase Concert will feature a complete performance of "is this madness?" The electronic/technological component makes the piece effective. Audience members get a small glimpse into what it is like to *feel* the desperation and depths of darkness as well as the highs of mania.

In the interview with Carly, she reflects on her reality with bipolar disorder. She speaks of deep, "black depression," struggles with suicide, manic spending sprees, a psychotic break from reality, and what unfolded for her as a multi-year process of finding the proper diagnosis and medication combination. This interview with Carly became the basis for the composition. Audio clips from the interviews are embedded throughout the composition along with the accompanying electronic track. The title of the work and the titles of the movements are all based on quotes from the interviews with Carly as well: I. *I can't speak...*; II. *dipping your toes into madness...*; III. *black...*; IV. *waiting to feel the sun again*; V. *be kind to yourself*.

After being asked to compose the work, Joe talks about listening to and reflecting on the interview for inspiration. "I aimed to convey the feelings, moods, and emotions discussed through music,

and I believed incorporating the dialogue from the interview would best achieve this, so I requested permission to use portions of it in the fixed media. Additionally, I included some of the interview text to be spoken by the performer and incorporated a doctor-patient communication scenario."

THE RESULT

I commissioned Joe to write this piece because I needed someone I could trust to handle the subject matter respectfully. He far exceeded my expectations and imagination bringing this piece to fruition. I asked for a compact multi-percussion piece, and I received a near 20-minute work that stretched me as a theatrical percussionist, performer, and person. Joe's incorporation of the interview clips into the audio track and my live speaking has woven together a piece that conjures a visceral response from both performer and listener.

The audio track incorporates the clips from the interview with Carly, my own voice, and the voice of a psychiatrist. The voices are overlapped in the audio track and live performance – at times, effectively masking whose voice we are supposed to hear. I think this brilliantly captures a part of what I understand about bipolar disorder: are these thoughts my own, my illness's, or someone else's entirely?

Performing this piece requires such a commitment to emotional authenticity, resulting in this piece being the most emotionally taxing performing I have done to date. In preparation for performance, I build in extra time for mental rest to protect my own headspace. As you watch the Virtual Session, I hope that my commitment not just to portraying the emotions but *feeling* them as my own, shines through.

Carly: "I was lucky to be able to attend the world premiere of all five movements of "is this madness?" in 2017. I do not know what I expected, but this exceeded it. Joe brings bipolar disorder to life so hauntingly with the vibraphone

chords and thrilling drumming combined with the unexpected acting and voices. Watching Kathryn perform this piece is very emotional for me. It's like watching part of my soul being performed on the outside of my body."

Joe: "The process of composing this work was informative and eye-opening, making me a better person. It taught me to be more considerate of everyone's life experiences and to have even greater empathy for those of us who are dealing with mental health conditions."

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

It is important to remember that when you or someone you know is suffering from a mental health crisis, these are symptoms of an illness. *Symptoms can be treated.*

You are not alone. Help is available. You deserve it.

988: Suicide and Crisis Hotline

Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 from anywhere in the United States, anytime.

1-800-662-HELP (4357) SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

Kathryn Irwin is a performer and educator from Petal, Mississippi. She is the Assistant Professor of Percussion at the University of Louisiana Monroe School of Visual and Performing Arts. Kathryn's primary teachers include Gwendolyn Dease, Jon Weber, Ji Hye Jung, and Brett William Dietz. She is president of the Louisiana PAS Chapter. **PN**

Traveling With Audio

By Dr. Lynn Vartan

It is such an honor to share this session for PASIC 2024! Most people know me as a keyboard artist, and in the past several years I have been championing pieces that use all kinds of electronics, working with composers on new pieces that try to bring fun, groove, and positive vibes to the percussion keyboard repertoire. My session developed because I have been traveling with electronics for years, and every time I perform, people come up to me after the concert asking about “my rig.” I love sharing my setup with people and all the tips and tricks I have learned that make traveling with electronics easy everywhere and anywhere!

I have been fortunate to be invited internationally to perform and teach in Vietnam, Cambodia, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Mexico, Columbia, England, Romania, Estonia, Sweden, Norway, Ireland, and Denmark among others, and I am currently a U.S. Fulbright Specialist. In all of my travels I have used my rig and had great success seamlessly integrating electronics into the program without any of the typical electronics glitches you tend to witness or hear about.

In building this rig I consulted with some great audio engineers and producers, and I came up with something totally solid that works all around the world! A few of the things I learned were surprising and really have made a difference.

For example, the power of the DI box in stabilizing everything is key, and not only helps with the actual electronics but also in communicating with venue staff; they feel so comfortable when you come with this ready and just need two inputs from your DI box to their P.A. Also, the impact of size and weight of things when traveling – including why a hard road case is not the best way to go for an individual artist!

My session will be split into two parts: “The Rig” and the “The Music.” In the first section, “The Rig,” I will show the car-

ry-on suitcase that everything fits into, and the basic flow of elements from computer to audio interface (and respective headphones and mics) to DI box to venue. Next, I will show the exact connections for each part of the flow. I will share my exact brands and makes of the equipment I use so that anyone can build their own version! Lastly, I will cover other things in the rig that are essential, including cable types, power managing (national and international), and my super small magic mic stands!

In the second part, “The Music,” I will perform excerpts from pieces and show the exact settings and software I use to perform them, including photos of the software screens and settings. The technological components for the pieces range from using a basic no-click backing track in Reaper, using digital delay processing for the marimba, using the Supercollider program for timed audio clips, and using Ableton for click and live looping with a BopPad.

Finally, I will premiere a new piece for marimba and electronics written for me by Ivan Trevino. Ivan and I share ideas of positivity, energy, and community in our world view, and these kinds of vibes inspired our collaboration!

In this session I hope to provide a full overview of my workflow when performing with live electronics, empowering you to do so fluidly and easily using many kinds of software and hardware.



DR. LYNN VARTAN

Even if you are just getting started with electronics, you can build this setup and make it work! Such performances are inevitably unique, so this session will be both wide-reaching for all to get a glimpse, while simultaneously specific for you to jump right in with the exact specifications you need for your performances. I hope it will benefit confident, experienced performers with new tips and tricks that I have found, as well as those who have felt timid using live electronics in the past but want to try. You can do it, and I am excited to share with you how!

Dr. Lynn Vartan is an internationally known music performer and educator, known for her collaborative performances and her dynamic warmth and energy on stage. She has been Grammy nominated multiple times and was a performer on an album that was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Music. As a concerto soloist Lynn has performed with various orchestras including the Hubei Opera and Dance Company of Wuhan, China, the Sierra Wind Symphony, The Helena Symphony, The Cheyenne Symphony, The Orchestra of Southern Utah, Southwest Chamber Music, and has premiered new concertos by American and Chinese composers. She has participated in cultural exchange projects such as the World Percussion Group, the Ascending Dragon project in Vietnam, The Dream of Helen project, and the East Meets West project designed around her as a soloist in Wuhan, China. Her current chamber music projects include Darkwood Duo (clarinet and percussion), Duo Vís (violin and percussion), and Duo LinLynn (percussion duo). Lynn is Professor of Percussion Interarts at Texas A&M University, where she builds programs and projects that bring together the worlds of music with dance, film, design, theatre, and all the visual and performing arts. [PN](#)

ELECTRONIC/TECHNOLOGY

FABIAN ZIEGLER, MUSIC BY JOHN PSATHAS WITH SPECIAL GUESTS THE JOHN PSATHAS PERCUSSION PROJECT (Omar Carmenates, Emma Gierszal, Justin Lamb, Diana Loomer) Electronic/Technology Daytime Showcase Concert Innovation of New Works and Technology in Percussion Repertoire

This concert by Fabian Ziegler will feature new and recent works by composer John Psathas. The works include cinematic-scale audio soundtracks and original video content. The program includes "RealBadNow," "Koolish Zein," and more. The composer will be present, introducing each work. Fabian Ziegler has been a consistent champion of Psathas's percussion works, commissioning and premiering multiple new pieces that are now entering into the standard percussion repertoire.

Fabian Ziegler is passionate about bringing innovative pieces by such renowned composers as John Psathas, Avner Dorman, Serj Tankian, Arash Safaian, and Daniel Schnyder to life. Born in Switzerland, he studied with Prof. Klaus Schwärzler, Prof. Raphael Christen, Prof. Benjamin Forster, Prof. Rainer Seegers, and Martin Grubinger at the Zurich University of the Arts. Together with the company Infinity Percussion, which specializes in mallets, Fabian Ziegler develops new products and is responsible for his own vibraphone series.

pax duo Electronic/Technology Clinic/Performance Projection Mapping and Live Performance Software in Percussion Chamber Music

This session will explore the fundamentals of using QLab, MadMapper, and MainStage to elevate live percussion performances. The pax duo will model their unique approach to creating a cohesive and compelling show incorporating projection mapping, live music, and sound/video/lighting performance control software typically seen in theater productions. The session will demonstrate the power of these technologies first-hand as the duo performs selections from their electro/acoustic show, "Bloom." They will describe the process of creating an automated light show to enhance live concert performances and share their experience with learning the software, creating the physical setup for the digital designs, and touring the show.

pax duo is a percussion project created by Micah Detweiler and Tristan Swihart. pax duo aims to expand the possibilities of con-

temporary percussion through collaboration and new creation. To that end they are active in commissioning, composing, and arranging new works for percussion duo. Their style blends genres like hip-hop, indie, and funk with contemporary classical to create music that is widely appealing and musically interesting. They have toured extensively, playing at independent venues, universities, and schools. They have collaborated with video production artists on videos of their arrangements and commissions.

MARIA FINKELMEIER Electronic/Technology Clinic/Performance Multi-sensory Performance

Maria Finkelmeier is a percussionist, composer, new media artist, and professor. Whether it's scoring conceptual art films or serving as director, composer, and performer in multi-sensory performances and public art installations, her work continually transcends both genre and medium. Merging meticulous performance practice and production knowledge with intentions that are narrative driven and socially responsive, Maria has been commissioned by national organizations, municipalities, and festivals including the National Parks Service, Esplanade Association, Harvard Ed Portal, IGNITE Broward, TEDx Cambridge, BLINK Cincinnati, London's i = u festival, ILLUMINUS, and the Boston Center for the Arts. Maria has founded and directed numerous ventures, including her active experimental studio MF Dynamics, along with Kadence Arts, Make Music Boston, Quartet Kalos, Masary Studios, and Ensemble Evolution. She is an Associate Professor at Berklee College of Music specializing in Creative Entrepreneurship. Maria received a Bachelor of Music degree from The Ohio State University and a Master of Music degree from Eastman School of Music.

Exploring the Marimba Repertoire

By Adélaïde Ferrière

I've been involved in creating arrangements since the beginning of my percussion studies – fascinated by the keyboard and classical repertoire that I played for a long time as a pianist, and continued to play alongside my career as a percussionist. My first original transcription was Jean-Philippe Rameau's "Egyptienne." The idea for it came when I was developing a new concert program: one that would enable audiences unfamiliar with marimba concerts (in France, at any rate) to discover the marimba's sound, but also to develop a different way of listening to pieces that are well known to the general public.

I feel this balance has often been a winning combination in recitals: mixing tradition with renewal; adaptation with original writing. The goal, of course, is continuing this research by opening up to more contemporary repertoire, and particularly by having a hand in contemporary creation, in order to foster an appreciation of different aesthetics – to push even further the reflection and ever-changing virtuosity of so-called "classical percussion."

In my PASIC 2024 Showcase Concert, "Exploring the Marimba Repertoire," this theme is still very much present, but my focus is on the work of today's percussionists in the field of composition, with three pieces created in the past two years,

each of which adds yet another stone to the edifice of both our pedagogical and concert repertoire.

The first of those is Michael Burritt's "Blue Smoke," a veritable tunnel of rhythmic and harmonic patterns linked in modern poetry: a piece that I'm sure will become indispensable. It awakens the warm sound of the marimba and takes on the inspirations that can be found in American music: repetitive, swirling, and timeless.

"Vermillion Bird," by Heng Liu, illustrates a tale featuring one of the four creatures of ancient Chinese mythology: a link with the forces of the cosmos and the ancient stars. Representing Emperor Yan and the seven southern constellations, Liu says, "It is the totem of fire, also the worship of the sun." A sense of magic can be felt and heard throughout this delicate, sunny work, marked by the richness of the timbre, magnificently highlighted.

Finally, "Elyl & Tap" by Emmanuel



ADÉLAÏDE FERRIÈRE

Séjourné, the only French work on the program, combines the ancestral sound of the marimba with a prerecorded electronic accompaniment, enabling percussion to carve out a place for itself in today's music. The power to decompartmentalize aesthetics wins over a younger audience. Paying tribute to legends Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays ("Elyl & Tap," their names in reverse), the piece is an ode to freedom with undeniable energy and virtuosity. Resolutely pop, it is festive, playful and highly imaginative.

For the classical part of the program, I will highlight one of my favorite activities, as I first mentioned: arranging for marimba. Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" and Saint-Saëns' "Danse Macabre" have become regular features on my programs. But one of my greatest sources of inspiration is and always has been the Baroque repertoire. Like many young students, I began by transcribing Johann Sebastian Bach's suites and sonatas, including, of course, his famous "Chaconne."

One frustration remained with the latter, however: the marimba's harmonic dimension and possibilities were attractive but not altogether satisfying to me when transferring the original violin music to the marimba. Unfortunately, we still can't imitate the sustain of the bow, and I missed this intensity on the instrument.

The project to arrange Ferruccio Busoni's version of Bach's "Chaconne" hatched after discovering pianist Hélène Grimaud's magnificent live version in 2014. I put the project on hold at the time, only to return to it in 2021 and see it through to the end with a recording project in Paris. At the time, I thought that "Rhapsody in Blue" had been my greatest challenge, but the "Chaconne" proved me wrong.

Re-transcribing Bach's genius and Busoni's madness in this infinitely harmonically charged score was a tedious exercise, but the detour was worthwhile. This work is simply grandiose, majestic, and immense. It also enabled me to rethink my work on the weight (of strokes) and

phrasing on the marimba, to get as close as possible to this massive and round sound image, to make the different voices distinctly audible.

Another Baroque composer who fascinates me is Antonio Soler, who in the 18th century revisited the famous Spanish dance of the "Fandango" for harpsichord. It is a veritable trance of three-beat measures that follow one another for ten minutes over almost only two chords, entertaining a furious and fearsome left-hand continuo.

One of the major challenges of this piece was to respect the musical text, which was written in an extremely pianistic manner, with a theme in the right hand and accompaniment in the left, requiring great endurance from the bass and virtuosity from the lead singer. A few dazzling arpeggios took up a good part of my time, as the technical difficulty is pushed to the extreme. The "Fandango" also has the quality of being timeless, unique, almost "rock sounding." The Baroque era is one of the richest in the history of music, so varied are the aesthetics.

Finally, there is George Frideric Handel's "Passacaglia" from the *Suite in G*, HWV 432 for keyboard, one of the world's most famous themes, and the subject of numerous remixes and inspirations. Having initially discovered it in its keyboard version, I felt that something was missing to bring it to life and restore its integrity on the marimba. That's when I came up with the idea of trying Johan Halvorsen's adaptation of the work via his "Impossible Duet" for violin and viola. This immediately caught my interest and aroused my curiosity, giving me the impetus to create another cross-interpretation — an "arrangement of arrangements" — similar to my approach with the "Chaconne."

I've also always felt quite close to the idea that Baroque and Classical works should continue to live on and surprise the public via transcriptions. Many performers of various instruments propose these rewritings, pushing virtuosity and welcoming into their own repertoire the music they've fallen in love with. Let's not

forget, too, that the marimba was not part of musical creation in Bach's time, but if it had been, I'd like to think we could have original pieces written for the instrument. We marimbists are, after all, an integral part of the keyboard family.

That's why I think it's essential to work on adapting repertoire today, also as part of a pedagogical apprenticeship, counter-balanced of course by work on our original repertoire. The one goes hand in hand with the other, and being a good musician also means having this versatility, this apprehension of pieces, which becomes all the more acute with the variety we offer. It also means breaking away from the vertical aspect expected of percussion instruments, and making them poetic, singing, and lyrical.

I personally leave open the door to composition in the future as well, as it increases the writer's imagination even more, and gives him or her a full understanding of the instrument.

One thing I haven't mentioned yet is my work with images, which is one of the many ways to introduce our work to the audience. Here, almost the entire program exists in audio recordings, but also as music videos, available on YouTube, so as to be able to showcase the instrument in the best possible conditions and offer a more complete artistic spectrum.

The publisher Edition Svitzer not only published the new works by Burritt, Liu, and Séjourné, but released two digital albums of marimba music including those works, in which I was lucky to participate. The artistic direction of a series of corresponding videos is quite unusual: superb locations in Denmark include an old sugar factory and a huge water tower.

When creating content for my personal projects, I've always been guided by the influence of each piece and finding a location that lends itself to the spirit of the composer and the guiding line of the work. It all started with "One Study" by John Psathas, whose preface notes the imitation of an unstoppable engine for seven minutes. My first thought was: "Why not an airplane?" The rest was a succession of

intuitive moments at various locations, and above all, the very good fortune of having the agreement of the directors of the various places where I was able to organize filming.

Video is also essential, in my opinion, for getting to know other professions. Musicians often work with musicians, and percussionists even more often with other percussionists. On video shoots, I've met some incredible people and discovered another way of making music, and sharing it in other ways than simply performing live.

The craziest of all, of course, was my last visit to PASIC in 2019. Having previously visited New York City several times, I thought I had to do something there as part of my trip to the U.S. At the same time, I was recording "Rhapsody in Blue," so an idea gradually fell into place. Playing on a rooftop in November was a crazy idea. The day before the shoot, it was raining; the day after it was snowing. We had a magnificent shooting day with 18 degrees (64 degrees Fahrenheit) and sunshine all day long and, above all, a memory that will never leave me. Only a few days before I performed the first live version in Indianapolis!

I can't wait to see you again for a new edition that promises to be as grandiose as ever. Long live PASIC 2024!

VIDEO

"One Study": www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-yprHSOvKNU&t=100

"Rhapsody in Blue": www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5vIQ5pQTEU&t=112s

Additional video clips available at www.adelaideferriere.com/en/clips

Adélaïde Ferrière was hailed as "a phenomenon" by the newspaper *Le Monde*, and *Le Figaro* said that she "embodies the arrival of percussion at the forefront of the classical music scene." In the 2024–25 season, Adélaïde will be making her debut with the Orchestre National de France at the Festival Présences, the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra, the Geneva Chamber Orchestra, the Brno

Philharmonic (in the Czech Republic), the Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra, and as associate artist of the Orchestre Dijon Bourgogne. In addition, she will perform recitals in France, Italy, Germany, and the United States. More at www.adelaideferriere.com PN

EVENING CONCERTS

STEFON HARRIS & BLACKOUT

Vibraphonist Stefon Harris has balanced his love of the hard bop tradition with his interests in contemporary jazz, fusion, and Latin idioms. While still in college, he was gigging alongside such legends as Max Roach, Joe Henderson, Steve Turre, and others. Following his graduation, he began leading his own groups, as well as working with such artists as Charlie Hunter, Greg Osby, Jason Moran, and Terrell Stafford. He has drawn praise for his own albums, like *A Cloud of Red Dust*, the Grammy-nominated *Black Action Figure*, and *New Directions*. In 2004, he introduced his Blackout ensemble with *Evolution*, followed by his exploration of Duke Ellington's music on *African Tarantella*. He returned to his Blackout ensemble with 2009's *Urbanus*.

Along with performing, Harris has broadened his scope into education, having held the position of Dean and Director of the Arts Department at the Manhattan School of Music. He also founded the tech company Melodic Progression Institute, with which he has produced several music-related apps. In 2011, he paired with trumpeter Christian Scott and tenor saxophonist David Sánchez for the Latin-influenced *Ninety Miles*. Over the next several years, Harris appeared on albums with Theo Croker, Regina Carter, and Diana Krall.

THE U.S. ARMY BLUES

The U.S. Army Blues, part of the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own," is the premier jazz ensemble of the U.S. Army. After informal beginnings in 1970, this 19-piece ensemble became an official element of the Army Band in 1972. The Army Blues strive to fulfill their mission through public concerts, educational outreach, and the preservation of the tradition of America's unique art form: jazz.

ELECTRONIC/ TECHNOLOGY

DANIEL TATITA MÁRQUEZ Virtual Electronic/Technology Clinic/Performance Robotic Drums

Robotic Drums merges music, technology and robotics. These impact robots go beyond being simple instruments; they are also research tools to explore the foundations of robotics and machine learning. Its ability to perform with precision, explore complex patterns, and operate continuously challenges traditional conceptions of percussion, opening up new possibilities in musical performance. By introducing Robotic Drums into music classrooms, not only is musical learning enriched, but the development of essential technological skills is also stimulated. These systems not only teach music, but also serve as a gateway to understanding robotics and automation principles. Educators can use them to teach fundamental concepts such as rhythm, timing, tempo, and musical expression, while introducing students to the fundamentals of robotics and programming.

Tatita Márquez — musician, researcher, and Marca Pais cultural ambassador — is leader of the Tatita Márquez Group, which fuses musical avant-garde and technology. His 30 publications on candombe and 10 albums explore such genres as candombe jazz and electronic. Winner of scholarships and awards, Márquez stands out for his musical versatility, from jazz to hip-hop and candombe. His recent ANII Innovative Entrepreneurs award 2024–26 reflects his leadership at the intersection between music and innovation in Uruguay.

ADÉLAÏDE FERRIÈRE
KOLBERG ARTIST

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Ninkasi Percussion Group, Garrett Arney, Daniel Berg & Anders Åstrand

NEW WORKS FOR MALLET QUARTET

Ninkasi Percussion Group

By Oliver Molina

Over the centuries, chamber music has become a preferred idiom for composers with various standardized instrumentation configurations such as the string quartet, piano trio, wind quintet, and brass quintet. In the percussion family, marimba quartets by such composers as Christopher Deane, Rüdiger Pawassar, and Daniel Levitan have led the

way. However, other combinations of keyboard percussion instruments have evolved due to their unique timbral combinations and easier portability. For example, Steve Reich's "Mallet Quartet" for two vibraphones, featured on Third Coast Percussion's 2017 Grammy-winning album, influenced the creation of more pieces for that instrumentation.

This Daytime Showcase performance by the Ninkasi Percussion Group will highlight several recent works, including commissions and premieres. The quar-

tet consists of Gregory Lyons (Louisiana Tech), Gustavo Miranda (Nicholls State), Oliver Molina (Northwestern State), and Joe W. Moore III (UT-Arlington). Formed in 2019, the group has toured and performed throughout the United States. Members have commissioned new works for the idiom, and also composed for the group themselves.

At PASIC 2024, the group will perform selected movements of "Hymns for Ninkasi" by Brett William Dietz. Written in 2023, the quartet recorded the piece at Louisiana State University last October. Dietz wrote, "Ninkasi was the Sumerian Goddess of Beer and Brewing. She was associated with both the positive and negative consequences of the consumption of beer. The original 'Hymn to Ninkasi' was written down in c. 1800. The eight hymns can be played in entirety or separately."

Ninkasi Percussion Group will also premiere a work by Susan Powell for keyboard quartet. The composer wrote, "It's a new mallet quartet for two marimbas, vibraphone, and xylophone that's high energy and is two-mallet centric for all players."

Follow Ninkasi Percussion Group on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ninkasipercussiongroup/>.



NINKASI PERCUSSION GROUP

“TWELVE PRELUDES FOR MARIMBA” BY JURI SEO

By Garrett Arney

“Twelve Preludes” was a collaboration between myself and composer Juri Seo with the goal of creating a new work for solo marimba combining my musical tastes, her virtuosic knowledge and ability on piano, and her compositional prowess. My only request for the work was that it harken back to piano pieces of the Romantic era, particularly the character works of Robert Schumann, namely “Papillon” and “Carnaval.” These works are comprised of multiple short movements to create a larger work and a larger shape.

Some of the movements tend to be short, even a matter of seconds, consisting of virtuosic runs, beautiful melodies, and more. One even consists of 11 double whole notes, in three groupings – four notes, then three, then four – which is of particular interest to me as an “interlude” of sorts. “Twelve Preludes,” as was my hope, brings a series of 12 short movements together in the span of less than 20 minutes. Some of the movements are a few minutes while others are less than 30 seconds, creating a beautiful musical journey. The 12 movements are arranged in a quasi-palindromic structure, with echoes, reflections, and variations throughout. They are: I.

Prologue; II. Träumerei; III. Springwinter; IV. Intermezzo I; V. Im Wunderschönen Monat Mai; VI. Intermezzo II; VII. Im Mai; VIII. Snow in August (Fugue); IX. Indian Summer (Gigue); X. Intermezzo III; XI. Der Lindenbaum; XII. Epilogue.

Juri Seo wrote, “As I grow older, the changing seasons evoke not only excitement but also a touch of apprehension, as I perceive these transitions as a cyclical journey that leads to ultimate demise. I am never interested in indulging in nihilistic melancholy, however. The cycles of rebirth that the seasons bring sweet tenderness, and the seasonal anomalies – untimely snow, unexpected warm days of autumn – inspire deep reverie, compelling us to experience non-linear time.”

An additional element of inspiration for Juri was the novel *The Magic Mountain* by Thomas Mann. Time is one of its central themes; sickness and death, dreams, and seasons’ ambiguity are crucial throughlines, creating some of the programmatic elements of “Twelve Preludes.” Schubert’s “Der Lindenbaum” (“The Linden Tree”), a central part of the novel, is an inspiration behind a movement of Juri’s solo with the same title. Toward the end of “Twelve Preludes,” Juri’s “Der Lindenbaum” acts as a symbol of many memories of life, longing, and a place of ultimate rest.

Garrett Arney, co-founder of the group arx duo and self proclaimed “collaborative percussionist,” is focused on bringing to life new percussion works in collaboration with today’s leading composers. Garrett was recently appointed Professor of Percussion at The University of Kansas.

DANIEL BERG, MARIMBA & ANDERS ÅSTRAND, VIBRAPHONE

Daniel Berg and Anders Åstrand have collaborated on a collection of new marimba and vibraphone duos called “Framework 2” (published by Edition Svitzer). The compositions in it are notated in the style of tunes in *The Real Book*: melodies with chord symbols and some suggested bass lines. This provides performers freedom in their music making. Every song is rather short. The artists hope that you will try your own version of the songs. A couple of examples and advice about how to approach the pieces is included here. Åstrand wrote, “We really looking forward to seeing you at PASIC to show you more!”

Performance advice for “Satisfied”

By Daniel Berg

Many years ago, I won an audition for a professor position in Sweden. I was so



GARRETT ARNEY



ANDERS ÅSTRAND & DANIEL BERG

happy and satisfied. After getting the result, I directly went to my marimba to improvise and compose a song to capture this rush of joy. It all started with the two chords in bars 1 and 2, labeled “Intro,” where I alternate the major and minor, which I love so much. When you play this Intro, feel free to repeat those bars as many times as you like. I suggest the marimbist play as it’s written in the score; the vibist could start improvising and then go to what’s written.

From bar 3, the melody and a groove start, which gives the feeling of being satisfied. The harmonies now fall in ev-

ery new bar. When I composed the song, I played those bars on marimba and started to whistle a melody, and I kept that theme during most of the song. When you play the melody, you could imagine humming or whistling it.

In bar 9, I use the alternation of minor and major again until bar 15, where the unison rhythms provide the direction to happiness in bar 16. While you improvise, always play what’s written in bars 15 and 18.

I use a lot of “sharp 11s” in my chords, which could be a little tricky to get at first, but I thought it was clearer to write

“Cmaj 7,#11” rather than “Gmaj 7/C.” Listen to the album as inspiration, and try to get the right feeling of being “Satisfied.”

Performance advice for “Soon”

By Anders Åstrand

“Soon” started as an improvisation on marimba. The ostinato in the beginning just “appeared in my hands” together with the chord progression. I recorded the ostinato and then continued seamlessly with the melody, singing and playing simultaneously. I enjoy composing this way – starting with an outline that I then embellish; it is a great way to feel free in my music making. When you play with friends who have the same approach, you share a great journey together. And if you prefer to play as it is written, go right ahead! Improvisation is optional!

If you want to try your improvisation skills, you do not need to know the chords and all of that. First, look at the melody and see how many variations you can make out of it. The next step could be to improvise on the notes in the chords. Take it bar by bar and then combine the melody and notes in the chord.

After that, try to figure out what scales you can get out of the chords. At this point, you will probably have come up with a lot of great ideas and you can start to form your own voice. Finally, try to record yourself every time you play. This is a great way to get to know yourself as a musician, and to educate yourself. You will notice how easy it is to see what you need to practice further, but also how you learn and improve your skills.

Daniel’s and my music making often stems from impromptu playing. We get together, start to play, and our ideas come out: we create “in the moment” music! This means that the pieces we play may differ a little at every rehearsal or performance. So, if we play “Soon” at PASIC, it will not sound exactly like the recording. Compare this with an experience in life: traveling from point A to B. The GPS will suggest the shortest and most efficient road to take, but you might choose the sce-

FORM SUGGESTION
Intro and Melody
Vibe solo (A and B)
Marimba solo
Vibe solo
Marimba solo
Intro and Melody
Coda

FRAMEWORK 2

works for vibraphone and marimba

I. SATISFIED

for vibraphone and marimba

Daniel Berg (2024)

Intro ♩ = 120
rep. 4 times
Vibraphone

Gm6 *ad lib.* Gmaj 7#11

Vibraphone *mf*

Marimba *mf*

A Melody (and solos)
3 Cmaj 7#11 Bm Bbmaj 7#11

1. *ad lib. (feel free to improvise right hand)*

2. *mf*

6 Am F#m6 D♭

1.

2.

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nic route that is more exciting and offers surprises on the way to the destination.

We hope you will like to perform any song from “Framework 2” and invite you to make it your own journey. Use the pieces as inspiration, and feel free to add your own flavor! Thanks to Johan Svitzer, Edition Svitzer, for the great design and layout of our songs.

AUDIO LINK

Framework 2: https://music.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_k0yoz7A-Tz39KNShTlz4D8otqLlubzmVPo

Daniel Berg (www.marimbaart.com) and Anders Åstrand (www.andersastrand.com) are both noted percussionists from Sweden. **PN**

EDUCATION SESSION

CHELSEA LEVINE AND THOMAS CLAESEN
Education Clinic
Money and Marketing for Musicians: Lessons Learned from Being Self-Employed

How do I charge more? Do I need a website? What's my next priority? Talking to our self-employed musician friends, we've realized that there are important lessons we have learned (some the hard way) that can be helpful. This session is for gigging musicians, teachers, students, directors, composers, and anyone who has bills to pay. We will focus on 10 relevant topics: money, contracts, websites, social media, time management, diversifying your revenue streams, networking, delegating, mental health, and life design. We will discuss lessons we've learned through trial and error, share success stories from the music industry, and leave the audience with resources and actionable advice. We hope our presentation empowers attendees to know their financial worth and how to best manage all the pieces of the puzzle.

Thomas Claesen and Chelsea Levine have been involved with LLCs, C-Corps, S-Corps, non-profits, and even an underground candy-bar business in elementary school. Music wise, they've taught and designed for marching ensembles all over the world. Thomas is a designer and entrepreneur. He owns Clawsun Design, whose portfolio includes websites for creatives, non-profits, and e-commerce brands, as well as branding, book design, and publishing. He is the quad tech at Rhythm X. Chelsea is the founder and CEO of Seavine and The Cymbal Scholarship, a former CMO, and consults in digital marketing and social media. She is the cymbal tech at Rhythm X. Thomas and Chelsea recently founded the tech company Teeq, which revolves around an app to give and receive video feedback. It facilitates better learning for students and teachers.

3

FRAMEWORK 2

II. SOON

for vibraphone and marimba Anders Åstrand (2024)

Intro ♩ = 132
rep. these bars ad lib.

Vibraphone

Marimba

A Vibraphone 1st round and Marimba 2nd round

B Marimba 1st round and Vibraphone 2nd round

Chord markings: G-maj, G-6, C-7, D-6, D7b9

Dynamic markings: *mp*, *mf*

Xylophoning in the Kitchen with Jonathan Singer

Celebrating 100 Years of George Hamilton Green Lessons

By Nancy Zeltsman

Jonathan Singer is like no one else. Of course, we are *all* like no one else! I've known and admired Jon for a long time, and I was happy for the chance to interview him about some experiences that set the stage for his upcoming xylophone session at PASIC 2024.

Nancy Zeltsman: Hi, Jon! Why do you play xylophone in your kitchen?

Jon Singer: Well, where else am I supposed to play it? Aside from PASIC, there aren't a lot of opportunities to play solo xylophone. As some people may know, I used to play on the subway platforms of New York City, dressed in fuzzy animal costumes – what else was I supposed to wear? – and also in bars, recital halls, and for various celebrations. I played wherever I could.

Zeltsman: That was with Xylopholks!

Singer: Right. From 2008 to 2020, I made a real effort to create opportunities to play.

Zeltsman: As goofy and over the top as the animal costumes were, I found something pretty deep about it. As a fellow performer of an under-known instrument family, you were getting a mallet instrument into peoples' lives, your playing was great as always, and

you made people smile. It was kinda genius.

Singer: That's very nice of you.

Zeltsman: You've also done some impressive research on the history of the xylophone – well, part of its history: your dissertation: "Noodling Changes: The Development of Xylophone Improvisation in New York City (1916–1942)." That was accompanied by a very impressive recital at City University of New York (CUNY) with Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks, including many of the famous tunes you'd written about. And you have made available a few of those charts through the Jon Singer Histori-

cal Xylophone Series. With all that behind you, I'm interested how you came around to George Hamilton Green's *Instruction Course for Xylophone* that you plan to highlight in your PASIC 2024 session.

Singer: Through all the aforementioned pursuits, I kept recognizing the assumption from educated percussionists that I had studied the Green course. I had not. Mostly, I was simply doing my best to have a good time. In 2016, I started recording each of Green's lessons and posting them on YouTube. The project began to provide the kind of annotated tutorial experience that I wished I'd had access to, and it turned into a several-year project – in my kitchen. I called it "Xylophoning in the Kitchen with Jon."

A number of students had approached me for insights into playing the xylophone. Typically, they had played one or two pages from the Green *Instruction Course*, and one of his popular xylophone solos that they were preparing for auditions and recitals. Is it possible to play Green's xylophone solos without a knowledge of basic harmony, musical style, any of the advice he gives in the 50 lessons or beyond, or the ability to improvise? Sure. But why not dig a little deeper? After all, in many cases, the students already



JONATHAN SINGER

possess the books and recordings. All that is needed is the time and focus to engage with them.

Zeltsman: So, again, why did this occur in the kitchen?

Singer: Putting the xylophone in the kitchen meant that I couldn't ignore it. After playing and hearing "The Whistler" a few too many times, one eventually starts to look for some new chords – hoping to do something new with his materials. My idea was to study each of Green's lessons, while also considering the years of musical development since their inception.

Zeltsman: What place did this hold in your personal journey?

Singer: I was at a point where I wanted to work backwards from lessons I took at Berklee College of Music as an undergrad in the early 2000s.

Zeltsman: You started playing percussion quite young, and already had an advanced technique by that point.

Singer: Maybe that accounts for the assumption that I could understand fairly complex harmonic ideas common in the modern jazz idiom. I remember my first lesson ended with a couple of pieces of paper covered in scales. They were to be played over just about every chord type I had heard of and then utilized over a tune, all in a week's time. I got frustrated by too much information, from both my lessons and the amount of knowledge demanded by the music I was striving to play. Information overload!

Zeltsman: In your training, did you experience other examples of "information overload" in other pedagogical approaches?

Singer: Sure! Another example was xylophonist Ian Finkel's outlook. In my first and only formal lesson with Finkel, he laid out what he considered to be all the major points to be concerned with as a soloist: being able to play in all musical

styles, many classical music transcriptions, sight-reading, arranging, playing in all keys – with an emphasis on keys with five and six sharps or flats, it always seemed! – four-mallet playing, improvising, and arranging – with both block-playing and isolated voices. Finkel was a virtuoso and imparted a lot of knowledge in a short span of time that would take me years to deal with.

Zeltsman: So you felt a pull toward a systematic approach – to work through someone's step-by-step approach.

Singer: Right! There have been many xylophone methods since Green's *Instruction Course for Xylophone*, but none as comprehensive or that, for instance, suggested writing out variations and improvising. One of the reasons I believe so few percussionists fully utilize the lessons in Green's *Instruction Course* is that, even though it's systematized, it can still be overwhelming to take on a 150-page book. The way the lessons were originally distributed, on a weekly basis, might limit what a student would practice in a given week. This could potentially provide a positive focus and generate interest, as a student might eagerly await the next steps. This was my experience studying and recording a lesson each week.

Zeltsman: How does jazz pedagogy factor for a xylophonist?

Singer: Much more has happened in the development of jazz and jazz pedagogy than xylophone playing since the 1920s. While some argue that Green was an early jazz musician, these lessons do not hold up as training exercises for jazz, but rather a fantastic introduction to improvising over short and simple forms.

One of the reasons for my kitchen experiment was to connect the introductory study of harmony and xylophone playing for a beginning or even intermediate student. Green addresses harmonic progressions, but not by naming the chords. While there are moderately

complex chord progressions used in his lessons, the styles addressed are limited in their chord types. Throughout the lessons, Green gives examples that can be cut and pasted into breaks or even entire forms.

"Lesson 1 – Ragtime" provides four examples of variations on the same harmonic form: I, IV, and V7 chords in the key of C. Mostly, Green favors presenting individual lessons in specific keys. Lesson 38 is the only study that addresses playing a variation in all major keys through the circle of fifths. Funny that he waits until Lesson 38 for this!

Interestingly, he does not do so with a series of resolving dominants, which

DRUMSET

WILL CALHOUN Drumset Clinic/Performance PULSE: The Interaction Relationship Between Sound, Rhythm, and Improvisation

Will Calhoun is a two-time Grammy winner from the band Living Colour and has been inducted into National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C. Will graduated from the Berklee College of Music, where he received his bachelor's degree in recording and engineering. Will has produced/toured with Harry Belafonte, Pharoah Sanders, Wayne Shorter, McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter, Buster Williams, Bobby Watson, Mike Stern, Public Enemy, Lauryn Hill, Marcus Miller, Yassin Bey (aka Mos Def) Herb Alpert, Mick Jagger, Oumou Sangare, and many others. He is an adjunct professor at New York University (NYU), teaching in the electronic music composing department. Will has invested over 25 years of personal research in the Outback of Australia, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Belize, and Northern Brazil to document and study the true history of the drums, rhythm, sonic vibrations, and their impact on modern music. In April 2023 Will received the Cultural Vanguard Award from The Bronx Museum for outstanding performance, interdisciplinary cultural research, and reinvesting his talents/knowledge in the Bronx. Will is presently touring with Living Colour and recording songs for a new release.

might prepare a student to think in terms of chord resolution. Instead, a series of potential scenarios are given, which almost assume a player's innate ability to understand their application in popular songs.

One oddity is in Lesson 23. Green instructs: "Have an easy piano accompaniment made for this melody, and you can play it either as a solo or for dancing." No suggestions are given as to how to make an easy piano accompaniment, and chords or accompaniment are not addressed in any of the prior lessons.

Zeltsman: So where is the xylophone today, 100 years or so since all this started?

Singer: Today, I find the xylophone to be a bit of a museum piece. There are a few players giving performances around the world. The limitations of the instrument have always been there. Just as a piccolo soloist may struggle to get out of a novelty categorization, the range, timbre, and volume of the xylophone is fairly unforgiving. One of the reasons George Green is still celebrated is that there have been no players since him to create as prolific an output of music, recordings, and pedagogical materials.

Zeltsman: Could you offer a few general takeaways from Green's lessons that you often point out to students?

Singer: 1. Maintain the full note value. Not doing so is commonly referred to as "cheating the rests." This is something that becomes evident when playing

with other musicians. Consistency of tempo and note values is very important, especially with an instrument that is staccato in nature. No matter how the music develops, rhythmic subdivision will always be necessary.

2. Consider mallet selection. I remember standing at Ian Finkel's door, being told that I would not be permitted to return with unwrapped mallets. As I was feeling stressed about finding wrapped xylophone mallets, or making my own, Ian lowered his voice and suggested that wrapped vibraphone mallets will do the job. The common use of hard mallets on xylophone played in large ensembles often sacrifices tone and reduces options of tone color. Instead of reaching for earplugs for xylophone practice, I suggest considering a softer mallet and aiming for a desirable, musical tone.

3. Consider your roll speed. Each xylophonist has their own approach to playing rolls on the xylophone. Green does not address roll speed or much about tremolo in his course. With technology to slow down his very clear recordings, we can hear that Green favored an eighth-note triplet for rolls in fox-trot tempos, and slow rolls for lyrical playing in general.

4. Consider musical styles. The xylophone music of the 1920s has been so pervasive over the past century that there have been few developments for its use in improvisation. There have been some concerti and solo recital performances, most often performed by

percussionists, and a few by dedicated xylophonists.

The format of xylophone with marimba accompaniment, masterfully presented by Bob Becker and Nexus, has been highly influential to recent generations of percussionists. The xylophone style of the 1920s has been strongly represented by performers of arrangements by Becker, Bill Cahn, and others who were central into a revival of the music in the 1970s and beyond.

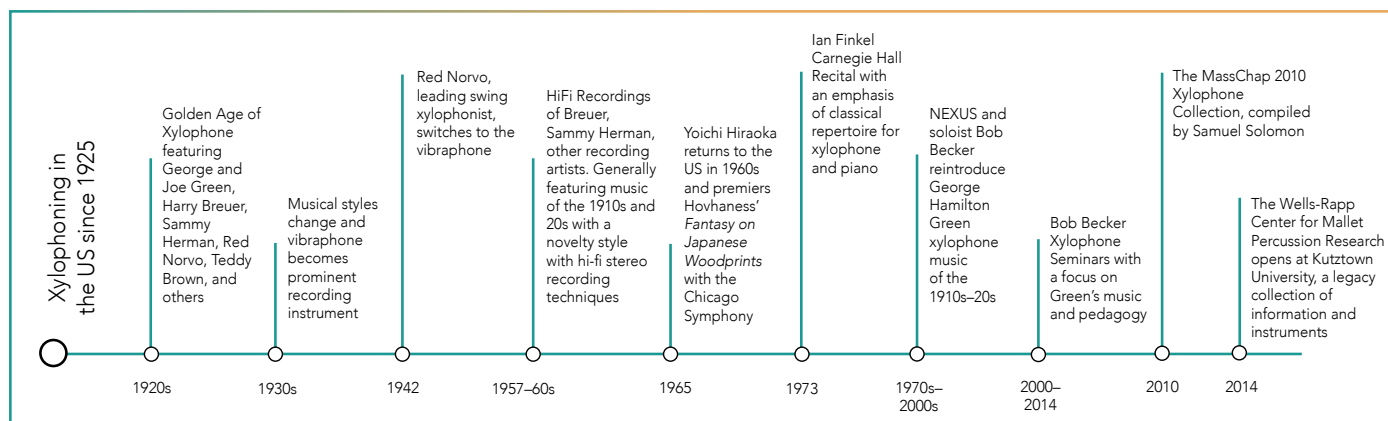
Harry Breuer, Sammy Herman, and others made recordings in the late 1950s featuring Stereo Hi-Fi recording techniques. Though these recordings featured xylophone and keyboard percussion playing of the highest level, the musical content is a musical nod to their musical roots of the 1920s. Even Breuer's "Space Age Pop" collaborations with Jean-Jacques Perrey feature arrangements of novelty xylophone playing. Ian Finkel developed a four-mallet style with clear influence from stride pianists of the 1930s and '40s.

Zeltsman: You created a timeline on which you charted your view of the most notable xylophone events in the last century. (See Figure 1.)

Singer: Certainly, much more has happened that I am not aware of, but I did my best to chart aspects of both the preservation and development of xylophone repertoire and playing.

Zeltsman: I look forward to hearing

Figure 1



more at your PASIC session, including hearing you play! What's next for the xylophone? As I see it, the sky's the limit!

Singer: Yes, the xylophone is ripe for innovation. Even the design of the instrument itself has not changed much since the 1920s. Whether or not we use the advice and instruction given 100 years ago, I also hope to see yet another revival of interest for the xylophone in new musical styles and contexts in years to come.

LINKS

Xylopholks

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=FU6trBF151o>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNOX-Wcj_L6o

Jonathan Singer dissertation

"Noodling Changes: The Development of Xylophone Improvisation in New York City (1916-1942)" https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3268&context=gc_etds

Jonathan Singer recital

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=8fBz589k5HA&t=6s>

Jon Singer Historical Xylophone Series

<https://www.mostlymarimba.com/product-category/sheet-music/composer-series/jon-singer-historical-xylophone-series/>

Jonathan Singer website

<https://jonathan-singer.com/PN>

KEYBOARD

DAVID FRIEDMAN Keyboard Clinic/Performance Generations Trio

David Friedman's Generations Trio features Friedman on vibes, Oliver Potratz on bass, and Tilo Weber on drums. David Friedman is one of the most influential vibraphonists in the history of the instrument. *Thursday* is the first release of Friedman's brand-new Generations Trio, and also the first release of his new label, Malletmuse Records. The Generations Trio provides a musical example of intuitive communication and intense interaction, resulting in an audible process of music-making, which speaks directly to the listening audience. These three generations of musicians develop an amazingly orchestral band sound, which is fresh and hip, while firmly rooted in the deep tradition of jazz.

Friedman has been heard live or on recordings with, among others, Joe Henderson, Horace Silver, Johnny Griffin, Ron Carter, Wayne Shorter, and John Schofield. Friedman's vibraphone and compositions are featured on Chet Baker's award-winning release *Peace*. A dedicated and renowned educator, Friedman founded the jazz program at Berlin's University of the Arts and served as its head for 16 years. His book, *Vibraphone Technique, Dampening and Pedaling*, is an influential mallet instruction book.

ERIKO DAIMO; MICHAEL UDOW; PIUS CHEUNG

Keyboard Clinic/Performance *My Marimba Works – An Approach to Interpretation and Expression* by Keiko Abe

PAS Hall of Fame Artist Keiko Abe's newest book, *My Marimba Works – An Approach to Interpretation and Expression* – released in English in 2023 by Meredith Music/GIA Publications – blends the historical background of 69 of Abe's more than 300 compositions with interpretive insights to help current and future generations of performers. Keiko wished that a clinic presenting selected works be given at PASIC to highlight many of the concepts shared in this compendium. She requested that Michael Udow, who served as chief editor of the English edition, present her concepts with background information about the selected compositions, with examples performed by Pius Cheung and Eriko Daimo, who will also perform one of Keiko's duets in its entirety.

Marimbists Pius Cheung and Eriko Daimo offer deeply insightful performances of consequential music that captivate audiences worldwide. Their extensive history of collaborations with Michael Udow, and Michael's decades of touring with Keiko

Abe, are a testament to their musical prowess. Pius, Eriko, and Michael, drawing from Abe-sensei's legacy as a performer, composer, and educator, infuse their performances with a rare blend of humanity, wisdom, and passion for marimba.

JERRY TACHOIR Virtual Keyboard Clinic/Performance Create a Richer Sound on Mallet Percussion through Chord Voicings

In this session, Jerry Tachoir will discuss utilizing expanded chords and prime dissonance to create bigger sounding and more aggressive chord voicings.

Jerry Tachoir's vibraphone playing, characterized by a delicate touch and expressive nuances, blends jazz, classical, and world music influences. Tachoir's commitment to his craft is evident in his extensive discography and collaborations with notable artists. Through his innovative performances and dedication to pushing the boundaries of vibraphone artistry, Jerry has earned a well-deserved place in the pantheon of accomplished musicians. Jerry is the author of *A Contemporary Mallet Method – an Approach to the Vibraphone and Marimba*. Both the Jerry Tachoir Group and Duo Tachoir have performed at major jazz festivals and concert halls throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe.

GORDON STOUT Keyboard Masterclass The Music of Gordon Stout

Gordon Stout is Professor Emeritus at the School of Music, Ithaca College, Ithaca, N.Y., where he taught from 1980 through 2019. A composer as well as percussionist who specializes on marimba, he has studied composition with Joseph Schwantner, Samuel Adler, and Warren Benson, and percussion with James Salmon and John Beck.

Many of his compositions for marimba are published and have become standard repertoire for marimbists world-wide. A frequent lecture-recitalist for PAS, he has appeared at more than a dozen PASICs as featured marimbist, as well as throughout the United States and Canada, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, Hungary, Bulgaria, Mexico, Denmark, Puerto Rico, Italy, Greece, and Spain. His composition "New York Triptych" for marimba orchestra, commissioned by and written for the 50th anniversary celebration of PAS, premiered at PASIC 2011 in Indianapolis, Ind. He has also conducted marimba orchestras in Australia, Croatia, and throughout the United States. Gordon was inducted into the PAS Hall of Fame in November of 2012. In 2019 his newest venture was launched: G&C Music, which will be the new home of Full Circle Publications and StoutWorks.

Texture Over Melody: Creating Sonic Landscapes

By Austin Keck

For decades, the musical landscape has been dominated by melody and thematic writing, with composers like John Williams and Sergei Rachmaninoff crafting sweeping themes that have become iconic. However, there is a shift happening in the world of film composition, one that prioritizes the emotional and subconscious impact of music over direct thematic expression. This shift is not just confined to film scores but is beginning to influence other musical genres, including concert percussion.

As a composer who has ventured into the realm of film music, I have observed this transformation firsthand. Directors increasingly seek music that evokes a feeling rather than a specific, identifiable

melody. They are looking for compositions that affect the audience on a deeper, almost subliminal level. This approach opens up exciting possibilities for percussion, an area that is uniquely equipped to explore a wide range of textures and sounds.

In my PASIC session, I will explore how these principles can be applied to concert percussion to create something truly original. My aim is not to reinvent the wheel; our field's incredible educators and leaders have laid a solid foundation over the past century. Instead, I seek to innovate on existing ideas, infusing my compositions with my own voice and personality to offer a fresh experience to audiences.

The core of my presentation will focus on how I utilize texture, particular-

ly in mallet percussion instruments, to build soundscapes that are not reliant on traditional themes or melodies. These instruments, in my view, are often underutilized in this regard. We have fallen into the habit of recycling familiar styles and sounds, with only minor variations in harmony and instrumentation. My approach challenges this by focusing on *how* these instruments are used, rather than merely on *what* instruments are chosen.

In the session, I will delve into five key principles that guide my composition process:

1. **Rhythm:** The foundation of any composition, rhythm can create structure, drive momentum, or evoke a specific emotion.

2. **Timing/Offset:** Subtle shifts in timing can significantly alter the feel of a piece, creating tension or surprise while also creating unique overlapping textures.

3. **Vertical Layering:** By stacking different sounds and textures, I can build complex soundscapes that envelop the listener.

4. **Timbre:** The unique color of each instrument, as well as the implement you choose, is essential in crafting a distinctive sonic palette.

5. **Harmony:** While less central in my approach, harmony still plays a role in supporting the overall texture and mood. It is also the core "DNA" of my writing style.



AUSTIN KECK

These components allow me to stay true to my identity as a composer while also pushing the boundaries of what percussion music can be. Through my studies and experiences, I've learned that innovation in music often stems from building on the ideas of past composers. For me, this means drawing inspiration from film music by such composers as Hans Zimmer, John Williams, and Ludwig Göransson, and finding ways to translate these influences into the world of percussion.

I believe that the future of music composition lies in contemporary, atmospheric, and textural writing. My journey also focuses on making music more accessible and inspiring the next generation. Music should be enjoyable and approachable for everyone, yet much of our current

repertoire is rooted in exclusivity and complexity. This can make it difficult for non-musician audiences to fully appreciate contemporary music, creating a divide between musicians and listeners, particularly in the U.S. By programming more diverse and inclusive pieces, we can help ensure that classical music remains vibrant and relevant for years to come.

In conclusion, my PASIC session will offer a glimpse into this new approach to percussion composition. By embracing texture and the unique qualities of our instruments, we can create music that resonates on a deeper, more intuitive level. I look forward to sharing these ideas and exploring texture with you in November!

Austin Keck is a Los Angeles-based percussionist and composer specializing in contemporary solo and chamber music. With a passion for innovation, Keck has performed worldwide, including at the IPEA International Percussion Competition and the Music for All Summer Symposium. His compositions, such as "Passage to an Uncharted World" and "Evanescence," have premiered at major events like PASIC. Keck has earned numerous accolades, including first prizes at the Great Plains International Marimba Competition and the Yamaha Young Performing Artist Competition. He holds a B.M. and is pursuing an M.M. in Contemporary Media and Film Composition at the Eastman School of Music. [PN](#)

EVENING CONCERTS

ANTONIO SÁNCHEZ AND BAD HOMBRE WITH THANA ALEXA, BIGYUKI & LEX SADLER

Four-time Grammy-award-winner Antonio Sánchez is among the most sought-after drummers on the international jazz scene. Following 21 years and nine albums with guitarist/composer Pat Metheny, he has also recorded and performed with, among others, Chick Corea, Gary Burton, Michael Brecker, and Charlie Haden. In 2014 Sánchez scored Alejandro Inarritu's *Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)*, which won four Academy Awards and for which Sánchez was also a Golden Globe nominee. Sánchez has close to a dozen recordings as a leader and solo artist. Recent projects include *Three Times Three* with Brad Mehldau, John Scofield, Joe Lovano, Matt Brewer, John Patitucci, and Christian McBride; *Bad Hombre*, a sociopolitical journey through electronica and percussion; *Channels of Energy*, featuring the WDR Big Band with arrangements of Sánchez's compositions by Vince Mendoza; *Lines in the Sand*, Sánchez's protest against social injustice and bigotry as well as a tribute to every immigrant's journey; and most recently, *SHIFT (Bad Hombre Vol. II)*, where Sánchez plays every instrument on an album featuring Trent Reznor, Dave Mathews, Kimbra, Ana Tijoux, Meshell Ndegeocello and more.

Thana Alexa is a Grammy nominated artist and winner of the International Songwriting Competition. Her latest album, *ONA*, which earned her two Grammy nominations

including Best Jazz Vocal Album, was inspired by the cross generational and cross-cultural stories of the immigrant women in her family and evolved into an exploration of the experiences of contemporary women everywhere. Alexa, together with Grammy nominated artist Nicole Zuraitis and bassist Julia Adamy, formed Sonica, a trio that incorporates intricate vocal harmonies, electronics, vocal loops, percussion, electric bass, and keyboards over a blend of original music and modern arrangements. Alexa also created the project Founding Mothers of Jazz in conjunction with MusicTalks Concerts to honor the history of women in jazz. One of Alexa's ongoing collaborations has been with her husband, Antonio Sanchez. Alexa has recorded three albums with his band Migration and is a featured artist on Sanchez's release *SHIFT (Bad Hombre Vol. II)*.

Masayuki Hirano — better known as BIGYUKI — is a ground-breaking songwriter and virtuoso keyboard player who blends jazz, soul, hip-hop, and electronica to create a sound that's wholly his own. Alongside releasing his own inimitable music, BIGYUKI is highly sought-after as a performer and collaborator by the likes of A Tribe Called Quest, Kamasi Washington, and Lauryn Hill. In November 2017 he released his debut album, *Reaching For Chiron*, a collection of music that connects the dots between experimental jazz, soulful funk, and deep hip-hop beats.

Lex Sadler is the Musical Director, programmer, and bassist for Abir, has performed with Def Jam artist Arlissa, RocNation artist Nicole Bus, has toured extensively with R&B artist Jor-

dan Bratton, and is the house bass player for Producer Mondays at NuBlu — New York's premier music innovation session and open jam. As a programmer and producer, Lex has designed and produced Ableton backing tracks for Abir, Arlissa, and Nicole Bus.

SŌ PERCUSSION Evening Concert

Sō Percussion will present an evening of commissions and collaborations designed to highlight the breadth of work being made in the world of contemporary composition for unique and diverse percussion groups. The program will include: Olivier Tarpaga, "Fêfê," Jason Treuting, "Nine Numbers 5" (with Ji Hye Jung), Nathalie Joachim, "Note To Self," and Julius Eastman, "Stay On It" (with alumni of So Percussion Summer Institute, members of Bard Percussion, and other special guests).

For over 20 years, Sō Percussion has re-defined chamber music for the 21st century through an "exhilarating blend of precision and anarchy, rigor and bedlam" (*The New Yorker*). They are celebrated by audiences and presenters for live performances featuring "telepathic powers of communication" (*The New York Times*) that bring to life the vibrant percussion repertoire; for an extravagant array of collaborations in classical music, pop, indie rock, contemporary dance, and theater; and for their work in education and community, creating opportunities and platforms for music and artists that explore the immense possibility of art in our time.

PASIC 2024 Scholarly Research Sessions

The PAS Scholarly Research Committee is excited to sponsor two diverse scholarly research sessions, one live and one virtual for PASIC 2024. These sessions were selected based on their valuable contributions to percussion research and are deserving of a PAS audience.

Live Session

NICHOLAS PAPADOR AND HEARTLAND MARIMBA QUARTET

Vessels of Song Precedents and Creation of Klezmer Suites for Mallet Ensemble

Nicholas Papador will present an in-person research session titled “Ves-

sels of Song Precedents and Creation of Klezmer Suites for Mallet Ensemble.” Assisting with Papador’s presentation will be the Heartland Marimba Quartet (HMQ), who will perform selections from these klezmer suites. Papador says that the presentation will provide “a precedent for klezmer performance on mallet instruments through contributions of a small but significant line of performers. Michel Józef Guzikow built his own instrument, the ‘stroyfidl,’ a xylophone prototype. His tour of Western Europe in the 1830s was a catalyst for the development of the orchestral xylophone. After the Ashkenazi immigration to North America, klezmer underwent a diasporic transformation as



NICHOLAS PAPADOR



HEARTLAND MARIMBA QUARTET

its musicians explored jazz and popular music. Joseph Moskowitz elevated the role of dulcimer instruments in New York and Jacob Hoffmann recorded as a xylophone soloist with the Kandel Orchestra in the 1920s. Furthermore, attendees will hear and learn about enjoyable new ensemble literature with poignant historical and cultural significance.”

Percussionist and composer Nicholas Papador is Full Professor at the University of Windsor School of Creative Arts in Ontario, Canada. Heartland Marimba Publications released his book *Vessels of Song: A Collection of Klezmer Suites for Mallet Ensemble* in early 2024. Papador has presented internationally at events such as The Space Between, Transplanted Roots, Puerto Rico Conservatory International Percussion Festival, and PASIC. His recording credits include *Marimba Collage* (2022) and *Points of Departure* (2015). Additionally, he was an on-screen performer in Matthew Barney’s six-hour film opera, *River of Fundament*.

Since its inception in 2016, HMQ has performed at over 250 concerts nationwide. HMQ offers a broad platform for the music of American and international composers. The ensemble’s four members – Matthew Coley, Ryan Pearson, Marco Schirripa, and Hunter Gross – form a virtuosic and electrifying ensemble. HMQ has been featured as soloists with the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra, Cheyenne Symphony, Minot Symphony, the University of Nebraska-Omaha Wind Ensemble, Millikin University Percussion Ensemble, and the International Marimba Orchestra. In 2022, HMQ was a featured guest artist at the World Marimba Competition in Stuttgart, Germany. The quartet released their debut album, *VISION*, in 2019 and is featured on other albums by Schirripa and Coley. Dedicated to bringing marimba performance to all communities, especially those underserved, HMQ provides numerous opportunities for artists, composers, and students at various stages of their careers. In line with this mission, HMQ was awarded a grant from New Music USA in 2020 and launched

the New Quartets Project Consortium, commissioning six women composers. HMQ is committed to enriching the musical landscape and inspiring audiences through performance and community engagement.

Virtual Session

DR. LUCAS (LUKE) HELKER

Materials that Matter: A Context Driven Approach to Repertoire with Found Objects

Luke Helker’s virtual presentation is titled “Materials that Matter: A Context Driven Approach to Repertoire with Found Objects.” According to Helker, “My research often focuses on the performance practice around found objects in the percussion repertoire and music that engages with the natural world. The purpose of this session is to examine the role and context of found objects in the percussion repertoire by demonstrating how found objects can be, and often are, utilized beyond the scope of timbral mimetics. Additionally, a taxonomy for categorizing these objects and providing performance considerations for select works will be presented.”

Helker is Assistant Professor of Percussion at Fort Hays State University. He received his Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the University of Kansas, where he studied with Dr. Mi-

chael Compitello and Dr. Sam Um. He previously taught at Benedictine College and the Bishop Seabury Academy, the latter of which he helped establish their instrumental music program. Helker remains an in-demand instructor for the marching arts, having toured with the Jersey Surf Drum and Bugle Corps and assisting with a variety of high school programs in Pennsylvania and Kansas. He is also an active academic, regularly presenting (and often performing) at conferences including the Kansas Music Educators Association In-Service Workshop, joint meeting for the American Musicological Society and Society for Music Theory, and PASIC.

Helker has commissioned or premiered new works for percussion from such esteemed composers as Jenni Brandon, Kevin Day, Nicholas Tran, and Daijana Wallace. His annual concert series, Ears to the Earth, has initiated the creation of some of these works in addition to providing a platform to combine musical performance with local outreach. Helker has also performed with Yarn/Wire, members of the International Contemporary Ensemble, So Percussion, and Sandbox Percussion, and he regularly performs with such local ensembles as the Free State Brass Band, Crossroads Wind Symphony, and Extemporeous Music and Arts Society of Kansas City. [PN](#)



DR. LUCAS HELKE

DRUMSET

GEORGE SCHWINDT Drumset Clinic

George Schwindt is Founder and Managing Director of 26F Music Publishing, where he has provided publishing administration and music industry navigation tools for such artists as Gogol Bordello, Dustin Welch, Reverend Peyton, and The Briggs. Schwindt was the drummer of Flogging Molly from 1995–2015, a globally recognized band with over 3-million units sold. He holds a B.A. in Music and an Executive M.B.A.

Experiential Wellness and Interactive Drumming

By Robert Damm

Experiential Wellness and Interactive Drumming sessions at this year's PASIC include the annual Drum Circle Facilitators Workshop, an engaging drumming and movement session demonstrating how to make a difference in the lives of young students and older adults, an introduction to African *kashakas* (shakers), a cultural presentation on hula dance rhythms of Hawai'i, a friendly program on how to build a community-based business, an experiential wellness drum circle based on wisdom traditions from around the world, and a rhythmic mindfulness program integrating movement and hand drumming.

DRUM CIRCLE FACILITATORS WORKSHOP

The annual Drum Circle Facilitators Workshop will be led by Robert Damm on Wed., Nov. 13 from 1:00–6:00 P.M. The five-hour workshop provides facilitators at all levels the opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge. No PASIC registration is required in addition to the \$50 registration fee for the workshop.

Interactive drumming unites all participants through the wonderful potential of in-the-moment activity, the unique enjoyment of music, and the special power of percussion. The drum circle can also provide an opportunity to share cultural information and engagement with world percussion instruments.

Damm's workshop will include foundational rhythms (e.g., universal, culturally specific, and speech), African drumming concepts (e.g., groove, polyrhythms, drum calls, and integration of drumming with songs), exploration of meter, integration of stories and games, drumming affirmations, celebration of themes (e.g., peace, kindness, diversity) through drum circles, and use of homemade/found instruments (e.g., buckets).

Robert Damm is Professor of Music at Mississippi State University, where he teaches classes about world music. Damm has facilitated hundreds of drum circles for thousands of participants since 2009 when he hosted a "Drum-a-ganza Community Drum Circle" celebrating health and wellness, sponsored by PAS and Remo. Damm is co-chair of the PAS Interactive Drumming Committee.

RHYTHM FOR REGULATION AND RESILIENCY

Rhythm for Regulation and Resiliency with Lisa Colleen is an interactive drumming and movement session with a bit of applied educational neuroscience. Colleen will demonstrate how rhythm can make a difference in the lives of young students and older adults. Senior communities seek ways to encourage their residents to stay active and relieve stress or anxiety; drumming can bring wellbeing to both residents and staff. Facilitators can help reset

and bring a sense of calm back to these communities.

Lisa Colleen is the founder of LC Coaching LLC (DBA LC Rhythm Events), a high-energy consultancy that applies rhythm, movement, and neuroscience to the art of reframing perspectives for health, happiness, and wellbeing. She completed the graduate certificate program in Applied Educational Neuroscience with an emphasis on Adversity/Trauma and the Brain at Butler University in 2021. She is recognized as a drum circle facilitator and creator of numerous rhythm-based



ROBERT DAMM

programs for schools and senior living communities.

CLACK CITY KASHAKAS

Tyler Hawes will explore the origins of a fascinating African instrument called *kashakas* (also known as *asalato*, *kaskas*, *televi*, *patica*, *butukata*, and many other names). Hawes will share the potential of *kashakas* in modern music and give participants the tools to begin their own personal clack journey. The *kashakas* are a simple percussion instrument that originated in West Africa. They consist of two dried gourd shells filled with pebbles or seeds that are attached to each other by rope. *Kashakas* are played by keeping one gourd in the hand while the other swings around the outside of the hand until smacking against the other to produce a sandy shake sound interspersed with hollow clacks. This combination of shakes and clacks are what give the *kashakas* their unique rhythmic capabilities.

Traditionally, the *kashakas* were used in Ghana and other West African countries as part of social or religious ceremonies. Musicians would sit in circles playing them together while singing. The *kashakas* made their way across the world over time, eventually landing in Japan where

a famous pop star of the late 1980s/early '90s played them live on a popular music television show. Because the traditional West African gourds were hard to obtain and would often break, the Japanese began making the instrument out of molded plastic. They named this version *patica*. At the time, there was a lot of interest in various hand juggling skills like the yo-yo and pen spinning; these types of elaborate moves made their way into the Japanese *kashaka* playing style. Hawes will demonstrate introductory techniques, discuss various extended uses of the instrument, and share the names of important figures in the worldwide *kashaka* community.

Tyler Hawes is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, and educator from Akron, Ohio. During his undergraduate percussion studies with Josh Ryan at Baldwin Wallace University, he traveled to Ghana to the Dagbe Cultural Institute under Emmanuel Agbeli. Immersed in traditional drum and dance music, he discovered the *kashakas* (known as *televi* in the Volta Region), which became a significant influence. He manufactures *kashakas* from traditional *swawa* gourds imported from West Africa.

SHARING ALOHA IN DRUM CIRCLES

Jeremy Kirk will provide participants with foundational knowledge to incorporate authentic rhythms of Hawai'i into their drum circles. Hula and *mele* (music) of Hawai'i, along with all cultures of Polynesia, are among the most underrepresented cultural art forms in western curricula. Many misconceptions of hula and misinterpretations of Hawaiian music and language are pervasive. Attendees will learn traditional rhythms and dance basic hula *kahiko* (pre-contact hula).

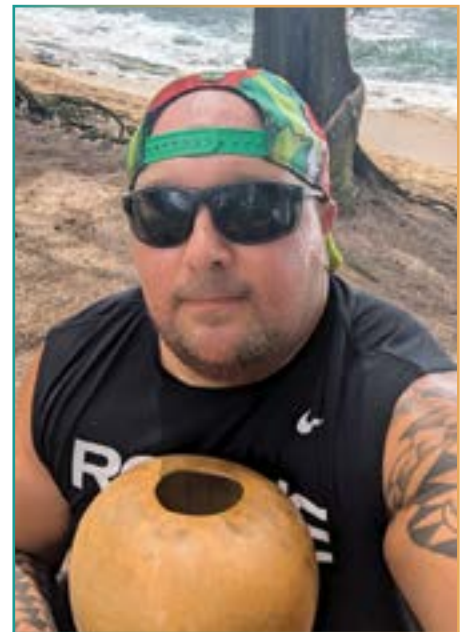
Traditional hula would honor gods and chiefs, provide *mo'olelo* (stories) of victorious battles and brave travel across the Pacific Ocean. It also explained such topics as lava, constellations, and weather patterns. No written language existed prior to Western contact; hula, along with the *mele* and *oli* (chant) used in hula, was a primary source of knowledge passed from generation to generation. After 1778, as Christian missionary influence spread, hula was eventually banned; its practice continued in secret. A new style of hula influenced by western culture began to emerge publicly. This style focused on such topics as beautiful flowers, calming rain, and the Hawaiian monarchy. Dance movements



LISA COLLEEN



TYLER HAWKES



JEREMY KIRK

became more graceful and fluid. *Mele* became influenced by European tonalities and instruments. In 1893, U.S. businessmen staged a coup, and the Hawaiian Kingdom was illegally overthrown. Five years later, Hawai'i was annexed by the United States, and it became a U.S. territory two years later in 1900. In the ensuing decades, Hawaiian language, art forms, and traditions were greatly suppressed and neared extinction. Over the years, as tourism began to grow, an interest in Hawaiian culture also grew. In the early 1970s, a major movement known as the Hawaiian Renaissance helped promote Hawaiian culture, history, and language into widespread availability including public school curricula. These circumstances have shaped hula into two different styles: hula *kahiko* (pre-contact hula) and hula *'auana* (post-contact hula). Each style is equally important to the history and culture of Hawai'i *nei* (beloved).

Jeremy Kirk, a percussionist, educator, composer, and ethnomusicologist, is Associate Professor of Music at Southwestern College (Winfield, Kansas). Highly regarded and in demand for his expertise in the arts and culture of Polynesia, Kirk combines his traditional training in Western percussion with his extensive knowledge in world music to create a unique global perspective in his teaching and performing.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY-BASED DRUM BUSINESS FROM SCRATCH

This session with Frank Thompson is designed to give drummers who aspire to build a drum-based business an overarching perspective on the steps and processes needed for success. Some drummers want a simple side hustle to earn a few bucks to support their drum hobbies. Others want to strategically build a personal services business to support all drum-based events that include everything from community drum circles to signature corporate events. Regardless of the goal, gear needs to be acquired, clients must be found, and marketing must be done.

While there is no one-size-fits-all solution to building your own business, there are some fundamentals that apply to all. Thompson explores them through his story of how he built his successful drum-based business, *The AZ Rhythm Connection*. The presentation focuses on four key phases: 1. Prepare the Business Owner – A total focus on getting the new business owner physically and mentally prepped for the long-haul of building a local community-based drum business; 2. Establish the Business – The steps needed to transform an idea into an active functioning business; 3. Build the Business – The necessary steps to launch and build a business based on the Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE) template; 4. Sustain and Grow the Business – Keeping the eye on the big picture, reviewing strategies and tactics that have and have not been successful, and implementing new processes to adapt to the ever-changing marketplace of life and business.

Frank Thompson started out with *One Drum and a Dream* and believes that anyone can do it too. His emphasis is on getting started, not over-thinking it, and being locally focused. He has been a professional drum circle facilitator and educator for over 30 years.



FRANK THOMPSON

ELEMENTS OF RHYTHM

Greg Whitt will lead a wellness drum circle based on wisdom traditions from around the world. This model consistently produces positive outcomes and improved well-being. Indigenous cultures have known for ages that intentional music, specifically intentional drumming, has tremendous ability to alter mind, body, and spirit. Whether in a trance dance, healing ritual, military parade, or a rock concert, drumming moves us. We're predisposed to respond to rhythm.

Modern science has been on a path for more than 25 years to substantiate countless anecdotal claims that drumming is good for us. Peter Scheer's website at www.rhythmresearchresources.net catalogs more than 65 clinical studies and scholarly articles documenting the efforts of researchers to prove the physiological and psychosocial benefits of this music-based wellness modality. Barry Bitman, Christine Stevens, and Simon Faulkner are championing these methodologies and refining protocols to consistently produce positive and measurable benefits from group drumming experiences. The research shows us that through drumming, we stimulate creativity, foster a sense of belonging, and boost the immune



GREG WHITT

system. This is why facilitators are developing systematic approaches to influence biological and social systems using drums. These skillfully facilitated rhythm experiences promote connection, contribution, and vitality – the three components for holistic wellness according to Jonathan Fields’ Good Life Project™.

These ideas influenced Whitt’s design of his Elements of Rhythm (EOR)™ program, which is similar to Bittman’s Health-RHYTHMS and Faulkner’s DRUMBEAT. Each of these wellness drumming protocols teaches that sharing stories of our experiences and feeling understood are key factors in health and wellbeing. In this format, a group takes turns sharing relevant personal experiences. The group then creates a nonverbal expression of those stories that allows participants to show support and engagement. Modern cognitive science is regularly applying these ideas using visualization techniques with athletes, executives, and surgical patients. According to Michelle Bailey, MD, the former Director of Education at the Duke Center for Integrative Medicine, this type of experience is an “excellent opportunity to practice living fully in the present moment in a fun, interactive format.”

Whitt’s program will be an experiential session involving participants in self-disclosure, deep listening, and musical expression on drums and percussion followed by Q&A. Greg Whitt is an in-demand arts facilitator and educator based in Raleigh, N.C. He teaches through rhythm, song, and story. Whitt is a board member of the North Carolina Storytelling Guild and previously served as executive director and president of the Drum Circle Facilitators Guild.

RHYTHMIC MINDFULNESS

Max Young combines music with movement and mindfulness to rewire the brain and regulate the nerves through unique modalities of group drumming. Every human being can harness that rhythm to enhance mental health and overall wellbeing. This session will feature a science-backed protocol that connects the

body to the mind and pulls people into the present moment in a fun and engaging drumming sequence.

Recent research in mental health has taught us that the body plays an integral role when it comes to things like emotions, memory, trauma, and, in this case, attention. Rhythmic Mindfulness happens while standing up and playing big barrel drums – not taiko, not djembe, but something in between. Playing them requires a full body engagement. By utilizing the power of movement to a degree that’s stressful enough to make you feel it, but not too stressful, the protocol uses the body to quiet the mind. Participants are guided through an exercise designed to trick the brain into wanting to entrain (to synchronize various rhythms into the same rhythm). In an “open focus meditation” activity, participants experience a form of improvisation that first honors the space between notes before mindfully and playfully filling that space. The session concludes with a series of interlocking rhythms. Participants are afforded the opportunity to cultivate layers of awareness, choose where to concentrate their focus, and pay attention to the present moment, on purpose, without judgement.

Max Young was playing drumset in the



MAX YOUNG

Penn State jazz ensemble and touring the country in a prog-rock/jazz fusion group until landing in Australia. There, he began studying djembe, taiko, and various other world percussion instruments before beginning to facilitate group sessions. Young combined group drumming with his love of meditation and education in behavioral neuroscience. Young returned to the U.S. and launched his RhythmetriX company.

DRUM CIRCLES AND RHYTHM LOUNGE

On Thursday at 10:00 P.M., Arianna Monge and Frank Thompson will co-facilitate the Late-Night Drum Circle, while Jeremy Kirk and Robert Damm support the Rhythm Lounge (intimate, low-volume option). On Friday at 10:00 P.M., Gary Huber and Eric Swanson will co-facilitate the Late-Night Drum Circle, with Lisa Colleen and Max Young helping in the Rhythm Lounge. The Closing Drum Circle on Saturday at 4:00 P.M. will be facilitated by John Yost and members of the IDC. Flash jams will happen on Thursday at 1:00 P.M., Friday at noon, and Saturday at 11:00 A.M. PN

COMPOSITION

JOHN PSATHAS Composition Clinic

Ioannis (John) Psathas was born in Wellington, New Zealand. From genre-crossing projects with jazz legends Michael Brecker and Joshua Redman, to an e-book scoring collaboration with Salman Rushdie, from a recording session with the Grand Mufti in Paris’s Grand Mosque, to a Billboard classical-chart-topping album with System of a Down front man Serj Tankian, Psathas’s musical journey weaves through myriad of genres, and has moved concert audiences in more than 50 countries on all seven continents. His music emerges from a 21st-century backdrop, where dynamic collaboration with creative masters from all corners of the physical and artistic globe result in outcomes that are visionary, moving, and inspired. John is now developing projects that integrate many strands of his creative journey. Much of his recent work has social and historical commentary at its core. Recently, the epic and experimental *No Man’s Land* project challenged the accepted handling of WWI commemoration.

PASIC 2024 Health & Wellness Sessions

By Hannah Weaver

With summer over and school back in swing, it's time to plan for PASIC 2024! As always, the PAS has compiled a rockstar list of performers, pedagogues, artists, clinicians, and more. Here are a few of the highlights that the Health & Wellness Committee will offer.

Thursday, Nov. 14
7:45–8:30 A.M., Convention Center Entrance

Health & Wellness Committee Fun Run
 Calling running enthusiasts of all levels! Join members of the Health & Wellness Committee on a morning jog. We'll hit a 5k loop around downtown, beginning at the Convention Center entrance. Get the blood pumping and endorphins flowing before a full day of clinics and concerts.

Thursday, Nov. 14
1:00–1:50 P.M., Room 201
Beat Drumline Back Pain! Three Keys to Play Pain-Free!" by Daniel Recoder and Forte Athletics

Anyone who has ever strapped on a drum knows the physical toll it takes on the body. Even with advancements in drum and harness design, drumline is still a brutal activity. In this session, Daniel Recoder of Forte Athletics will ad-

dress the problem of how to develop the core strength and spinal stability to help players eliminate back pain. Recoder will elaborate on his three tips to eliminate back pain: 1. Choose exercises that are relevant and achievable; 2. Learn to engage the correct muscles while carrying equipment; 3. Properly recover after rehearsal. This will be a must-see for anyone involved in the marching arts. Performers and teachers alike will gain useful insights from this session.

Friday, Nov. 15
3:00–3:50 P.M., Room 201
Healthy Life as a Percussionist presented by Fabian Ziegler

Physical wellness and mental/emotional wellness are both essential to the longevity, happiness, and success of one's musical life. Fabian Ziegler is going to speak to both of these areas during his clinic, "Healthy Life as a Percussionist." Highlights of his talk will include: mental training for musical performance and



DANIEL RECODER AND FORTE ATHLETICS



FABIAN ZIEGLER

life; tips for improved body performance and recovery; discussion of the benefits of yoga, meditation, and autogenic training (a relaxation technique used to combat anxiety or stress in the body through the power of the mind). This will be an excellent way to slow down from the mad energy of PASIC and take some time to evaluate ways to improve all aspects of your musical life.

Saturday, Nov. 16

1:00-1:50 P.M., Room 205

Your Eardrum: The Most Important Instrument You Own by John R. Beck and UNC Percussion Professors

The title says it all! In this session, John R. Beck and the percussion professors of UNC (Juan Álamo, Thomas Taylor, Eric Willie, and Amy Xin Yin) will discuss how to protect your most valuable assets—your eardrums. As percussionists, we are constantly operating in environments with decibels far beyond the healthy limits, so hearing protection is crucial. Beck and his colleagues performed studies on live musicians and have compiled video examples and research data to share regarding the sound volume levels percussionists and conductors regularly experience. They will then go on to share affordable and practical hearing protection options to help you prolong and protect your hearing. This clinic will be an invaluable resource for all.

Free Hearing Screenings

Friday, Nov. 15, 9:00 A.M.-3 P.M.

Butler University Audiologists and Health & Wellness Committee Members

Stop by for a free hearing test! Volunteers from Butler University and the Health & Wellness Committee will be assisting with screenings. [PN](#)



AMY XIN YIN, THOMAS TAYLOR, JUAN ÁLAMO, ERIC WILLIE, JOHN R. BECK

Teaching Percussion to Students on the Autism Spectrum

By Sean Neely

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disability that is becoming more commonly diagnosed each day. In 2001, the year I was diagnosed, the rate was 1 in 110. Now, it's 1 in 36. When I was diagnosed, my parents had no idea what my life would be like. They tried to not set expectations about how my life would look, as it was anyone's guess. I don't think, though, they'd envision their child at 24 years old studying to get a master's degree in social work while also presenting research at the largest percussion convention in the world over the disability that has impacted every facet of his life and will continue to do so.

A lot of times, outside of music therapy contexts, autism and other disabilities are not spoken of widely in the percussion world. But the truth is, it's not a matter of *if* you will encounter an autistic student, but *when*. Getting an understanding of who your students are is important, and it will only serve to make you a better educator. We as percussionists, composers, educators, etc. come to PASIC each year to learn more about percussion — maybe about specialized topics we wouldn't have been able to learn about before. I applied to present at PASIC because I thought this

was a topic not widely spoken about or represented in previous years. My goal is inclusion: to help students on the autism spectrum reach the same heights as their peers.

To start, you'll need to understand autism and how it affects people. Autism has two central components: deficits in social and communication skills, as well as restricted, repetitive behaviors and in-

terests. Both components must be present for a diagnosis; one can have autistic traits without having autism itself. Traits start from birth and can be detected as early as nine months old.

Autism can and does affect every facet of one's life, even with things you may not think of when you think of autism, such as motor skills and executive functioning. For me, I have trouble holding a pencil the "normal" way; I hold it using more fingers for more support. Knowing this may help explain why I had trouble learning how to grip a snare drum stick until I learned the three-finger fulcrum rather than a two-finger fulcrum. Knowing that autistic people have a much slower processing speed than their neurotypical peers at otherwise matched IQs, it makes sense that I need a minute to process instructions or may need things repeated. Knowing that autistic people often have trouble determining the "central idea" of media and instructions they encounter, it makes sense why I do better when I have concepts taught to me in smaller steps. Understanding autism and how it affects people is your first step to teaching students on the autism spectrum.

Your next step is knowing how to instruct — especially how to give feedback.



SEAN NEELY

Knowing that autistic people face an increased amount of rejection from their peers and superiors, it makes sense that I'd come to expect nothing but negative feedback or be overly judgmental of my own playing. Incorporating praise into any feedback you give encourages students to keep going and find those good things in their own playing. Knowing that autistic people have a hard time understanding "hidden meaning," it makes sense to not include figurative language and to spell out everything you need to say into explicit detail. Knowing I sometimes struggle with short-term memory, it makes sense that having things written down helps me a lot.

The last component is mitigating dysregulation. Autistic people often struggle with dysregulation, whether it be sensory or emotional dysregulation. This can lead to autistic people becoming upset and the instructor seeing such "behaviors" as meltdowns, shutdowns, impulsivity, or hyperactivity. The best way to approach this topic is to stop the dysregulation before it starts.

Using the previously described strategies will also help you, but so will allowing ear protection and frequent breaks, warning autistic students of any changes coming up, offering frequent encouragement, and giving students an outlet to fidget. The reason you see these "behaviors" is always beyond surface-level observations, so helping students manage their own dysregulation will help you and them, because autistic students don't like being dysregulated either.

I do a lot of autism advocacy in many different settings, but one of my favorites is percussion because I enjoy playing, and often there's a lot of people interested in the topic. I believe seeing your students as people first and percussionists second will help you understand them and be able to make more of a connection with them. When you take a more in-depth look at autism and the components behind it, you start to understand your students as people rather than just percussionists. If your students feel like they are valued

and appreciated, they will be more likely to stick with percussion rather than walk away from it.

I believe percussion can have a positive impact in anybody's life, and percussion can be particularly beneficial to autistic students for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to the fact that it works on skills autistic people can use in their everyday life, and a dedicated hobby can help autistic people achieve self-actualization. If you're reading this, it's because you have an interest in percussion, and it's a valuable thing to be able to spread that interest to others, no matter how they may be different from you.

Sean Neely is a 24-year-old percussionist, disability rights advocate, and social work master's student based in Philadelphia, Penn. He has presented his capstone at numerous colleges and universities, and last year he was a panelist in PASIC's "Percussion is for Every Body: Neurodiversity in Percussion" session. To view Sean's other writings, go to sneelypercussion.substack.com, and to contact him with questions or inquiries, email sneelypercussion@gmail.com **PN**

DRUMSET

RUSS MILLER Drumset Clinic/Performance Developing Your Sound

Russ Miller's "Developing Your Sound" clinic presentation is a session of performances, examples, and discussions about how to find "your" sound. This is one of the most important elements of being a musical artist. In over 35 years of doing clinic presentations, Russ has created an education event that provides an opportunity to learn to find your own direction, teachings, and sonics. Miller's high level of performance and teaching abilities bring the information home in a direct and understandable form.

Russ Miller has played on over 500 albums, selling more than 32-million copies. Russ' movie credits number over 150. He has worked with over 60 legendary artists, from Ray Charles, Natalie Cole, Tina Turner, and Bobby Caldwell to Andrea Bocelli, Nelly Furtado, The Psychedelic Furs, Hilary Duff, Steve Perry, Michael Bubl , and countless others. Russ has topped dozens of readers' polls for his contributions to studio drumming and popular music. He has been a staple on television house bands such as *American Idol*. He holds guest professorships at the Shanghai and Beijing Conservatories of Music and has authored five award-winning books and has six instructional videos published. He has six solo albums, with a collective 23 weeks in the Billboard Hot 100. Russ's single with Giovanni Hidalgo, "Things We Said Today," peaked at #32 on the Top 40 radio charts and the hit "Rhythm World" from *Arrival* climbed to #38 in the Top 40 as well.

CHRISTOPHER TURNER Drumset Clinic Real Metal Drums

Christopher Turner is going to perform some songs and discuss his approach to metal drumming whilst keeping everything organic. This is something that is lost in the the genre today, and he is fighting to bring it back in order to keep the instrumental musical and expressive.

Christopher is known worldwide for his fast, hard-hitting, and painstakingly precise playing without the aid of anything unnatural. He refuses the use of triggers or samples to replace or enhance his drum sound, as well as refusing his work to be snapped onto a grid. His organic and traditional approach to recording, combined with his modern and creative playing, is not to be missed!

PANELS

**DIVERSITY ALLIANCE
PANEL DISCUSSION**
Challenging Expectations:
Writing Your Own Narrative

DRUMSET PANEL DISCUSSION

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS
PANEL DISCUSSION**

MARCHING PANEL DISCUSSION
Backstage All Access to Judging

MARCHING PANEL DISCUSSION
Power House Arranging

WORLD PANEL DISCUSSION
Afro-Colombian Marimba de Chonta
Music from the South Pacific Region:
Roots, Reach and Evolution

I Got Stuck as a Self-Made Percussionist — And Then Realized Why

By Adam Tan

Despite percussion's status as one of the oldest musical instruments, the idea of someone striking an instrument with an implement, beater, or even their own body parts can still be an odd principle for many in the general public. And so, in 2024, it can be difficult for percussionists to find a career path that works for them and can provide adequate income for their future. It is also the exact question I ask myself whenever I'm thinking of expanding my own career possibilities: Why would anyone pay to see me perform?

I have been a self-employed percussionist for almost a decade, building my career as a marimba soloist, composer, and educator on my own. Despite living in the small city of Perth, Australia, where our warm but small percussion scene has a history of only about half a century, in the past eight years I have had the honor of performing and presenting as a soloist across Argentina, Australia, Honduras, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, resulting in me presenting over 50 masterclasses in 30 institutions worldwide. I founded and still direct Marimbafest Australia, the largest marimba festival and

competition in the southern hemisphere, which just concluded its fifth instalment in July. In that time, I've also sold over 5,000 copies of my sheet music on my own online store, and my music is now on repertoire lists for auditions, juries, and festivals across the world, including the Texas Prescribed Music List, the Florida Bandmasters Association, Trinity College London, and more. I also have designed

signature mallets (Encore Mallets Adam Tan series) and even a signature percussion backpack (The Traveller by Adam Tan).

All of this happened before I turned 30 this year.

I did the above in my little rented office space known as "The Studio by Adam Tan," which is named after my YouTube show, where I began my adventures in percussion content creation in 2016. Today, my combined social media reach sits at a reasonable 50,000 followers with over five million views. I don't upload on YouTube nearly as much as I used to (I prefer Reels now, which I will talk about more in my masterclass), but this YouTube channel and the world of social media was a key element in getting me to where I am today.

This brings me back to the focal point of this article: What is a "self-made percussionist," and how do we create opportunities for ourselves in this increasingly competitive and fast-paced world of percussion? Everything moves so fast in 2024; gone are the days when you had to fax Steve Weiss Music to order gear, or find an obscure CD so that you could listen to what a percussion work was supposed to sound like before learning it, or sign a



ADAM TAN

publishing deal so that you could finally release your own compositions.

Nowadays, it looks like almost everyone is releasing self-published sheet music on websites they made themselves on a service like Wix or Squarespace. Almost everyone can get millions of views on Instagram and TikTok from some relatable percussion content they made that the algorithm liked. Almost everyone has professional-looking headshots, biographies teeming with global competition victories, and an endorsement list the size of a Subway menu.

But I'm really happy to see it; the world is moving on, and more people from all walks of life are being put in the spotlight of the percussion universe. So how do you stand out in this bright world of ours? Here's a small backstory to give you an example of what you can do to become your own shining star.

When I was in my first two years of producing content for "The Studio," I learned something very quickly as I bought all of my instruments, gear, and equipment with my own savings from multiple part-time jobs. Picture 22-year-old me standing in a near-empty office space staring at the beautiful five-octave marimba I had just bought with cash. There was a modest collection of second-hand camera gear, my self-built website was up and running, and I was thinking that I had a good idea of how to use all of the above, thanks to my many years of part-time work in event photography and videography.

But why wasn't anything happening? Why wasn't I being invited to do anything interesting? Surely with all the nice gear, a huge skillset, and having completed my university degrees up to the master's level, there should be people banging on my door asking me to work with them! Everyone needs an Adam in their life, right?

It turns out I'd forgotten about the most important question, which I mentioned at the start of this article: Why would anyone pay to see me perform? I was just a small chicken in a small Australian city, while my less-than 1,000 subscriber audience was mostly based in the United

States. That wasn't going to help much for my day-to-day living, so I had to switch my mindset.

I started with goal setting: if I wanted to get noticed, I would have to view my future in a different way so that I didn't regress into doing nothing, or conversely become overwhelmed and burn out. I started separating my vision of becoming a well-known marimba soloist and composer from my goals, which were things like learning a piece of music for an upcoming gig. Instead, I tried to make these goals more achievable by simplifying them: "Let's just learn eight bars of this piece today." It felt good to tick off these simpler goals more regularly, as opposed to staring at a growing list of pure unobtainium.

I also decided to be more supportive to the others in my local community; if I wanted their support, I would need to support them first. I started simple, by attending more concerts and events that were happening in town, so that I could not only learn more musically but also show support to our percussion (and even non-percussion) community. I would always try to greet the performers and congratulate them on their performances, while making mental notes of what they were doing (e.g., their pre-show routine before performing, or the way they presented to the audience) so that I could be a better performer myself.

A fresh graduate from university doesn't really instill confidence in most employers, so I decided I would make myself more employable by getting more percussion-related experience. I put my hand up to volunteer at more events like friends' recitals and local community orchestra concerts. I offered to record people's gigs and would help promote their events even if I wasn't involved in them. Although very few of these were paid gigs (or I even lost money), many of these experiences became some of my fondest memories!

And, sure enough, things started to change. As my simpler goals allowed me to perform more, as I showed my face in

the community more often, and as I appeared as a supportive figure in many different circles, people started to remember me as "the percussion guy." *"Hey Adam! I saw you at my gig the other day, thank you so much!"* *"Hey Adam! I saw you were recording for this group. I'll pay you if you can help me with my recording."* *"Hey Adam, we need a percussionist for this gig, and I saw you playing in a community orchestra. Are you free?"* Suddenly, I was getting paid offers very quickly.

I started using these experiences as portfolio content, and my websites and social media started filling up quickly, giving an impression to prospective employers and organizations that this Adam person was actually doing a fair amount of percussion-ing in his day-to-day life. And, sure enough, as my social media

DRUMSET

BERNARD LONG, JR **Virtual Drumset Clinic** **Developing Essential Jazz** **Drumset Styles**

Bernard Jr. graduated with his B.M. in Jazz Studies from Northern Illinois University under the leadership of Professor Ron Carter. He performed in the NIU Jazz Ensemble, touring with such greats as Clark Terry, Benny Golson, Rodney Whitaker, and Peter Erskine. He graduated from Michigan State University with his M.M. in Jazz Studies. At MSU he directed the MSU Jazz Orchestra 3 and performed with the MSU Jazz Orchestra 1. He graduated from Lindenwood University with his MAT in Music Education and with his Ed.S. in School Administration.

Bernard, Jr. is an Adjunct Professor of Jazz drumset at Lindenwood University. He is the band director at Madison Jr/Sr High School in Madison, Ill. and serves on the St. Louis Civic Orchestra board. Bernard Jr is a 2018 honoree of the Salute to Excellence in Education class sponsored by the St. Louis American Foundation. He was selected as the 2022-23 Teacher of the Year in the Madison CUSD#12. He serves on the PAS Education and Diversity committees and is the percussionist for The St. Louis Black Repertory Theater, the St. Louis MUNY, The Jazz St. Louis Big Band, and the National Tour of Antigone in Ferguson.

gained traction I started to get invited to more international events, which gave me greater growth opportunities.

I believe these three small things – simple goal setting, showing support, and volunteering for more experience – are easy yet effective ways to help reinforce your percussion career path, and I still do all of them to this day. Combining these things while putting yourself in challenging environments regularly (i.e., not surrounding yourself with “yes” people all the time) results in you working towards being the greatest percussionist you can be, and that is a good feeling! I don’t want to give away too much of my PASIC presentation, but I love talking about these points on my tours, as they are often the

key ingredients many highly skilled percussionists in my generation are missing.

If you are interested in hearing more on this topic, I look forward to seeing you at PASIC 2024! This will be my fifth PASIC and my seventh visit to the United States. I will share even more methods that can help you with your percussion dreams, including marketing hacks and musical tips. I’m often reminded that the percussion community is truly a global one, and I look forward to seeing all of you continue your own unique and interesting percussive paths.

Adam Tan is a marimba soloist, composer, and content creator based in Perth (Boorloo), Australia. Adam is known for

making online content about percussion with over 45,000 followers and 10 million views across all platforms. Adam’s works for percussion are performed regularly around the world and appear on repertoire lists for schools, competitions, and festivals. Adam is the director of Marimbafest Australia, an organization that has curated five international marimba festivals and competitions, and he has operated the percussion studio and retailer The Studio By Adam Tan. Adam was invited by Ju Percussion Group as a VIP Guest to the Taiwan International Percussion Convention (TIPC) in 2023. Adam is a composer with Edition Svitzer, artist with Soundbrenner, and an Associate Artist with the Australian Music Centre. [PN](#)

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE SESSIONS

ELBTONAL PERCUSSION Percussion Ensemble Clinic/Performance

Elbtional Percussion ensemble from Germany is dedicated to such artists and cross-overs as Radiohead, Keiko Abe, and Thierry de Mey. For this program, Elbtional will present a selection of representative works from its concert program: “Madeira River,” from Philipp Glass, was originally commissioned for a ballet company and is inspired by the flowing waters of the Amazon. Thierry de Mey’s “Musique de Tables,” a classic of modern percussion literature. “Allemande” from Bach’s 6th Cello suite and “Präludium” BWV 999, a tribute to the grand master of European music. “Stomping Buckets” by Stephan Wildfeuer. “The Wave” for marimba and Japanese percussion by Keiko Abe. The concert ends with the atmospheric, contemplative ambiance of “Daydreaming” by the British band Radiohead.

The four Hamburg percussionists of Elbtional Percussion master the creative crossover of classical, jazz, and world music. With massive drums, cymbals, and gongs from all over the world, enriched by marimba and vibraphone, Elbtional Percussion enthralls its audiences with their exciting dynamism and diversity of style, as demonstrated on nine CDs and two DVDs. Elbtional Percussion has been touring since 1996, has performed over 1,000 concerts, and has been invited to play at numerous renowned festivals. Concert tours have taken them throughout Europe and Asia.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA, DIRECTOR TRACY WIGGINS New Percussion Literature Showcase

The UNA Percussion Ensemble presents a session of new works for the percussion ensemble. The works on this program have all been composed in the past five years, and represent many of the great publishers and composers in the percussion world.

Tracy Wiggins is assistant director of bands and coordinator of the percussion program at The University of North Alabama. He has a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Hartt School, University of Hartford, a master’s degree in Percussion Performance from the University of New Mexico, and a bachelor’s degree in Music Education from Oklahoma State University. He has performed with the Huntsville Symphony, Tuscaloosa Symphony, Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, Florence Symphony Orchestra, Carolina Philharmonic, and the Santa Fe Symphony. Tracy has presented clinics at PASIC, The National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy, and the Midwest Clinic, and co-hosted the 2018 PASIC New Music/Research Focus Day. He is the president of the Alabama PAS Chapter, is a former member of the PAS Board of Advisors, and has served on the PAS University Pedagogy and New Music/Research Committees. He currently serves on the PAS Percussion Ensemble Committee. At UNA he oversees two percussion ensembles, the contemporary ensemble, the world percussion ensemble, and the marching band percussion section.

TA! OTRA PERCUSIÓN Virtual Percussion Ensemble Daytime Showcase Concert TA!LA

TA!LA is the new show by the percussion duo TA! otra percusión. Although the group has stood out for including Latin American works in its shows, as well as for premiering pieces created by young composers from Chile and Argentina, creating a show that contains exclusively Latin American music written or arranged for percussion was a dream that had been growing since the beginning of the duo and that today we can see as a concrete project.

TA!LA immerses us in a miscellaneous moment of adrenaline and virtuosity. A unique show, full of the colors, textures and sounds from Latin America. Cuecas, chacareras, boleros, corridos, among other rhythms, come together in an energetic show that combines new works and arrangements of classic pieces.

TA! otra percusión is a duo created in 2014 by percussionists Ska and Santiago Kuschnir. The performers play on a stage surrounded by traditional percussion instruments, scrap, and other materials. The music moves forward through lights, slide projections, and screens, and the rhythms and images immerse the audience in an atmosphere that captivates and surprises. TA! is a unique duo whose shows are made for anyone who wants to experience something new.

FUNdamentals First!

By Oliver Molina

Each year, the PAS Education Committee presents a series of FUNdamentals sessions at PASIC by outstanding clinicians. This year, there will be a blend of in-person and virtual sessions, providing a comprehensive educational experience for all attendees. In-person clinics will be conducted by Alphonso Young Jr., Mike Vercelli, and Patrick Roulet, while Aaron Ragsdale and Justin Bunting will present their sessions virtually.

These sessions cater primarily to student percussionists and their teachers, including private instructors and band directors. They are beneficial for percussionists and teachers of all skill levels, offering valuable insights and techniques that can enhance anyone's approach to percussion. The sessions encourage attendees to revisit and refine their basic skills, which is crucial for developing advanced techniques and effective teaching methods.

Revisiting fundamental concepts is essential for continuous growth in any musical discipline. This year's FUNdamentals sessions cover a wide range of topics, including keyboard percussion, world percussion, and drumset. These diverse topics ensure that attendees gain a well-rounded understanding of different percussion instruments and styles, helping them become more versatile musicians and educators.

The presenters have designed their FUNdamentals sessions to be highly interactive, encouraging active participation from the audience. Attendees will have the opportunity to work closely with the clinicians, engaging in hands-on activities that reinforce the concepts being taught. Each session includes handouts with musical ideas, examples, and exercises that participants can immediately apply to their practice routines or teaching methods. These handouts are valuable resources that can be referred to long after the convention.

PAS members also have access to a wealth of educational materials from past FUNdamentals clinics. These handouts, published online (https://pas.org/resources/?_search2=fundamentals&publication=instructional-resource), serve as excellent resources for teachers looking to refresh their knowledge or assign reading materials to their students. This extensive library of educational content ensures that PAS members can continue to benefit from the expertise of past clinicians.

The PASIC FUNdamentals sessions provide rich and diverse learning experiences for percussionists and educators alike. By attending these sessions, participants can enhance their skills, broaden their knowledge, and gain valuable insights from highly regarded clinicians in the field. Whether attending in-person

or virtually, these sessions promise to be an enriching and inspiring part of the PASIC experience.

LIVE SESSIONS

ALPHONSO YOUNG, JR.

PRACTICE "OLD," PLAY "YOUNG"

Alphonso Young, Jr.'s session focuses on applying traditional technique exercises to contemporary improvisational music styles. Today's young musicians are influenced by a wide range of musical genres and may not seek to emulate "the greats" such as Max Roach and Philly Joe



ALPHONSO YOUNG, JR.

Jones. This session presents ideas for the real-time application of “old school” techniques and language using traditional texts such as George Stone’s *Stick Control*, Ted Reed’s *Syncoption for the Modern Drummer*, and the Wilcoxon snare solos.

A significant aspect of this session involves the integration of modern technology resources like the Moises app, which revolutionizes real-time practice and application. Participants will learn how to bridge the gap between traditional techniques and contemporary musical styles, making these timeless exercises relevant and exciting for the new generation of percussionists.

Alphonso M. Young, Jr. has been a professional musician and music educator for over 40 years. His versatile and imaginative style has charmed audiences worldwide and led notable artists such as Randy Brecker, Bob Berg, and Etta Jones to seek his talent. Alphonso is currently the drummer with the Eric Byrd Trio and is on the faculty at Shenandoah University, Gettysburg College, and the National Jazz Workshop. He is also a music teacher with Loudoun County Public Schools in Northern Virginia.

MIKE VERCELLI AND PATRICK ROULET

GHANAIAN MALLET METHODS

In this session, Patrick Roulet and Michael Vercelli explore the teaching methods of two master gyl players from Ghana: Aaron Bebe Sukura and Bernard Woma. Both musicians are prominent figures in the Dagara culture and have taught thousands of students worldwide. This session demonstrates how their teaching methods and music can be used in various educational settings, both on the gyl and western mallet instruments.

Roulet and Vercelli will show how the independence and coordination necessary for gyl playing can enhance mallet study and offer new repertoire options for percussion studios. Participants will engage in hands-on activities, learning Woma’s introductory pedagogical pieces and Bebe’s focus on technique to cre-

ate larger etudes and ensemble pieces. Demonstrations will be provided by students from Western Washington University and West Virginia University, and session participants will be invited to join in using instruments provided by the clinicians.

Dr. Patrick Roulet is a percussion professor at Western Washington University with broad interests in symphonic



MIKE VERCELLI



PATRICK ROULET

percussion, jazz, and global music. Dr. Michael B. Vercelli is the Director of Graduate Studies and professor of music at West Virginia University, focusing on the transmission and performance practice of percussive traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora. Both clinicians have extensively studied the Ghanaian gyl with master musicians Aaron Bebe Sukura and Bernard Woma.

VIRTUAL SESSIONS AARON RAGSDALE

THE RIGHT LICK WITH THE RIGHT STICK (AND RIGHT QUICK)

Development, Motivation, and Maturation of Keyboard Percussionists in the Contemporary Band Program

This session delves into teaching technical and musical concepts for beginning and developing percussionists in a scholastic setting. It is specifically designed for non-percussionist band directors who may not have dedicated percussion-class experience. Topics include common technical development problems (with an examination of the five most prevalent issues in developing players), a suggested technical regimen to refine and strengthen technique in young players, factors affecting mallet selection, guidelines on



AARON RAGSDALE

usage and implementation, and tips for successful and confident ensemble sight reading.

Aaron Ragsdale is a Professor of Music at South Dakota State University, where he teaches applied percussion and percussion pedagogy, conducts the SDSU Percussion Ensemble, and works with the Pride of the Dakotas Marching Band. He is an active performer as a soloist, chamber musician, and member of the percussion section of the South Dakota Symphony. An advocate and activist in the realm of new music, he has premiered and commissioned over 20 new works for percussion. A native of Fayetteville, Arkansas, Aaron holds a DMA from Rutgers University, a Master of Music degree from the University of Arkansas, and a BME from the University of Oklahoma.



JUSTIN BUNTING

es with rubato and/or various dynamic swells further prepares the hands and mind for success.

Dr. Justin Bunting is Director of Instrumental Activities and Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Bunting is the President of the Arkansas PAS Chapter and a former member of the PAS World Percussion and Collegiate Committees. In addition to performing at PASIC, he has appeared at PAS Days of Percussion in North Carolina, Tennessee, Ohio, and internationally in Armenia and Colombia with Blue Line Duo. Justin earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Performance and a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Music Theory from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a Master of Music degree in Percussion Performance from Belmont University, and a Bachelor of Music degree in Percussion Performance from The Ohio State University.

JUSTIN BUNTING

FILLING YOUR TOOLBOX

A Practical Approach to Keyboard Percussion

A single-directional approach to learning any skill is ineffective; versatility and creativity are essential. This clinic covers four-mallet grips, tips for developing hand-eye coordination behind the marimba, and ideas for tailoring practice to the music being learned. These techniques

help fill our toolbox with skills and ideas that enhance musicality, technical fluency, and expressive capability. The session also includes discussions on developing exercises that isolate specific technical needs of the music currently being learned, using moments from Michael Burritt's "Preludes." For example, sequential sticking exercises are beneficial for Prelude 1. Playing these exercises

Dr. Oliver Molina is an Associate Professor of Music at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, where he serves as the Director of Percussion Studies and Assistant Director of Bands. He is Chair of the PAS Education Committee and treasurer of the Louisiana PAS Chapter. PN



ALLIANCE OF BLACK ORCHESTRAL PERCUSSIONISTS

MISSION: *ABOP aims to increase the diversity of percussionists in symphony orchestras by providing guidance and support to Black orchestral percussionists through a comprehensive Mentorship Program administered by a community of dedicated musicians, educators, and businesses.*

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Enhance Drumming Education with Psychology

By Frank Ferraro, Ph.D.

I want to share a few comments I've heard from my students in drum lessons recently: "Drumming is too hard; I need to pick an easier instrument." "I don't have time for this, I want to quit lessons." "I can't play in front of people, I feel judged." "I see all these great drummers on social media, I'll never be that good."

Sound familiar? These are all common feelings (what I call "mental roadblocks"), and I'm sure you have directly encountered them as either a student or a teach-

er. Through a mixture of evidence-based psychology findings, along with personal student anecdotes, my PASIC presentation aims to help you overcome these "roadblocks" with practical behavioral strategies rooted in the science of psychology.

TOPIC 1: EXPERTS ARE MADE, NOT BORN

The first section will emphasize that learning anything well will take significant effort, especially percussion and drumset. However, the way you practice matters greatly. You can waste time with inefficient practice routines and not see tangible results. I will emphasize the principle of deliberate practice.¹ An important conclusion from psychological research will be emphasized: *experts are made, not born*.

TOPIC 2: YOU'RE NOT A GOOD DRUMMER

Drumming requires two important aspects of motivation: intrinsic drive and growth mindset. Students who are able to be motivated by personal goals (i.e., intrinsically motivated), as opposed to external rewards or praise, will experience more consistent practice and long-term enjoyment of the instrument.^{2, 3} Further, drummers who view musical difficulties as healthy challenges (a component of

growth mindset) will be more likely to overcome obstacles when they arise.

One key aspect of intrinsic motivations and growth involves teachers focusing on the learning process, rather than telling students they are "good" at what they do. Praising "good" playing seems natural, but if used too often, can undermine intrinsic motivation and actually slow a student's progress when material becomes more difficult.

TOPIC 3: OVERCOMING THE JITTERS

Performance anxiety can be reduced with understanding cognitive psychological principles based on the person, the situation, and the task at hand. Understanding the human stress response can also be helpful in managing performance anxiety. I will provide specific examples and relaxation routines that are effective.

TOPIC 4: CONNECT RATHER THAN COMPETE

I will emphasize that cell phones are an outlet for good and bad habits. Specifically related to drumming, social media can lead to unrealistic social comparisons of drumming skills and performances.⁴ The multitude of drummers on social media may create a mental impression that they are "better" or "more successful" players.



FRANK FERRARO, PH.D.

Highly edited and mistake-free performances also create a false impression of drumming that especially affects young drummers.

Despite these drawbacks, I believe social media can be a powerful tool if used to connect with an online community of more advanced players. This can help drummers more rapidly learn their instrument and build confidence. Related to this, it is important to have “good inputs” for your musical ideas, so I will highlight several social media accounts that provide good inspiration, especially for young drummers.

CONCLUSION

No musician, whether student or teacher, can expect music to be a simple path. The difficulties will be numerous, and perhaps a large degree of them will be mental. The goals of this session include learning how to overcome some mental obstacles by adopting a deliberate practice routine, growth mindset, understanding and managing stress, and using social media to your advantage psychologically.

Finally, the future of almost all human abilities will involve understanding the complexities of the brain. Thus, the field of neuroscience will be critical for drum educators to follow. Already, neuroscience research is revealing intriguing ideas about neural pathways (mirror neurons) that may be linked to musical development and creativity. I hope the future explorations of neuroscience will keep you intrigued about the possibilities it holds for drumming education.

In the meantime, the psychological skills discussed in this session should inspire teachers to help their students be better musicians, and ultimately mentally healthier people.

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Frank Ferraro is a psychology professor and drum instructor from Lincoln, Nebraska. He earned a doctoral degree in behavioral neuroscience from Kansas State University in 2003. He has taught psychology courses at the university-level for over 20 years. Frank also is an avid drummer with live and studio recording credentials. He operates his own drum teaching business (Ferraro Drum Lessons), where he privately instructs over 20 students. **PN**

MARCHING

DRUMMERS' HERITAGE CONCERT Marching Clinic Rudimental Roots and the Evolution of Marching Snare Drum

This session aims to present a timeline from the early 20th century through the development of the marching snare drum over the past 100 years. DCI Hall of Famer Charley Poole, Fife and Drum Champion Brendan Mason, and former “Old Guard” Bandmaster SGM(R) Mark Reilly have amassed a collective 100+ years of experience in the art of traditional, modern, and hybrid rudimental drumming styles. This clinic will showcase performances, research, and pictorial demonstrations of techniques used and adapted over time, as well as explore the jump in rudimental compositional development that took place when the American drumming world collided with the Swiss drumming world in 1936 and again in 1969. Repertoire performed during this session, influenced by the Connecticut Yanks, Boston Crusaders, Connecticut Patriots, Sons of Liberty, and the “Old Guard” Fife and Drum Corps will entertain, educate, and inspire the next generation of percussionists.

USARD President Brendan Mason has experienced the generational excellence of Connecticut rudimental drumming as it was passed on from generation to generation through the likes of Paul Cormier, Ken and Ed Lemley, and state drum corps meets held in Connecticut for over 100 years, where the best of the best would compete for a chance to win the Northeastern States Drum Corps Association Championship.

DCI Hall of Famer and adjudicator Charley Poole is an expert on the classic Connecticut style of rudimental drumming crafted by Earl Sturtz, whose style later shaped the entire drum and bugle corps idiom through prized student Frank Arsenault as his travels brought him to the Midwest with the Ludwig Drum Company, changing drum corps forever.

World Drum Corps Hall of Famer and former Bandmaster of the “Old Guard” Fife and Drum Corps SGM(R) Mark Reilly grew up in the New York competition style of rudimental drumming developed from the likes of Gus Moeller, evolving with the Charles T. Kirk’s fife, drum, and bugle corps, and eventually solidifying with the iconic style of Les Parks, Nick Attanasio, and Bobby Thompson of the Sons of Liberty.

Exploring the Great Indoors: RCC Indoor Percussion's PASIC Debut

By Genevieve Hilburn

For decades, RCC Indoor Percussion has provided hundreds of young percussionists in Southern California with the opportunity to display their artistry and technical skills on the international stage. Since its inception in 2001, the ensemble has been awarded six WGI World-Championship titles and firmly established itself as a fixture of the top-five. While it may be difficult for younger readers to imagine RCC Indoor Percussion as anything other than a pillar institution within the marching community, the ensemble began as humbly as any other.

Based out of Riverside Community College (now City College) in Riverside, California as an offshoot of the band program, the ensemble was instituted by the Concord Blue Devils “in an effort to try to have an indoor program to help and train young performers, creating a year-round structure,” recounts long-time Program Director Sean Vega. While the organization’s tie to the Blue Devils afforded it some reputability, the early days of the program were scant in every sense. Originally, “there were just a handful of staff members, and performers were mostly locals within the Southern California area. My mom made the costumes,” reminisces

Vega. “I worked with the band director’s son, Paul Locke, who did the staging. We used to make the props in his backyard.” Vega helmed the program for nearly two decades before passing the torch to Joy Liu and Tony Nuñez, RCC’s current logistical and creative heads.

While a billing at PASIC is, undoubtedly, a professional apex for any presenter or performer, RCC Indoor Percussion’s trip to Indianapolis for PASIC 2024 bears broader significance. Apart from appearances by Rhythm X in 2011 and Music City Mys-

tique in 2016, WGI percussion ensembles, in their complete iteration, have been noticeably absent from decades of PASIC showcase rosters. Each year, the WGI World Championships rank at the top of the leaderboard for attendance among all percussion performance events in the United States, drawing tens of thousands of spectators. When further considering the mass of percussive market-share taken on by the cohort of indoor percussion groups from Southern California (including 14 independent ensembles and 150+



RCC INDOOR PERCUSSION

high school programs), a representative appearance seems long overdue. Despite the off-season logistical challenges and sheer physical distance from Southern California, the students and educators at RCC and the administrators of their parent organization, Blue Devils Performing Arts, are excited as ever to share their work and mission with the larger percussive community. So, where have they been until now?

The origin story of RCC is quite parallel to that of the whole indoor percussion community within Southern California and the United States. The institution built itself from the ground up using the meager resources it had available. With some exceptions, these ensembles from Southern California are largely furnished by percussion educators bearing no “formal training” apart from their experience within the marching activity. Program Director Joy Liu, who holds a B.M. from Chapman University, remarks that “most of these people don’t have a bachelor’s or master’s in percussion. That’s just not the environment we’ve ever been in. Most of us [educators] came straight out of the indoor scene in high school, and our ‘schooling’ became to do indoor continuously. Your professional extension then became to teach and improve through that.”

This approach, with all of its unorthodox and grassroots tenacity, in tandem with the relentless growth that WGI and RCC continue to experience, has drawn much criticism over the years. It is what Liu speculates may have spurred the prevailing, false dichotomy of “academia versus marching.” She notes that “there is a comparison that happens [between the two experiences]. ‘I went to school for music and I have a degree’ versus ‘I don’t have a degree, but I’ve been here for 20 plus years and I have all of these real life, practical experiences.’ And I think this gap in understanding fed the perception that pursuing indoor at all is somehow the opposite end of the spectrum from the academic route.”

Sean Vega is no stranger to experiences of this flavor either. He distinctly recalls

“being a young man in the early aughts going to PASIC and seeing people walk by laughing and spitting on the WGI booth.” In direct response to his 2003 joint PASIC clinic “The Evolving Role of Tenors,” he weathered allegations of “ruining rudimentary percussion by working with WGI groups. How dare [he] stand up on stage pretending [he knew] anything about it?”

This history of skepticism towards the indoor marching percussion activity is not merely a trick of the light; a misconception or delusion relegated to the anecdotal experiences of Liu and Vega. It is codified quite clearly in the archives of *Percussive Notes*. “What’s the Problem with Indoor Percussion?” by Troy C. Wollowage, published in the July 2012 issue, serves as a historical mile-marker of these ideas, detailing the phenomena of general dissent towards the indoor percussion activity. Using his own experiences on an online forum as a framing device for the article, Wollowage recalls the sentiments of “educators who apparently had a real angst, almost hatred, against the world of indoor percussion.”

In an article by Jeff Moore from the same issue, “How Does Indoor Marching Percussion Fit in a Student’s Total Music Education Experience?”, the pedagogical merits of an indoor percussion experience are weighed by “percussion professionals (including collegiate teachers) [who] have a right (some may say obligation) to offer their thoughts because they are supplying ‘expert opinion’ on the situation.” While Moore cautions marching advocates not to read these musings as “overly critical and see their concerns as ‘attacks’ on the indoor marching activity,” the parting questions he leaves for the readers to mull over in pursuit of their own opinion of the indoor activity do include: “Does selecting legitimate concert music for the field justify the time spent on one ten-minute marching band show?” and “Do percussion students have different music education goals and outcomes than other musicians? Are there enough teaching opportunities provided in the competitive indoor marching activity to adequately

address the required music competencies? Are percussionists exempted from learning certain skills?” Overly critical or not, the tone of this article serves as a time capsule for the temperature of 2012, when indoor percussion and its worth were fair game to be decided upon by the “folks who knew better.”

In the years since these articles were published (and even moreso in those since PASIC 2003), broader percussive sentiments towards WGI have certainly tempered. Amends have been made and new alliances formed. Of the RCC staff roster, Front Ensemble Caption Head Brian Dinkel and Creative Director Tony Nuñez have sat on PAS Marching Committee panel discussions prior to their appearance this year, and RCC follows in the footsteps of Rhythm X and Music City Mystique, as previously mentioned. But, to understand where the indoor percussion activity has come from is to understand why it is so notable when one of its ensembles takes the stage at PASIC. The echoes of those early sentiments are still felt by today’s crop of percussion students. Lauren Rooke, RCC Front Ensemble member, collegiate percussionist, and music education major, feels the WGI medium is “sometimes disregarded in the concert community. But, the fact that [RCC] was invited [to perform at PASIC] helps to show that what we are doing is just as legitimate as other forms of performance.” RCC bass drummer Reid Shimabukuro regards his attendance as “fulfilling a dream I never thought I could consider in the first place. When our invitation was announced it was one of the most pleasant surprises of my career as a performer!”

All of these are facts not lost on Liu, who sees that being at PASIC “has so much value in that way of us just taking up space.” She hopes to embolden Southern California and WGI ensembles alike, “because somebody else did it, not only do we not have to question it as much, but we have confidence because now there’s a precedent set.” Dinkel also feels this juncture provides an “invaluable opportunity to leverage the relationships between or-

MARCHING

PAT PETRILLO; SCOTT JOHNSON Marching Clinic/Performance SNAREdrumSET

In this fun and interactive clinic performance, Pat and Scott will demonstrate the numerous possibilities and applications, direct and indirect, between rudimental snare drum and the drumset. Using examples like "Crazy Army" as well as specific rudimental combinations that they have created, the duo will emphasize how these can be orchestrated and phrased to enhance one's performance skills. Additionally, they will "ad-lib" and jam together using their shared rudimental vocabulary by playing along to musical tracks. Attendees will be provided with handouts and examples with which to continue their development in both fields.

Pat Petrillo has backed and/or recorded with a wide array of artists, including Patti LaBelle, Gloria Gaynor, Oz Noy, Chieli Minucci, Debbie Gibson, and Glen Burtnik, and for numerous Broadway shows. He leads his group the Big Rhythm Band, performing in New York City and throughout the East Coast. As a popular clinician and educator, he taught for many years at Drummers Collective in New York City, and has presented clinic performances at PASIC, Musicians Institute, Berklee College of Music, and many drum shops around the globe. He has numerous instructional videos with Hudson Music.

Scott Johnson just finished year 45 with the Blue Devils Drum and Bugle Corps. Personal awards include 21 D.C.I. Gold medal championships, 14 D.C.I. High Percussion titles, two W.G.I. gold medal championships, three DCA gold medal championships, two DCA High Percussion titles, ten DCE championships, nine DCE High Percussion titles, 12 High Percussion titles in Japan, and 1977 D.C.I. and 1978 PAS Individual Snare champion. Scott was inducted into the 2012 class of the DCI Hall of Fame and the 2012 WGI Hall of Fame, and the 2015 World Drum Corp Hall of Fame. The primary focus of his teaching career has been in the drum corps idiom, and Scott has also taught privately and arranged percussion scores at the elementary, junior, senior high, and university levels. Scott's judging assignments have included marching band and percussion competitions throughout the world.

ganizations, to begin building something that's going to benefit both communities in different ways," an effort that will commence with RCC's session.

Creative Director Tony Nuñez is well aware of the long-established traditions of PASIC's large-scale marching sessions. "Historically, with a drum corps, you go through your warm-ups, you go through your book, and you talk about it a little bit, and I think that's what everybody is expecting." However, what Nuñez and his staff aim to recreate "is what a weekend looks like at RCC, which is a really good snapshot of what it's like to audition for RCC, which is also a really good snapshot of what it's like to be a participant at WGI." Nuñez goes on to elaborate that the session will take the "opportunity to highlight several years of music, experimentation, and ideas that we developed into what became the 2022 show, the 2023 show, the 2024 show. We only have 50 minutes to capture all of this intense experience, and that's ultimately what we're trying to honor and showcase."

Brian Dinkel hopes that this approach further provides "a sense of what it's like to be a part of an ensemble like RCC. There are a lot of facsimiles and versions of this around the country, this will be a look into the way we do WGI." Dinkel touts the cultivation of an experience that will reach farther "than what the audience might experience just seeing us in context at WGI finals, for example. There is a certain level of intimacy to the indoor percussion activity that is probably not perceived that way from the greater non-marching audience. I think the indoor percussion idiom is a lot more intimate and a lot more sensitive and a lot more detailed as a result of the connection the audience can get with the performers in the settings that we do this in." Dinkel hopes that this understanding will disrupt the view of indoor percussion "as just an extension of marching band and drum corps, which is perceived at the distance of a football field, with planes flying over and helicopters and sirens and whatever background ambiance there is."

Nuñez also hints that there will be a surprise for those in the audience. "We're going to let them know what that is once we're there."

Above all else, Joy Liu hopes those in attendance walk away with "a newly-developed interest for the indoor scene or activity; for more curiosity." She also hopes that percussion students, in particular, feel enabled to pursue "as many things as possible. If the WGI experience is one of them, then that's value added, right? In my opinion, that's what is so exciting about RCC being a group that represents this. Here's a whole other spectrum of percussion experience that somebody can have."

Tony Nuñez intends for RCC's billing to stir new dialogues. "We do percussion too, and so do you. Let's just embrace that and not get territorial about it. Let's just learn from each other and let's see where this can go. I think this can be a massive step forward." He hopes the session can serve as a catalyst for audiences "to feel inspired, to feel like something creatively is ignited within them, and that they would want to come back, maybe even participate in WGI one day. I hope that they see this activity as a great outlet for students, for parents, for school programs."

Sean Vega closes with the reminder that "We're talking about music, we're talking about percussion, and how its application differences shouldn't necessarily matter. Unilaterally, everyone has the capacity to decide, 'Hey, let's all be involved in this, because we're really talking about the same thing.'"

Genevieve Hilburn is a percussionist and percussion educator based in Southern California. She heads the percussion programs at Bakersfield College and California State University Bakersfield. She serves on the PAS Marching and Rudimental Committee and is a part of the battery staff of the Blue Stars Drum and Bugle Corps. Genevieve holds a B.M. from California State University Northridge and an M.M. from Texas A&M University Commerce. **PN**



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The Evolution of Philippine Drum & Bell Lyre Traditions

By Satur Tiamson

The Philippines boasts countless Drum & Bell Lyres corps, making it the most active country in the world in this musical tradition. Every province has at least one Drum & Bell Lyre group. Its popularity is due to the affordability of the instruments compared to those of Drum & Bugle Corps and the ease of learning compared to instruments in orchestras or concert bands.

Drum & Bell Lyre Corps are categorized into two types: the scholastic class, which includes school-based bands from elementary to college, and the open class, which consists of community-based bands managed by private individuals, government agencies, or organizations. Typically, these ensembles feature keyboard percussion instruments (bell lyres, xylophones, marimbas, and marching bells), a drumline (snare, tenors, cymbals, and bass drums), as well as color guards and majorettes.

HISTORY

The Drum & Bell Lyre Corps in Manila has origins dating back to the 1960s. The most notable pioneer in the area is D'Harmony, formerly known as the Green Beret Drum & Lyre Corps, located in Pasig City, Manila.

D'Harmony was founded by Wilfredo S. Tremor. In September 2022, the Philippine Drum & Lyre Associates Inc. and the Color Guard Alliance of the Philippines recognized Tremor as the "Father of Philippine Drum & Lyre."

COMPOSITION OF A DRUM & BELL LYRE CORPS

A Drum & Bell Lyre Corps is typically divided into two main groups: the musicians and the visuals.

Musicians: This group generally consists of several sections: pit section/front ensemble; marching keyboard percussion section; drumline/battery section.

Visuals: This group enhances the performance through visual artistry and movement: color guards; majorettes.

The entire corps is typically led by a conductor, often referred to as the Bandmaster, who coordinates the musicians and visual performers to create a cohesive and engaging show.

THE BELL LYRE

The bell lyre, commonly referred to simply as the lyre, is the primary instrument of the Drum & Bell Lyre Corps. In the Philippines, the establishment of numerous Drum & Bell Lyre corps can be attributed to the affordability of their instruments com-



SATUR TIAMSON

pared to those used in Drum & Bugle or marching brass/winds bands. Interestingly, the earliest models of the bell lyre were designed to resemble the stringed instrument known as the lyre.

The Philippines PAS Chapter is currently working to promote the standardized and accurate description of this musical instrument. In some provinces, the bell lyre is incorrectly referred to as a xylophone, which is inaccurate, as xylophones are made of wood. Additionally, some people traditionally call the bell lyre simply “lyre,” which is also misleading, since a lyre is a stringed musical instrument. Currently, various organizations reject the standardization of international terminologies, arguing that the term “lyre” is an important aspect of Filipino culture that should be preserved.

THE PHILIPPINE-MADE BELL LYRE

Presently, most bell lyres are made by local makers. This also promotes the creativity and craftsmanship of the local makers. Branded or international musical instruments have a big difference in cost compared to locally manufactured ones. That’s why Drum & Bell Lyre bands usually choose to buy locally made instruments.

The bell lyre was introduced to the Philippines in the 1960s, initially referred to as the “Chinese Lyre,” available for purchase at Raon, Manila. This nomenclature persisted until the 1990s. During the late 1970s, local musical-instrument makers, many of whom were band trainers, began crafting their own versions of the instrument, contributing to its evolution. Over time, the bell lyre, or Chinese lyre, became commonly known simply as the “lyre.”

The design of the bell lyre resembles that of the traditional stringed lyre, and it was originally played in an upright position. However, as the instrument gained popularity, it was adapted into a horizontal format, allowing for two-handed play. This evolution reflects the instrument’s integration into the local music culture and its adaptability to different playing styles.

Instruments such as the Musser M65S Aluminum Marching Bells, which are made in the USA, and the E-lance Percussion Marching Lyre differ considerably in cost from those produced

Wilson Marching Percussion at the 5th National Competition 2024 by DBCOPI- Bacoar City



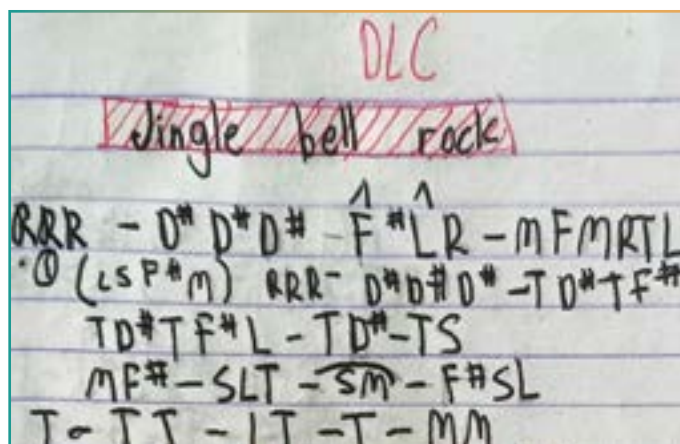
domestically. While many top drummers and drum lines opt for branded or imported instruments, the Philippines currently lacks the technology and advanced steelworking processes necessary for manufacturing high-quality imported drums. Additionally, the country does not have the appropriate types of wood that are durable enough for making high-tension drums. Nevertheless, there are still locally manufactured drums available in the market, such as those made by Lester Aristoteles, member of PAS Philippines and owner of E-Lance Percussion.

TEACHING METHODS

To become familiar with the bell lyre, students are taught to mark the notes using *so-fa* syllables, while others may use pitch names or the musical alphabet. They then practice scales. The teacher often dictates or sings the notes, allowing students to hear the melody before they see it written on paper.

Similarly, for the drums, instructors sing the beats and demonstrate them to the students before they begin to play. The teacher writes the notes using *so-fa* syllables or pitch names, assigning syllables to each note value, which makes it easier for students to understand.

Sample by Tirso Caragay



Each note is represented as follows: Do - D; DO# - DI; Re - R; RE# - RI; Mi - M; Fa - F; FA# - FI; Sol - S; SO# - SIL; La - L; LA# - LI; Ti - T.

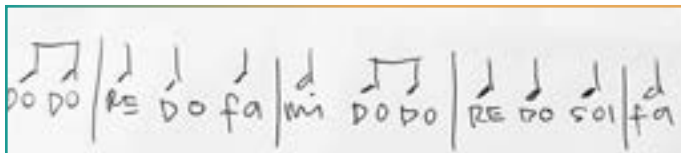
Flat signs are not used in this notation style. They will also indicate the numbers representing how many times to play each note. When indicating pitch, arrows are used to denote high or low notes. An upward-facing arrow signifies a higher pitch, while a downward-facing arrow indicates a lower pitch.

To facilitate learning, fast passages are simplified from sixteenth notes to eighth notes when using one mallet. However, if students demonstrate the ability to play fast passages with one mallet, they are encouraged to do so, fostering individuality in their learning process.

In 2018, some bandmasters began teaching their students how to read music notes. They use notation alongside *so-fa* syl-

lables. Most Drum & Bell Lyre groups today are arranging music with complete harmony.

Sample by Rocky Isanan



Students also learn to execute single- and double-stroke rolls, which they refer to as “rolling.” This terminology helps unify their understanding of rhythm and technique, allowing for a smoother transition between different styles of play.

Today, their style is influenced by what they see in DCI (Drum Corps International). The marching, drill, choreography, arranging, and color guards are all quite similar.

COMPETITIONS

Drum & Bell Lyre competitions have been a part of the Philippine music scene since the 1980s, spearheaded by the Department of Education (DepEd), which was formerly known as the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS). These competitions continue to thrive today, with events held almost every month across various locations in the Philippines. Most competitions are organized by local government units, different organizations, or private companies.

The 1997 DECS “Paligsahan sa Sining” (Arts Competition) was held at the Cultural Center Complex and attended by Drum & Lyre groups from 13 regions. The top three winners were Makati, Dasmariñas Cavite, and Bocaue Bulacan. The first official national Drum & Lyre competition took place at Baclaran Elementary School on May 4, 2013. Organized by the Philippine Drum & Lyre Associates Inc. (PDLAI), the event saw participation from nearly 40 bands from Luzon.

PDLAI 9th National Competition 2024 - Bacoor City, Marching Band Capital of the Philippines



In 2014, Doowee Donut sponsored a televised national Drum & Bell Lyre Competition called the Doowee Hooper Beat Band Competition, which aired on ABS-CBN Sports and Action Channel 23. This competition ran for four seasons, from 2014 to 2017, and was open to all Drum & Bell Lyre Corps.

The Bacoor City Government organized the Bacoor International Music Championships in 2018, featuring 31 bands from across the Philippines as well as marching bands from Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Japan, and Hong Kong. This event highlighted the vibrant Drum & Bell Lyre community in the Philippines.

Currently, there are two separate national competitions organized by the Philippine Drum & Lyre Associates Inc. (PDLAI) and the Drum & Bell Corps Organization of the Philippines (DB-COPi). These competitions continue to showcase the talent and dedication of Drum & Bell Lyre ensembles nationwide.

JUDGING SYSTEM FOR COMPETITIONS

The rules, guidelines, and criteria for judging in Drum & Bell Lyre competitions vary depending on the organizers. Current-

Partida Blue Cadets / Rocky Isanan - Bandmaster



ly, national organizations have aligned their competition standards with those of international entities such as Drum Corps International (DCI), Winter Guard International (WGI), and the Asian Marching Band Confederation.

Competitions are categorized into three main divisions: Elementary, High School, and Open Category. Each category has its own set of judging criteria, ensuring that participants are evaluated fairly based on their skill, creativity, and overall performance.

In the early 1990s, when I was in Grade 3, I started with the Drum & Lyre (Angono Elementary School Central Drum & Lyre Corps) before joining the Community Band (Angono Wind Ensemble). Everything the bandmasters I spoke with for my PASIC presentation said rings true, as I have experienced it myself – from learning, competitions, instruments, and the evolution of the style from then to now. In my PASIC presentation, I will showcase several videos of Bell Lyre training, instrument-making, and competitions in the Philippines.

In the end, I hope that these experiences will inspire and provide knowledge to the next generation of musicians and students who wish to continue the tradition of Drum & Lyre in our country.

I would like to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations: Isaac De Alva III (Vice President of Philippine PAS Chapter); Manuel Los Añes (Founder of DBCOPI); Patricia Real Barairo (Founder & Executive Director of CGAP, Inc.); Gibson Miguel Zapanta (Judge Academy Director of PDLAI); John Lester Aristoteles (Owner of E-Lance Percussion); Tirso Montoya Caragay (San Carlos College DBC Bandmaster, San Carlos City, Pangasinan); Rocky Isanan (Bandmaster of Partida Blue Cadets); Joe Daryl Diesta (Bandmaster of Xtended Drum and Bell Corps); Marlon Lopez and PASAMVlog team; Ryan Gleserio P. Palamos (Chairman of PDLAI); Dino Tamondong; Wilson Marching Percussion; PDLAI and DBCOPI. Thank you for your invaluable contributions and support!

Satur Tiamson is an active drummer and percussion performer, educator, adjudicator, and clinician. He is the President of the Philippine PAS Chapter, PASAMBAP (National band organization in the Philippines), member of the PAS World Percussion committee, and a PAS advisory member. He was a featured artist at PASIC 2023. Satur was hailed by *Time Out Magazine* as one of the Top 20 Musicians in Hong Kong. He is also a recipient of the TOYM (The Outstanding Young Men) award in the Philippines for his achievements in the Arts in Music. [PN](#)

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SPORT OF THE ARTS

The Lost Works of Charley Wilcoxon

By Dan Piccolo

This virtual session will present selected highlights from The Wilcoxon Papers, one of the Special Collections in Bowling Green State University's Music Library. The materials in the collection are drawn from PAS Hall of Famer Charley Wilcoxon's personal archives, and include sketches, manuscripts, original artwork, correspondences with editors, negatives and proofs, and many pages of unpublished music for both pitched and nonpitched percussion instruments. While there are many exciting pieces, the jewel of the collection is a complete set of "swing" variations on "The Downfall of Paris," which I have edited for an upcoming publication by Ludwig Masters.

THE WILCOXON PAPERS

When I first started teaching at BGSU in 2016, I received an email from then-Music Librarian Susannah Cleveland telling me about a collection of materials the library had received in 2008 as a donation from Robert and Jeanette Romaniello. After working out the details with Cleveland and Dr. Roger Schupp, BGSU Professor of Percussion from 1992 to 2015, the Romaniello family ultimately donated three boxes of uncataloged materials from Charley Wilcoxon's personal archives. According to Cleveland, the family had no personal connection to Wilcoxon, but had discovered the boxes in the attic of their house when they moved in. Over the next ten years the collection was sorted and cataloged; some of this was done by Dr. Schupp and his students (most notably Robert Ciesluk), some by staff at the BGSU Music Library (most notably Emily Daus DiLeo and Frances Zengel), and some by me.

When I began reviewing the materials, I was initially preoccupied with my excitement in seeing original manuscripts for some of my favorite snare drum music – pieces I'd been playing

since I was 13 years old! I still enjoy flipping through those pages, but during the quiet months of 2020 and 2021, with concerts being few and far between, I was able to dig deeper. This was when I discovered the manuscripts for a collection of "swing" variations on "The Downfall of Paris," written between 1972 and 1974. While there are many other unpublished materials in the collection, including a wealth of material for keyboard percussion instruments, this was the most cohesive, completed manuscript.

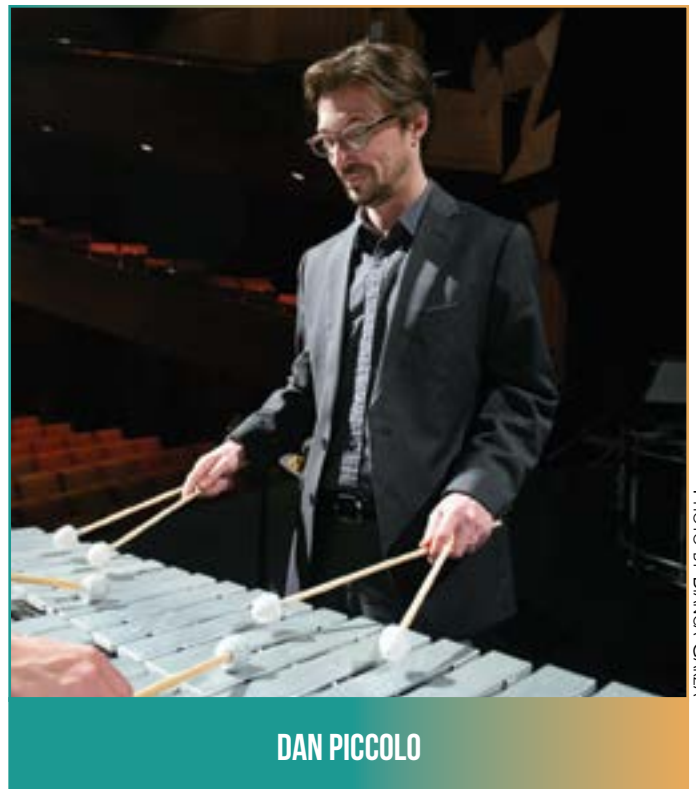


PHOTO BY BIANCA GARZA

DAN PICCOLO

THE DOWNFALL OF PARIS “SWING” VARIATIONS

“The Downfall of Paris” is derived from an English tune dating back to the late 1700s, and it became popular among European military bands in the 1800s. It became a standard of the American fife and drum repertoire thanks in part to its inclusion in George B. Bruce and Daniel D. Emmett’s *The Drummer’s and Fifer’s Guide* (1862).¹

The snare drum accompaniment to this popular melody has been a standard piece of the rudimental snare drum literature for well over a century. In his introductory remarks in *The Solo Snare Drummer, Vol. 1* (Permus Publications), John S. Pratt describes “The Downfall of Paris” and other pieces taken from Bruce and Emmett’s text as exemplary of “the best of the heritage of drumming in America that dates back to the Revolutionary War days.”²

Wilcoxon had an affinity for traditional rudimental tunes; *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos* contains multiple versions of “Three Camps,” another piece found in *The Drummer’s and Fifer’s Guide*, along with “The New Downfall,” another re-working of “The Downfall of Paris.” What sets these new “swing” variations apart is that their existence has been essentially unknown until now. They come from 30 years later in Wilcoxon’s career than his other popular works, and they perfectly demonstrate Wilcoxon’s ability to employ rudimental vocabulary to make distinct but compelling music with the same source material.

One of the advantages to these pieces is that the theme on which they are based was created as an accompaniment for a melody. This creates exciting opportunities for students and teachers to incorporate a melodic element in their rudimental snare drum studies. The use of melodies is another thing Wilcoxon emphasized in much of his writing; he published a collection called *Drumming! plus a Hummin’ Tune* in 1962 that had students sing melodies while playing, and among the BGSU Library’s collection I also found a set of progressively difficult rudimental accompaniments for “The Yellow Rose of Texas.”



IN CLOSING

I was first introduced to Wilcoxon’s music at age 13 when I began taking private lessons from Steve Curry in Rochester, N.Y. As I’m sure was the case for many readers, Wilcoxon’s compositions were my first experience using the rudiments as actual musical vocabulary, rather than abstract patterns I had to prepare for lessons. One of the joys of working on this project has been connecting with some of Charley’s former students – one, Sperie Karas, described *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos* as “earth shaking” when it was first published! Wilcoxon’s ability to make the rudiments “swing” was singular, intuitive, and addictive, and it helped me understand how they could be used together to make music.

While my career has taken me in many different musical directions, Wilcoxon’s compositions provided me with an essential technical and musical foundation that has been a tremendous asset. As I have become a full-time educator, first working primarily with middle and high school students in private lessons and now teaching at a university, the value of Wilcoxon’s writing has only become more apparent. To this day, there are etudes in *Modern Rudimental Swing Solos* that are rites of passage for nearly every student I teach, from the undergraduate to doctoral levels. I simply can’t imagine teaching double-stroke rolls without “Rolling in Rhythm” or mastery of stroke types without “Swinging Accents!”

I hope you will join me for my virtual PASIC 2024 session. I plan to share more history about “The Downfall of Paris,” additional background on The Wilcoxon Papers along with some highlights of the collection, and a biography of Wilcoxon. I will spend the majority of the time on “The Downfall of Paris ‘Swing’ Variations,” including a summary of the editorial process, pedagogical possibilities, and, of course, performances of these great new additions to Wilcoxon’s remarkable catalog of published works. It is in the spirit of this legacy that I humbly introduce these newly discovered pieces to anyone who hopes to make the rudiments “swing!”

ENDNOTES

1. George B. Bruce and Dan D. Emmett, *The Drummer’s and Fifer’s Guide* (New York: Pond & Co., 1862): 44–45.
2. John S. Pratt, William J. Schinstine, and James L. Moore, *The Solo Snare Drummer, Vol. 1* (Columbus, Ohio: Permus, 1985): 2.

Dan Piccolo regularly performs and teaches in a wide range of musical settings. He has recorded and toured internationally as a concert percussionist, jazz drummer, and world percussion specialist. Dr. Piccolo frequently appears as a clinician at universities throughout the United States. He is Associate Professor of Percussion in the College of Musical Arts at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. Visit www.danpiccolo.com for more information. **PN**

Orchestrating Your Dream Gig

How to Get a Drumset Gig with an Orchestra and Get Called Back Again!

By Sean J. Kennedy

I am honored to have been selected to present a session at PASIC 2024. Having attended numerous sessions at PASIC over the years, I have often wondered how I might contribute to the educational impact of this esteemed event through my own playing and teaching experiences. After extensive reflection and discussions with trusted friends and colleagues, including soon-to-be PAS Hall of Famer Neil Grover, I chose to focus on how to establish oneself as an independent drumset artist available for work



SEAN J. KENNEDY

with orchestras. This niche is one I have successfully navigated, and I am eager to share my insights.

Following is a preview of the itinerary for my in-person session this coming November, along with some key takeaways for those who may not be able to attend.

WHAT WAS MY DREAM GIG?

My dream gig was to hold the drumset chair in either the Boston Pops under John Williams or *The Tonight Show* band drumset chair with Doc Severinsen. Growing up in the 1980s, drummers Fred Buda (Boston Pops) and Ed Shaughnessy (*The Tonight Show* band) were frequently on television, and I aspired to be like them. My formal percussion lessons began in the mid-'80s when Ed and Fred were prominent on TV. Eventually, I graduated with a degree in music education and a master's degree in percussion performance. Armed with a degree and technique, the question was: how do you turn that knowledge into paying gigs and get called back repeatedly?

STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR DREAM GIG

Here are six steps to help you reach your dream gig:

1. Listen, Listen, Listen! Listen to everything you can. Study what you listen to and try to replicate it. Pay special attention to the field of percussion you want to

specialize in, whether it's drumset, world music, orchestral, etc.

2. Be an Exceptional Sight-Reader Time is money. The quicker and more accurately you can read and produce quality music, the more you'll work. Read everything: treble clef mallet instruments, bass clef for timpani and keyboard, drumset charts, world percussion instruments, etc.

3. Be a Great Communicator Don't make anyone wait for your reply. Be honest, friendly, and articulate in your communications. Even if you can't do a gig, don't just say "no." Offer to help find someone else to cover the spot.

4. Do Your Homework If you get a gig, do your homework! Print the music, mark it, practice it, tape it together, put it in a binder, etc. Listen to reference recordings. Know the repertoire cold before you go to the first rehearsal. Ensure you have the correct gear for the genre — cymbal choices, drum sizes, stick options, etc.

5. Be On Time Early is on time. On time is late. Late is unacceptable.

6. Don't Turn Down Any Gigs Especially when you're starting out, you can't afford to say no. Keep your passion and keep honing your craft in your ideal area, but remember, a gig in a genre that you don't love could lead to the gig you want.

How do you establish yourself as an independent drumset artist available for work with orchestras? It's akin to the classic tales of a want-to-be actor starting as

an usher or page in a major TV studio and eventually finding an opportunity to get on stage because they were already on the scene. A similar story applies to me; I've always considered myself a drumset player who is also an orchestral percussionist.

HOW IT STARTED FOR ME

Keep all of your professional drumming opportunities open. Even though drumset is my passion, I have always taken any opportunity to challenge my skills. I have managed to navigate both the orchestral and commercial/jazz worlds simultaneously, taking advantage of a variety of opportunities that have allowed me to grow and showcase my versatility as a musician. Here are some examples in both areas:

ORCHESTRAL OPPORTUNITIES

I have had the privilege of performing as a substitute percussionist with various regional orchestras, gaining valuable experience and expanding my network within the classical music community. My versatility has allowed me to play as a section percussionist on pop gig tours, blending orchestral precision with the energy of pop music. I have also participated in many diverse productions, including live video-game-music shows and concerts with renowned artists, which has broadened my exposure and enriched my performance skills. Soloing with symphony orchestras on notable pieces such as "Bolero" and the Rosauero Marimba Concerto pushed me to hone proper rehearsal techniques and precision.

In addition to live performances, I ventured into producing virtual videos and albums with world-class musicians, collaborating with such artists as Dame Evelyn Glennie and members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Canadian Brass, and The Boston Pops. One significant project involved recording and producing all 50 etudes from the Cirone book *Portraits in Rhythm*, which I then posted on YouTube, providing a valuable resource for percussion students and enthusiasts.

DRUMSET OPPORTUNITIES

In the world of jazz and commercial music, I led my own jazz quartet, which allowed me to explore my creative voice and refine my leadership skills. Performing and recording with my quartet and working with such elite jazz players as Bob Mintzer, Bernie Dresel, Clayton Cameron, and Bernard Purdie was both challenging and rewarding, pushing me to elevate my playing and broaden my stylistic range.

I appeared on television and radio, further establishing my presence in the jazz community and reaching a wider audience. A highlight for my quartet was opening for Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra at Philadelphia's Verizon Hall.

Composing my own music provided an outlet for personal expression and innovation, while playing and recording with The Doc Severinsen Tribute Band, led by Jay Webb. Performing and recording with the Gardyn Jazz Orchestra added another dimension to my portfolio, blending orchestral sensibilities with jazz improvisation.

In addition to live and studio performances, I embraced the digital age by performing on virtual videos and recording tracks in my home studio for various clients. This adaptability ensured that I remained relevant and in-demand, regardless of the medium or platform.

WORLDS COLLIDE

All of these experiences came together in the early 2000s. I was hired to sub on an orchestra tour with Maestro Peter Guth. My role in the section was auxiliary percussion — bass drum, glockenspiel, and triangle.

It happened that the section was too small and couldn't cover all the parts. The maestro suggested replacing the concert bass drum, piatti, and snare drum with a drumset player. Despite being the low man on this gig, subbing for a regular member, none of the regular players wanted to do it or considered themselves drumset specialists. Oddly enough, the bassoonist

knew me primarily as a drumset player, so he blurted out to the maestro in front of the entire orchestra, "Sean should do it! He's a great drumset player!" Guth asked, "Who is Sean?" I acknowledged him, and he asked, "Do you mind playing all of the battery percussion in the polkas on drum kit?" I responded, "I'd love to, maestro!"

This was the first time I played drumset with a professional orchestra on tour. We performed at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center in Philadelphia, The State Theater of New Jersey, and Avery Fisher Hall in New York City. While this was not what I watched Fred Buda and Ed Shaughnessy do, it was my first chance to show a larger, hiring audience what I could do on drumset. Remember, everyone and anyone in that group could be a contractor!

After that tour, I started to be recognized as a drumset player by people in the orchestral contracting community. It is a word-of-mouth business. Being on the scene, being easy to work with, and being able to bring what is needed to the project gets you called back.

Following this serendipitous event, I was eventually called to perform on drumset with The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, The Philly POPS, The Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, and The Allentown Symphony Orchestra, to name a few. I have also held the principal drumset chair for the Philadelphia Boys Choir and Chorale for over 20 years, and currently hold the drumset chair for the Doc Severinsen Tribute Band featuring Jay Webb and The Gardyn Jazz Orchestra.

CONCLUSION

This is just a glimpse into some of the tips, advice, and methods that I'll share with everyone at PASIC 2024. Other topics I'll cover include navigating these areas: Conductors; Listening vs. Reading; The Balancing Act; Putting It All Together. Plus, I'll be performing live with tracks from the Philadelphia Boys Choir and Chorale and The Doc Severinsen Tribute Band!

I hope to see you there! **PN**

Playing the Cymbals

By Edoardo Albino Giachino

A pair of cymbals. It seems simple. It's just two bronze plates, with which you can't make sounds too fast, nor can you create very different tones. So why does playing this instrument in the orchestra excite us so much? Why is it so essential? Why is an audition often decided by the quality of the candidate's cymbal sound? Why is it so difficult to play softly and rhythmically? Why do I enjoy playing this instrument so much, and why have I invested so much time in it, still studying and experimenting with many things?

My heart beats fast when the tension in the music builds towards my cymbal crash, which explodes at the peak of the phrase. It's not me; I'm just a part of this unique, powerful, orderly, and exciting thing that is the orchestra, and at that moment, I'm captured by what we are all creating together. I only do one single, very powerful hit. But I have an enormous responsibility; everyone is watching me and expecting this earthquake, and I feel like a god. Is it a trivial part? Maybe, but it's fundamental, essential for delivering an emotion. Because our job as musicians is to give emotions to others and to our-

selves. To do this, it has to be perfect – the movement, the attack, the body of the sound, the timbre. On this, I have to work hard, deeply, never being too satisfied, and never feeling like I've arrived.

Studying the cymbals is strange; it has to be done in small doses because it requires great physical strength and causes wear on the skin of the hands that rubs against the leather straps. I can study for a few minutes, a few times a day. Therefore, concentration and continuous commitment become essential during the short time I have before my fingers start to hurt, my arms begin to tremble, my back suggests that I stop, and my abs are all marked by the cuts of fast stops.

It's such a physical instrument; I love that sound, as if the soul poured its vibrations through the bronze, the blood boils, the whole body clashes against these reverberations.

Art is an extremely serious thing, and music is a very serious thing. It doesn't depend on the difficulty it requires, but creating Art and creating Music with a capital "M" means taking nothing for granted, going deep, and believing in it.

The grip? Many think that control of the grip is given exclusively by the index, thumb, and middle fingers, but instead, I use the pinky and ring fingers a lot; they allow me to have a secure grip and a lot of strength. The movement? The speed? The pressure? How long should the cymbals stay together and vibrate together? Are



EDOARDO ALBINO GIACHINO

there rules? Does it depend on the type of cymbal? Or on the type of hit? How do I manage to play so many fast and strong hits if I don't have the physical structure and training of Michael Rosen? How do I always have a satisfying hit? I want to talk to you about this in Indianapolis, but I don't want to teach you anything; I just want to talk to you about what I do, what I find useful, what I've discovered, how certain goals I thought I had reached later turned out to be surpassed, how I continually feel like a child discovering a sound or a way of playing that I didn't know.

How important is the quality of the instrument? We often underestimate this aspect. We play with violinists who play a Stradivarius, and often we settle for the cymbals we find in the orchestra. I found in the Zildjian company an ideal partner in the search for the sound I need – what the music I am playing requires, what my group of musicians demands. I have the opportunity to choose the cymbals I like, to create new ones, to modify some, and above all, to pair them in unexpected ways. Do we settle for playing cymbals that factory workers pair for us? Why? Habit? Laziness? I don't have my cymbals paired; I have many individual cymbals, and I pair them differently to obtain a new crash, a different sound, a special timbre.

Do you know "Fountains of Rome" by Respighi? The penultimate piece, "The Trevi Fountain at Noon," has four cymbal crashes, one *fff*, one *f*, one *p*, and one *pp*. Here, I love using a heavy 20-inch cymbal in my left hand that weighs about 2,700g, and in my right hand, I change four different cymbals. So I have the same basic timbre, but very different attacks, sounds, and dynamics to give a special sense of diminuendo and to try to make everything as exciting as possible.

What will I talk about in my clinic at PASIC 2024? About many things. I won't be able to say everything I want; time will run out, and I will still want to explain for hours the art of this instrument, so ancient and so simple.

Edoardo Albino Giachino is a member of the Orchestra Nazionale di Santa Cecilia of Rome and Professor of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. He has developed new performing techniques, makes videos, and his channel is followed in Europe, Asia and America. He wrote seven teaching manuals and various pieces of concert music for his students. He holds masterclasses worldwide, including at PASIC 2022. He is part of the orchestral project Utopia. Active in the field of contemporary music, he plays as a soloist and in chamber music ensembles, collaborating with many composers and performing national and international premieres. In 2015 he founded Takt-Time, a group of eclectic musicians offering pieces of Baroque, Romantic, rock, contemporary, folk, and urban music, giving life to a new sound experience created by the use of traditional and alternative instruments.

PN

IPEC CONCERTS

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Scott Herring, Director

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON
Andrew Eldridge, Director

SYMPHONIC

LAURA NOAH Symphonic Clinic Two Worlds: Marching and Orchestra and the Skills Between

This presentation will highlight how ensemble skills learned while performing in the marching arts directly relate to the skills used when performing in a symphony orchestra. Laura Noah will explore the physical and mental concepts geared toward the orchestral performer, such as timing, visual awareness, ensemble balance, character of sound, musical style, visualization, score study, and more. This presentation will aim to take a deep dive into Timing, Balance, and Character (TBC) and show how they are used to achieve quality performances in the marching arts and symphonic orchestra.

Laura Noah is the Principal Timpanist for the Mobile Symphony, Pensacola Symphony, Mississippi Gulf Coast Symphony, Meridian Symphony, Mobile Opera, and Pensacola Opera. Laura served as Alabama PAS Chapter President from 2021-24, is a current member of the PAS Symphonic Committee, and served as the Socioeconomic Point Person for the PAS Diversity Alliance from 2020-23. She is the Director of Percussion and Assistant Director of Athletic Bands at the University of West Florida. Laura also works with her husband, Sean, and the McGill-Toolen Catholic High School Band program as the instructor and arranger for the McT Band Front Ensemble. Laura holds a Master of Music degree in Percussion Performance from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Percussion Performance from the University of Alabama. Additionally, she attended the Aspen Music Festival and School and was a 1999 DCI Champion Santa Clara Vanguard front ensemble member.

Principal Percussion Duties

By Josh Jones

For many percussionists, higher education is a necessity to their growth as professionals. Consistent private lessons, ensemble experience, and classroom courses such as theory and music business are just some examples of what many colleges offer. However, the majority of graduates often find themselves in situations that

were not covered in their respective programs, leaving them feeling unprepared. Courses on how to do taxes as a freelancer or resume building may not be available, even though the majority of professionals would deem them as essential skills. One such topic that is rarely covered thoroughly in percussion education is the role of a principal percussionist.

At first glance, the core duties of a principal percussionist look quite simple: assign music, hire subs, rent instruments, and create a setup chart. However, there are other tangential duties that are often assumed or not explicitly defined within them, requiring several different skill sets.

Organization, management, problem solving, and communication are examples of skills that are essential to a principal's success. Many of these skills may be covered separately among several courses, but employing them all within the structure of organizing a single orchestra program, let alone an entire season, may seem like a daunting task. In order to minimize that sensation, the principal must have a strategy that is effective and efficient in completing all the duties. This is achieved by developing and implementing systems and processes that can be utilized in any situation, with any orchestra they happen to perform with.

Before I began my tenure as principal of the Calgary Philharmonic, I sought guidance from several principal players on how

they approached the role and what they wished they knew in the beginning of their respective careers. They all at some point said the following: every principal basically does the same thing, but every orchestra is unique. Several would say some version of, "You'll find out what else you need to do as you go along," and they were correct.

The core duties at Calgary were apparent and I quickly was made aware of the tangential duties assigned to me. For example, I was asked to assign solely based on the order of the sub list, so that the "more important" parts would be given to the substitutes higher on the list. For me, this was a departure from what was recommended to me by principals I talked to, "but every orchestra is unique."

While this particular example is objectively small, depending on who you ask, idiosyncrasies like that and other variables can affect several aspects of a principal's duties. How soon substitutes are hired may affect how soon assignments are completed. At what point you are able to receive music from the librarian affects your ability to do assignments, hire subs, rent instruments, and draw the setup chart. You can see how much of a domino effect one delay in any point of the process creates.

Dealing with unexpected events, be they trivial or "catastrophic," is something that every principal, percussion or otherwise, has to learn to navigate within their role, and this is made easier the more



JOSH JONES

streamlined their system is. If a principal does not have an effective way of communicating with the library, then anything having to do with the sheet music will become more difficult. If a principal does not have an efficient way of getting information to the personnel manager, then hiring substitutes becomes more difficult.

How do principals communicate with the multiple parties involved? How do they organize and distribute the vast amount of information needed for themselves and for others? Some stick solely to pen and paper for drawing setup charts while others use software to create models of the stage and the instruments. Some use Microsoft Word to write assignments down, while others use Excel. The differences in methods that you will see often are attributed to two things: how the principal receives information, and how a specific party received information. If a principal works best with using a pen and paper, but the personnel manager works best with email, then the principal will first do everything on paper, and either transfer it directly to email or, if their handwriting is clear enough, scan it. Knowing how everyone communicates is extremely important in ensuring a seamless process.

Throughout my time in Calgary I went from having multiple email threads for each individual duty, to developing an Excel sheet that contained the majority of information in those emails. This helped me have a clearer view of what was happening on a broader scale, and it gave some of my colleagues another avenue of communication. These adjustments were gradual, collaborative, and the final iteration, along with the process itself, was a major factor in being awarded tenure.

I continued using this system in my subsequent orchestra positions, Grant Park being the most recent, and its efficacy and efficiency still holds up. Had I started my first job using this system, I certainly would have avoided many unnecessary emails, headaches and moments of feeling overwhelmed.

It's my sincere hope that by presenting the system itself and informing aspiring

principals of what to look out for at this year's PASIC, they will have a better experience and be best set up for success.

Josh Jones began his formal studies in percussion with the Percussion Scholarship Program under the direction of Chicago Symphony member Patricia Dash and Chicago Lyric Opera member Douglas

Waddell. He earned his bachelor's degree in music from the DePaul School of Music and was the orchestra fellow of both the Detroit and Pittsburgh symphonies. In 2020, Josh joined the Kansas City Symphony as Principal Percussionist. Josh authored a percussion method book series, *Spatial Studies for Hitting Things*, and writes musical and philosophical blogs on his website, drummojo.com. **PN**

DRUMSET

ELENA BONOMO Drumset Clinic Musical Theater Drumming: A Creative Approach to Reading

From the rehearsal studio to the Broadway stage, Elena will present a masterclass on how to approach reading different types of charts as a working drummer. She'll share her experiences as a Broadway drummer and guide you through the exciting world of drumming for musical theater, orchestras and beyond. Learn essential tips and tricks for interpreting different types of charts, and develop your sight reading skills in order to be able to say yes to every gig that comes your way.

Elena Bonomo is a drummer, percussionist, and music educator. A graduate of Berklee College of Music, she holds a bachelor's degree in Performance. Elena currently holds the drum chair for Broadway's Tony-award-winning musical *SIX*. Actively involved in the pop/rock and musical theater scenes, Elena strives to create fluidity across all musical genres. Elena has appeared on *Late Night with Seth Meyers* as a featured drummer with the *8G Band*. She is a member of the Broadway *Sinfonietta* — an all-female and majority women of color orchestra — with whom she records and performs. Elena has shared the stage with such artists as Jordin Sparks, Lea Michele, Norm Lewis, LaChanze, Abby Mueller, Keri René Fuller, Dylan Mulvaney, and Patina Miller. Elena has performed in the Caribbean, South America, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe while working as a bandleader for Holland America Cruise Lines. Elena held the drum chair for the 1st National Tour of the musical *Waitress*. She originated the drum book for two Off-Broadway shows including *The Hello Girls* and *A Strange Loop*, which won the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. An active sub in the NYC Theater scene, her credits include *Be More Chill*, *Cagney*, *For Colored Girls*, and *A Taste of Things to Come*.

DAVID CHIVERTON Drumset Clinic The Art of Versatility

This session will expound on the essence of being authentically efficient in various genres of music. The ability to stylistically and intentionally execute multiple genres of music at any moment will increase your value and demand as a musician. David will discuss everything from drum tones to "touch" and "feel." He will perform a cross-blend of genres such as Gospel, jazz, fusion and pop.

David Chiverton is a Miami native who grew up surrounded by Gospel music and musicians. By age 12, he was featured on a Gospel project titled *Jesus Is the Real Thing* by The Miami Music Workshop Choir. From then, he became the full-time drummer for Cooper Temple COGIC. He attended Miami Northwestern Senior High, where he became a member of the marching band and the jazz ensemble. He was offered a full academic scholarship to Florida International University and a position with the university's big band, which performed with such artists as Arturo Sandoval, Ingrid Jensen, and Nicole Henry. While in college, David linked up with producer Bigg D, where he was the featured drummer every Wednesday night at Miami L.I.V.E. at Santos Miami, where he shared the stage with such artists as John Legend and Lil Wayne. David received his bachelor's degree in Jazz Performance in 2010. He is currently touring and recording with various artists and has been highlighted as one of South Florida's most sought-after musicians.

“Histoire Du Soldat”: the Original Setup

By David Valdés

Despite “Histoire Du Soldat” being one of the masterpieces of the 20th century and a milestone in the percussion repertoire, it is still surprising how little percussionists know about this work, Stravinsky’s concept, or even the instruments (he owned many drums at the time of writing “Histoire”) and the techniques involved in this pioneering *chef-d’oeuvre* (he described them very precisely in the part).

In 1917 Stravinsky was working together with André Gide in “Antony and Cleopatra,” a project commissioned by Ida Rubinstein, but he abandoned that project after several months. Some of that already written music was “recycled” and re-used in a new work together with Ramuz: “Histoire Du Soldat.”

The manuscript of the score of “Histoire” (the irrelevant debate regarding the *L*’ in the title would give rise to another article), which is also the score used on the premiere night (and, because of that, it contains many valuable and interesting annotations by both the composer and Ernest Ansetmet, the conductor on Sept. 28, 1918), was presented by Stravinsky to Werner Reinhart, a rich philanthropist who funded the composer very generously. This manuscript was kept by Reinhart and was donated to the Rychenberg-Stiftung on Feb. 13, 1949. Since May 10, 1977, it is kept (but still belonging to the Rychenberg-Stiftung) at the Stadtbibliothek Wintertur under the code Dep RS 75.

Dep RS 75 contains loads of useful information clarifying the total mess that the 1924 score and part are (and, therefore, also the subsequent editions based on those very unreliable sources). Sadly, none of the percussionists who have written their own edition of the percussion part (including William Kraft and James Blades, or even Robert Craft, Stravinsky’s assistant during his American years!) have ever seen or even mention studying the crucial Dep RS 75. I was granted permission by the Rychenberg-Stiftung to get a copy of this invaluable source.

Only Morris Arnold Lang went to the trouble, way before the

internet era, to travel to Winterthur (in May 1974) to check this manuscript. He then wrote “A Journey to the Source” on “L’Histoire du Soldat,” which was published in Vol. 12, No. 2, Winter 1975, of the PAS magazine *Percussionist*. In this article he points out very interesting issues and solves them in a definitive way but, decades after, percussionists are still asking the same questions and answering them *wrongly* (they just had to read that article!). Sadly, Lang never published his own edition.

Dep RS 75 is a clean copy (except for the annotations made



DAVID VALDÉS

during the rehearsals), the culmination of Stravinsky’s compositional process. We would be nothing short of naïve if we thought that Stravinsky wrote “Histoire” directly as a tidy, almost ready-to-print, work. Of course, many proofs and sketches exist, and as far as I know, no other percussionist has ever dived into them.

The Rychenberg-Stiftung and the Paul Sacher Stiftung keep more than 250 pages of sketches for “Histoire Du Soldat.” I was granted permission from both institutions to check them and to reproduce the relevant ones in my own critical edition of the percussion part.

While studying the sketches (I checked all of them), I came across this wonderful page:

Figure 1. Sketch 1.33. (recto, 23 cm. x 17.9 cm.) Reproduced with permission of the Paul Sacher Foundation, Basel, Igor Stravinsky Collection



The upper part of the page and the center contains a fragment of the “Marche triomphale du Diable,” with some ideas regarding the percussion and a couple of rebarrings. The bottom part includes some ideas for the “Petit Concert.”

It is the drawing on the right-center that made me scream with excitement in the library. (I had to give some explanations to the librarian, but she immediately understood my joyfulness!) Let us zoom in.

Figure 2. Sketch 1.33. (detail) Reproduced with permission of the Paul Sacher Foundation, Basel, Igor Stravinsky Collection

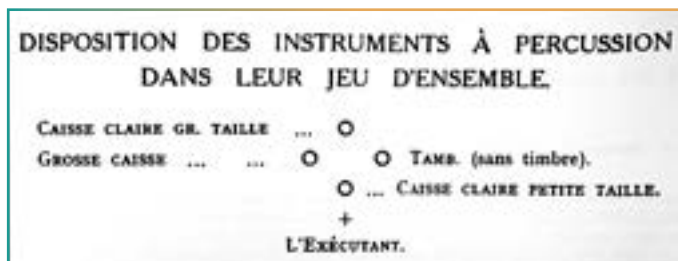


We can clearly see four drums, drawn by Stravinsky’s own hand! They are in a north-south, east-west configuration, exactly as indicated in the 1924 score and part.

To the west we can see a bass drum, to the east the largest snare drum (military drum). Both feature triangles on their shells, but do not get fooled by appearances. Those are not rope-tensioned drums. Those lines are triangles drawn on the shell, exactly like the drums that Stravinsky owned (his eldest son, Théodore, described them precisely in his memoirs). During my PASIC presentation you will be able to see photos and other iconography (by Théodore Stravinsky and Auberjonois, the artist in charge of the stage and costumes) proving that Stravinsky, while sketching “Histoire,” drew his own drums, representing the setup that he wanted for the percussion.

North of the sketch we can see the middle snare drum. South we can find the small one. This drawing matches perfectly the disposition of the drums in the 1924 part and score.

Figure 3. Disposition of the percussion instruments in their set. JWC 43a - JWC44. Public domain in the U.S.A.



The drawing in sketch 1.33 explains everything regarding the percussion part because the drums are set edgewise – that is, the largest surface in a vertical position (*pose de champ* in French). We will also see during my presentation that this disposition is not something Stravinsky draw at random, as other sources (by his eldest son and Auberjonois) perfectly match it. This vertical disposition of the drums is totally intentional and has been confirmed by other sources.

The problem with the 1924 edition is that it took for granted that the drums would be set edgewise. The “aerial” plan-view in Figure 3 shows the drums in that north-south, east-west configuration, but drawing them edgewise would entail the use of perspective (or rectangles, making things more confusing), which is complicated for the engravers. So, the edgewise disposition was taken for granted, as that is how the drums were played before the publication of the 1924 part and score (JWC 44 and JWC43a respectively). Note that there were no performances after the premiere due to the 1918 Influenza. The Suite was played in London in 1920 and a few performances took place in 1923, all of them under the close supervision of Stravinsky. The vertical disposition of the drums was used by the composer himself and by Monsieur Jacobi, the percussionist for the premiere.

Note also that this is not a “simplified drawing,” as no stand would have allowed the drums to be set vertically, so the verti-

cal-on-the-floor disposition of the drums is intentional and was adopted by Stravinsky since the very early stages of the compositional process (so early that this particular set of sketches – those named with “1.X” – still contains music for the abandoned “Anthony and Cleopatra”). This may seem weird, but we have to take into account that “Histoire” was a pioneering work featuring multipercussion. Remember, too, that Stravinsky owned many drums, and that he used them to try the part while writing his masterpiece. Many other drawings and paintings corroborate that the drums were intended to be played on the floor.

Not only the iconography proves that this is the setup that Stravinsky had in mind; his own instructions confirm it. We can find this at the beginning of the “Ragtime”: *All this percussion is (lightly) struck with the triangle beater. The triangle is held by the l.h. of the performer, to his right can be found very close and facing each other the S.D. and the tambourine (both edgeways), to his left the B. Drum.*

Figure 4. Photo by David Valdés.



Note that this setup perfectly matches his own drawing. Note also a key expression: “both edgeways” (*poses de champ* in the original French). This entails putting the drums vertically, and that can only be accomplished by setting them on the floor. Note also how he instructs the performer to put them “facing each other.”

We can also find these instructions in figure 33, again, in the “Ragtime”: *The B.D. is on the left and the two snare drums right in front of the performer and very close to each other [...]*

Note also that the setup in Figure 5 allows playing following these “obscure” instructions: *Play with the sponge-headed stick, which the performer will take care to hold with the head turned down, and to manipulate it only with the fingers (the arm remaining perfectly motionless) so as to provide a mechanical and precise character.*

They are not that obscure once we understand Stravinsky’s original setup.

Figure 5. Photo by David Valdés.



At the beginning of the “Danse du Diable,” Stravinsky indicated the following: *Place these two instruments edgeways [de champ in the original French] very close to each other [...]*

Figure 6. Photo by David Valdés.



These instructions allow one to play in the manner that the composer indicated: [...] *very close to each other so as to be able to easily handle the stick (r.h.) between their membranes in the indicated movement.*

In the “Marche Triomphale du Diable,” the manuscript presents these instructions: *The notes featuring upward stems belong to the right hand; those featuring downward stems to the left hand. The B.D. is to the left and the large S.D. to the right of the performer; before him the other two S.D. can be found, both turning their faces (the drumhead) towards the performer – the small one closer and the medium one further away [...]*

All of these instructions perfectly match the disposition of the drums drawn by Stravinsky himself and printed in the 1924 score and part. Check, again, Figure 5. Surprisingly, the edition by William Kraft includes as a “bonus feature” on page 6, a replica of sketch 1.39, the one featuring the instructions in the para-

graph above, but that has never triggered Kraft's or any other percussionist's curiosity. Everything was there, right before our noses, in the form of Stravinsky's manuscript, sketches, and instructions; also, in Théodore Stravinsky's watercolor, Auberjonois sketches and drawings for the stage and even in photos of early performances, where percussion instruments can be seen on the floor.

Please join me at PASIC 2024 for my presentation "Histoire du Soldat Revisited: The Original Concept," where I will introduce you to never-before-published information regarding this wonderful percussion part.

David Valdés studied at The Royal Academy of Music in London, where he gained his Postgraduate Diploma in Performance and his LRAM. He was awarded the Princesdom of Asturias Govern-

ment Scholarship three times, was a finalist at the International Keyboard Percussion Competition sponsored by the Yamaha Foundation of Europe, and was runner-up for the Deutsche Bank Pyramid Awards. David plays regularly with symphony orchestras and early music ensembles in Spain, Portugal, France, Poland, Russia, Germany, and the U.K. He has translated into Spanish *Method of Movement for Marimba* (L.H. Stevens) and www.percorch.com. He has published a new critical edition of the percussion part of "Histoire du Soldat" using the original manuscript and sketches as the main sources. David has also published several early 19th-century works for tambourine and fortepiano, together with manuals on historical tambourine techniques. He is the founding member of Les Musiciens Domestiques duo. [PN](#)

DRUMSET

GERGO BORLAI Drumset Clinic The Magic of Spontaneity

Gergo Borlai is a Los Angeles/Barcelona-based professional drummer, composer, and producer originally from Hungary. Gergo took 3rd place in Modern Drummer's "best all-around drummer" in the 2019 poll behind Vinnie Colaiuta and Steve Smith. In 2020, Gergo was nominated for Grammy Awards in two categories for his solo album *The Missing Song*. Besides being a band member and session/studio musician of world renowned productions and with multi Grammy-awarded musicians, Gergo also became a clinician/educator all over the globe. Some of the artists Gergo has performed and recorded with include Al DiMeola, Nguyen Le, Frank Gambale, Guthrie Govan, Gary Willis, Jimmy Haslip, Scott Kinsey, Jeff Lorber, Scott Henderson, Nathan East, Dean Brown, Vinnie Moore, Jeff Beal, Matthew Garrison, Tom Scott, Bob Mintzer, Hiram Bullock, L. Shankar, Tony McAlpine, Vernon Reid, and Terry Bozzio.

JAKE SOMMERS Drumset Clinic/Performance The In's and Out's Of Touring

Jake Sommers and Mat Maxwell are the rhythm section for country artist Luke Combs. Jake studied his craft in New York with some of the greats, including Dom Famularo and John Favicchia. Jake attended University of the Arts, and Mat attended Labette Community College, where they studied music. They've been doing rhythm section clinics together the last three years. Aside from touring they enjoy educating and session work. They focus on the importance of networking, playing to a click, how to get and keep a gig, and the importance of staying healthy mentally and physically on the road.

JAMISON ROSS Drumset Clinic/Performance "Soulmates": The Drummer's Relationship Between Rhythm and Melody

Jamison Ross is a Grammy-winning R&B/soul artist whose music emanates from the intersection of R&B, gospel, and blues, supported by modern production plus contemporary soul. Jamison's previous projects from Affective Music releases have been influenced by some of history's greatest soul singers, including Marvin Gaye, Rance Allen, and Al Green. Jamison attended Florida State University the University of New Orleans, where he earned a Master of Music degree. In 2012, Jamison won the Thelonius Monk (now Herbie Hancock) International Jazz Competition; that led to his debut album *Jamison* (2015), which earned him his first Grammy nomination for Best Jazz Vocal album. In 2019, Jamison and David S. Hargrett founded Affective Music, a soul-music-focused record label and management company dedicated to defining the sound of soul for this era. Jamison achieved a significant milestone in 2023 by winning a Grammy with Snarky Puppy for Best Contemporary Instrumental Album, *Empire Central*.

NIR Z Drumset Clinic Both Sides of the Glass

This session will focus on how to approach a song and understand the recording technique in a studio setting, while bringing your stylistic influences into the session. The clinic will also present a performance and discussion of Nir's experiences as a session drummer, producer, and engineer.

Nir Zidkyahu also known as Nir Z, is a well-established studio-session drummer. Nir resided in New York City for 18 years and has lived in Nashville for the past 13 years, where he has recorded and performed with such artists as John Mayer, Genesis, Chris Cornell, Billy Squier, Alana Davis, Little Steven, Ray Wilson, Blake Shelton, Dan and Shay, and many others. Nir is also busy in his own personal recording studio producing tracks and playing drums and percussion for musicians all over the world. Nir Z was hired by Toontrack to record the drums samples for their virtual drummer program, Superior Drummer, which includes all the new legacy studios 2.0,[1] New York Studios Vol.2 SDX,[2] and New York Studios Vol.3 SDX.

A Complete Timpani Curriculum

Understanding the ideas and skills you need to master this instrument

By Duncan Patton

During the course of my teaching career — 35 years at the Manhattan School of Music — I have had the chance to observe major trends in percussion performance. During the first 15 to 20 years, we saw astonishing progress in keyboard playing. In the past 15 to 20 years, I feel there has been a major improvement in the level of snare drumming, particularly among the top high school players. Sadly, I am still waiting to hear this kind of progress in timpani performance. I have been asking myself what the problem is, and I developed my PASIC 2024 clinic as a way to try to answer that question and hopefully to help move things forward in this area.

No doubt there are practical obstacles to timpani study, especially at the high school level. Few students have easy access to good instruments for practice. The level of teaching is uneven; many very fine percussion teachers are not as knowledgeable or comfortable on timpani as they are on other instruments. Even if a student has a chance to study with a professional timpanist, each one seems to have a different way of playing, and that can make things difficult down the road. I also notice that most teachers seem to

be using books that are 60–80 years old. Keyboard and snare drum repertoire have enjoyed an explosive increase in the variety and quality of material; newer timpani resources have not been adopted as widely.

More importantly, I think timpani, by its nature, presents some unique chal-

lenges that many students have difficulty navigating. The timpani, of course, are drums that produce a definite pitch. Some students get intimidated by having to deal with intonation, but this is a solvable problem, which I will touch on in the clinic. Timpani are also the most resonant drums, with a lengthy sustain to the tone. When we play the timpani, in a sense, we are doing two things: We are drumming, and we are producing tones. The quality of the “drumming” needs to be impeccable, with the same attention to perfect time, evenness and fluidity of hands, and dynamic control that we try to bring to our snare drumming or drumset playing. At the same time, we want to maximize the unique and noble tone of the timpani with every stroke we play. We need to cultivate this tone, because it is the fundamental character of the instrument. But this tone can create a problem as well; every note we play has a resonant duration that can interfere with the clarity of our performance. Playing a four-drum timpani solo can be a little bit like playing four suspended cymbals with soft mallets. We need to manage the sounds we are producing to make them as attractive as possible, but also to allow for the clarity we need.



DUNCAN PATTON

Playing a four-drum timpani solo can be a little bit like playing four suspended cymbals with soft mallets.

SOUND AND TECHNIQUE

Building an effective timpani technique needs to begin with a focus on sound. The student needs to learn to recognize the subtle differences between qualities and types of sounds. Next is developing the basic strokes. First, we want to simply to produce a “good” sound, and then we want to be able to vary that sound in musically useful ways. In my clinic I will go through the components of a good basic stroke; then we will address how to vary the stroke to create more or less “attack” in the sound, and then how to achieve a brighter or darker tone color. The timpani amplify subtle differences in how the drum is struck more than any other drum (at least those played with sticks and mallets). Timpani study can be a window into

the world of touch and sound, which can carry over to work on other instruments.

The development of good basic strokes on timpani is only the beginning. We need to then build a comprehensive technique around these strokes. Too often timpani study skips over the kind of hand development we typically spend years on when studying snare drum. It is useful to spend time on George Stone- or Ted Reed-type exercises using good fundamental timpani strokes. Timpanists like to use alternate sticking in general, because it helps maintain consistency and quality of sound, but there are many times when doubles are useful. Developing even doubles is essential practice as well. It is crucial to do all of your technique work at all dynamic levels. You need to learn,

and then practice, how the hands need to move to consistently produce the ideal sounds from *pp* to *ff*.

THE ROLL

Timpani rolls need to be studied from two points of view. We often say that the purpose of the timpani roll is to produce a sustained tone. It is essential to utilize the most legato touch possible for the individual strokes of the roll. The speed of the roll is coordinated with the vibrations of the head – slower for low pitches, faster for high pitches – in order to maximize the resonance of the particular drum. But it is rare that we actually achieve that ideal of the seamless sustained tone. Typically, the individual strokes of the roll are heard along with the tone. So, we need great

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hands that can produce a satisfying, perfectly even single-stroke roll. And again, practice through the complete dynamic range is obligatory. Crescendo and decrescendo exercises are particularly useful for roll practice.

MOBILITY

After establishing quality strokes and fluid hands, we need to address mobility around the instruments. Playing two, four, or more timpani creates the issue of integrating horizontal movement with our vertical strokes. Exercises and etudes to develop this mobility are important. We don't want our quality sound to go out the window when we start playing rapid passages around the drums. Experts can disagree about the pros and cons of cross-sticking, shifting, and doubling, but we need to build the skills to handle rapid technical passages one way or another.

PEDALING AND INTONATION

Becoming adept and comfortable with pedaling is an essential skill for a timpanist in the 21st century. If the hardest thing you have ever played is the excerpt from Bartok's "Concerto for Orchestra," you are not really prepared for all the contemporary repertoire you will face. Practice on pedaling exercises is needed to develop the feet and the ears, but also to coordinate the hands working well with the feet. Too often I see players whose good hands and sound concept evaporate when they are faced with a challenging pedaling passage. A methodical course of tuning/pedaling exercises is needed to build this skill.

MUFLING

Hand muffling is, of course, a necessary part of timpani technique. There is also an Art to it; muffling need not always be 100%. Often taking out only part of the sound can give you the clarity you need while keeping the beauty of sound in your performance. Studies to focus on muffling are valuable. Many times, I see students compromising the quality of their stroke as the hand comes in for the

muffle. You need to always complete the stroke before the muffle.

PASIC CLINIC

The technical and musical examples for my clinic will be drawn from my book, *The Artist Timpanist*. The book contains carefully constructed exercises to address all of the technical issues I have discussed, etudes to practice all of these skills, and a lengthy set of musical etudes that cover everything. I will include an orchestral excerpt or two to show how these ideas and skills get applied in context.

It is my hope that the clinic can be useful for teachers as well as for students. The idea is to give a big-picture view of what needs to be addressed in timpani study. My observation is that too many students are getting only small pieces of what they really need in their timpani training. I have had a lifelong fascination with the unique and multi-faceted sound of this instrument. Timpani playing is the way for percussionists to delve into and experience the great 18th- and 19th-century orchestral literature. There is nothing quite like being in the middle of a Beethoven or Brahms symphony, or a Wagner or Strauss opera. Finding a way to unlock the full musical magic in these great scores creates an incredible artistic experience. I hope this clinic can help get people excited about pursuing a sophisticated and comprehensive approach to this great instrument.

Duncan Patton was principal timpanist of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra for 33 years. Additionally, he has appeared as a guest timpanist with the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the Orchestra of St. Lukes. He has performed or recorded chamber music with the Met Chamber Ensemble, the Percussionists of the Met Opera, the Metropolitan Opera Brass, Canadian Brass, Empire Brass, Graham Ashton Brass Ensemble, Kiril Gerstein and Ingrid Fliter, and the Manhattan Percussion Ensemble. His articles on timpani performance have been published in *Percussive Notes*.

He is also a composer of works for percussion and mixed ensembles, published by Bachovich Music Publications. Patton is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, and was a student of John Beck, Roland Kohloff, and Richard Albagli. He has been a member of the Manhattan School of Music faculty since 1989. [PN](#)

DRUMSET

ROB MITZNER Virtual Drumset Clinic/ Performance; Workshop Dial in Your Drum Sound to Make the Music Feel Great

Getting a great drum sound is not only about *what* you play, but *how* you play it. Many subtle details go into this, and nailing them can be the difference between an adequate performance and a remarkable one. This clinic will focus on concepts like the beat placement of a groove in live and recording situations (on top vs. behind). It will also focus on managing stage adrenaline (result: rushing), overplaying (result: dragging) and how to create balance between your limbs to make patterns feel good. Getting the right blend within the kit can take your sound to the next level.

Rob Mitzner has recorded for *Billboard* Top-10 charting albums, films, and Broadway shows, and recently appeared on NBC's *Late Night with Seth Meyers* as the guest drummer with the 8G Band. He is the author of *Drumming in a Band: Stuff You Can Use* (Hudson Music) and his credits include over 60 albums across many styles, including jazz, rock, pop, hip-hop, country and R&B. He has served as a guest lecturer at NYU's Clive Davis Institute and Albright College and does masterclasses throughout the country on how to play in a band with other people and make the music feel great. Rob also runs C-Room Studio in Brooklyn where he records tracks and writes articles about music.

Dancing on Steel

By Dr. Jeannine Remy

Dancing on Steel is an original composition for steel band, percussion, and choreographed dance. This musical suite was inspired by folk music from Trinidad and Tobago, and the dances use authentic movements and gestures characteristic of the genres presented. The piece contributes to new music repertoire for steelpan and works as a medium for promoting the country's cultural heritage and the dances associated with it.

This multimovement work is orchestrated for tenor (lead), double tenor, double seconds, cello and/or guitar, tenor bass, and bass. Other percussion instruments include drumset, timpani, and optional auxiliary percussion. Since the parts are idiomatic for the players, it is hoped that others will take up the challenge of performing this work; scores are available from the composer.

HOW IT EMERGED

Dancing on Steel was commissioned by Professor Michael Mizma and the San Jacinto Central Steel Band for its United States premiere in May of 2024. Inspired by Dr. Jeannine Remy's *The Rainmakers* at PASIC 2008, Mizma has been actively engaging composers to create themed works specifically for steel band. The instructions for this commission were to compose six pieces, each of five minutes, which would be choreographed to dance. Given these parameters, I identified and

captured the cultural practices and dances of the twin-island nation of Trinidad and Tobago. Ultimately, I selected the Belair, Jig, Stick Fighting, Bongo, Limbo, and Calypso.

Before beginning to compose, listening to, researching, and comprehending the chosen cultural artifacts' proper authentic structure and meaning was necessary. Accordingly, I studied videos, listened to the folk music of each genre, and examined their drumming patterns; this was essential for capturing the essence of these deeply rooted cultural expressions. It is worth noting that each movement was influenced by its precursor of West African origin and has evolved and was later assimilated into the local cultural milieu.

For a global audience, the work's title had to capture the overall meaning in a

straightforward and uncomplicated way. Next, each movement's name was meticulously chosen to resonate with its cultural ethos and accurately represent the dance style. These titles not only expressed the essence and meaning of the cultural practices, but also had to be understood and acceptable to the local populace. Despite my initial conception of the movement sequence, I ultimately entrusted this to the choreographer's artistic sensibilities.

THE STORYLINE

Once *Dancing on Steel* was composed, the choreographer created a dramatic story inspired by the structure and complex assemblage of compositional components of the musical suite she called "A Folky Love Story." Joanna Charles envisioned a dream scenario where a museum keeper,



DANCING ON STEEL: A MULTI-MOVEMENT WORK FOR STEEL BAND AND CHOREOGRAPHED DANCE INSPIRED BY CULTURAL PRACTICES FROM TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

during his rounds, visits a room housing statues of folk dancers. Soon, his attention is drawn to the beautiful “La Reine Rive” (Queen) statue at the back. She awakens and drapes her foulard (scarf) around his neck as he approaches, putting him in a daze; then, miraculously, the other dancers come alive.

Smitten by the beauty of La Reine Rive, the museum keeper dances the Belair with her. They fall in love and get married at a traditional Tobago wedding, which is captured by the indigenous Tobago Jig. Soon afterward, the situation goes haywire when the groom is sidetracked by other women dancers. A brawl, symbolized by stick fighting, ensues, and the bride dies defending her husband from the diversions of the women-suitors. The Bongo, a funeral dance, follows. It depicts the mourning of the deceased bride and the celebration of her life. She is then symbolically resurrected in the indigenous Limbo dance that follows. The spectacle ends with the traditional Calypso dance, where, due to his vigorous dancing, the museum keeper’s scarf is loosened, and he comes out of the trance, only to realize it is all a dream.

MOVEMENTS

I. Grandiose Affair

This opening movement conveyed the Belair’s grandeur through the music’s rhythmic complexity and emotional intensity, producing highly majestic imagery that was awe-inspiring. Dancers wear full-fabric flare skirts, which are characteristic of this dance’s costume and cultural representation. The opening statement is significant, as it captures the male dancer’s initial impressions. Furthermore, the musical precision and attention to detail embody the essence and ethos of the genre, enabling the dancers to faithfully express the elegance of the style.

The cello introduces the Belair melody. As this movement unwinds, melodic fragments mutate, numerous layered counter-melodies support this motivic development, and quartal harmony is utilized. Notably, this cultural practice involves dis-

tinctive drumming patterns used to transition between sections. Additionally, the drumset player is occasionally required to play on the cymbal bell, mimicking the African bell. Due to the distinctive stylistic components typical of the Belair, certain elements of African drumming were incorporated, such as 2:3 polyrhythms and call-and-response.

II. Celebration, the Wedding

This movement uses elements of the Tobago Jig melody played by the violin (in fiddle fashion) accompanied by the tambrin drum (a frame drum, similar to the Irish bodhran but without the cross bars) with goatskin heads. The music opens with a layered harmonic pyramid privileging open fifths and creating a quasi-hoedown or square dance ambiance. The choreographer decoded this texture through the three-step brush-back dance step, indigenous to Tobago weddings. This movement includes changing duple and compound duple time signatures with shifting accents and hemiolas that mislead the listener into perceiving the pulse differently. “The Celebration” is playful and euphoric, capturing the joy and exuberance of a Tobago wedding. The piece also features rich moments of contrapuntal treatment and sometimes gives the feeling of a round or canon. It concludes with an ostinato, a repetitive cliché jazz bass, with the jig melody juxtaposed on the top.

III. No Retreat No Surrender

Stick fighting developed from a West African martial arts tradition where two combatants armed with sticks (*bois*) battle in a fighting ring called the *gayelle*. This cultural practice is incredibly brutal; the victor is determined by drawing first blood. Each challenger (*bois man*) is motivated by a chantwell, the lead singer, who riles up the fighters. This singer continues the West African tradition of the “griot,” who functioned as a chronicler, commentator, and storyteller. The fighters decipher and act upon the accompanying hypnotic drums that frame the setting. One of the most important is the cutter, whose sound

comes from a highest-pitched African drum. Its complex syncopated rhythms pierce the ensemble’s polyphony. This drum also signals the end of a section. The repeating bass ostinato in this movement adds to the genre’s trance-like quality.

The extended performance techniques utilized, such as striking the skirt and rim of the steelpan, work to create textural and programmatic elements that imaginatively set the tone of the confrontation while conveying significance to its adherents. It represents the soundscape in the ring where the fighters are merciless, ferocious, and unrelenting, with sticks whooshing through the air, aiming to make contact with one’s opponent and deliver the decisive blow. This “sonic zone” is augmented by the musical “war” between the timpani and drumset as they compete in a seemingly continuous call-and-response. Although this movement is physically and emotionally intense, it is extremely fun for everyone to play.

IV. Do So or Dance So

The piece starts with a processional at the wake of the deceased. Usually held at the family home, this ritual begins calmly and ends in a flurry of competitive and frenzied dance. It is a celebration of the departed and for the rejuvenation of life. This Bongo night culminates in a contest in the wee hours of the morning. It becomes a way of saying, “I can do better/dance better,” as each dancer shows off their abilities, seeking to upstage one another.

Correspondingly, the musicians get to make an impression as the theme of the Bongo is tossed around the ensemble from player to player, flaunting their virtuoso abilities. This movement also allows the dancers to showcase their skills in various styles. Structurally, “Do So or Dance So” includes multiple musical genres, including Latin, Castilian, gospel, blues, and waltz. One of this movement’s more complex and challenging parts is the gospel/bluesy/jazz feel set to the folk music “Brown Skinned Girl” in 6/8 time. Furthermore, several metric modulations exist where one note

value equals another from a different time signature. Fittingly capturing the occasion's solemnity, the movement concludes with an augmentation of the opening theme.

V. Bring it Down to the Ground

A short call-and-response melody forms the core of this monothematic movement. Unlike the previous dances, which are through-composed, this one follows a D.C. al Coda structure. It starts, predictably, with tonal harmony, but as the music progresses, consonance gives way to increasing dissonances, signifying the increasing challenge of dancing under a limbo pole that lowers with each attempt. As the music progresses, more blues notes and riffs are added. Meanwhile, the background maintains the undecorated melody of the limbo. This part simulates the "calm before a storm," leading up to the lighting of the limbo stick. Here, the double seconds and cellos produce gradually descending yet increasingly chromatic harmonies, symbolizing the lowering of the pole.

The section, representing an ignited limbo pole, uses mostly augmented chords. The tenor pans perform "flicks" (quick grace notes) that act as sparks to the fire, adding to the energetic bass ostinato. The music becomes more aggressive, shifting gradually to a minor tonality. Then, the cellos and seconds engage in a musical battle with their climbing melodic riffs in groups of four, intensifying the texture of the piece. Cluster chords create a jarring harmonic jolt, intentionally deviating from traditional Western harmony to achieve a percussive dissonance. The piece winds down with a long chromatic scale, trilled in minor seconds, signifying going as low as possible, from which it unexpectedly springs back, leading to the recapitulation.

VI. Calypso Dancing Time

This movement uses a traditional calypso with functional chords, a tuneful melody, and characteristic phrasing. The orchestration is a textbook example of the structure and development of a cliché pan-

orama piece and is suitable for teaching pan arranging. It involves an introduction, verse, chorus, five variations on the verse and chorus, two jams, a minor key variation on the verse and chorus, a recapitulation, and a classical-sounding rhythmic clichéd ending.

The modulations are seamless, first to the subdominant key and then to its relative minor. The first variation of the verse and chorus places the melody in the background pans with a bit of reharmonization as it develops. The piece can be regarded as an exercise in motivic and rhythmic development and features melodic sections for all players to shine. In this final movement, the choreographer incorporated elements of traditional Carnival characters and their associated gestures.

ENCORE

Overall, *Dancing on Steel* has met the test of several performances, receiving standing ovations every time. Audiences in Trinidad and Tobago and the United States were awestruck and reacted exuberantly. The musicians and dancers loved performing the suite and had a great time on stage. It was created for the enjoyment of all!

CREDITS

The music was performed by UWI Arts Steel, led by Jessel Murray and Khion De Las, and the UWI Arts Percussion Ensemble, led by Dr. Jeannine Remy. The dancers are from the UWI Dance Ensemble led by Joanna Charles.

Dr. Jeannine Remy, composer of *Dancing on Steel*, is a Senior Lecturer of Music at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in St. Augustine, Trinidad, where she teaches percussion, steelpan, pan arranging, and steelpan history and development. Dr. Remy is a prolific composer and arranger for the steelpan.

Joanna Charles is a choreographer, professional dancer, and dance instructor at UWI. She previously taught dance at primary and secondary schools and holds de-

grees in both dance and theatre arts. She brings her Caribbean folk, modern, and contemporary dance expertise to this collaboration.

Jessel Murray, the conductor of *Dancing on Steel*, is Head of the Department for the Department of Creative and Festival Arts at UWI and Senior Lecturer. He teaches voice, choir, piano, and choral conducting. **PN**

KEYBOARD

KAI STENSGAARD Virtual Keyboard Clinic/Performance — The Aluphone and the Six-Mallet Grip

This session will cover the unique sound of the Aluphone, which spans the range between the glockenspiel and tubular bells. The Aluphone has now existed for 12 years and is widely used by drum corps, percussion artists, percussion ensembles, symphony orchestras, and more. Many world-renowned composers have written for it. It made its world debut at the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics, where Dame Evelyn Glennie played the Aluphone when the Olympic flame was lit.

Six-mallet grip has become a prevalent technique among many international marimba artists worldwide and is becoming standard among the younger generation of marimba players. Kai Stensgaard's approach to it is based on Stevens Technique. Kai began developing the grip in 1984 and has since written many works for marimba solo.

Kai Stensgaard studied percussion at the Royal Danish Academy of Music and pursued advanced marimba studies in New York City with Leigh Howard Stevens. Kai is internationally recognized as a leading concert marimba artist and award-winning composer. Kai has given concerts and clinics in Europe, the U.S., South America, Taiwan, and Mexico. He is one of the pioneers in six-mallet playing and has composed numerous works for six mallets. He is the author of a method for six-mallet playing called *The Six Mallet Grip* and the marimba method *Advanced Marimba Technique*. In 2012, he and engineer Michael Hansen invented a completely new mallet instrument called the Aluphone.

Solo Ideas for Timbales, Bongos, and Congas

Victor Rendón, Wilson “Chembo” Corniel, Yasuyo Kimura

By Victor Rendón

Beginners on timbales sometimes sound too much like drumset players playing timbales. This is usually due to a lack of understanding of the stylistic language, touch, and a premature flash of technique in the wrong places. While I was directing the Latin Jazz Ensemble at Lehman College one day, the drumset player decided to play timbales on one tune. He hit a rimshot. Rather than producing a good ringing tone, it sounded more like a “thud.” I yelled out, “You sound

like a drummer!” He yelled back, “I *am* a drummer!” What I was getting at is that a player will play the way that he or she hears it in their mind. One must have a good mental image of how to approach the instrument in order to get the appropriate sounds.

Any good jazz drummer has spent countless hours listening to the timekeeping and solo ideas of such drummers as Warren “Baby” Dodds, “Papa” Jo Jones, Art Blakey, Max Roach, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, and so on. The same holds true for Latin



VICTOR RENDÓN, WILSON “CHEMBO” CORNIEL, YASUYO KIMURA

percussion instruments. In order to truly become proficient and knowledgeable on these instruments, one must study their legacy.

A good starting point for the study of Latin percussion (bongos, congas, timbales) solos are the so called “old school” players. Their style is relatively simple and easy to understand. Yet, their approach is very melodic and has a lot of soul and swing. As the old saying goes: “No rolls, just butter” vs “All rolls, no butter.”

You can clearly hear the clave direction in many of their figures. Listening to how they phrase and structure their solos will give you the vocabulary and touch from which to build on. That is our ultimate goal. There are too many players to mention. Some of the players mentioned below are not percussion “household” names. However, they should be sought out as essential listening. Most of them were/are also proficient on all instruments.

Bongos: Antolin “Papa Kila” Suárez, Rogelio Iglesias “Yeyito,” John “Dandy” Rodriguez, William Correa aka Willie Bobo, José Mangual Sr. and Jr., Ray Romero.

Congas: Federico Aristides Soto Alejo aka Tata Güines, Cándido Camero Guerra, Ramón “Mongo” Santamaria Rodriguez, Tommy Lopez, Ray Barretto.

Timbales: Osvaldo “Chihuahua” Martinez, Papi Pagani, Raymond Muñoz Rodriguez aka Monchito, Ray Mantilla, Ray Romero, Manny Oquendo, continuing with Tito Puente, Willie Bobo, Guillermo Barreto, Nicky Marrero, Orestes Vilató, and José Luis Quintana aka Changuito, into the present.

PHRASING

Solos should be approached from a musical standpoint. Randomly hitting notes will not give you the organization and continuity necessary for a logical musical statement. Latin-style solos are often played to a two- or four-bar montuno phrase. That makes it easier for the soloist to think in two- and four-bar phrases and build on them to develop longer solos.

One of the easiest ways to learn solos is to start with one-bar phrases. The one-bar phrases in the next section are taken from *The Art of Playing Timbales*. They were written for timbales but can be applied to other instruments as well. They work well as a repeated phrase.

All accents can be played as a rimshot along with the suggested sticking. Start by playing four measures of time at a comfortable tempo and then play the one-bar phrase four times. Return to playing time and repeat the process for each example. Memorize the examples and experiment with different sounds and stickings for each. This will help in developing stock phrases or “licks” that will serve as a base foundation that you can always fall back on if you need it.

These phrases were not arbitrarily written. They are taken from various solo transcriptions and notes of several timbaleros. Many of them are traditional “licks” that are played by many players. You’ll find many of the phrases throughout transcrip-

tions and recordings. You’ll also find that some of the phrases are rhythmically the same but voiced on different surfaces. This was purposely done so that one can start seeing how one pattern can be used in a number of ways.

Some figures may seem too easy and simple. Keep in mind that these phrases were taken from actual recordings. They were chosen for their melodic content rather than technique display. Each phrase has a melody of its own that makes it stand out. Spend some time reading the passages and singing the melodic riffs to yourself so that they eventually become ingrained in your mind.

PLAYING SOLOS AND FIGURES IN CLAVE

Soloing in clave is important. Often, if you keep the clave in mind and you listen to the rest of the rhythm section while you are playing, the figures will come out “in clave” automatically. Clave sense is something that develops from listening and playing experience. However, there are some basic guidelines that will help you know if something is in the correct clave. Here are some examples of figures in 2-3 clave. Notice how some of the clave beats meet with the figures. There is also a natural tendency to play more downbeats on the “2” side of the clave and more upbeats on the “3” side of the clave.

2-3 clave

BONGOS

The basic pattern for the bongos is the *martillo* played in straight eighth notes. Variations or riffs called *repiques* are then played according to the “feel” of the music. These riffs are also played in clave. At PASIC, Yasuyo Kimura will present various “repique” patterns in 2-3 and 3-2 clave, demonstrating how they can be developed into longer phrases. The first example shows the *martillo* followed by four common *repiques* played by bongoceros. Examples are in 2-3 clave.

Key: T = tips of fingers TH = side of thumb O = open tone on the low drum

Martillo

Repique riffs in 2-3 clave

CONGAS/TUMBADORAS

Wilson “Chembo” Corniel will discuss and demonstrate various conga solo techniques that he has learned and used throughout his experience in the New York City scene. Many of these ideas come from renowned players. “Quinto” rumba riffs will also be discussed and demonstrated as in the following.

3-2 Rumba Clave

All these ideas will be covered and elaborated on at the clinic. It may be helpful to bring a print copy of this article or have your copy of *Percussive Notes* open on whatever device you use for the online edition so that you can refer to the various music examples.

Text and music excerpts used by permission of Music in Motion Films.

The Art of Playing Timbales by Victor Rendón

The Art of Playing Tumbadoras/Congas by Wilson “Chembo” Corniel and Victor Rendón

Victor Rendón is a New York City percussionist/educator/composer/arranger who has released seven CDs as a leader and has worked with Mongo Santamaria, Chico O’Farrill, Carlos “Patato” Valdés, Ray Santos, Grupo Caribe, The Latin Jazz Coalition, The “New” Xavier Cugat Orchestra, Los Más Valientes, Grupo Latin Vibe, Rudy Calzado’s Cubarama, and many others. He is author of *The Art of Playing Timbales* published by Music in Motion Films. Rendón, who holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the

University of North Texas and a master's degree in education from Hunter College (NYC), has had a lengthy career teaching instrumental music and Latin percussion in the New York City Public Schools. Victor currently performs with his group, Bronx

Conexión Latin Jazz Big Band, and is an adjunct professor at Lehman College in the Bronx, where he teaches percussion, leads the percussion ensemble, and directs the Lehman Latin Jazz Ensemble. **PN**

WORLD

HÉCTOR TASCÓN AND LAURA STEPHANY COHEN **World Performance: Afro-Colombian Marimba Music Transformed: Sounds of Chonta**

Héctor Tascón, born in Cali, Colombia, has focused his work on the study of percussion and on the traditional music of the South Pacific region of Colombia. The marimbas, currulao rhythm, traditional Colombian legends, and Afro-Colombian dances are at the center of his interests as an artist and researcher. He has won first place in several competitions, including best marimba de chonta player in the 2023 International Music Festival Petronio Álvarez, the Mono Núñez Festival, and the Filarmónica del Valle competition. Héctor has written several method books including: *A Marimbear: oio method to play the marimba de chonta*, *Qué te pasa' vo*, and *Colombia music for symphonic marimba*. Héctor is chair of percussion at the Conservatorio Antonio María Valencia.

Laura Stephany Cohen is a Latin/classical percussionist and multi-instrumentalist from Cali, Colombia. She completed her Bachelor of Music and master's degrees in percussion performance at Eastern Illinois University and the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music respectively. Stephany served as Associate Instructor while at Indiana University, where she taught private percussion lessons and assisted teaching the Afro-Cuban and Brazilian ensembles. Stephany enjoys performing in diverse Latin American, Latin jazz, and fusion groups, specializing in creating a variety of Latin multi-percussion setups for different occasions. Growing up in Cali exposed her to salsa music and the traditional rhythms of this region. As a member of the PAS World Percussion Committee, she looks to spread awareness of the cultural and historical importance Latin American traditions deserve.

JONATHAN SCALES **World Daytime Showcase Concert : Jonathan Scales** **Fourchestra – Live at PASIC**

This will be a live performance by Jonathan Scales Fourchestra featuring Maison Guidry on drums, E'Lon JD on bass, and Jonathan Scales on steel pan. Jonathan Scales Fourchestra is tough to describe. Veering from in-your-face, jaw-dropping chops and passion to quiet moments when you hold your breath to take in a soundscape of solitude, the power trio of electric bass, drums, and steel pans combines elements of jazz, classical, and progressive rock, peppered with Latin rhythms and soulful outbursts of funk. From club and festival stages across North America and Europe, and tours of Africa, Southeast and Central Asia as a Cultural Ambassador for the U.S. Department of State, to their NPR Tiny Desk Concert featuring Béla Fleck, the Fourchestra's live shows make even the most jaded listeners forget where they are – even if just for a moment.

M'BEMBA BANGOURA **World Clinic/Performance: Sounds and Technique of the** **Djembe in Guinea, West Africa**

Master Drummer M'bemba Bangoura (Wula Drum) will demonstrate the sounds, techniques and traditional rhythms on the djembe from his homeland of Guinea, West Africa. Excerpts will be from a variety of time signatures, tempos, and level of complexity. Bangoura will be supported by a small group of drummers to show how the djembe accompaniment parts, the dundun, and solo patterns all fit together. He will also demonstrate the virtuosity of his solos phrases, which make him a true master drummer.

M'Bemba Bangoura has traveled the world as a performer and teacher of the djembe, for which he is revered for his high level of mastery. A native of Guinea, West Africa, M'Bemba began playing the djembe at age seven. By the age of 21, he was an acclaimed drummer and was invited to play for Ballet Djoliba, the national company of Guinea. Since moving to the U.S. in 1992, M'Bemba has been an integral part of the drum and dance scene nationwide. He has taught hundreds of students, many of whom are now teachers themselves. In addition, he has personally created choreography and developed repertoire for dozens of dance companies worldwide. He has recorded four solo albums and an educational project called *Wamato: Everybody Look!* M'bemba is the artistic director of Wula Drum and continues to create repertoire for the group, teaching and performing worldwide.

OTHNELL MOYO **World Clinic/Performance: Music of Zimbabwe**

Othnell Moyo will present the music of his ancestors from his native country, Zimbabwe. He is a multi instrumentalist and vocalist who is amongst the few remaining guardians of Zimbabwean Ancient musical culture and spirituality. His work follows the minority who approach the ancient musical instruments as instruments that evoke the spirits and are used for ancestral worship and Zimbabwean ancient spirituality. Since Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, the music has slowly been reanimated and rediscovered. However, highly spiritual instruments such as the mbira have been made to fit in modern contexts

Othnell Moyo, also known as "Mangoma" (freely translated as "Drums in Shona and the one with Music in IsiNdebele") is a multi-talented, internationally touring artist and an ethnomusicological researcher and preservation activist, deeply rooted in Zimbabwean culture, who makes 75% of the instruments he plays himself. He was trained as a traditional dancer, actor, and musician and has since studied and acquired detailed knowledge of a vast range of local traditional instruments, musical styles, and rhythms as well as global and contemporary ones. He plays and performs with the diversity of his skills while advocating for the significance of education and preservation around his country's rich cultural history.

SALAR NADER **SAUNGWEME (THE SOUND OF THE BEES)** **World Clinic/Performance: Current Trends in Tabla and the** **Music of Central & South Asia**

Tabla virtuoso Salar Nader is recognized as a global ambassador, weaving South Asian arts into the musical traditions of his Afghanistan heritage. A percussionist, composer, and producer, Salar has studied under Ustad Zakir Hussain since the age of seven. He has toured widely with Stanley Clarke, Kronos Quartet, Wu Man, Miles From India; Central Asian master musicians Homayoun Sakhi and Abbos Kosimov; and legendary Indian classical musicians including Ustad Zakir Hussain, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Selva Ganesh, Alam Khan, Rahul Sharma and many others. Salar is committed to bringing the tabla to a wide audience. In 2019, he founded the Salar Nader Tabla Foundation, globally preserving Afghan cultural traditions through instruments and mentor scholarships, supported by Rhea Designs Inc. His discography includes *Live in San Francisco Volume I*, *The Forgotten Empress*, *In the Footsteps of Babur: Musical Encounters from the Lands of the Mughals*, and his collaborations with Grand Tapestry.

Famoro Dioubate and the Bala from Guinea, West Africa

By Michael Markus

The balafon, a West African xylophone, is a very old instrument dating back more than 800 years. First made in the times of the Original Mande region of West Africa (present-day Guinea, Gambia, Senegal, Guinea Bissau, and Mali), the Susu (Sosso) bala is played primarily in Guinea and considered the first instrument of the Mande Jeli (“Griot” in French). The Griot are the oral historians for the culture, responsible for knowing the history, lineage, and traditions of each family name within the country. This is why the Griot is respected and called upon by all for important occasions, celebrations, and holidays. The Griot are the keepers of the history and culture. Traditionally, the repertoire of the bala from Guinea is vast, containing hundreds of songs and folklore. Although anyone can learn to play the bala, to be a Griot, one must be born into it.

Handmade from Hare Wood, a very dense hardwood found in Guinea, West Africa, the bars are smoked and cured, then cut and shaved (similar to that of the marimba) in order to obtain their pitch and durability. The balafon is amplified by small gourds underneath the keys, and traditionally have small layers of pressed spider webs over holes to create a unique buzzing sound (although now plastic and paper can be used). This gives more resonance and sustain to the music.

The bala has 21 notes and uses a seven-note scale with bars tied to a bamboo frame. Traditionally, each village will have its own tuning; however, in more modern times, people in cities are using more major Western scales, like D, C, or G Major. This allows them to travel and play with other musicians as well as other instruments such as guitar, piano, electric bands, etc. While the bala can be played in any ensemble configuration, it is traditionally found in an ensemble with three to four other bala players plus a dundun (bass drum) and djembe to help give rhythm



FAMORO DIOUBATE

foundation to the music. One can also see singers, the African flute, and the Kora (21-string Africa Harp) in the ensemble.

Professional players use a variety of techniques, including press tones, extreme rhythmic independence, dexterity, and stick control to produce a vast array of sounds. Although it looks like a simple keyboard, the bala takes years of training. When compared to a piano or marimba, which has accidentals on a separate manual, the balafon has all bars on the same manual, so it is easy to become lost when moving around the instrument.

Famoro Dioubate was born in 1965 in Conakry, Guinea as a Griot, and is the grandson of El Hadj Djelli Sory Kouyate, a living legend of the Mandeng balafon. Famoro was the understudy of his grandfather in the Ensemble Instrumental National (National ensemble of Guinea) and routinely performed for the President and visiting foreign dignitaries, as well as a multitude of musical engagements and collaboration. He was a member of the famous Mory Kante's orchestra for the performances and recording of the "Traditional Symphonie."

In addition, Famoro is a traditional musician, steeped in the folklore, and he plays more modern music, collaborating with musicians from all over the world. He composes, arranges, produces, and records for others as well as his own projects. Living in New York City since the late 1990s, Famoro is in high demand as a free-lance musician, playing everywhere from nightclubs to Carnegie Hall.

Famoro will give a clinic at PASIC 2024 joined by other Wula Drum artists, including Master Drummer M'bemba Bangoura, Fara Camara, and Michael Markus. During the clinic, Famoro will play traditional music from Guinea, demonstrate and explain the unique techniques used, the basics of the instrument and nuances for learning it, as well as the rich vast variety of songs and rhythms applied. Please join us! [PN](#)

KEYBOARD

STEVE SHAPIRO Keyboard Clinic/Performance — Studio Tips and Techniques for Mallet Players

This clinic will cover all the bases when it comes to what mallet players might need to know when entering the studio. Topics will include playing techniques, session do's and don'ts, gear and mallet tips, mics, mixing, audio processing, and some revealing stories from the sessions of some well-known recordings (with listening). Steve has decades of professional experience as a session mallet player and a producer. He's worked with some of the best recording engineers in the business and has expert knowledge of the technical aspects of recording and mixing.

Steve Shapiro is a veteran New York City studio vibraphonist and composer. He has recorded with such artists as Steely Dan, Ornette Coleman, Phil Collins, Spyro Gyra, Whitney Houston, They Might Be Giants, Pat Martino, and many others. An accomplished producer/arranger, his work has appeared in hundreds of high-profile projects for television, film, and Disney. Steve has been a pioneer using audio and MIDI technology with the vibraphone since the 1980s, and has developed a unique voice inspired by contemporary electric keyboards. He has released seven recordings as a leader.

WORLD

SAMUEL TORRES World Clinic — Hands of Fire: Igniting Latin Percussion Dynamics and Control

The clinic will delve into understanding the unique rhythmic structures found in various Latin American traditions. This might involve exploring clave patterns, polyrhythms, and specific rhythmic feels associated with Latin Jazz. You'll learn how to use percussion as a bridge to connect different musical styles. This could involve incorporating traditional Latin American rhythms into other genres or vice versa, fostering a sense of fusion and creative exploration. An important aspect of the clinic will be about developing your own unique voice as a percussionist. This might involve learning how to improvise within the framework of these traditions, exploring personal interpretations of rhythms, and developing narrative skills to build your own percussion solos.

Originally from Bogotá (Colombia), and based in Brooklyn, N.Y., Latin Grammy Award-winning percussionist and composer Samuel Torres thrives at the intersection of Afro-Latin rhythms, Latin jazz, and contemporary classical music. Torres has performed, arranged, produced, and/or recorded with the "who's who" of the jazz, Latin pop, and salsa world, including such luminaries as Tito Puente, Arturo Sandoval, Cecile McLorin Salvant, Wynton Marsalis and the JALC Orchestra, Paquito D'Rivera, Yo-Yo Ma, Chick Corea, Alejandro Sanz, Ricky Martin, Richard Bona, Lila Downs, Angélique Kidjo, Marc Anthony, Rubén Blades, and Shakira. Torres won the Latin Grammy Award for the Best Classical Record in 2019 with his album *Regreso*, a concerto for congas and symphony orchestra. He is a three-time recipient of the New Jazz Works Grant by Chamber Music America. Torres also received 2nd place at the Thelonious Monk Jazz Hand Percussion Competition in 2000.

EXPERIENTIAL WELLNESS

ANDEW VEIT Experiential Wellness (Recreational Drumming and Health) Clinic — Enhancing the Collegiate Percussion Experience by Integrating Music Technology, Electronics, and Amplification Education into the Applied Percussion Curriculum

This session will explore pedagogical techniques of adapting audio technology into collegiate percussion lessons. Recording and amplification knowledge has become a required skillset for the percussion teacher at almost every level of education. This clinic will explore methods on how to instruct students on basic audio techniques while also supporting traditional percussion skills.

Dr. Andrew Veit is a composer, performer, clinician, and adjudicator. He is Director of Percussion Studies at the University of Texas, Permian Basin. He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Iowa. He has served as the visiting Principal Percussionist with the West Texas Symphony Orchestra and has performed with the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra, the Fox Valley Orchestra, and the Kaiju Crescendo Symphony. Dr. Veit has also appeared internationally as a soloist and ensemble member of Clocks in Motion and Heartland Marimba Quartet. Presently, he performs and records with his duo, the Veit/Jones Project, which won first prize in the Southern California Marimba International Artist Competition Open Duo division. Previously, Dr. Veit was Adjunct Professor of Percussion at Grayson College in Denison, Texas, and Director of Marching Percussion at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois.

New Percussion Literature and Recordings

Publishers who are PAS Corporate Members and individual PAS members who self-publish are invited to submit materials to *Percussive Notes* to be considered for review. Selection of reviewers is the sole responsibility of the Review Editor of *Percussive Notes*. Comments about the works do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Percussive Arts Society. Prior to submitting material for review, please read the submission guidelines at www.pas.org under Publications. Follow the appropriate procedures to ensure your material will be considered for review.

Difficulty Rating Scale

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



KEYBOARD PERCUSSION SOLO

Étude, op.8, no. 2 V
 Alexander Scriabin
 Arr. Pablo Blanco Cordero
 \$17.95

HoneyRock Publishing
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: [score sample](#), [video recording](#)

From the outset, it's clear that this arrangement is a tour-de-force. It retains the spirit of the original while expressing its nature in a way

only a marimba can do. The virtuosic character of this etude presents a great challenge for the performer, and yet it is not merely a drill; rather, it is a delight to listen to and behold as an audience member.

Practically the entire range of the marimba is represented here. The original piece, for piano, is a workout for the left-hand accompaniment, while the right hand sings overtop. The right-hand part is reminiscent of a sung aria with orchestral accompaniment in the left. And, indeed, Pablo Blanco Cordero's version is just that, but with added difficulty: four mallets instead of ten fingers.

The sound of this arrangement is remarkable. The original piano piece is quite stormy, with a dreamy interlude; it is passionate and nonstop. So too is this arrangement, which requires professional dexterity along with an artistic touch. Oftentimes it is a struggle to make these essential skills live alongside one another; perhaps that is the point of the etude: physical difficulty matched with musical sensitivity.

This piece would be perfect as a capstone performance for higher education or for a professional presentation. It pushes some of the physical and musical limitations that we have as marimbists. Kudos to Cordero for making a solo piece sound like a duet. Truly amazing. Those who are up for the challenge will be massively rewarded in their journey through this etude.

—Cassie Bunting

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION DUO

Framework 2 IV-V
 Anders Åstrand and Daniel Berg
 €30.00

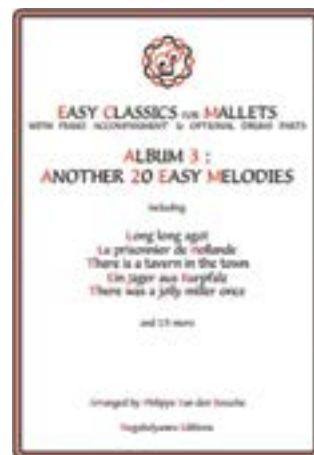
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation (2 players): 5-octave marimba, vibraphone
Web: [score sample](#), [audio and video recordings](#)

Framework 2 by Anders Åstrand and Daniel Berg is a collection of six works from their album of the same name. The works are "crossover songs from jazz standards to folk songs with an open form for vibraphone and marimba" and offer the players options for making their own version of the works as well as improvisation opportunities in each piece. It reminds me a lot of the works of Double Vision (Dave Samuels and David Friedman), though accessible to more players.

This collection fills a need in classical percussion repertoire and bridges the gap between fully composed music and music one can improvise over. Åstrand and Berg have provided something that seasoned improvisers can utilize right away, and that allows performers new to soloing over a form to dip a toe into unfamiliar waters, so to speak. The score can be played as written, but players are encouraged to play with the form (suggestions are given), improvise a specific line, and generally be more free. The score has all applicable chord changes, and it comes with QR codes with which to access your audio streaming platform of choice to start listening to recordings right away.

I highly recommend *Framework 2* for any players looking to do more structured improvisation, as well as seasoned jazz players.

—Joe Millea



KEYBOARD PERCUSSION SOLO WITH ACCOMPANIMENT

Easy Classics for Mallets Album 3:
Another 20 Easy Melodies II-III
 Philippe Van den Bossche
 \$19.00

Nogabelyanos Editions
Instrumentation (soloist and 2 players): practice xylophone or bell kit, optional piano, optional drumset

This collection solves the problem of having level-appropriate repertoire for a beginner on a practice instrument, which is also engaging to play by having piano accompaniment and

optional drum parts. Each piece is written for an intermediate beginner and can be played on a practice xylophone or bell kit. The pieces use different time signatures and key signatures with some including sticking notation.

Each piece is an arrangement and comes with a description and its origins in four languages. This gives the player context for musical decision making as well as a little bit of music history. The only drawback is that the mallet parts are not printed on their own but have to be read off of either the piano accompaniment or drum accompaniment pages. This can be difficult for young players who aren't accustomed to score reading, and while that is a useful skill to develop, it may cause frustration for a beginner still working on the notes.

Each of the melodies is about the same skill level, so this book would work equally well as accessible material for beginning mallet players and as sight-reading material for more experienced players. It is also a wonderful opportunity for teachers and students to play together, and for a mallet and drum student to play short duets. *Easy Classics for Mallets* would make a useful addition to a teaching library or for a hobbyist wanting fun tunes to play with musical friends and family members.

—Marilyn K. Clark Silva

4's Company Album 8: Tetragrip III-IV

Philippe Van den Bossche
\$16.00

Nogabelyanos Editions

Instrumentation (soloist and 3 players): marimba, xylophone, or vibraphone, 1 metal sound (long), 1 wood sound (short), and 1 skin sound (long)

Web: [score samples](#)

Published in 2023, the 4's Company series is a set of 10 collections meant to showcase a soloist without the pressure of performing alone. There are two collections each for snare drum, drumset, two-mallet keyboard, four-mallet keyboard, and timpani. Each piece within these collections has a three-piece percussion section as accompaniment. *Album 8: Tetragrip* contains eight medium-difficulty pieces for four-mallet soloist with accompaniment.

The composer does not wish to be too specific when assigning instruments for any of these pieces. The soloist can perform on marimba, xylophone, or vibraphone. The suggestion for assigning percussion instruments is to use a long metal sound, a short wooden sound, and a long skin sound. That gives the performers many options!

The keyboard parts are intelligently written to incorporate multiple techniques in each piece, not just focus on one type of stroke, which is very easy to do with etude books. There are many opportunities to practice dynamic shifts, phrasing, rolls, and dead strokes. Some keyboard parts are more involved than others, but they are all around a medium difficulty.

The individual percussion accompaniment parts are not too involved; however, the challenge for the percussion trio will be putting all of the parts together. There are many staggered entrances, offset notes, syncopation, etc. Therefore, the

percussionists should not feel like they are there simply to support the soloist.

This collection could be a great addition to you or your students' repertoire. This is especially true if you have students who are having anxiety about performing on their own. Perhaps the best part of this collection is having the choice of soloing on many different percussion instruments. Very smart!

—Ben Cantrell

Ragtime Classics for Mallets, Album 3:

Miscellaneous Masters III

Various

Arr. Philippe Van den Bossche

\$19.00

Nogabelyanos Editions

Instrumentation (2-3 players): unspecified keyboard percussion instrument, piano, optional drumset

Ragtime Classics for Mallets, Album 3 includes Philippe Van den Bossche's versions of eight ragtime tunes arranged for unspecified solo mallet instrument (treble clef), piano, and optional drumset. Included for each piece are the piano score, solo mallet instrument part, and a fully notated drum part. The inclusion of drum parts is appreciated since, while many players perform ragtime accompaniments by ear or referencing the solo part, those less familiar with the tune or genre will surely find them helpful.

This "album" is the third of four published in this series and bears the subtitle "Miscellaneous Masters." While the other three all feature the music of Scott Joplin, this one includes eight composers, including Charles L. Johnson ("Dill Pickles"), Tom Turpin ("The St. Louis Rag"), and George Botsford ("Black and White Rag").

Neither the solo nor the accompaniment parts are particularly challenging, with the solo parts also only utilizing a range of about 2.5 octaves maximum. This collection would be great for a ragtime enthusiast looking to branch out, and it is appropriate for university, high school, and advanced middle-school students to explore.

—Marco Schirripa

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Caged IV

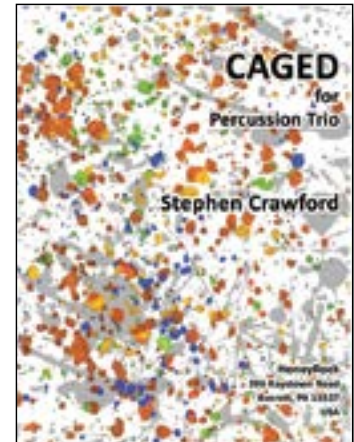
Stephen Crawford

\$24.95

HoneyRock Publishing

Instrumentation (3 players): vibraphone, 4.3-octave marimba, 4.6-octave marimba

Stephen Crawford has composed a piece for keyboard percussion trio using techniques reminiscent of American composer John Cage. Rather than being simply a derivative "homage" composition, in which performers would likely be better off going directly to Cage's works themselves, Crawford uses some of Cage's hallmark creative approaches to assemble an original work. The most notable of these is the use of chance operations to



select pitch sets for each part, with the composer using a six-sided die (in lieu of the usual Cage-ian I Ching method) to select six-note sets.

The piece is set in a through-composed form with sections alternating between unison, hocketed, and chorale-style writing. Each player is given a section in which to improvise. While not a tonal work, the use of repetitive groupings of pitches throughout enables a sense (perhaps subconsciously) of familiarity for the listener that might be less so if free atonality were used. Ironically, the piece ends on a G-flat minor-9 chord that sounds surprisingly cadential!

All parts are playable with two mallets; however, the assignment of chance-selected pitches to some of the rhythms will necessitate experimentation with stickings on the part of the performers, as they might not be immediately apparent or idiomatic, but certainly playable with a little preparation.

—Jason Baker

SNARE DRUM SOLO

20 Modern Snare Drum Solos: A Rhythmic Journey IV-V

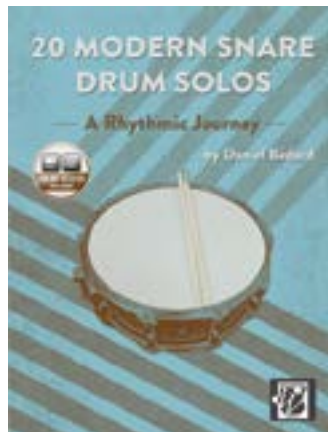
Daniel Bédard

\$19.99

Wizdom Media/Alfred Publishing

Web: [sample pages](#)

This collection of 20 snare drum solos covers various rhythmic ideas including rudiments, polyrhythms, odd times, various tempos, and applications for drumset. Opening with a 41-measure rudimental snare drum solo in 4/4 titled "A Walk in the Park," the collection sets the standard high for the performer with a clear explanation of the solo's structure, with the composer's rationale of seven distinct sections combining seven-stroke rolls, pataflafla, and Swiss Army triplets, among others. Marked at a tempo of quarter-note equals 90, the student performer would be wise to slow the tempo slightly in order to achieve the accents with the marked stickings.



The second solo, “Dragonfly,” has the performer working through variations of ternary rhythms, notated in 12/8 throughout this 40-measure composition. The third solo, “Diddle Doggy Bag,” has the performer working paradiddles and associated paradiddle variations. Set in 3/4 throughout its 56 measures, the fourth solo, titled “Not a Waltz – per se,” explores the tasteful variations of six subsections, providing a unique solo experience.

Solos 5 through 20 are equally delightful variations upon one or more rudiments and their associated accentuated patterns, providing diversity and challenges in their compositional approaches. One solo that begins to bridge Bédard’s solos to his drumset applications is “Tony, Steve and Vinnie,” dedicated to Tony Williams, Steve Gadd, and Vinnie Colaiuta. It is in 7/8 and covers the vocabularies of these three performers using paradiddles and various three-note groupings.

The second section of the book, “Applications on the Drumset,” adds the bass drum and hi-hat. Bédard connects this section to several of his snare drum solos in the first section, such as “A Walk in the Park,” “Dragonfly,” and “Tony, Steve and Vinnie.” This provides a logical extension and conclusion to his musical journey.

20 Modern Snare Drum Solos – A Rhythmic Journey is a very useful and challenging publication that could be very practical for instruction on snare drum rudiments and their application on drumset. Audio download access for this book is available upon purchase.

–Jim Lambert

METHOD BOOK FOR MULTIPLE INSTRUMENTS

Edumanus Album 1: Percustart II

Phillipe Van den Bossche

\$19.00

Nogabelyanos Editions

Instrumentation: snare drum, drumset, marimba, vibraphone, timpani, congas

Album 1: Percustart is a broad survey course for beginners, covering snare drum, drumset, marimba, vibraphone, timpani, and congas. In each section, the author focuses on a different instrument, offering basic exercises and warmups coupled with a short solo or etude. The exercises give a cursory introduction to the techniques used in the etudes, and each chapter contains two etudes of increasing difficulty.

The snare drum chapter includes exercises that quickly move through alternating strokes, buzz rolls, flams, and three- and four-stroke ruffs. Sticking is indicated through the French system of open and closed squares (for right and left hand, respectively). This could be a good method of acclimating students to this notation system, which is used in many famous snare drum solos and etude books (e.g., *Douze Etudes* by Jacques Delecluse and *Snare System* by Frederic Macarez). The two solos are of varying difficulty levels, with the first utilizing only single strokes and buzz rolls, while the second incorporates flams, three- and four-stroke ruffs, meter changes, and metric modulation.

Two chapters are dedicated to mallets, the first with two-mallet exercises and the second with four-mallet exercises. In the two-mallet chapter, the exercises progress rapidly from short scalar passages to double-stop rolls. Sticking choices are designated in the etudes just as they had been in the snare exercises. The four-mallet chapter moves through the several main stroke types (double vertical, single independent, single alternating, and double lateral) as well as pedaling and dampening. The solos are again of tiered difficulty in both chapters and can fit easily on a 4.3-octave marimba.

The drumset chapter has exercises leading up to two etudes. The first is a basic rock groove with a few moments of open solo, while the second solo is much more difficult, utilizing the techniques introduced in the second level of exercises (open and closed hi-hat, linear-style writing, offbeat hi-hat patterns, etc.). Both solos and exercises incorporate improvisation, which is something often missing from beginning drumset books.

The timpani chapter is the most demanding. The first round of exercises, all with sticking patterns written out, move through basic alternating patterns into muffling and metered roll exercises. The first etude has a wide range of dynamics and tempo changes, with quick rhythmic passages and rolls. The second set of exercises and etude are much more challenging, incorporating tuning changes, quick shifts around the drums, fast dampening passages, polyrhythms, and metric modulations.

The conga chapter introduces the basic strokes: heel/toe, bass, open, and slap. The exercises take the player through a wide variety of combinations of these strokes, developing each individually before testing the player’s transitions between sounds. As the exercises get more difficult, the author also incorporates a second conga. All exercises are clearly marked with the stroke type and which hand to use. There is only one etude in this chapter, in which the author crafts a solo around basic conga patterns in both straight Latin and swing styles.

While labeled as introductory level by the author, this collection would be better suited to an advanced high school student or beginning college student. The etudes are more challenging than the exercises, and the second etude in each chapter is significantly more challenging than the first. As the author suggests, though, this is not meant to be a comprehensive method book and should be paired with other instructional materials. With that in mind, it’s a lovely survey of a variety of different instruments. Each chapter has a little nugget of technical/maintenance trivia for the corresponding instrument – pictures of baroque timpani, a comparison of register for different keyboard instruments, diagrams of where to strike

cymbals, and a lug tuning scheme for snare drum.

–Hannah Weaver



DRUMSET

Drum Kit Exam Pieces from 2024

Grade In (Initial), Grades 1–8 II–V

Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

\$16.58 – \$21.70

Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

This series of graded books is used for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) music exams. The material focuses on drumset performance within a range of styles, including rock, pop, jazz, hip-hop, funk, reggae, Afrobeat, fusion, heavy metal, progressive rock, and drum’n’bass. The books feature a mix of original tunes and covers of hit songs.

There are nine books in the series. The first book is unnumbered. In place of a number, there is the abbreviation “In” for “initial.” This book includes songs and solos that mainly utilize quarter and eighth notes. While the material is basic, the book features popular songs such as Queen’s “We Will Rock You” and Twenty One Pilots’ “Stressed Out.”

The main books are numbered from grade one through eight. Grade One features songs such as “Hard to Say I’m Sorry” by Chicago and “Ball and Biscuit” by The White Stripes. While this book also uses quarter and eighth notes, sixteenth notes are sometimes incorporated into fills. Grade Two includes “Baba O’Reilly” by The Who and “Cold Heart” (remix) by Elton John with Dua Lipa. This book includes flams, cross-stick hits, open-hi-hat notes, and improvised drum fills.

In Grade 3, the drummer will start to see sixteenth notes on the hi-hat as well as shuffles (notated as swung eighth notes). Dotted eighth/sixteenth-note combinations are also featured throughout the book. Songs include “Come As You Are” by Nirvana and “Wake Me Up When September Ends” by Green Day. Grade 4 challenges the drummer with a Bo Diddley-style feel and a jazz waltz (with brushes). The book features longer drum solos and solos played over simple band hits. A highlight of this book is a version of “Give It Away Now” by the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Grade 5 features sixteenth- and eighth-note interplay between the snare and bass drum. There are a few thirty-second notes interspersed throughout the songs. This book includes such styles as bossa nova, jazz (in 4/4 with brushes), and soca/dancehall. James Brown’s “Cold Sweat” is a nice addition to the song list. Grade 6 includes four-

stroke ruffs, sixteenth-note triplets, and drum rolls. Swung sixteenth notes and time-signature changes are also found in this book. "Cissy Strut" by The Meters is a high point of this book.

Grade 7 has a variety of time signatures including 3/2, 4/4, 6/4, 7/4, 5/8, 7/8, and 12/16. Many songs include time signature changes. Slipknot's "Before I Forget" is included in this book. Grade 8 also features odd time signatures and shifting time signatures. A highlight of this book is an arrangement of "The Sound of Muzak" by Porcupine Tree.

Each book has nine pieces: six play-along songs and three solo compositions. The demo and play-along mp3s can be downloaded through the ABRSM website. The tracks range from approximately one minute (for the first few books in the series) to over three minutes. This series should prove to be enjoyable for many drummers, not just those preparing for the ABRSM exams.

—Jeff W. Johnson

4's Company Album 5: Cymbol I–III

Philippe Van den Bossche

\$16.00

Nogabelyanos Editions

Instrumentation (drumset soloist and percussion trio): drumset, wood, metal, skin

Philippe Van den Bossche takes the isolation out of early drumset studies with this new collection of studies for beginning to intermediate drummers. These studies fit alongside Van den Bossche's collection of pieces, known as *4's Company*, which are devoted to performing repertoire with others spanning from snare drum, mallets, and timpani, to this book that is focused on drumset. While the drumset is the focus, each work is intended to be performed with trio accompaniment.

Containing 13 short solos, *Album 5* features solos that range from easy to medium-difficult. The easy solos in the collection — such as "Roads to Fame Materialize" and "Lend Us Your Eardrums" — are both under a minute and often require coordination between two limbs, while featuring short pre-composed fills and easy-to-navigate alternation between grooves and fills. The solos increase in difficulty throughout, with ultimately the most challenging solo, "The quaking quartet [sic]," requiring four-limb coordination with slight syncopation in the feet, opening and closing of the hi-hat, isolated fast doubles in the kick drum, and improvised fills, and it is two minutes in length.

Each solo is intended to be performed with percussion trio accompaniment and features a broad dynamic range. The instrumentation for the accompaniment is free, with the suggestion of a wood, metal, or skin. The accompaniment parts feature a single-line stave; however, the rhythms could easily be adapted as a guide for a chordal comping pattern or bass line. As a practice aid for the drumset soloist there are digital mockup recordings of the percussion accompaniment at different tempos, available online from the publisher.

Album 5: Cymbol is an interesting approach for teaching drumset and working with drummers who are just starting out. Several drumset texts focus on styles, chart reading, transcriptions, or exclusively look at technique; however, fewer function as etude books geared towards presenting musical problems in a systematic way that isn't overwhelming for the beginner. Additionally, the openness of the percussion accompaniment makes it accessible for a variety of music programs and

an exciting way of encouraging chamber music for beginning drummers. Many of the solos in *Album 5* would be ideal for a private studio recital or even as a part of the curriculum within a small-group drumset class, or even within a percussion methods course as a fun way of engaging the whole class while working on drumset.

—Quintin Mallette

RECORDINGS

Drums of Compassion

Michael Shrieve

7D Media

Drums of Compassion is a 35-minute CD combining elements of world, jazz, ambient, and avant-garde music to create a series of tracks that "expresses Michael's spiritual perspective on what music contributes to the world." With contributions from such performers as Jack DeJohnette, Zakir Hussain, Babatunde Olatunji, and a host of others, this album is an interesting and engaging sonic journey performed to the highest level.

Percussion is the predominant voice throughout the CD, with electronics, vocalizations, or the occasional acoustic instrument added in. The opening track, "The Call of Michael Olatunji," is the longest track on the album. Setting up the ambient atmosphere of the album, a vocal incantation from Babatunde Olatunji is surrounded by melodic tom gestures and tabla fills.

"As Above, So Below" begins a series of three tracks that flow seamlessly into one another. The first features an interesting juxtaposition of long melodic lines from composer BC Smith while percussionists Raul Rekow and Karl Perazzo support these with brisk, dense percussion grooves. This track flows into "The Euphoric Pandiero of Airto Moriera," which is a one-minute pandeiro solo with vocalizations, which transitions directly to "The Fierce Energy of Love," a soundscape featuring various samples over driving percussion grooves.

Tracks like "On the Path to the Healing Waters," "Oracle," and "The Breath of Human Kindness" still have ambient sensibilities while providing more straight-ahead groove and almost pop aesthetics than the rest of the disc. This is by no means a negative, as these tracks help provide a new color and character to the collection while not feeling out of place.

Track 8 is a tabla solo from Zakir Hussain, which is what you'd expect from this legendary performer. The track develops brilliantly and acts as the perfect lead-up to the final song, "Hejira," which takes us back into highly ambient soundscapes and serves as a good bookend to the opening track.

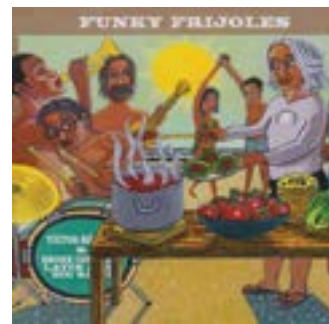
Drums of Compassion is a well-composed and beautifully performed album. Fans of any of the genres listed above will find something to enjoy on this disc, and the opportunity to hear some of these percussion luminaries perform in such exposed ways is sure to not disappoint.

—Brian Nozny

Funky Frijoles

Victor Rendón & Bronx Conexión Latin Jazz Big Band
Self-Released

Funky Frijoles is the fourth album released by Victor Rendón & Bronx Conexión Latin Jazz Big



Band. The eight tracks on the album span a diverse spectrum of Latin and Latin jazz styles. The band is made up of percussion, woodwinds, and brass instruments, as well as piano and bass.

The percussionists are prominent in a number of tracks. "Bronx Detour" is a mambo featuring alto sax, trombone, and Chembo Corniel on congas. Chembo's solo is vibrant without being overpowering. "Basta!" is more up-tempo and gives ample space for Victor Rendón on timbalitos and timbales, while "Funky Frijoles" is highly syncopated with Cascadú on dundun and Rendón on drumset. Even though "The Moment" is more laid back in tempo, there is still prominent percussion in the form of drumset, congas, and bongos. Drums are always a bit higher in the mix, presumably by design. As a percussionist, I love it! "Morningside" begins with Chembo and Yasuyo Kimura trading licks on congas and bongos. Their sounds overlap beautifully to create a rich, full texture.

The music is masterfully performed by the band, and the album is beautifully recorded and packaged. Cheers to all involved for a fantastic release!

—Justin Bunting

Morse Code (more than...)

Michael Sammons

Equilibrium Recordings

Translating and communicating energy and personality in snare drum recordings can be tough, but Michael Sammons has achieved it with this collection of seven works for solo, or featured, snare drum. Across the tracks, Sammons' artistic, sensitive, and professional approach to the instrument comes through loud and clear, and it is a real treat for the listener.

The collection starts with "Prím" by Áskell Másson, in which Sammons burns through the composer's intricacies and rhythmic challenges with ease. It is worthy to note that within a piece that fluctuates so often between dynamic extremes, the recording maintains clarity at every dynamic level — a tall order when recording percussion instruments. Next is "Perpetual Motion: Marches, Trains, and Light" for snare drum and piano by Christopher Bradford. This, and all the music that follows, was commissioned for this recording. Here, the snare drum toggles between snares-on and -off, and on the head and the rim while it dances above the piano's harmonic texture of sound that lies underneath. Sammons communicates ebb and flow, and large-scale meters and rhythms with ease throughout the piece.

"Iris" by Brian Nozny features the snare drum coupled with a digital soundscape, the latter of which leaves a lot of open space for the snare drum to shine through, almost like a digital playground

for the rhythms and motives. Sammons maintains performance energy in such a way that the listener cannot help but remain engaged. On "Without a Murmur" by Chad Floyd, Sammons translates the various sounds (Bundlz, brushes, sticks, and Super Ball moans) into an attractive performance that delivers consistent momentum from beginning to end. Again, the recording is engineered in such a way that all of the nuance comes through with precision and authority.

The three movements of "Canyon Suite" by Jason Nicholson features Sammons playing energetic motives on a drum without snares, artistic gestures with brushes and sticks, and some wicked grooves with snare and splash cymbal on the head with an additional low drum. If Nicholson's grooves coupled with Sammons' performance prowess does not compel the listener to make a "stank face" while listening, you better check for a pulse! The next solo, "Drag Queen" by Marc Mellits, features a healthy smattering of drags/diddles amongst a repetitive and steady stream of sixteenth notes on the rim, and is where Sammons brings his confident artistic treatment to a work that is more straight-forward and predictable in terms of phrase structure and presentation.

The collection concludes with "IO" by Áskell Másson, and features Sammons backed by marimba, vibraphone, and timpani. Throughout the work, the pitched instruments serve to establish harmonic scenes for the snare drum, and also interact with the snare rhythms, sometimes in unison and sometimes in a playful, back-and-forth conversation.

Kudos to Michael Sammons for putting together a collection of recordings that is dynamic, engaging, varied, and artistic!

—Joshua D. Smith

Peixinho Patriarca Percussão

Drumming Grupo de Percussão

Self-released

Recordings of contemporary avant-garde percussion works often miss the social and acoustic nuances that make experiencing this music special. For me this 2021 offering by Drumming Grupo de Percussão (Drumming GP) manages to both archive the work of a few notable composers previously unknown to me, while also expanding the possibilities of sound combinations possible for percussion.

Peixinho, Patriarca, Percussão is a recording of the Sept. 15, 2021 performance by Drumming GP as a part of the Circular Festival for the Performing Arts, a Portuguese festival for contemporary art. This recording features works by two noted composers: the late Jorge Peixinho and his one-time composition student Eduardo Patriarca. The recording features four tracks, two by each composer, with a total runtime of 74 minutes.

The sequence of tracks is a bit jarring. The recording begins with "Morrer em Santiago," a nearly 30-minute work that features long, ethereal metallic melodies that extend across instrument families and evolve into more rapid drummy textures with various toms, bass drums, timpani, snare drums, and dry wood sounds. While this work marking the 1973 coup d'état in Chile would be tempting to hear as programmatic, Miquel Bernat is quoted referring to this piece, as "a kind of tribute [from Peixinho] to the Chilean people," perhaps a way of expressing the global impact of a local event.

The second track, "A Floresta Sagrada" by

Peixinho, and the last track, "Electrónicolírica" by Patriarca, both feature electroacoustic works for chamber percussion ensemble. Because of the blend in the recording, it is difficult to differentiate between the live and programmed sounds. After multiple listenings I remain stumped as to the instrumentation; however, both works are fascinating and are worth a listen as they are compelling pieces that are particularly striking, given their order in the recording.

"Empty Time/Empty Space," the third track, is a nearly 9-minute work by Patriarca that sounds both old and new. Featuring a battery of acoustic percussion instruments, this work leverages combinations of drums and metallic instruments in a way that seamlessly reflects Patriarca's interest in the sounds and meditative philosophy of John Cage as well as the layers and cycles within spectral compositions.

Thank you to Drumming Grupo de Percussão for their sensitive and virtuosic playing and for preserving these works by Peixinho and Patriarca!

—Quintin Mallette

Play Off

Vasco Mendonça and Drumming GP

Holuzam

Play Off is an album of multi-percussion chamber pieces by composer Vasco Mendonça and performed by the Portuguese percussion group Drumming GP. The compositions are in the style of classic avant-garde percussion pieces that leave fans of the genre spellbound in live performance. The album is made up of four pieces broken into multiple movements: "Play off," "American Settings," "Three Memos," and "Aphasia." The timbres have been chosen with deliberation and precision by Mendonça and performed with equal precision by the players. There are no wasted notes or walls of sound; every note has been chosen to fit in a specific way with an interplay between deep heavy sounds, and light delicate sounds.

The beautiful moments are haunting with the use of a singing voice. There are particularly lovely moments where the pitch of the voice is matched with bowed vibraphone. The more drum heavy movements don't groove so much as they flow. The technical skill of the performers, and the masterful intertwining of lines in the composition, is clear throughout.

Recording percussion music with its wide range of dynamics and timbres is a challenge, but *Play Off* does it well. The subtleties come through clearly, although the listener will get the best effect through nice headphones or speakers without background noise to cover the delicate passages.

Play Off is not an album the average listener will go to for casual listening, but for the contemporary percussion fan there is a lot to love.

—Marilyn K. Clark Silva

Plucked & Struck

Percussia

Neuma Records

Plucked & Struck is a lovely new album by New York City-based chamber group Percussia. The album consists of duo performances by artistic director Ingrid Gordon (percussion) and Susan Jolles (harp). The instrumentation is quite unique in that Gordon mostly performs on Orff xylophone and Jolles on Celtic harp. The relative portability of these instruments is certainly an asset for traveling around the city!

The album has a wide variety of music that

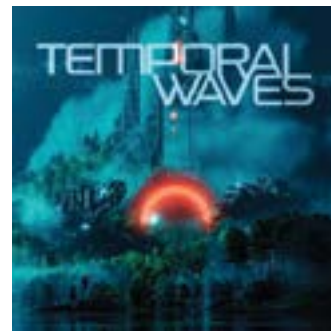
works very well within the limitations of the instruments (Orff xylophones only play in three keys, and the Celtic harp is tuned by hand levers). Sunny Knable's "envelop(e)" and Seth Bedford's "A Year in New York" were both composed for the duo and have a calm and relaxing aesthetic that is immensely enjoyable. Carlo Nicolau's "Windows of Time," also written for the group, has rhythmic material and clear melodies that contribute to its dramatic/cinematic sound. Nicolau also expands the percussive palette with the inclusion of additional small instruments. Angelica Negrón's "Was I the Same When I Got Up This Morning?" has a gamelan sound that is conducive to the instrumentation.

The album also contains several older works and arrangements, including Lou Harrison's "Avalokiteshvara" and "Jahla" (composed for harp and small percussion) along with his harp duet "Sonata in Ishartum" (arranged for harp and Orff xylophone). It is fabulous to hear these rarely performed works by an influential percussion composer!

The remaining selections are Renaissance works, including two John Dowland pieces arranged by Jolles. The duo is joined by soprano Melissa Fogarty on "Sephardic Songs," arrangements by composer Samuel Milligan of Ladino folk songs from the 16th century or earlier. On these we hear Gordon on drums as well as Orff xylophone. Finally, the duo performs Milligan's arrangements of three French bourrées compiled by Joseph Canteloube. These don't use Orff xylophone, instead using a drum sound, tambourine sound, and finger cymbals. All of these arrangements work nicely and serve to provide excellent contrast in the group's repertoire.

This is a unique album that I highly recommend. The music is very pleasant, and I love the variety of music using limited instrumental means.

—Joseph Van Hassel



Temporal Waves

Shawn Mativetsky

People Places Records

We have recently seen a renaissance of what would be called "retro" electronic musical trends in popular culture, partly thanks to the soundtracks of successful franchises such as *Stranger Things* and the *Guardians of the Galaxy* movies. This resurgence of 1980s and '90s electronica reaches into the world music scene with the help of acclaimed tabla virtuoso Shawn Mativetsky and his new album, *Temporal Waves*. Mativetsky expertly blends the versatility of his instrument with multiple orchestrations of tape, synthesizer effects, and drum-machine grooves for the duration of this extraordinary project.

Throughout the 15 tracks, Mativetsky displays how the tabla can be an impressive solo instrument

and a tasteful and supportive accompanying voice. Pieces such as “Data Cassette Sunrise” and “Sprawl Twilight” feature the vast improvisational possibilities of the tabla through an onslaught of superbly performed rhythmic figures. Alternately, works including “I Remember” and “Warmth of the Winter Sun” showcases how the instrument can support melodic lines by serving as the steady rhythmic drive and helping with the harmonic progression. The specific intonations that Mativetsky bends out of the large baya drum are truly impressive and a sign of a true master of the instrument.

Along with the musical abilities of the featured performer, the electronic soundscapes give a pleasant sense of nostalgia to those of us of a certain age. You will be reminded of happy days in front of your Atari or NES gaming system as you hear digital melodies like those from Mega Man levels, early Final Fantasy soundtracks, as well from futuristic movies of the late 20th century.

This project is masterfully produced with a spot-on balance between the acoustic tabla performances and their digital settings. Whether you are a fan of the musical stylings from which the tabla originates or you lived your formative years in the early days of electronica, listening to this album will give you a lot of joy.

—Kyle Cherwinski

Unbreakable

Andy Harnsberger

Self-released

This album is the byproduct of Andy Harnsberger’s PASIC 2019 showcase concert. It includes “Traveller” by Gareth Farr, “Dead Reckoning” by Adam Silverman, “Saragorda Sound” by Benjamin Finley, and “Unbreakable” by Harnsberger. These are quite musical and showcase Harnsberger’s four-mallet marimba skills.

Specifically, Farr’s “Traveller” provides Harnsberger with an Eastern-sounding background using woodblocks and Chinese cymbals and gongs. Harnsberger’s solo marimba passages utilize arpeggiated and block harmonies with an ambience of a gentle pentatonic sound.

Silverman’s “Dead Reckoning” presents more of a rhythmic than a lyrical flair with contemporary harmonies (almost atonal) permeating Harnsberger’s smooth soloistic presentation. Finley’s “Saragorda Sound” provides a layered accompaniment from the ensemble’s steady multiple-percussion accompaniment as Harnsberger contrasts the ensemble with delightful traditional block harmonies.

Harnsberger’s “Unbreakable” ties everything together, with liner notes providing significant insight into this engaging composition. At the heart of its perpetual motion and Aaron Copland-like joyful ensemble presentation is a testimony of Harnsberger’s personal battle with cancer and his father’s battle with Parkinson’s disease. Once the listener knows these associations, one cannot help but to sense the unrelenting battle that a person must have to survive. As Harnsberger states, “Unbreakable” is dedicated to anyone who has ever battled a disease, illness, or disability and refused to give up. It is also meant to be a comfort for those people who battled and eventually lost but never gave up.

Congratulations to Dr. Harnsberger for an inspiring, serene recording, and his transparent message of courage and truth.

—Jim Lambert

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REVIEW REBUTTAL

I submitted my book *Rock Grooves in Odd Times* to PAS for review. The reviewer either missed or dismissed the basic point of the book, and the reason I wrote it. My book is written specifically to introduce drummers (intermediate to advanced students as well as pros) to a subject that most may know little about when it comes to actual playing. Their experience in playing rock is often limited to 4/4, or even 3/4, and perhaps 5/4, especially since “Take Five” became an iconic hit. There is a comparatively small percentage of players with any real and extensive experience playing experimental rock, or even progressive rock. Because of this I wrote a book that students as well as professionals could embrace with ease. The reviewer says, “The biggest oversight is that for a book of rock grooves there is not one bass drum part provided.” He seems to feel you can’t have a rock groove without a bass drum part. He’s wrong. A bass drum part helps to complete a groove, but as I stated in the book, the bassist plays lines that help to establish a groove together with the drummer. To prove my point, a drummer could play a gig with just the hi-hat and snare, but it’s impossible to do the same with just a bass drum. The book provides an extensive array of possible cymbal/snare rhythmic combinations and allows readers an opportunity to be creative by thinking up their own bass part. This design makes the written drum part simple to read and understand because just one staff line is used; the cymbal part is above the line and the snare part is below the line. These two surfaces are the most important surfaces when it comes to keeping time for playing any type of music. The review claims that sometimes the same patterns are repeated. They’re repeated when the phrasing moves from 2/4 to 3/4, etc., something that the reviewer does not mention or doesn’t recognize. He complains that no sticking is given, but no sticking is necessary since the cymbal part is always played with the same hand; that’s also true for the snare part, so the sticking is obvious. My book shows an extensive number of grooves to play “on the top,” and simple bass parts could be created easily. This is all very clearly explained in the book. Moreover, the book is not intended for beginners, another thing the reviewer doesn’t seem to recognize. He feels that the rhythms should be broken down and explained, but there’s no need to break down simple rhythms since the book is for intermediate level and up. I recommend to anyone interested in the subject to get the book and make their own judgement.

— Joel Rothman

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Majestic Percussion – 2
Meredith Music Publicaitons – 99

Kolberg Percussion – 27
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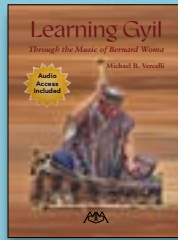


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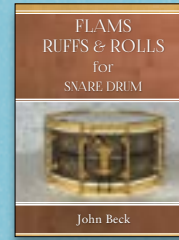


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THROUGH
THE MUSIC OF
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Michael Vercelli

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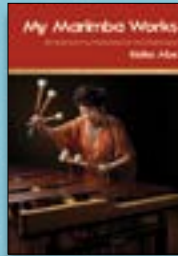


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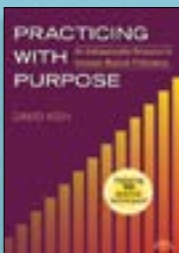


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