PERCUSSIVE NOTES

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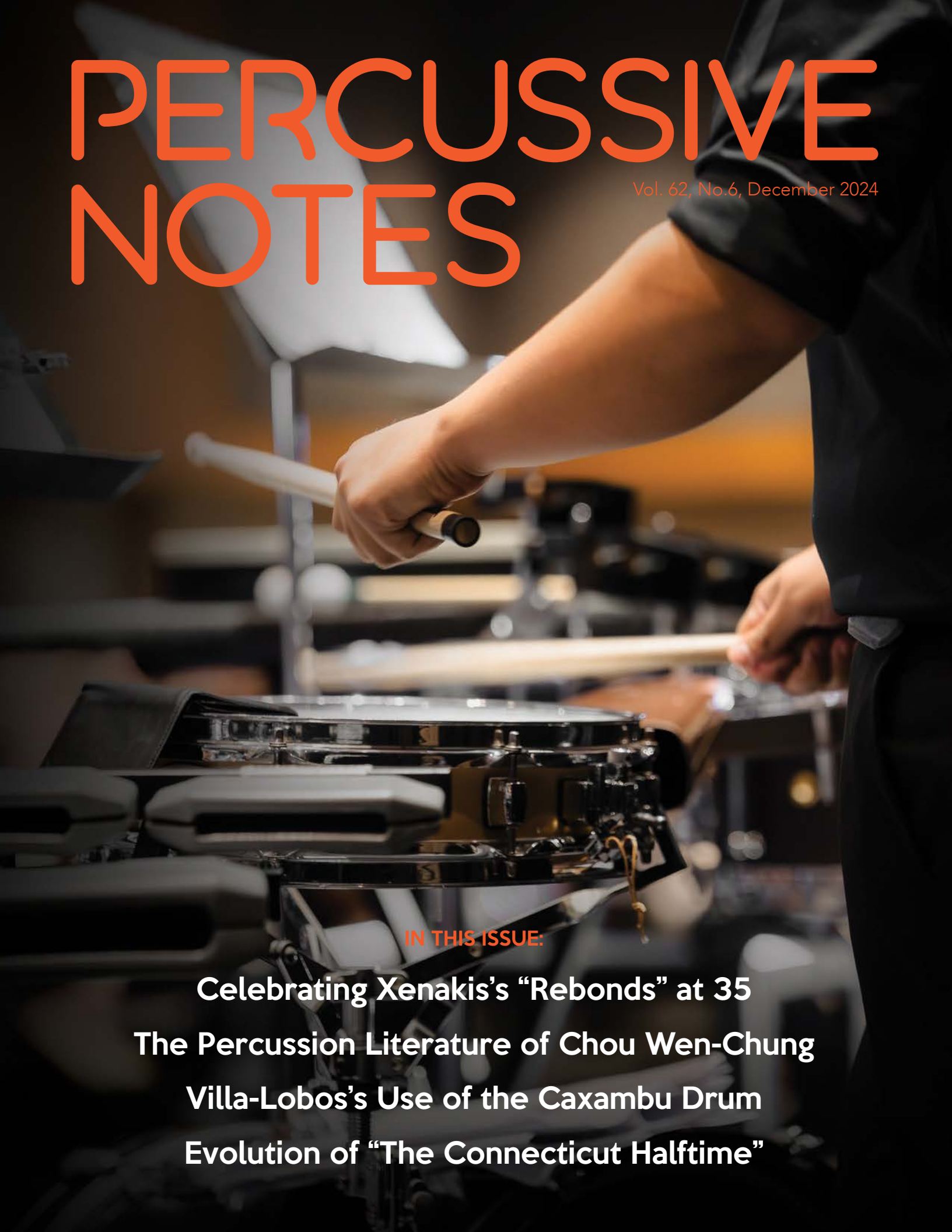

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Reflecting on a Remarkable Year and Looking Forward

By Joshua Simonds

Dear Percussive Arts Society Community,

As we close out 2024, I am filled with gratitude for a remarkable year and immense optimism for the future. This year has been pivotal for PAS, marked by inspiring events, important developments, and a growing community of percussionists who push the boundaries of our art and support each other through every beat. Thank you all — members, volunteers, students, educators, performers, and industry partners — for making this year one of our best yet.

In 2024, PAS made significant progress on several fronts, but perhaps most notably, we laid the groundwork for a strong future with the development of a new strategic plan. Our leadership team and board worked diligently to create a roadmap that will not only sustain PAS in the years to come but will allow us to grow and evolve in meaningful ways. This plan prioritizes initiatives that strengthen our organizational resilience, expand our educational resources, and reach even more percussionists of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of experience. It's a vision built for long-term impact, and I'm excited to see how it unfolds in the coming years. Thank you to our board of directors, especially Board President Julie Davila, for leading us through this process and for her service to PAS over the past two years.

One of the pillars of this strategic plan is nurturing the next generation of percussionists, and I'm thrilled to share that our Percussion Ensemble Competitions and Festivals were launched this year with resounding success. This program is already thriving, and the momentum is building as we head into 2025. We've seen young percussionists come together, showcasing their skills, building friendships, and learning from incredible instructors and peers. These events are more than competitions — they're opportunities for growth, camaraderie, and inspiration, and I am so excited to see where this journey will take us in the future.

Of course, one of the highlights of 2024 was PASIC, which reached new heights this year. With a record-breaking attendance, a sold-out Expo Hall, and sessions that left audiences energized and inspired, PASIC 2024 was a truly unforgettable experience. From the performances to the panels, every aspect of PASIC this year reaffirmed the strength and passion of our community. If you were there, you know the feeling — that palpable excitement in the air, the joy of reconnecting with old friends, and the thrill of meeting new ones who share the same drive and love for percussion.

Looking ahead, we're already in full swing planning for PASIC 2025, which will mark a major milestone: our 50th PASIC! This celebration will be unlike any PASIC before it, and I can confidently say it will be our biggest and best yet. If you've ever thought about coming to PASIC, 2025 is the year to make it happen. PASIC 50 will honor our rich history, celebrate the present, and look boldly toward the future of percussion. We're planning something truly special, and we can't wait to share it with you.

None of this would be possible without the support of our incredible volunteers and members. It's your dedication, time, and passion that allow PAS to thrive as an organization. From helping at PASIC to mentoring young percussionists, the work you do is invaluable, and we are profoundly grateful to each of you. We're also deeply thankful to our sponsors and industry partners for their ongoing support, which makes our events, programs, and initiatives possible.

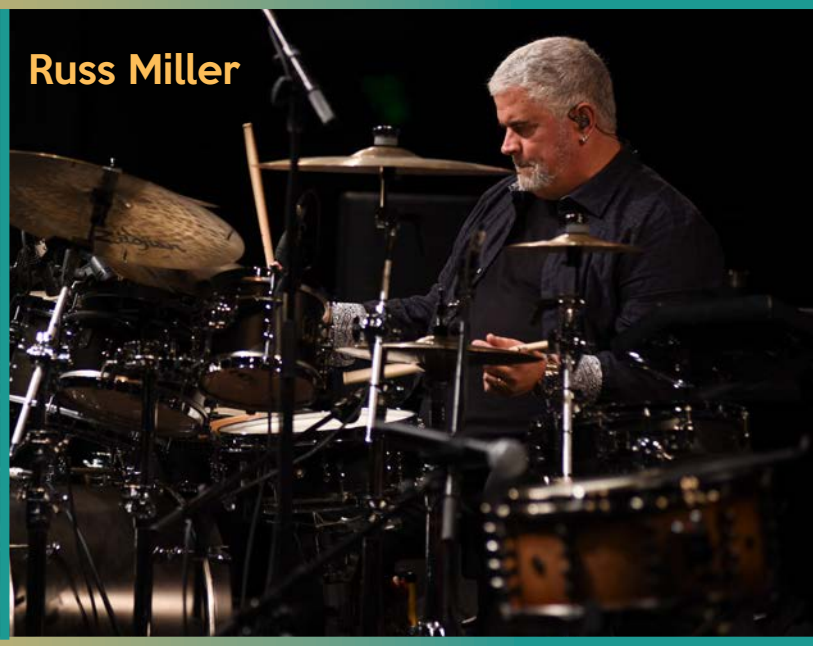
To the entire PAS community, thank you for making this year extraordinary. As we look forward to 2025, I am filled with hope, excitement, and gratitude for each of you. Let's continue to inspire each other, uplift the next generation, and make 2025 a landmark year for PAS and percussionists everywhere.

Warmest regards,
Joshua Simonds
Executive Director,
Percussive Arts Society


Antonio Sánchez


Jamison Ross


Hector Tascón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L to R: Gregory Hutchinson, Colleen Clark, Mike Clark, Peter Erskine, Maria Marmarou, Steve Fidyk, and SSG Eric Pers

Mock Audition

Terri Lyne Carrington

Birdville High School

Celebrating Xenakis's "Rebonds" at 35

In Praise of Shadows

By Steven Schick

Iannis Xenakis (1922–2001) was many things: composer, architect, engineer, resistance fighter, and self-proclaimed ancient Greek exiled to the 20th century. To this impressive list, add one more accomplishment: progenitor of late 20th-century modernist percussion music. As Jorge Luis Borges said of Franz Kafka, Xenakis was so important that he influenced even those who came before him. It's true. When I hear the massive timpani roll that leads to the entrance of the brass bands in Hector Berlioz's "Grande Messe des Morts," I hear the opening textures of "Persephassa," not the reverse. And Ravel's "Gaspard de la Nuit" seems to imitate Xenakis's "Mists," even though the Ravel was written 72 years earlier.

As important as the music of Xenakis has been for the community of percussionists, it has been equally important to me personally. I first played "Psappha" on my master's degree recital at the University of Iowa in 1978 as just the third person to have performed it. I gave the American premiere of "Rebonds" in 1990 with the composer present in what turned out to be my audition for the position I currently hold at the University of California, San Diego. I played "Persephassa" in a concert organized by Doug Perkins on rafts on Central Park Lake. And in the 1980s as a part of the Affiliate Artists program, whose mission was to introduce concert music into unconventional venues. I performed "Psappha" a hundred or so times at shopping malls, factories, senior-citizen homes, and in one nearly disastrous moment, for construction workers who were well into their third keg of beer in celebration of completing an apartment building. (That was the only performance I ever began but did not finish.)

Steven Schick performing the American premiere of "Rebonds" in April 1990.

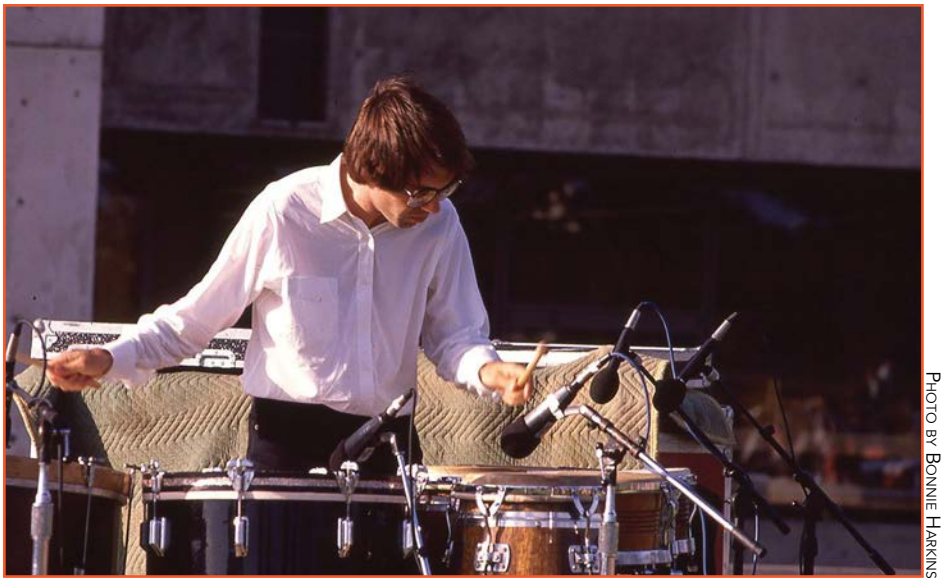


PHOTO BY BONNIE HARKINS

I was touring "Rebonds" in the former Soviet Union when I saw Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev on Red Square, and I performed it in Prague in 1991 in the very week that the Soviet army withdrew from the city. I played it in a circus tent in the Jardin de Tuileries amid clouds of tear gas wafting from the nearby Place de la Concorde as French gendarmes broke up one of Paris's many protests, and I gave an early performance on a windswept promontory overlooking the Pacific Ocean at sunset. "Rebonds" comforted me after the premature deaths of my parents and saw me through a divorce. Truly, my thousand or so performances

Musicians are often more eager to avoid mistakes than they are to explore art.

of Xenakis's music over nearly fifty years have given meaning to my life — as a riotous celebration of the best moments and as the safeguard of my sanity in the worst ones.

This year, "Rebonds" celebrates its 35th anniversary. And it is having a moment. Firmly established within the canon of solo percussion music, it has a host of young advocates who play it superbly: Brian Archinal, Adélaïde Ferrière, Michael Jones, Ayano Kataoka, and Kai Strobel come to mind, among many others. And it is simply extraordinary music.

With so much to applaud, why was I feeling glum?

Part of the answer reflects a weakening of the poetic framework supporting the piece. By poetic framework I mean the way an interpreter harnesses a broad and personal set of references that give meaning to a performance. At the center of every poetic framework is the score itself. Rightly so. It tells us what to play, when and how to play it. But the score alone is not enough. It must be buttressed by ideas drawn from the broader world. Think of a set of concentric circles emanating from the score. Most immediately they touch other music by that composer or evoke relevant historical antecedents. But any performer wishing to have an impact beyond the parochial world of specialists must also look beyond the musical world for inspiration.

Here it gets exciting. Whereas every performer must deal with the score — thus providing important points of commonality among performances — the poetic framework is personal and expansive, thus providing diversity. It can be used for a single performance and discarded. Or it can last a lifetime. Over the years my poetic framework for "Rebonds" has mirrored my interests, drawing on a devotion to reading and learning languages, on walking, and on a life-long yoga practice. For you it might be rooted in cooking or riding horses or surfing. Or maybe you're a parent or caregiver.

I have made three recordings of "Rebonds," the most recent shortly after my 70th birthday. Each has a unique poetic framework. In my first recording, made in 1992, I tried to reconcile the high modernist and largely European percussion repertory, which I had studied intensely, with my background as a jazz-loving American. I sought inspiration in the great African-American bebop drummers who, within the strictures of a refined musical language, asserted great individual freedom. I loved the waves of sound they made and the deeply personal way they expressed themselves. I remember wondering: How would Elvin Jones play "Rebonds"?

Whether or not that question is still interesting today, it was hugely helpful then. Starting in my brother Dan's garage over Christmas in 1989, I began a practice regimen featuring two highly contrasting protocols. First, I worked a given passage in microscopic detail, rehearsing it carefully from memory. Then I "improvised" that same passage, freely re-creating it in search of the essence of the music. The first kind of practice reflected my duty to the composer and the score; the second embraced a personal exploration of musical possibilities. Realizing that both were necessary, I slowly began to work toward the middle, retaining the details of the score and embedding them within the surges and spontaneities of improvisation.

I made my second recording in the early 2000s while I was writing my book, *The Percussionist's Art*. At that time, I was captivated by the transformative energy of "Ionisation" — how Varèse molded timbral identities in response to forces in his music. I saw similar transformations in "Rebonds B" as the confident "rebound motif," the opening rhythmic composite, absorbed challenges from woodblock interjections and rapid homophonic drumming. Gradually heated to the point of malleability, timbral/rhythmic identities dissolved and were reassembled in unpredictable ways. What was clear and incontrovertible at the outset proved later to be ephemeral and pliable. In a period of profound personal change, "Rebonds" helped me understand the transformations afoot in my own life.

Recently, though, "Rebonds" has become a victim of its own success. As standard repertory, it has become a go-to piece for recitals and first rounds of competitions. It's wonderful that music that I love deeply has become an important part of our conversation. But in environments of judgment such as recitals and competitions, musicians are often more eager to avoid mistakes than they are to explore art. Accordingly, the poetic framework shrinks to a narrow, textual reading of the score. Play it accurately and at tempo and you win. Necessary as such considerations may be in a competition, they can unleash a spate of self-serving motivations. "I hope to be judged a better musician than my classmate." "I hope my performance brings me celebrity." Here the poetic fare shrinks to such meager portions that it can never hope to nourish music of substance.

The second problem with "Rebonds" lies with the score itself. In addition to several copying errors from the manuscript, the epigraph written by Jacques Longchampt of *Le Monde* is deeply offensive. Longchampt claims that "Rebonds" is "uncontaminated by folkloric traditions." Let's unpack that. Shouldn't a French music critic, writing at the bicentennial of the French Revolution and cognizant of the damage wreaked by France's colonial past, strive for a more enlightened view? Couldn't we expect a publisher in

the 21st century to see the blatant racism of this statement and remove it from the title page of the score? The answer to both questions is yes. Nevertheless, colonialism remains unaddressed, and that epigraph has been a part of every percussionist's experience of "Rebonds" for the past three decades.

By 2018 or so I felt that "Rebonds," music I once loved fiercely, was slipping away. It had been so egregiously repackaged as a shallow competition showpiece with overtones of appropriation that I had lost all desire to play it again.

The question of whether I would return to "Rebonds" was answered by my post-pandemic recording project, *Weather Systems*, a multi-volume retrospective for Islandia Music Records of the most important solo music I have played. The first two volumes were finished, and I was nearing the completion of the final volume — a study of rhythm and history titled "It's About Time." How could I exclude a piece so indebted to rhythmic intricacy and to my personal history as was "Rebonds"? So, with the arched eyebrows of a cynic, I began a six-week process of relearning "Rebonds" for the recording.

I began with the essential questions in the piece. How would I manage the impossible moments in the score? (Some are truly impossible!) What about the order of the two movements in the piece? Would I play B/A as I had done for half of my life, or try A/B? And, importantly, would I embrace a virtuosic approach to the score or try to work around it? And if the former, would my 70-year-old body cooperate?

These questions required a new and robust poetic framework. As before, that framework needed to work in two directions: inward to the minutiae of percussion performance — sticking, tempo, phrasing — and outward connecting my interpretation to an ample world of ideas.

As I relearned "Rebonds," I was also working with my student Kosuke Matsuda on his compelling research surrounding Japanese concepts of silence. Kosuke inspired me to reread "In Praise of Shadows," Junichiro Tanizaki's essay on traditional Japanese architecture. Written in 1933 as Japan was increasingly drawn toward but still resistant to the bright lights and brashness of Western culture, Tanizaki claimed that vividness in Japanese design was rooted in subtle contrasts and made possible by the careful control of shadow. In the Western aesthetic everything sparkled and, as a result, the tonal spectrum narrowed. Shadows were gone but, equally, brighter tones were muted. Gold, Tanizaki maintained, gleams more brilliantly in shadow than under bright light. He pointed to the *tokonoma*, the artfully shadowed alcove in a traditional Japanese home in which artistic items are displayed for appreciation. *Tokonoma*, literally a "gap in the space," includes the traditional Japanese *kanji* (character) for *ma*, which can also mean silence or pause. I was intrigued.

Was my problem with conventional interpretations of "Rebonds," including perhaps my own, that an unwarranted emphasis on virtuosity made them too brightly illuminated, therefore homogenous and insufficiently contrasted?

With this poetic framework in mind, I revisited my list of imperatives. I immediately decided to reorder the piece and play "Rebonds A" then "B." I had played it hundreds of times and recorded it twice as B/A. Why not mix it up? The unforeseen advantage was that the long silences at the end of "Rebonds A" — the longest of which is around 11 seconds — followed by the gap between movements, created an interruption in the flow. It was literally the *ma* of *tokonoma*. Allowing my poetic framework to lead me simultaneously to large-scale conception and practical detail, I sought to frame questions of mallet choice, tempo, and tuning to create the ecology of subtle contrast that Tanizaki celebrated. In short, I tried to create shadow.

Largely avoiding the traditional Western romantic toolkit, I removed my habitual *bel canto* lyricism in the woodblock tremolos of "Rebonds B." I also excluded a favored strategy of a sudden *meno mosso* before the drum/woodblock unisons followed by a dramatic accelerando to the end. Play it straight, I thought, and let the shadows come from instrument choice and tuning.

I created two sets of instruments, one for each movement. "Rebonds A" was tuned for maximum harmonic impact. I brought the bass drum up in pitch so that it would not act as an orchestral bass drum but rather, literally, as a bass version of the other drums. The tunings of the low drums would be far enough apart to offset our psycho-acoustical difficulties in perceiving close harmonies in low registers, but close enough to create a potent sonic mass. Importantly, the drums would be as resonant as possible so that sounds might linger in an aurora of harmony to counterbalance the relentless forces of horizontal momentum. (Another point of reference for me was Glenn Gould's 1956 recording of the "Goldberg Variations," in which he ingeniously parries the deliberate pace of Bach's harmonic movement with a mercurial clarity in the horizontal line.)

As always, I would try to play the rapid 3:4 music of "Rebonds A" as clearly as possible, but I would accept some cloudiness in the texture due to the resonance of the instruments and the closeness of the tunings. The increasingly intricate and frequent polyrhythmic thickets would become my version of Tanizaki's shadows, themselves a nod to the famous *nu-*

Hear Steven Schick perform "Rebonds" in the web version of this article.

ages of Xenakis's "Persephassa." My goal was a fruitful contrast between shadow-shrouded polyrhythms and the sudden incisiveness of the bass drum/bongo grace notes at the end of the movement.

Instruments in "Rebonds B" were much drier, thanks to the natural skin of the conga and a lower bass drum. This more muted sonic terrain gave clarity to the rhythms and led to the unavoidable question of virtuosity. I had to face facts: no matter the starting tempo, the speed of the wood/skin unisons at the end is too fast to be played even by the most agile virtuoso. Likewise, the tremolos cannot be performed as notated, even using the mass-produced, purpose-built "woodblock trees," which to me produce a regrettable uniformity in interpretative approach.

Xenakis's view of virtuosity is complex. He writes very difficult music expressly to raise the intensity level in performance. He wants the electricity of a performer confronting a Herculean challenge. But when the music crosses into outright impossibility, the question becomes an ethical one: How does a human performer bent on conquering a great challenge react when that challenge truly cannot be conquered? The hero-performer is suddenly stripped of armor and becomes again flawed and human. Hubris was the undoing of arrogant heroes from Achilles to Icarus. In "Rebonds," perhaps Xenakis is reminding us of their tragic fates.

Some have wondered whether Xenakis knew that these passages were impossible. I firmly believe so, since every piece I have played or conducted by him features similar impossible music. Impossibility arrives at parallel structural moments and is approached in the same way. Xenakis often begins easily with almost banal music, heating and complexifying it steadily. When it is too late to retreat — when a performer has fully committed as protagonist and an audience has utterly bought in — only then does the moment of impossibility arrive. The only way out is forward, and the only possible strategy is to become human again — to drop the mask of the heroic and find a personal path through the impossible.

That's why "Rebonds" can never be described as a groove. A groove is a rhythm of strength and celebration, a musical sign that you are powerful enough to overcome your troubles. Xenakis shows you, again and again, that to be human is to be vulnerable. Modest rather than proud in the face of trouble.

Of course, there can be no actual strategy to perform impossible music. But there are decisions to make. I decided to play the opening at the marked tempo, slow enough to allow for a consistent tempo as the piece becomes more difficult, but fast enough to feel joyful. Within the base tempo I threaded slight fluctuations of pacing, momentarily moving slightly forward or back in speed so that when the inevitable slowing occurred it would not seem unprepared. I experimented with various metric modulations to make the slower tempo of the tremolos and double-stop section feel organic. Ratios of 2:3 and 3:4 worked, but they felt slow. Eventually a ratio of 5:6 — about 84% of the opening speed — maintained the intensity and, through the irrational metric modulation, prevented it from feeling too calculated. Then it was just a matter of straightforward, "uninterpreted" playing. A very late decision pleased me: I played the last few bars not as a hand-to-hand tremolo as I had done for 35 years, but as a continued line of unison playing. The first true tremolo of the section on the final fermata feels culminating and irrevocable.

Thanks to my new poetic framework, I felt myself falling in love with "Rebonds" again. A few days before the recording, I was interviewed on another topic. The journalist observed that artists often say they feel compelled to pursue their artform — that being an artist was a necessity, not a choice. She asked if I felt that way. No, I responded, I have never felt compelled. Music was and has remained a choice. In fact, it was a relatively late choice in life. I could have done many things: I could have become a farmer or maybe a Latin teacher. But my heart was set on being a small-town Iowa doctor. I imagined babies to deliver, broken bones to set, families to care for. The day at age 19 that I made the irrevocable decision to pursue life as a percussionist was bittersweet. I was struck more by what I was giving up than by what I was gaining. What has made that decision a positive one on balance was that music like "Rebonds" made the trade worth it. No shallow competition showpiece could have done that.

In my final recording of "Rebonds" I found inspiration in the praise of shadows. You will find your own inspirations: Surfing? Family? Using poetry, let's fashion music into a favored tool, one with a sharpened edge and well-worn handle. Then we'll wield it as "an axe for the frozen sea inside of us," to quote Kafka. Thus freed, music can become an ally in our grand exploration of life, leading to a rich world beyond mere professional accomplishment. It will lead to wisdom.

Steven Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego and holder of the Reed Family Presidential Chair in Music. He was inducted into the PAS Hall of Fame in 2014.

Toscanini and Percussion

Oscar Levant on Toscanini, "Bolero," and Berlioz

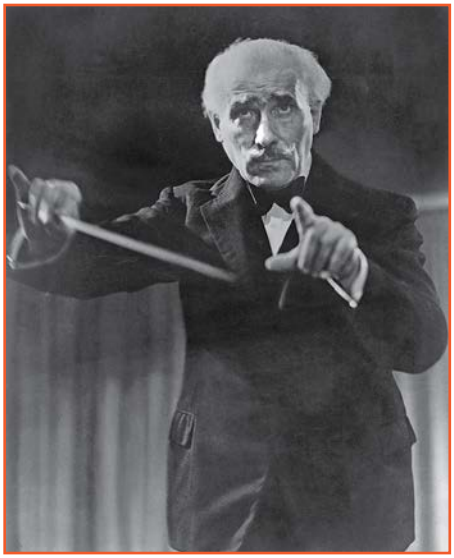
By Michael Rosen

Arturo Toscanini (1867–1957) was one of most eminent conductors of the 20th century, considered by many to have been the best. Oscar Levant related anecdotes about Toscanini and percussion in his *book A Smattering of Ignorance*. The subjects of his scrutiny were percussionists August Schmehl and Sam Borodkin.

August Schmehl (c.1895–c.1970) began his career as a featured soloist on xylophone and bells for the Albany Indestructible Cylinder Company in 1909–10. He recorded "Moon Winks," "Little Charmer," and "Pass dat Possum," among others. Schmehl served as percussionist with the New York Philharmonic (then called the New York Philharmonic Society) from 1923–36, and was principal for the 1926–36 seasons. According to his contract with the orchestra, he received $85 per week for a 25-week season. For a listing of Schmehl's recordings and audio examples, access the Gerhardt Cylinder Recordings at http://pas.org/about-edwin-l-gerhardt/.

Sam Borodkin (1892–1973) was Toscanini's timpanist and percussionist in the New York Philharmonic for 32 years from 1928–49 and then played for another 14 years with the NBC Orchestra conducted by Toscanini, also playing for Leopold Stokowski from 1947–49. He was born in Russia, came to the U.S. when he was seven years old, and early in his career he played with the John Phillip Sousa Band (perhaps with Joe Green, who was in the same band at the time) and in most of the operettas of Victor Herbert. Borodkin was also a talented baseball player, and in 1914 he turned down a contract with the New York Giants. He counted among his friends Al Jolson, Sergei Rachmaninoff, and Gene Krupa. Both Schmehl and Borodkin played with timpanist Saul Goodman when they were in the symphony under conductors Toscanini, Willem Mengelberg, Sir John Barbiolli, Artur Rodzinski, Josef Stansky, and Bruno Walter. (Thanks to Meredith Self and the staff at the New York Philharmonic archives for the helpful information they provided.)

Arturo Toscanini



Oscar Levant

Oscar Levant (1906–1972) was a world-class pianist and actor who played the wise-cracking sidekick in dozens of Hollywood movies. Best known are *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris*. He was associated with George Gershwin and was considered the best interpreter of Gershwin's music. In addition, he was a raconteur, author, and television personality known for his wit and self-deprecating humor, appearing many times on the Jack Paar show.

Here then is the passage from *A Smattering of Ignorance* by Oscar Levant (Garden City Publishing Co., Inc. Garden City, N.Y., 1942).

One eminent composer was otherwise than flattered by Toscanini's treatment of his music. This was the late Maurice Ravel, who was honored by a performance of his "Bolero" in Paris during the Philharmonic's European trip [in the 1930s]. It was an initial irritation for Ravel that no tickets had been sent to him, and he made his way into the crowded hall with great difficulty, to discover that Toscanini's tempo for "Bolero" was unforgivably fast. He added audible, unscored verbal comments from his box as the work progressed in a mounting crescendo that paralleled the surge of the music. This monotone of invective brought a storm of shushing from the intent Parisians, to whom Ravel was not a world-famous composer but merely an ill-mannered listener.

The performance completed, Ravel descended angrily upon the green room to deliver his annoyance with the performance in person to the maestro. With voluble gestures and insistent pounding of his feet, he delineated the impossibility of dancing a "bolero," his or anyone else's at such a pace. There was a charm of novelty in this experience for Toscanini, since only a composer of Ravel's stature could be thus indifferent to the maestro's reaction.

Despite this unprecedented experience, Toscanini continued to conduct "Bolero," content, perhaps, to regard its unapparelled opportunity for orchestral virtuosity as compensation for the bad manners of the composer. After several brilliant performances with the Philharmonic, in which he had been delighted by the meticulous playing of the orchestra's percussion section, he summoned its members to his room and expressed his particular pleasure with the snare drummer [August] Schmehl, whose superb pianissimo *and imperceptible crescendo excelled anything in his experience.*

A large florid man with the muscularity of a heavy-weight wrestler and a speech compounded equally of Brooklynese and Hemingway, Schmehl replied casually, "Tanks, boss — glad you feel that way about me."

The praise apparently aroused Schmehl to the difficulty of his task and a consciousness of how well he had accomplished it, for at the next repetition of "Bolero" he was swept away by panic, beginning his opening solo at a rapidly increasing forte. *A contortion of rage suffused Toscanini's face and he muttered imprecations. Schmehl's partner [in the percussion section] sought to retrieve the sticks and play the solo himself, but the drummer was too nervous to understand the request. The fury of Toscanini with Schmehl transmitted itself to the rest of the orchestra, a trombone exploded a blast instead of a tone at the climax of his solo and the performance moved swiftly into confusion.*

When the final chord had been reached, Toscanini stalked from the stage without a glance at the audience and rushed to his room crying, "Where is Schmehl? I want Schmehl. Where is Schmehl?"

The culprit finally appeared to be greeted by a torrent of "Stupido…Shame…You play no more for me!" All this to a man he had recently decorated with garlands of praise.

Truculently Schmehl accepted the abuse with the patience born of forty years' experience in orchestral playing and, waiting for his opportunity, finally said, "You don't like my work? Get yourself another boy." Nevertheless, it cost him his post in the orchestra for one misguided pianissimo.

There might have been a similar outcome for another impasse at the Philharmonic rehearsal had not the player shrewdly adapted himself to one of Toscanini's few limitations. The problem arose in the rehearsing of Berlioz's "Queen Mab" scherzo (in the "Romeo and Juliet" music). This contains an effect scored for antique cymbals, the tiny equivalents of the familiar large cymbals. Toscanini demanded that the rapid tinkling of the instruments be mathematically precise and metronomically exact, the rhythm sharply articulated.

One after the other the percussion players took their turns at attempting to meet Toscanini's requirements, only to find that the task of rustling the two tiny dials [disks] together at the proper speed and with the desired clarity defied any technique with which they were acquainted. They were all waved impatiently aside until Sam Borodkin, virtuoso of the gong, tam-tam, bass drum, and glockenspiel, pushed his way to the music stand and said he'd like to try.

The orchestra began, and Borodkin stood poised with the small cymbals (each no larger than a silver dollar) in his hands. When his entrance approached, Borodkin bent over the stand in an attitude of extreme attentiveness, meanwhile substituting a metal tringle stick for the cymbal in his right hand. Then, with his hands barely visible over the top of the stand, he beat out the rhythm perfectly.

Toscanini dropped his baton and called out "Bravo, Borodkin, bravo" — being unable to penetrate the deception with his weak vision. No doubt if he could have seen that far he would have found some reason to be displeased with the results.

The "Queen Mab" (or the "Fairy of Dreams") scherzo is one of the movements from the seven-movement "Romeo and Juliet" (1839), which Berlioz called a Choral Symphony. Berlioz was master of orchestration, and his *Treatise on Instrumentation* (1844) is still considered an important reference for orchestrators to this day. He was the first composer to call for a sponge-headed stick and to specify for such details as "the cymbal must be suspended free, held in the left hand and struck with the right." In his "Requiem" (1837) he calls for 16 timpani played by eight players. This was unheard of at the time! He calls for only two sets of timpani in "Romeo and Juliet."

Here are the terms used in "Queen Mab":

Cimbale antico in F (fa)

Cimbale antico in B (si flat)

Baquettes d'eponge (F): sponge-headed sticks [soft mallets]

Schwammschlägel (G): sponge headed mallet

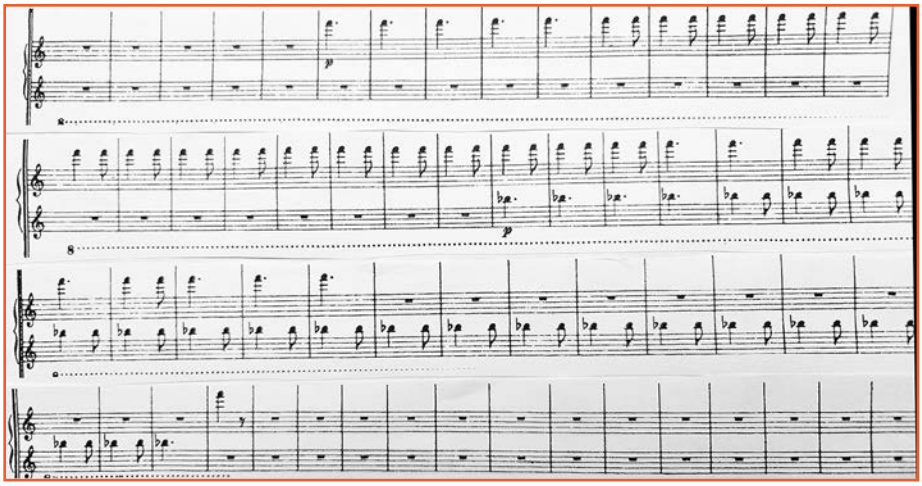
Grand cassa e Cinelli (I): bass drum with cymbals [cinelli is an old term for cymbals]

Gr cassa solo (I): solo bass drum [This means bass drum without cymbal. Usually, cymbals were played with the bass drum unless specified.]

Timpani I e II in C (Ut) and F (Fa)
Timpani III e IV in Des (Re flat) and A (La)

I have included the passage for antique cymbals from "Queen Mab" that Levant refers to, which Borodkin played so well. I imagine that Borodkin mounted the two antique cymbals on a music stand and played them both with metal beaters, although Levant doesn't go in detail about the playing technique. Listen for this excerpt at 6:09 on a YouTube performance of the piece.

Antique cymbal part from "Queen Mab



Michael Rosen is Emeritus Professor of Percussion at Oberlin Conservatory of Music where he founded the Oberlin Percussion Group. He was elected to the PAS Hall of Fame in 2019. He was Principal Percussionist with the Milwaukee Symphony from 1966–72 and has performed with the Grand Teton Music Festival, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and the Concertgebouw Orchestra. He was a member of the PAS Board of Directors and is an Associate Editor of *Percussive Notes*. He has recorded for Opus One, Bayerische Rundfunk, Albany, Lumina, and CRI labels and is a sought-after clinician for marimba and cymbals.

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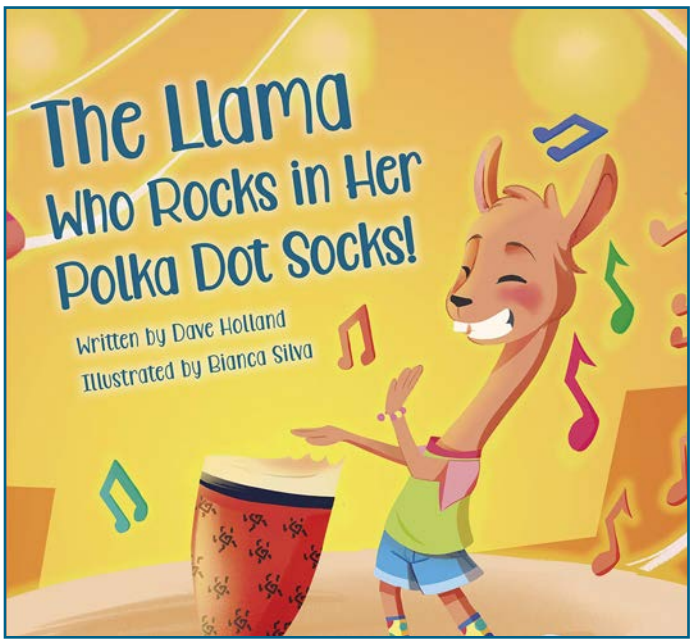
How Do You Rock?

By Robert J. Damm

Dave Holland, a recognized leader in rhythm-based facilitation and world percussion, published a must-have resource for drum circle facilitators: *The Llama Who Rocks in Her Polka Dot Socks!* The first part of this article is a summary of an interview in which Holland discussed the new book and its potential benefits for all drum circle facilitators and teaching artists. The second half of the article addresses additional applications for elementary school teachers, elementary general music teachers, and drum circle facilitators who collaborate with these educators to help youngsters achieve myriad academic, musical, and life goals.



DAVE HOLLAND INTERVIEW

My purpose for writing this book was to make available for the first time a children's book that introduces drum circle facilitation and the word "facilitate." I was inspired to write this book because of my own experience with my daughter and conversations with her about making great choices. The book's main character is a llama because it's my daughter's favorite animal. I offer this book to the field of children's literature in the spirit of the work I do as a teaching artist. I teach drumming and music, but I also support arts integration and learning in other areas, such as character education and making responsible choices.

One activity I often include in drum circle programs is the teaching of sign language. I teach the sign for the letter "u" plus the hand gesture of rock from rock-paper-scissors while saying "You rock!" The receiver adds the gesture of holding up two fingers and says, "You rock, too!" This is the springboard to encourage children to make "rock star choices," the recurring theme of *The Llama Who Rocks in Her Polka Dot Socks!* The book is all about choices. The hope in a drum circle is that you become a little more curious about others, and you also learn about yourself and find your own voice.

One of the important concepts that we showcase, highlight, and celebrate in the drum circle world is diversity. A wonderful metaphor for this is the rainbow with all its colors. That is why on Saturday, Lulu picks out a multicolored pair of polka dots socks and hosts a drum circle. Lulu's final choice on Sunday is to take a break. Children in today's phone-based culture need to know the importance of getting out in nature, being quiet, pondering, and reflecting. There is too much "othering" fueled by social media and the current political climate, which only generates separation. Children need to appreciate each other and to be kind.

Facilitators don't always take time to spell out the basic tenets of a drum circle to the participants. The book demonstrates many fundamental elements of a drum circle: four basic timbre groups of metal bells, drums, shakers, and woodblocks. *Sangita* comes from the Sanskrit word for music and associated performance arts in Indian traditions. It implies combining, coming together, and blending in the context of musical arts. In a similar way, a truly well-rounded drum circle experience includes

The hope in a drum circle is that you become a little more curious about others, and you also learn about yourself and find your own voice.

playing, singing, and movement. The call-and-response (or echo) process of West Africa is included in Lulu's drum circle. I sometimes introduce this concept by saying "Everybody be my copycat. I'll play a rhythm and you play it back." There's a final "rumble" too. So, Lulu's drum circle identifies the components of a drum circle including the language of enthusiasm, high energy, and facilitation.

Why does Lulu bring down the volume? So everyone can hear. Why does she invite someone to solo? So everyone can cheer! It shows the open invitation of the facilitation process that acknowledges that everyone has something to say. To be in a drum circle where you can make mistakes and find your way is a real gift because you are in a chorus of others.

Remarkably, the words "Drum Circle" are never used in the book. The reader could describe what Lulu does as recreational drumming, interactive drumming, community drumming, or simply drumming.

As a teaching artist, I support literacy. I am an advocate for reading. There is a downward trend in children's interest in reading and in their capacity to read. Social media has taken over in terms of children's attention. There is no computer, cell phone, tablet, cell phone, or screen of any kind in the book. Instead, Lulu is with her friends who support her when she makes good choices. She celebrates in rhythm with them on the weekend. This message is needed in our society today. We in the rhythm-making world need to advocate for "backyard jams" and for children to have their own drum circles.

I regularly present library and school literacy programs that I call "BIG TIME GROOVE: Rhythm and Rhyme." I read a story accompanied by body percussion. This supports fluency for young readers by emphasizing beat, steady tempo, cadence, and phrasing. This is especially accentuated during the call-and-response sections. A read-along resource (and a jam-along percussion track) for *The Llama…* is available at the Interactive Rhythm website: *https://interactiverhythm.com/product/the-llama-who-rocks-in-her-polka-dot-socks/*

The culminating event of my program is an interactive drum circle. Here, I model the things that Lulu did in the book, such as including everyone, bringing down the volume, listening to each other, creating rhythms, call-and-response, giving opportunities for solos, and trading instruments with each other. We end with a big dance party, playing small handheld instruments to facilitate movement. Programs designed to foster life lessons and character development can build to an ending when we reflect and discuss specific educational themes prompted by questions such as: What did we do? What happened? What did we learn? How can we continue to learn and apply our new understanding at home, at school, and in community life?

TEACHING APPLICATIONS

This book would be designated by elementary school teachers as a mentor text because it teaches such lessons as life skills, compassion, and inclusion. Mentor texts are normally short and engaging, and they provide a context that is relatable to the students. Mentor texts are used by teachers, especially literacy specialists, for many different learning outcomes in a strategy known as close reading (a term included in the Common Core Standards for K–12 education). Close reading requires reading and discussing the text, as opposed to being told about the text by a teacher. A first reading is done to comprehend the plot or key ideas and details of the text. A second reading focuses on how the author organized the story, what literary devices were used, and why the author chose particular words. Finally, a third reading would explore deep questions: What was the author's point? What does the book have to say to me about my life or my world? How does this story relate to my personal beliefs and experiences?

Julie Tuley, a veteran first- and second-grade teacher with more than 30 years of experience, discussed how she would use the book. She would have the students read the book before a drum circle to prepare them for the drum circle experience. She would also guide close readings of the book several times after the drum circle in order to address academic vocabulary and check the students' understanding of the text. This would lead to a circle-time discussion in which the students would share their unique "gifts" prompted by the question "How do you rock?" She would bridge into a related writing lesson the next day, in which the students would write about "how they rock."

These lessons would support social and emotional learning (SEL), the process through which children develop healthy identities, manage emotions, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. SEL can be woven into the fabric of a school's curriculum to make lessons more personal and relatable to students. Teachers often have students journal (write about) their thoughts and feelings on lessons (e.g., teamwork, understanding others, and problem-solving), which helps them succeed in school and beyond.

CONCLUSION

This book is a valuable new resource for promoting interactive drumming, arts integration, music education, literacy, and social emotional learning.

Elementary teachers and parents can help young readers extend their learning with additional activities: find objects with which to make music, build musical instruments, create (improvise and compose) rhythms, study (compare and contrast) world drumming traditions; explore musical elements (e.g., timbre, rhythm, meter, drumming technique, musical processes, and form), and organize their own drum circle. From these experiences children may develop an understanding of ensemble (synergy, community, and entrainment); recognize the value of each person's contribution; realize that we are all drummers and musicians; and appreciate diverse musical, cultural, and personal experiences.

An additional teaching resources is by elementary general music specialist Jeanette Mihalchik, who developed lesson plans for *The Llama Who Rocks in Her Polka Dot Socks!* She provides directions for reading the book, adding a melody and "Orffestration" (glockenspiel, xylophone, metallophone accompaniment) to be sung at each page turn, leading a percussion circle, and opportunities for students to improvise on their instruments: *https://thehappymusicteacher.com/llama*.

Space limitations prohibit the author from undertaking an in-depth discussion of polka dot socks. You are invited to read the book!

The Llama Who Rocks in Her Polka Socks! is part of the ongoing Rhythm Rhyme Series. Find out more at *www.interactiveRhythm.com/RhythmRhymeSeries*.

Robert J. Damm is Professor of Music at Mississippi State University, where he teaches classes about World Music, Music of Africa, Music of Latin America, Native American Music, African American Music, World Drumming. and the Mississippi Blues. He studied music and culture in Cuba, Ghana, and Mali. He is a certified Orff-Schulwerk teacher and a Smithsonian Folkways certified teacher of world music. His teaching reflects his commitment to community engagement, best practices in interdisciplinary collaboration, experiential learning, and the African philosophy of human interconnectedness known as Ubuntu.

Spotlight Series with Black Percussionists: An interview series by Julie Spencer

Marvin Sparks

Experiences and responses to the question "What would you like more people to better understand about racism?"

The creative versatility and professional accomplishments of Marvin R. Sparks, Jr. are a testimony not only to the deep reservoir of his talents and passionate commitment to percussion, but to his love of life-long learning and generously guiding the students who are fortunate enough to have his mentoring. He has worked throughout the United States as a drummer and percussionist, music director, producer, professor, clinician, program recruiter, consultant, founder of festivals and performance organizations, composer, writer, tech advisor, systems manager, and music arranger. Whether as a studio musician with over 200 credits for television and radio commercials, or in his teaching, Sparks' expertise, hard work, and positive attitude have resulted in an impressive career full of performances and recordings with music legends across different genres. He's worked with Randy Brecker, Ernie Watts, Ndugu Chancler, Roy Ayers, Joe Henderson, Max Roach, and Billy Preston in the world of jazz. In country music Sparks has recorded with Willie Nelson. In blues, soul, and pop he has played with Aretha Franklin, Marvin Hamlish, and Ray Charles. Third Rail and Maxx Traxx were his own successful funk rock bands; He's been active in mega-church music ministries with such gospel greats as Della Reese and in world music ensembles. Marvin has been heard with the Chicago Civic Orchestra, the orchestras of Gladys Knight, the Kingwood Pops, and a blues orchestra conducted by Calvin Owens, the orchestra of Danny Ward, and Symphony Inspira that specializes in Anime music, and he has been at home with the Houston Latin American Philharmonic Orchestra for the past 12 years. He has also played in numerous musical productions. At PASIC 2016 he was invited by the PAS World Percussion Committee to speak on a panel discussion, "Rhythm and Race: Racial Identity in World Percussion Study, Performance, and Teaching."

You can't take anything for granted. You have to hold yourself to the highest standard. If you see other people doing certain things, you can't take it for granted that you can do that same thing. You have to remember that impressions matter. Ndugu told me one year at a jazz conference to put on my suit and look my best. Just because other people dress casually at a conference doesn't mean that you should. Donald Meade taught me to introduce myself to other Black educators at conferences. For

instance, at PASIC, at the beginning, there were not many of us there. I noticed that a lot of white people thought being around Black people was okay. I knew what that world was, where I was one of the only Black people, because I went to an integrated high school. From the beginning, we always made it a point to introduce ourselves and then to keep in touch. We introduce all our students to people, even if they don't think it's that important. We developed that whole attitude of camaraderie because you shouldn't be a "lone ranger" at a conference.

I have had a lot of great colleagues who look out for each other, and give me work, not based on race. In America things are going back and forth a lot. You have to be prepared for people who might have a negative response to you because you're Black. But for all percussionists, white and Black, it's important that we are gracious. We have to be gracious about getting opportunities and deflect whatever is negative around us.

My parents were from Arcola, Mississippi, and every summer I can remember going there and having to ride in the back of the bus and seeing the "white" and "colored" drinking fountains. When the movie *Roots* came out, my parents did not want to watch it because they said, "We grew up in that and don't want to see it again."

I grew up in Chicago, which is the most segregated city in the U.S. divided into grids. I grew up on the Southside in a Black neighborhood called Morgan Park. This is where hardworking Black people bought homes. We lived right by the tracks. The street that racially divided this area was Vincennes, and the other side of the street was the white neighborhood, Beverly Hills. I went to an all-Black grammar school and took free piano lessons from a lady at the church, Ms. Hooks, and the church had a group who came out and gave music lessons on Saturdays. I took drum lessons, and they held Fall and Spring concerts in the suburbs for all participants in the program.

From 1967–71 I attended Morgan Park High School. It was integrated. When I was in high school, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, and we had a race riot. Being in the band, I developed a great relationship with my white classmates and director, which afforded me many opportunities. One of my classmates was James Dutton's son. James Dutton was the Director of Percussion at American Conservatory and I was afforded the opportunity to study with him. In turn, I became a member of the All-City Band and Orchestra during my junior and senior years. I was a classical percussionist in high school, not playing drumset or jazz.

There were very few Black students, but we had a couple of Black assistant band directors. At that point in my life, I didn't recognize racism as much but knew about it. In high school, we performed several musicals with full orchestra. We had the cast parties in Beverly Hills — the white neighborhood. While in high school, I remember taking lessons at my band director's private school, which was deep in the white neighborhood. Sometimes, I would ride the bus, and there were some occasions where whites confronted me with the N-word and violence.

At the high school I attended, I played on the baseball team. There were three or four Black players on the team; the rest of the team was white. We traveled to another school for a game one day, and it was in an economically depressed area called the projects. The other team, and all the people rooting for them at the game, were Black. Our team won the game — with mostly white players. All the people at the game, including the other players, began to attack our cars. I was in a car with my Black teammates. They didn't touch our car, just the cars with the white players. I think the white players on my team never forgot that. It may have caused some of them to become more racist.

In 1971 I got a scholarship to University of Illinois and studied with Tom Siwe. I was the only Black percussion major, and I participated in two worlds: the white percussion world and Black culture on campus. During my audition, Robert Ray, the director of the Black Chorus, the university gospel ensemble, met me and made me a member of his group. We developed a strong relationship because he knew about both worlds. In college, I played more drumset and gravitated to "Black culture."

After graduation, I traveled back to Chicago and began doing jingle and studio work. I was a member of the union but only worked with Black producers. I knew many of the musical theater people because I would go to the drum shops every Saturday when I was in All-City band and played in the Roosevelt U. band when I was in high school. They knew me but wouldn't hire me.

Then, I got a break. One of the white percussionists gave me a call to do *The King and I* with Yul Brenner. The only reason I was hired — and I was the only Black musician they hired — was because they didn't have any Blacks in the orchestra and were being pressured. Later, I was able to work and sub for several of my friends for many of the "Black shows" including *The Wiz*.

During this same period, together with the late Terry Marshalls, I started a group called Third Rail/Maxx Traxx, a jazz-fusion/R&B group, and we became one of the top groups in Chicago playing all the major festivals. We recorded two albums, *Third Rail* and *Maxx Traxx*, which have been reissued by Numero Group. This group had a white manager and record producer, played original music that was a combination of Black R&B, and we had a live show that had "rock" edges. Two members were white; three members were Black. We played for groups and organizations of all nationalities.

Through the years, I have faced several occasions where white people I worked with would never acknowledge racism. When I came to the U. of Houston, one of the reasons they hired me was because they got funding to hire minority faculty. They didn't have any Black faculty at that time. But I knew from the first faculty meeting that they didn't want to hear anything I had to say. There was only one faculty member, Jeff Lerner, who was from New York City and went to Juilliard, who was a contractor and hired me for several musical theater shows including *Ragtime*, *Titanic*, *Will Rogers Follies*, and several orchestral jobs throughout

the years. This relationship helped me to sub for *The Color Purple* throughout the country.

As I have worked in the academic arena, and in the years of going to all of the conventions including Midwest, PASIC, TMEA, TBA, etc., the main reason I have gotten a chance to present was because I had an undeniable Afro-Cuban Ensemble at U. of Houston, and at that time, starting in 1990, the academic percussion world had not embraced world music. There were times especially in the 1990s when I wrote letters to the top leaders of PASIC about including HBCU groups, but these requests were ignored. It finally took Robin Engelman from Nexus to insist on including Black percussion. I connected him with Pedro Orey, who brought the Bethune Cookman College drumline, and Rodney Goods, who brought his middle school percussion group.

In the educational jazz world, we have developed our own platform with the Donald Meade Jazz Griot Award that is presented at the annual JEN conference, which brings me satisfaction. The late Donald Meade, well known in the world of percussion, was my mentor. Ironically, right now in my life I primarily work with white people, and they are pretty good to me — very kind and respectful.

One of my former students, Matthew Henry, and I have often talked about race and racism. He attended the University of Houston in 1997 during my last year teaching there. When I moved to St. Louis to teach at University of Missouri Saint Louis, Matthew followed me there, and he is now the Director of Percussion. He is a well-known world-music percussionist, skilled in Cuban and African percussion. He has battled to be recognized in these areas as a white percussionist, but many of the masters in these areas know him well. We have always shared our thoughts and experiences about racism from both sides. My goal is to surround myself with people who have good hearts no matter what race they are. Always remember, there are good and bad people in all races.

LINK

Sparks Educational Services: *https://sparksedproserv.com*

The Spotlight Series with Black Percussionists was generated from conversations and communication between artists and Julie Spencer that began in 2020. Spencer is an American composer, percussionist, and artist living in Germany. PN

About Marimba — A General Vision

By Emmanuel Séjourné

When invited to write about the marimba, I asked myself, "What can I say?" Many articles have been written, and numerous lists of works are circulating, as well as a number of technical books. My triple status as percussionist, composer, and teacher — which I constantly connect — perhaps allows me to see certain aspects in a general vision. I will therefore evoke two aspects that seem important to me, by referring to historical elements:

1. Consequence of the evolution of instruments on composers and performers;

2. Pedagogy and good instrumental practice.

First, I will discuss (briefly, I reassure you) the history of keyboards. In the 14th century, different keyboards appeared, with struck or plucked strings: the clavichord, épinette des Vosges, and the virginal. The 16th century saw the emergence of a number of varied harpsichords in Europe, many with different ranges and sounds — each manufacturer giving free rein to their inventiveness and imagination with different construction designs, mechanisms, and sizes. There is even a "broken" harpsichord in three parts, intended to be easily transported. An interesting invention appeared on certain prototypes: the pedal.

The 17th and 18th century saw the heyday of the large harpsichord. At the time, Baroque musicians used their thumbs little or not at all. Innovative Johann Sebastian Bach developed the use of the thumb as a pivot finger, allowing the hand to move around the keyboard much more easily. This technique revolutionized the playing of instrumentalists.

At the same time, harpsichord makers, in search of more instrumental power, gradually developed the pianoforte with a string-striking mechanism. The first instruments date from 1709, developed by Cristofori. Little by little, the pianoforte continued to be developed, increasing in range, starting from around five octaves (Mozart period) to six octaves around 1810 (Beethoven's last works include these added notes), to seven octaves around 1820, then seven and a half octaves, like modern pianos.

Sébastien Érard built his first pianoforte in 1777. He developed the modern piano with his staple technique in 1808, which fixed the piano strings. But it was above all his "double escapement" system in 1821 that revolutionized the use of the piano. This allowed a note to be replayed without waiting for

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

Are we moving towards a standardization of the marimba or not?

the key to be raised, and enabled a virtuosity that was impossible until then. Numerous technical improvements — the use of pedals, a widened possible range of dynamics, and extent of the keyboard — allowed the arrival of the modern piano. Composers and virtuoso pianists (sometimes they are the same: Chopin, Liszt, Brahms, and many others) seized these new developments, and shook up the pianistic literature.

Furthermore — unlike harpsichords and other plucked string instruments; also, unlike organs, each of which is unique — the modern piano, through its standardization, allows the pianist to have the same physical and tactile cues whatever the location and brand of the piano. Whether it is an upright piano, a small or a grand piano, the performer will not be affected, and will always have an 88-note keyboard, white keys 2.3cm wide, black keys 0.9cm wide, and a space between each key of 1mm.

We thus see in the evolution of the piano the positive consequences of an evolution of violin making on practice and musical innovation, and vice versa. The two go hand in hand. Historically, there has always been a strong relationship between musicians and instrument manufacturers (Bach/Silbermann, Liszt/Érard, Chopin/Pleyel, etc.): an essential relationship for both.

If we compare the history of the piano and our percussion keyboards, we are at the very beginning of the pianoforte, that is to say, in the 18th century, a time when each manufacturer had its norms, its standards, its particularities: a rich and interesting period. Considering the piano, are we moving towards a standardization of the marimba or not? Is it necessary? In all sincerity, I don't know. The future will tell.

As marimba players who are often accustomed to one make of instrument, sometimes it is difficult to quickly adapt to other standards (width or length of slats, spacing, etc.). The only thing I am sure of is that we need to collaborate and work with the manufacturers of instruments and drumsticks to continue to develop our artistic practice.

PEDAGOGY AND GOOD INSTRUMENTAL PRACTICE

While not really talking specifically about the marimba, I share with you a few quotes, written almost 300 years ago, that are still relevant today and resonate with the practice or teaching of an instrument. In 1753, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–88), son of Johann Sebastian Bach, wrote an essay on the true way of playing keyboard instruments. Here are some excerpts. These axioms should be displayed in all classrooms and work studios.

"Listening is absolutely necessary. There are still things that we cannot explain, let alone write, and that we can only learn by listening."

"Anyone who has the opportunity, at the same time, to learn the art of singing and to regularly listen to good singers will benefit greatly and will facilitate the art of playing well."

"It is always good to start by singing a phrase out loud to yourself, in order to find the right execution."

"Good instrumental playing should have roundness, clarity, and naturalness and not be jerky, noisy, and clumsy. We must immediately teach the good positions and eliminate bad habits; otherwise, we deprive the student of any possibility of achieving something good with stiff and tense fingers."

"A good performance is therefore immediately recognized by the fact that all the notes are heard with ease. This is where the roundness, purity, and fluidity of the game are born."

"Good execution can elevate even a mediocre composition."

"Good use of fingers is inseparable from the art of playing well. With poor skill we lose more than we can compensate for with all the art and good taste imaginable. All the ease of playing depends on the fingerings and experience shows that a mediocre mind, but whose fingers have good habits, will always prevail over the best musician if the latter has bad fingerings."

"If the musician understands proper fingering, he will play the most difficult pieces in such a way that his hand movements will hardly be noticed, provided he has not developed the habit of making unnecessary gestures. Listening to him, one will have the impression that everything seems easy to him, while another will, on the contrary, play the easiest pieces with the worst clumsiness."

"The musician must sit in the middle of the keyboard in order to be able to play the highest and lowest notes with ease. When playing, the fingers must be flexed and the nerves relaxed. Stiffness hinders all movement."

"If some are tempted, because of their skill, to play these pieces as an open book, I urge them to first look at them with the appropriate attention down to their smallest details, before wanting to perform them."

"You should not undertake anything when playing in public that you cannot completely master, because you are rarely as relaxed as you should be. (Practice and work at home.) All these precautions are essential so that the execution is easy and smooth and to be able to get rid of this anxious expression which, far from sharpening the mind of the listener, can only annoy him."

"You have to try to play on an instrument that you don't know, about which no one cares whether it is good or bad, whether it is fit to be played or not."

"To learn to find the keys without looking at them when you have to play by sight, you will do well to play regularly by heart and in the dark."

"We must not believe that the strength of a harpsichordist rests on his velocity alone. Not everyone who professes to play fast has a clear, pleasant sound and phrasing."

As they say in French, Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach "knocks open doors." This all seems obvious. But it is clear that many instrumental playing problems among percussionists come from:

- poor management of work and deadlines
- absence of sung conception of the musical phrase
- bad positioning or bad fingering that "stiffens" the music, and can at the same time trigger tendinitis or physical problems

These common-sense tips span the centuries and are valid for the practice of all musical instruments.

I will therefore end this little article by achieving the feat of not talking about marimba or at least indirectly, with this sentence from Bach senior: *"Incessant work, analysis, reflection, lots of writing, endless self-correction — that's my secret."*

Emmanuel Séjourné is a composer, percussionist, and teacher of international renown. His career ranges from classical music to improvised music. As a composer, his music is romantic and energetic, inspired both by the Western classical tradition and by popular culture (jazz, rock, "extra-Européan"). Séjourné received prizes for Best Music for Drama at the Festival d'Avignon, the Prix de l'Academie du Disque Français, and the Repertoire Prize awarded by the French Music Publishers for his piece, "Khamsin." Percussionist Aurélien Gignoux won the Victoires de la Musique 2021 by playing Séjourné's composition "Attraction."

Performing as a soloist, as well as wih the ensemble, Accroche-Note, Séjourné has premiered over a hundred pieces of music. He is Head Teacher of the Percussion Department at the Strasbourg Superior Academy of Music and Arts in France, and Associate Professor at HEMU Lausanne in Switzerland. Séjourné has presented master classes around the world, and has been a member of the jury for numerous international competitions including ARD Munich, Geneva, Tromp, and Salzburg. In tribute to his many activities, he was named "Doctor Honoris Causa" by the National Academy of Music of Bulgaria (2019). *www.emmanuelsejourne.com*.

Études for Overcoming Technical Challenges

Express and improvise freely

By Jonny Mansfield

The Cambridge dictionary defines "étude" as "a piece of music intended to be played to improve a musician's technical skills. The word comes from the French word for 'study'." Its use within the English language began in 1826 in *The Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* 1826: Volume 8 (according to the English Oxford Dictionary). Following the Age of Enlightenment, the early 19th century saw the expansion of the middle class and therefore more amateur musicians (Burkholder et al., 2019). Music publishers began to publish works (predominantly for keyboard) that allowed people to study music. One of the most famous exponents of the étude is Carl Czerny, who from the age of 10 studied with Beethoven and went on to teach Franz Liszt, who later published his "Études d'Execution Transcendante" with a dedication to Czerny (Rowland, 1998). Although études are usually only associated with Western Classical music, pieces of music that have a dual didactic and artistic purpose have been prevalent in cultures predating the 19th century.

An important figure within Indian Carnatic Classical music was Purandara Dasa, born in 1484. Dasa was responsible for the systemization of teaching Carnatic music, introducing the raga Mayamalavagowla as the fundamental scale for musical instruction as well as a series of graded lessons (ccrtindia.gov.in/carnatic-classical-music). This systemization has remained the same up until the present day. One musical form used to develop a musician's bhava (emotional expression), raga (mode/melody), and tala (rhythm) is called Varnam.

"Varnam(s) form a genre of Carnatic music that bridges the gap between pedagogical études and concert music. A varnam is a composition explicitly designed to present the raga in which it is composed in all of its subtleties of ornamentation, special phrases, and overall pitch movement; it teaches the student how to sing, perform, and eventually improvise in its raga, as well as serving as sort of raga dictionary, on which other compositions and performances are based." (Morris, 2011)

The shakuhachi is an end-blown bamboo flute that has existed in Japan since the eighth century. The shakuhachi was played by mendicant monks called komusō, who belonged to a subsect of Rinzai Zen Buddhism (*www.komuso.com*, n.d.). The honkyoku is a repertoire of pieces written for the shakuhachi by the komusō; it is notated using the katakana alphabet. Honkyoku pieces serve a dual purpose: they are used for meditation and for learning to control the breath and manual dexterity needed to play the shakuhachi. (Lee, 1993)

Other musical traditions, such as Turkish Mesk, Arabic Maqam, Gaelic and Nordic folk, and West-African Mande music, among others, also involve dual-function didactic and performative musical elements. These traditions are primarily transmitted through aural methods.

MY ÉTUDES

It's clear that the étude has a rich history and deep roots, I'll begin to break down some of the reasons for writing my own études, both as didactic and performance pieces. I confess to having had little knowledge and awareness of the history prior to doing this research, but it provides richer context, and I expect it will inform future compositions. When I began writing études, I realized that technique was inseparable from sound production. The greater the variety of techniques we can employ, the more sounds and modes of expression we can access. An exploration of our technique is, simultaneously, also an exploration of our sound.

For me, the main source of sound exploration was inspiration from other vibra-

phonists; after being struck musically by something someone had played, I would be intrigued to investigate the techniques used to achieve the sound they'd made — a reverse engineering of the statement above: "Exploring technique is, therefore, also an exploration of our sound." Thus, these are reciprocal: exploration of sound informing technique informing sound, and so on. I would then task myself to write a piece that included that technique within the framework of my musical language and expression.

Having said that the source of inspiration was primarily from other vibraphonists, Étude 1 was inspired by the incredible guitarist Julian Lage. He had released a series of études on YouTube (you can listen to one here: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdedBrenPsk*). From a musical point of view, I wanted to achieve a piece where I'm constantly playing fast passages of many notes, but there is a feeling and sense of space. Most of the rotation exercises I had practiced were based around three- or four-note patterns, so this five-note pattern not only helped with dexterity but allowed me to explore more colorful harmony, too. I would practice this étude trying to accent each eighth note in the bar — i.e., playing once through accenting the first of five, then the second, third, and so on, eventually coming up with different variations, i.e., 1+2+4.

Étude 2 was inspired by the incredible British vibraphonist Lewis Wright. Specifically, his piece called "Mettle" features a 12-tone row in a cycle of 4ths in the left hand. Something I wanted to become more fluent in was being able to hold down an ostinato in my left hand while playing melodies with my right — similar to the way some of my favorite pianists (Shai Maestro, Gerald Clayton, and Vardan Ovsepian) do it. So, when I saw Lewis performing this piece live, I was inspired to write something that would help me become more familiar with that technique. Also, more generally, Lewis' use of harmonizing melodies in the right hand is something I've enjoyed when hearing him play, so I tried to incorporate that in this étude also.

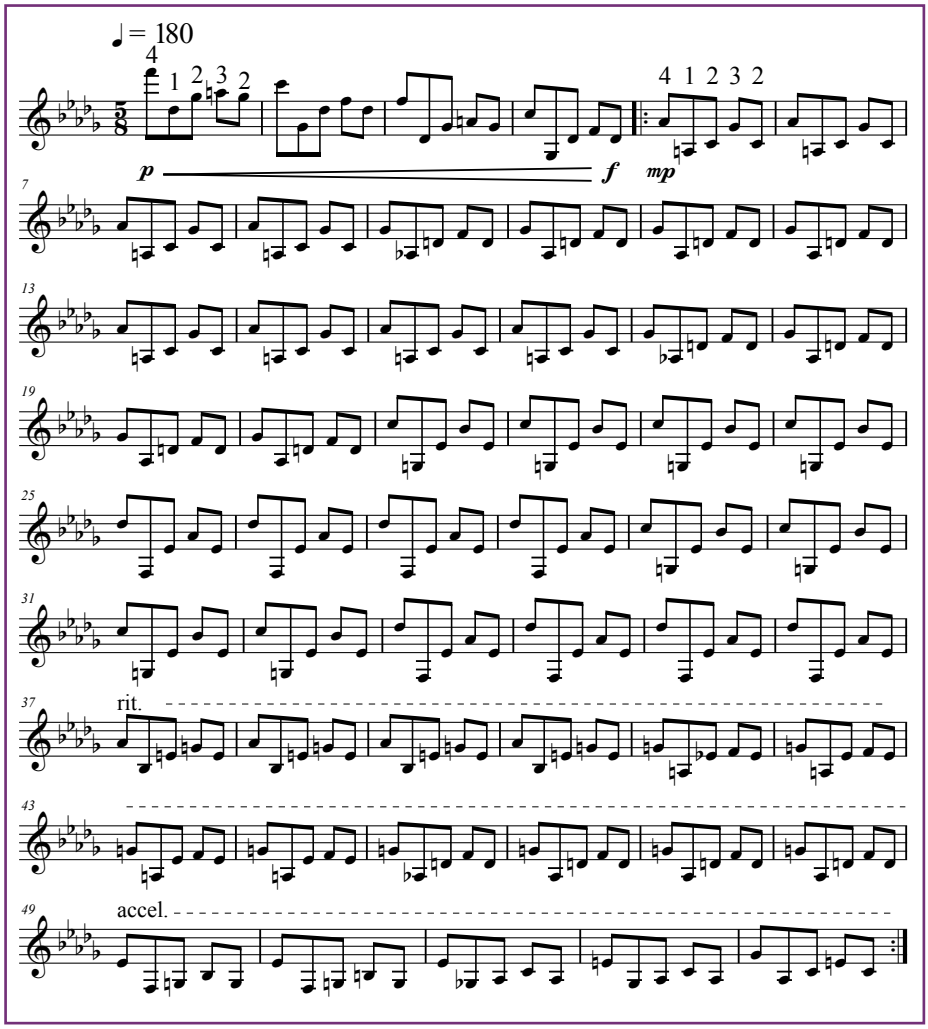
Étude 3 was inspired by the playing of Joel Ross, one of my favorite musicians to listen to. I love that Joel's playing completely transcends the instrument itself; I'm not aware that he's playing the vibraphone most of the time. Technical ways in which he can achieve that, I think, is having a fluidity between singles and doubles. This étude focuses on that.

Étude 4 was inspired by the incredible vibes player, drummer, and all-round musician Jim Hart. I studied with Jim at the Royal Academy of Music when I first moved to London, and I continually work on elements we looked at in lessons to this day. He's an incredible teacher and can explain concepts from many different angles and instruments. After focusing on stick and hand independence with the previous études, I wanted to look at piston strokes with some tricky intervals as well as some rhythmic practice within 9/8.

Étude 5 was a slightly different process from the rest of the études, as it didn't initially come from trying to hone a particular technique. I wrote it after a particularly busy time of touring and releasing music, and I was questioning whether there was any relevance to the performing I'd been doing or whether it was a vanity project. In times of self-questioning, I find it helpful to improvise and connect with playing the vibes. This waltz-like piece arose at that time, and it serves as a reminder to keep questioning "Why am I doing this?"

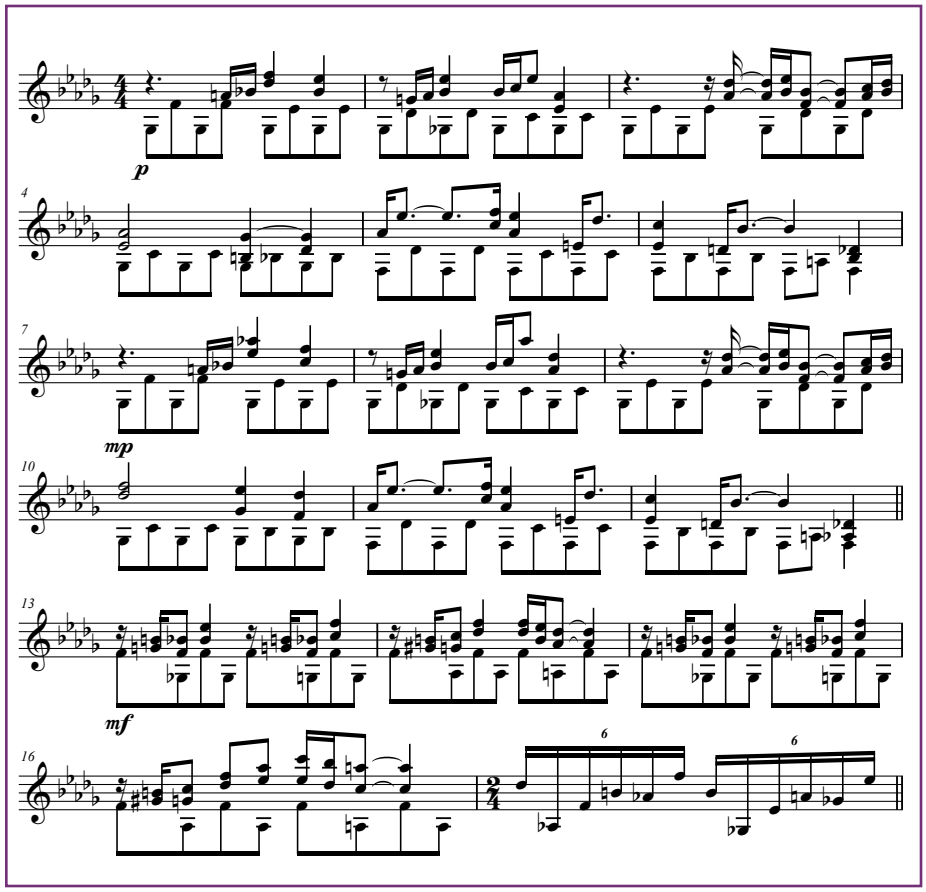
Étude 1 excerpt

You can see me playing Étude 1 here: https://youtu.be/uBv2kEDMVJU?si=Gte51_61tbZ8xjgb



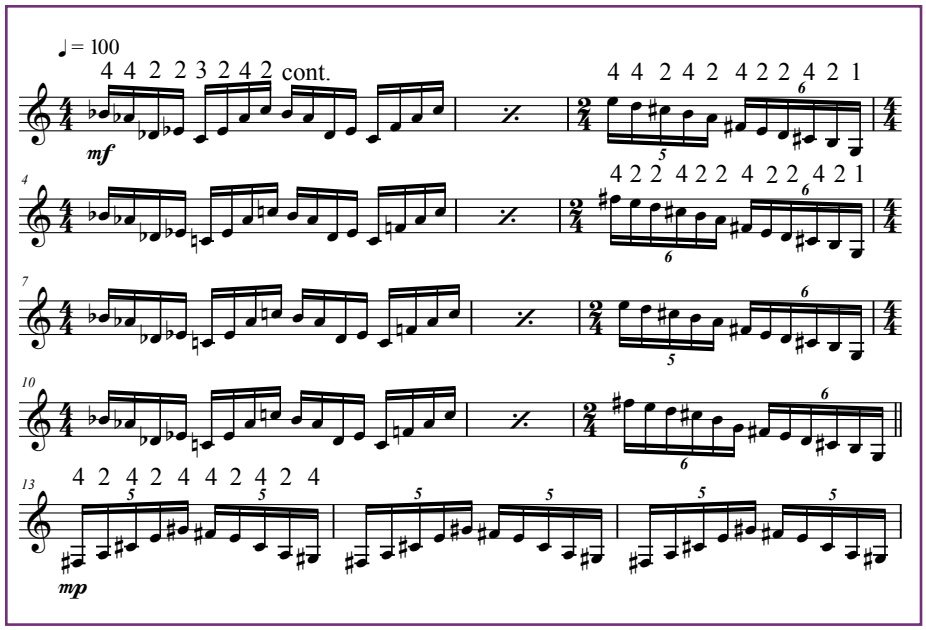
Étude 2 excerpt

You can see me playing Étude 2 here: https://youtu.be/JxaFgTV6Azw?si=nireGIsvVjAZV18q



Étude 3 excerpt

You can see me playing Étude 3 here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixoXERXReOY



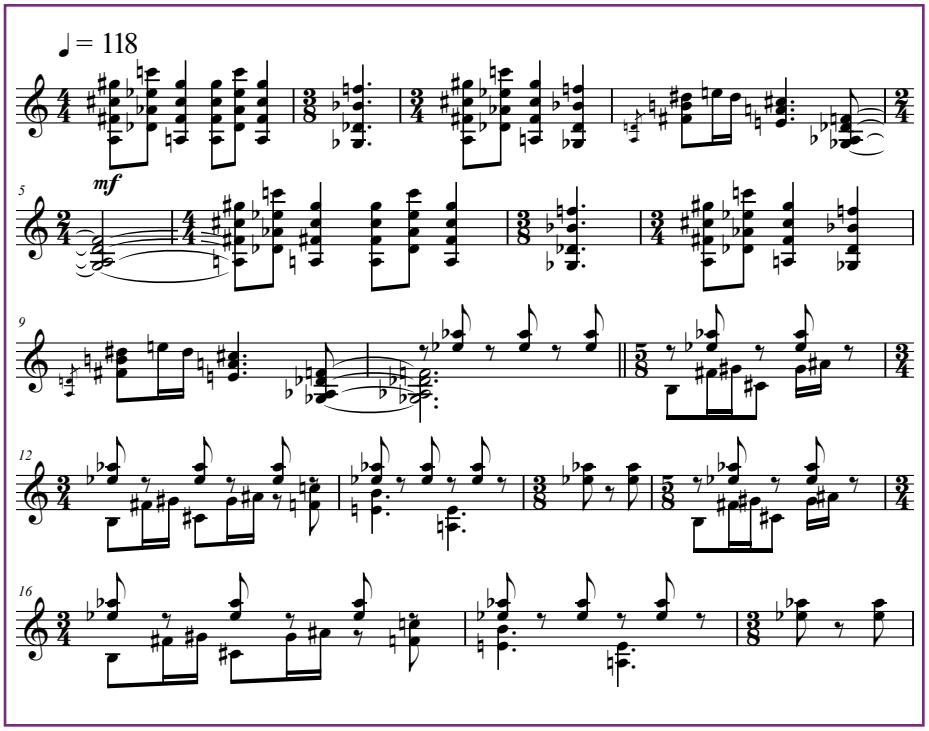
CALL FOR ARTICLES

Percussive Notes welcomes articles of interest to percussionists and drummers involved in all genres of music. We are interested in articles that inform and educate percussionists and drummers in the areas of drumset, health and wellness, marching percussion, world percussion, keyboard percussion, and orchestral/symphonic percussion. We also welcome percussion-related articles on education and technology. Individual articles can deal with technique, scholarly research, and/or historical information.

Before submitting an article, please read the submission guidelines at *percussivearts.tfaforms.net/4728494*.

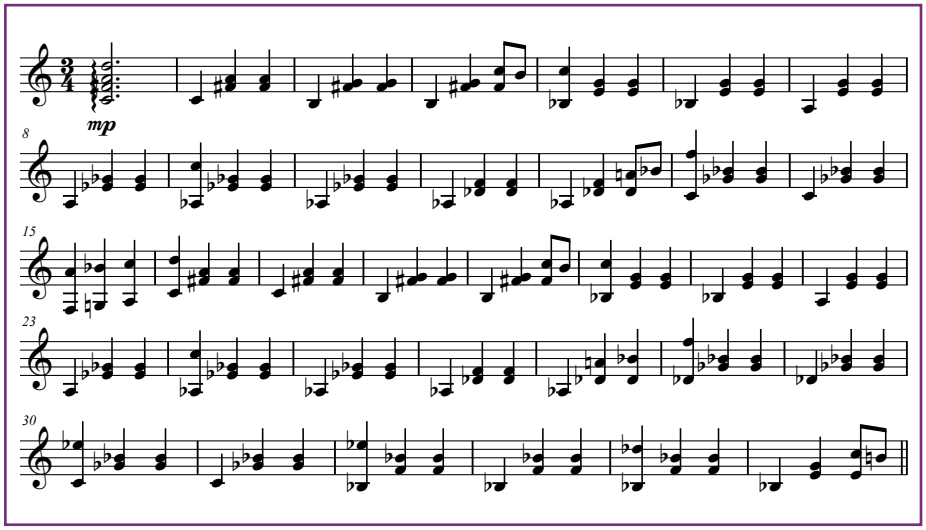
Étude 4 excerpt

You can see me playing Étude 4 here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLoXHaUmxeQ



Étude 5 excerpt

You can see me playing Étude 5 here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IuJ_uPiZib0



Étude 6 was inspired by guitarists who utilize a hammer-on sound with their left hand (not re-strumming the string with their right hand), specifically John Martyn, Sam Amidon, and Justin Vernon. I love this sound and wanted to emulate it on the vibes. What I like about it on the guitar is that resonance from other strings vibrating from previous notes carries over. The way I translated that onto the vibes was with single-hand "flamed" stick dampening. This is difficult to describe in text but makes sense if you watch the video. I then wrote this étude to incorporate this technique into a musical setting.

CONCLUSION

I hope this article has given some insight into the history and use of the étude as well as insight into my approach to trying to improve my fluency on the instrument and overall musicianship. This was a preview of a larger set of études that I will publish in the coming months. I hope these excerpts and examples provide players of all levels insight into my approach. Currently, I'm particularly inspired by the playing of Patricia Brennan and Simon Moullier so I plan to write some more études to delve deeper into aspects of their playing.

To reiterate the previously stated idea that exploring technique is to explore sound, as well as the reverse of that statement, through writing these études, I feel I have a greater understanding of my taste and the sound that I am striving to achieve than before this process. I recommend this process to my students and will continue this process myself.

All Études by Jonny Mansfield

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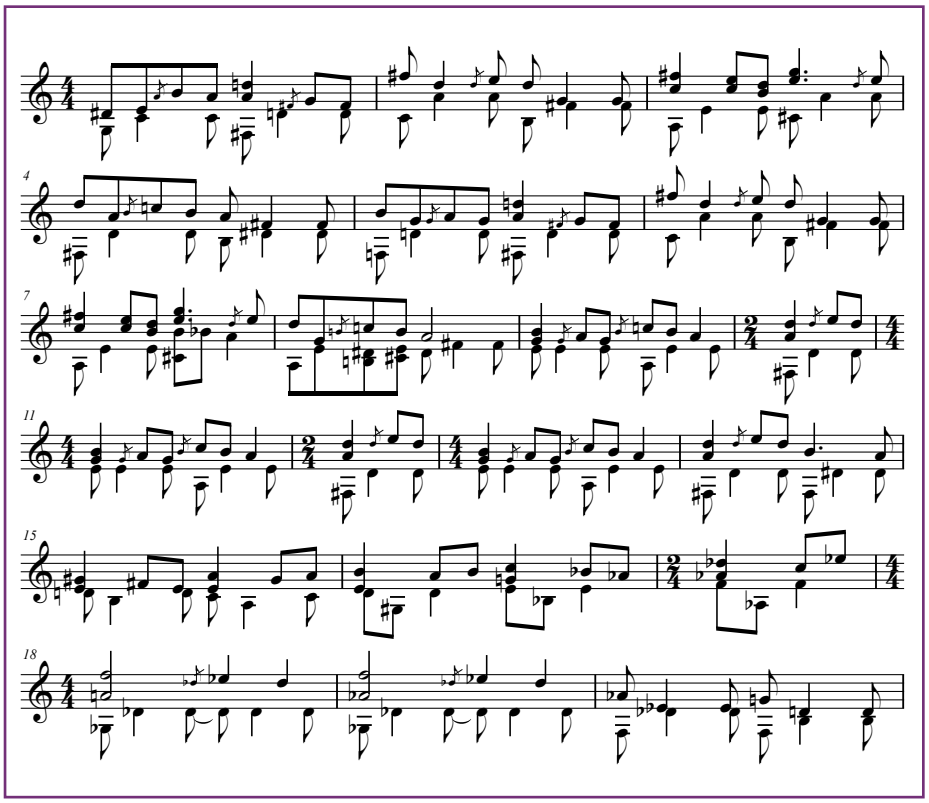
Étude 6 excerpt

You can see me playing Étude 6 here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFNOb0Id2eg



Jonny Mansfield is an award-winning vibraphonist, composer, and educator based in London, U.K. He has worked with respected musicians including Chris Potter, Orlando Weeks, and Yazz Ahmed and has toured worldwide and performed at major venues such as the Bimhaus, SXSW festival, and the Royal Albert Hall. In 2018, Jonny was awarded the Kenny Wheeler Jazz Prize and subsequently signed to Edition Records to release his debut album *Elftet*. He has subsequently released two more albums on his label Resonant Postcards. Jonny teaches vibraphone at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. For more information visit *www.jonnymansfield.com*.

Fueling Your Day with Caffeine?

By Drew Workman

We all know the feeling: it is late at night, and you are exhausted. Whether it is because you have been cramming for an exam for hours, staying up late to rehearse for a performance, working on a tight deadline for a work project, or simply just trying to enjoy your day-to-day life, sometimes reaching for that coffee cup or energy drink feels like the only way to power through. Caffeine gives us that much needed jolt of energy, but what happens if we overdo it? How much is too much? What are the long-term effects on our body, and what can we do to avoid them?

PROS AND CONS

Caffeine is a stimulant that has become a normal part of many of our daily routines. From your morning cup of coffee to your late-night energy drink used to give you a second wind, caffeine is a go-to for many people looking for a quick energy boost. However, like most other things, caffeine has its pros and cons.

Pros

Improved mental alertness: Caffeine is well known for helping you stay awake. It does so by blocking a neurotransmitter called adenosine that tells you to go to sleep, thus keeping you honed-in and attentive.

Physical energy boost: Caffeine stimulates an adrenaline release that increases your physical energy. This makes it a very popular drink choice for performers, athletes, and exercise enthusiasts who are trying to improve their performance — especially when used for endurance sports such as running, biking, or swimming.

Enhanced concentration: Studies show that caffeine can improve certain aspects of cognitive function such as attention, reaction time, and problem-solving skills.

Mood improvement: Caffeine has been shown to also have a mild effect on decreasing depression. It stimulates the production of dopamine, the neurotransmitter associated with pleasure and reward, leading to an improvement in mood and symptoms often associated with depression for some people.

Other health benefits: Research suggests that caffeine may help reduce the risk of several conditions including Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, liver disease, and certain types of cancer. It has also been known to alleviate symptoms of migraines and menopause, and improve heart health in some cases.

Cons

Dependence and addiction: One of the most concerning aspects of caffeine use is its potential to lead to dependence or addiction. If used too frequently, your body becomes reliant on constant caffeine intake and will require it just to function normally for daily tasks. When this requirement is not fulfilled, the body can go through withdrawal symptoms similar to drug addiction, such as headaches, fatigue, irritability, and difficulty concentrating.

Increased anxiety: While in some people caffeine can improve overall mood, it can also exacerbate anxiety in others, particularly in high doses. This is due to its overall stimulant effects, which can lead to an overactive nervous system.

Disrupted sleep patterns: Since caffeine is often used to help you stay awake, it makes sense that it can have a significantly negative impact on sleep, leading to poor sleep quality or even insomnia.

The effects of caffeine can be felt within minutes of consumption, but its half-life (the amount of time it takes for the body to get rid of half of it) is about three to five hours. This means that if you take even a small amount of it later in the day it can still affect your sleep quality. This lack of good quality sleep can lead to a cycle of daytime sleepiness and increased caffeine intake to combat fatigue, further exacerbating the insomnia problem and caffeine dependence. If this happens for a long period of time it can also result in chronic sleep deprivation, which can have many negative effects including

One of the most concerning aspects of caffeine use is its potential to lead to dependence or addiction.

decreased cognitive function, mood disturbances, and increased risk of chronic diseases.

Physical side effects: Overconsumption of caffeine can cause many physical side effects including headaches, a rapid heartbeat, and muscle tremors. As a diuretic, it can lead to frequent urination and even loss of bladder control. In extreme cases, it can cause more serious conditions such as heart palpitations or arrhythmias. These latter side effects can be especially concerning in those with preexisting or a family history of heart conditions.

Collectively, some of these symptoms are often referred to as "jitters," which is something that many caffeine drinkers are familiar with. While these things may seem manageable in the short term, the long-term effects can be more serious and cause chronic health issues.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Most of the time, the negative side effects of caffeine come as a result of overconsumption, which then begs the question, "How much is too much?" The Food and Drug Administration recommends a maximum of 400 mg of caffeine for the average healthy adult. To put it in perspective, that is almost five 8-ounce cups of coffee. It is important to remember that the tolerance of each individual may vary. Just because 400 mg of caffeine is the upper limit, it does not mean that it should be your daily goal. A safer and more manageable amount would be closer to 200 mg per day, as long as you do not notice some of the negative effects mentioned earlier. This is about the equivalent of two to three cups of coffee per day. Limiting your caffeine intake can help you minimize the risks associated with excessive consumption without losing the health benefits.

WHAT SOURCES SHOULD I USE OR AVOID?

Not all sources of caffeine are created equal. It is important to understand where your caffeine is coming from and the overall impact it can have on you and your health. Check the nutrition label or ingredient list to find out what is supplying your caffeine. Here are some common good and bad options that are used all over the world every day.

Coffee is considered one of the most popular sources of caffeine. It is rich in antioxidants and is linked to many health benefits including reducing the risk of Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and certain types of cancers. However, it is best consumed without large amounts of sugar or high-fat creamers because they are known to cancel out some of the benefits that coffee offers.

Green Tea is another great source of caffeine. It has lower amounts of caffeine than coffee, making it a good choice for those who are sensitive to caffeine. It also contains L-theanine. This is an amino acid that promotes relaxation and can counteract the jitters usually felt with caffeine intake.

Energy Drinks and Sodas are never considered a healthy option. I'm sure we all saw this one coming. Many of these drinks contain high levels of caffeine — some even up to 300 mg! — along with added sugars, artificial flavors, and other additives that can be harmful to your health. Many of these drinks lead to a rapid spike of energy followed by the infamous crash associated with their high sugar content, which can contribute to weight gain, type-2 diabetes, heart problems, and other health issues. Energy drinks and sodas play a contributing or even leading role in most conditions.

HOW DO YOU IMPROVE YOUR ENERGY WITHOUT CAFFEINE?

If you find yourself relying on way too much caffeine in a day, consider exploring healthier alternatives. Regular exercise is one of the most effective ways to boost your energy naturally. Physical activity increases the production of endorphins, which can enhance your mood as well as your energy. Even a short walk can help wake you up when you're feeling sluggish.

If you're consistently tired, consider that your body is telling you that your diet is lacking in some way. Complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains and other high-fiber foods, provide a slow and steady energy source throughout the day to help you avoid the energy peaks and valleys that you would normally experience with sugar and caffeine intake. Adding more protein, like lean meats, nuts, and legumes, can also help keep your energy levels steadily higher throughout the day.

Another important addition to the diet is hydration. Many healthcare professionals recommend around 100 ounces per day. Steady hydration throughout the day is essential for maintaining energy levels and overall health. Dehydration can lead to fatigue, so make sure you are having enough water every day.

Finally, get the correct amount of sleep. It seems like an obvious solution, but the best way to avoid needing that steady flow of "joe" for your day is to get the amount of sleep you need. Adults typically need 7–9 hours of sleep per night, and usually fall short of this amount, leading to their overall dependence on caffeine to get through the day. Keeping a regular sleep schedule, even on the weekends and holidays, can help improve your sleep quality and reduce your need for caffeine.

IN CONCLUSION

Caffeine can be a helpful tool when needed and used correctly, but it is important to be aware of how often you are using it. While it may have some benefits, too much of a good thing can be bad for you, leading to side effects and long-term dependency. By balancing decreased caffeine intake with proper nutrition, exercise, and the right amount of sleep, you can enjoy caffeine without the drawbacks.

As with many things in life, moderation is key. Staying aware of the sources of caffeine, the other ingredients incorporated in them, and exploring other healthier alternatives, can help you make informed choices that support your long-term health and well-being.

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The Statement of Teaching Philosophy In and Beyond the Job Search

By Ryan Ebright and Dan Piccolo

Teaching statements, or statements of teaching philosophy, are an important aspect of an academic portfolio that will often be required at every stage of a career in higher education, from the initial hiring phase to formal reviews and promotions. There are many resources available to those seeking advice on how to approach this document, but they tend to be written in general terms that can be applied to a wide range of academic disciplines. As such, the goal of this article is two-fold: first, we have attempted to include the information most relevant to those seeking studio teaching positions; second, we consider unique aspects of teaching percussion as they relate to these narratives.

This article arose from our work with students in the Doctor of Musical Arts program at Bowling Green State University. As is the case with many students who have ambitions to teach at the college level, most of our doctoral students at BGSU have been trained primarily as performers and have little to no formal instruction in the art of teaching. They are asked to generate a teaching statement as part of their professional development training, but the exercise has also proven to be valuable independent of preparing them for the job application process. By reflecting on core values and broad principles, young professionals become more thoughtful and aware teachers themselves, helping to prepare them for their roles as music educators.

BEFORE YOU START WRITING

It is important to consider what you would like to accomplish with your teaching statement before you start writing. How will this document complement your other application materials? What can you say about your teaching that is not evident from looking at your CV? One method that is useful for this style of writing is to write a three-sentence abstract that states your main points as clearly and concisely as possible; this can serve as a guide as you elaborate on the points in your teaching statement.

It is also wise to have a target length in mind. When applying for your first college teaching position, one page is generally adequate. As you progress through the ranks of a position, you may need as many as three pages to illustrate all your points.

Another important step is to seek out models from your mentors, teachers, and colleagues. These can be helpful for pinpointing the style and voice you would like to use, and they can also provide examples of how to organize your statement. For example, some might organize their document based on core teaching values, while others may use a chronological approach to show how their teaching has evolved from their experiences. There are many organizational methods that can work, so you must decide on a structure that best tells your story.

Finally, consider the job posting and research the institution to which you are applying. Knowing your audience and their priorities is essential to having your application advance to the next phase of the process. For example, if the duties include some classroom teaching, you may try to find a way to speak to that in your statement, rather than focusing entirely on your approach to teaching applied lessons.

When speaking directly to the job description, it is important to be honest so you don't come across as disingenuous or say something that you can't live up to later. Emphasize your experience, but also consider speaking aspirationally — for example, "I have sincerely enjoyed working with undergraduate music majors in my

Speak in terms that anyone can understand, and keep the focus on your goals for your students.

current position, but I would be excited to teach in a program that serves both undergraduate and graduate students."

PHILOSOPHY VS. PEDAGOGY

The first teaching statement that most people will write is a Statement of Teaching Philosophy, which is often required in the early rounds of a job search. This document is meant to give the search committee a sense of your teaching style prior to a possible campus visit, where you can demonstrate your teaching in person. Considering the assertion above that many studio teachers have minimal training as educators, committees are likely to consider candidates' teaching philosophies carefully. It will give them a sense of which candidates have the most relevant experience and have most carefully reflected on their approach to teaching.

In general, a teaching philosophy should focus on broad values. It can be helpful to start by answering some questions:

- What is it important to accomplish with a student in one lesson? One semester? Over the course of a degree?
- What would you want your current students to say to prospective students about your teaching style?
- Consider the teachers you have had who inspired you. What do you think they would name as their core educational principles?
- Recall a lesson or class that you taught where you felt particularly proud of what you accomplished. What makes it stand out?

One common pitfall at this stage is mistaking the forest for the trees: an instrument- or topic-specific approach to pedagogy is not the same as a teaching philosophy. Most search committees will not include a percussionist, and some may even include faculty from disciplines outside of music. You don't want to get too bogged down with an in-depth discussion of your personal approach to snare drum technique or spend a paragraph naming your preferred method books. This can be lost on many committee members, and it can also make it seem as though you are flaunting your own knowledge. This issue is especially acute for percussionists, as our field can be somewhat insular; while your doctorate work may have been dominated by the evolution of percussion pedagogy over the past 50 years, committee members may not be aware of this, nor see its relevance to the students at their institution. Speak in terms that anyone can understand, and keep the focus on your goals for your students. Then, you can employ particular pedagogical tactics as exemplars of how you achieve those goals.

MENTORSHIP

Applied teachers have a unique role in students' lives. While most other faculty on campus will have students in one or two classes over the course of their degrees, studio faculty meet with students one-on-one, year after year for the entire course of their degrees. It is important to recognize the importance of that relationship in students' experience, and to acknowledge your role as a mentor. Most search committees will be at least somewhat aware of the significant logistical component to the percussion studio, and the crucial role percussion students play to ensure that day-to-day operations run smoothly. Embrace your role in establishing a positive and productive culture, and let that inform your teaching statement.

Remember: we are teaching *people*, not subject matter.

NUTS, BOLTS, AND CONNECTIONS

Before submitting any of your application materials, be sure to proofread them carefully! Ask teachers, friends, parents, or siblings to read all your writing samples, such as cover letters and teaching philosophies, and give you honest feedback. After reading your teaching statement once, can they summarize your approach to teaching? Is your philosophy concise? Do your materials appear uniform?

Keep in mind that your teaching statement is not viewed in isolation, but as a representation of one of the many facets of your professional identity. In preparing your other materials, you might also consider the extent to which these facets overlap. How has your creative work informed your teaching, and vice versa? If other teaching materials are required, such as sample syllabi or teaching videos, do they accurately reflect your principles?

AN EVOLVING, REFLECTIVE DOCUMENT

This article has provided insight on how to craft a statement of teaching philosophy for a job application, which, for folks who are early in their careers, is usually written as a mostly aspirational document. But just as your teaching style will continue to evolve, so too will your teaching statement change in tandem with your career. After accepting a position, you will likely undergo some form of periodic review, and depending on the nature of your position, you may be eligible for promotion as well. These processes often require you to submit a teaching narrative, which will naturally become more of a reflection on your teaching at that institution. What have you done that has

worked well, and how have you adapted to the needs of your students? Taking the time to carefully craft a thoughtful teaching philosophy for job applications will make you a more attractive candidate, but it can also provide you a strong template for your future reflections on your effectiveness as a teacher.

As you return periodically to your statement throughout your career, ask yourself if and how your stated values continue to underpin your studio teaching, ensemble coaching, or classroom instruction. As you go about connecting theory with praxis, philosophy with pedagogy, you will find that the statement of teaching philosophy has immense value far beyond its role in a job search.

Ryan Ebright is an Associate Professor of Musicology at Bowling Green State University, where he also serves as program coordinator for the DMA in Contemporary Music. His scholarship and writings, which center on opera and experimentalism, have appeared in the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Opera News*, *NewMusicBox*, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, *American Music*, *Rethinking Reich*, and other publications. Beyond his research and teaching, he is active as a vocalist and as a public scholar, with lectures and talks for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Opera Philadelphia, Toledo Symphony, and other organizations.

Dan Piccolo is a percussionist who 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.

Feedback: Finding Man in the Machine

By Jacob Morgan

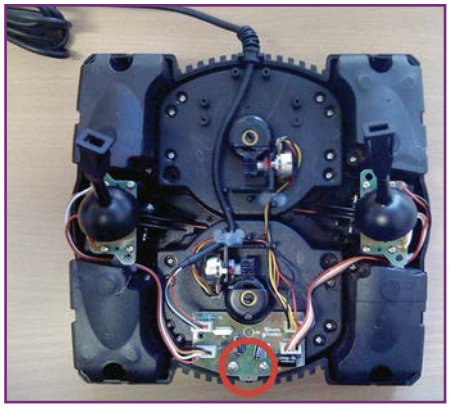
"I don't like to think that I create music. I like to think that I create environments where musicians can organically make music together," explained Dan Trueman in a conversation I had with him last summer. Upon hearing this, everything clicked into place. I had found the ethos behind the project that had been consuming my life recently. For the last seven or eight months I'd had the pleasure of putting together his piece, "Neither Anvil nor Pulley" (2010), a 40-minute, continuous five-movement work for percussion/laptop quartet.

When I initially found the piece, I wondered why it hadn't been more often performed over the decade or so since it had been made public. This was a musical gold mine! How could it remain untapped? As I dug into the score, I discovered the reason for its seldom performance. The demands of the piece are quite high, both in technological complexity and in the difficulty of the music itself. Much of the technology needed was uniquely crafted for this piece, and would be hard to come across, such as a few resoldered game controllers from the 2000s.

Combine this with a few metric concepts that tend to go against every instinct we have as percussionists and you're left with the sort of piece that only gets performed a few times a decade.

With that said, though, I could hardly resist at least giving it a shot. And now, speaking with the composer a few months later, I couldn't help but reflect on how it all came together.

Figure 1. Gametrak Real World Golf tether controllers used to manipulate audio clips in movement II.

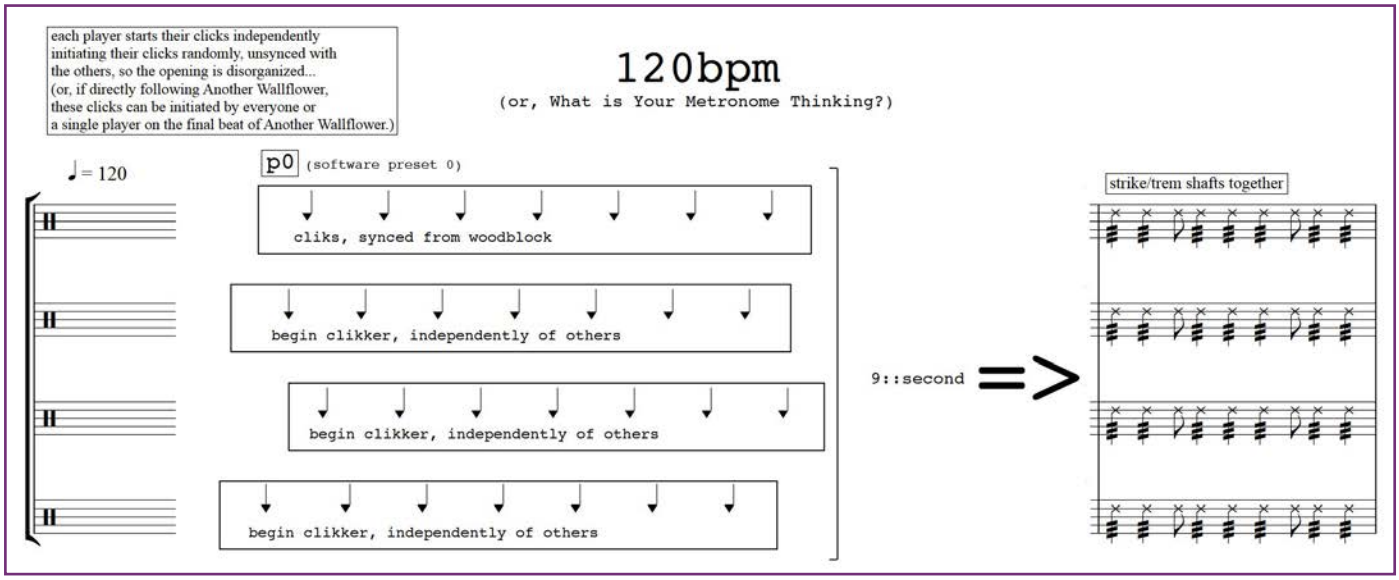


Oftentimes, deciphering the score to a rather open-ended piece of music can leave us doubting our every move. A good first instinct in this situation is to listen to someone else playing the piece, and fortunately for me, Sō Percussion has produced a wonderful recording of "Neither Anvil nor Pulley" (which I would urge everyone to listen to immediately). However, while my project was still in its infancy, I couldn't help but feel this was a bit of a double-edged sword. At every turn our quartet found ourselves questioning whether we were making a decision because it was the right decision for the group, or simply because it's what Sō did. As such, we were left searching for a diamond in the rough, trying to uncover something unique that didn't sound gimmicky or like we were trying too hard to be different.

The biggest example of this was movement IV: "Feedback." In this movement, two speaker drivers are affixed to the heads of a concert bass drum. The bass drum is then played with two microphones, whose audio is run through a tuning filter and played through the speaker drivers, creating a tuned feedback loop whose pitches can be controlled via two MIDI controllers. After the bass drum enters and a few harmonic changes are set in motion by the vibraphonist, two drum machines slowly start up, ruthlessly keeping time in some rather challenging metric loops. Here is where the crux of the movement becomes apparent. While one player works the bass drum, and two players control the filters and drum machines, the fourth player improvises on drumset, keeping time with the increasingly chaotic and accelerating drum machines until an inevitable point of impossibility is reached, and the battle of man vs. machine reaches its apex. This movement, more than any other, is truly left in the hands of the performers. At times, only a collection of pitches are provided, to be distributed and played as desired.

To return to the original problem, how do we arrive at a unique sounding inter-

Figures 2 and 3. In movement II players are occasionally asked to aurally isolate and play to one of four frequently shifting metronomes clicking at once. This becomes even more challenging when the clicks begin rapidly accelerating near the end of the movement.



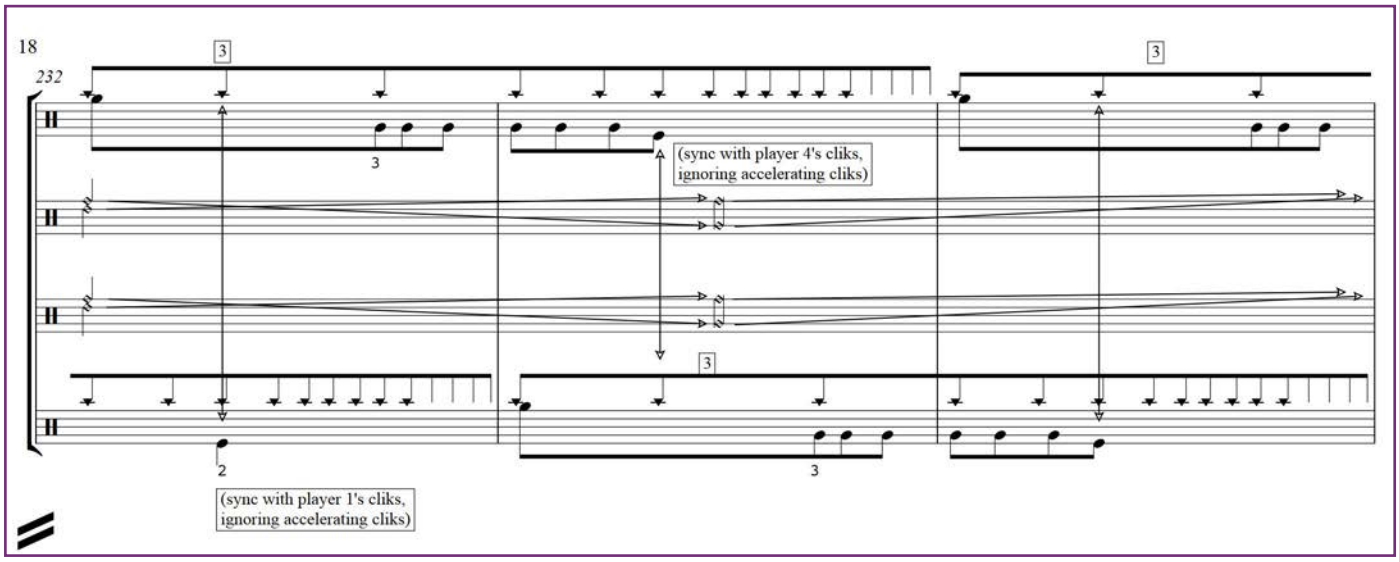
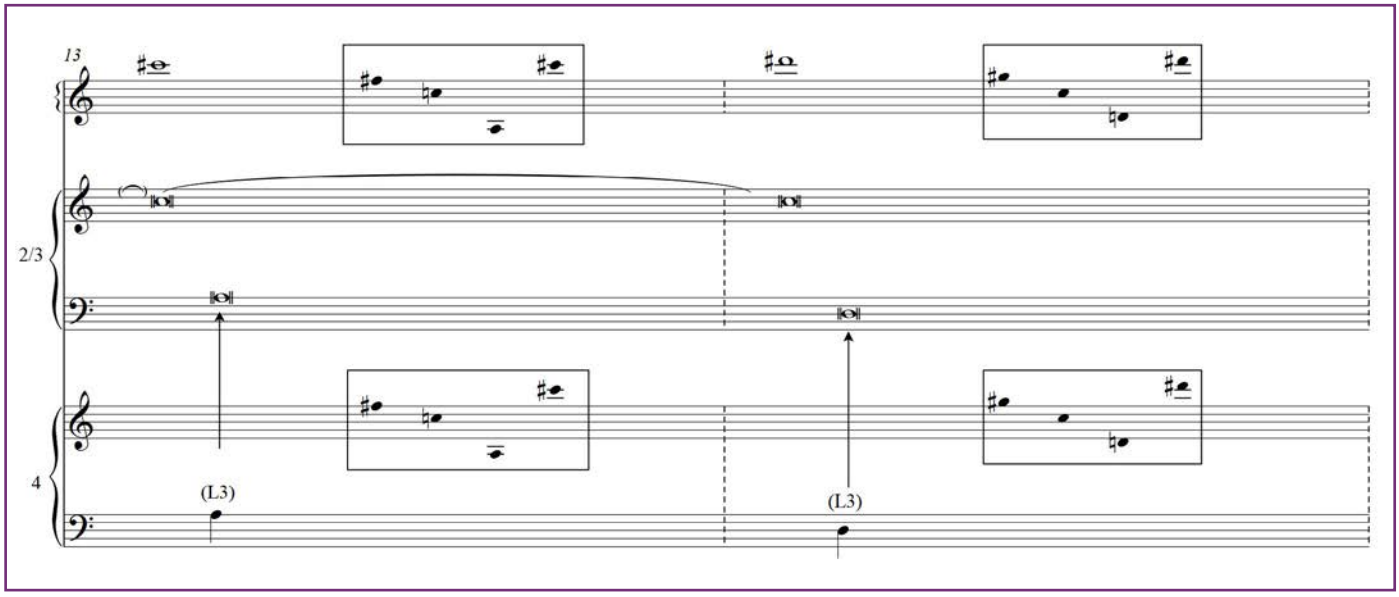


Figure 4. These squared-off pitch collections are provided throughout movement IV for players to present as they choose



pretation of the piece that doesn't sound gimmicky? The answer is simple. Trust your instincts, and especially trust the instincts of your colleagues. The members of the quartet all have vastly different backgrounds and prerogatives, and we used this to our advantage in this movement. We just let everyone work in their own wheelhouse, and it ended up being exactly what we envisioned.

In addition to the time spent on musical decisions and in rehearsals preparing the piece, an equal amount of effort was directed towards becoming comfortable with and organizing the array of computers, audio interfaces and mixers, the software itself, and a seemingly endless mass of cables. Fortunately, the MAX patches provided by the composer are fairly easy to use and lend themselves to recovery from mid-performance SNAFUs.

The biggest demand here was to be able to quickly move from one movement to the next. Each movement had vastly different technical and technological demands, and as such, a sizable deal of rehearsal time was spent on transiting from one setup to another.

When we decided to commission three short films from Paras Bassuk, a talented photographer in Iowa City, we only added to the demands on the players. Of course, during the performance we wanted the movements to flow smoothly from one to another, and eventually, we reached a point of comfortability where this was possible, but I think we would all say that this was objectively one of the most challenging aspects of performing this piece.

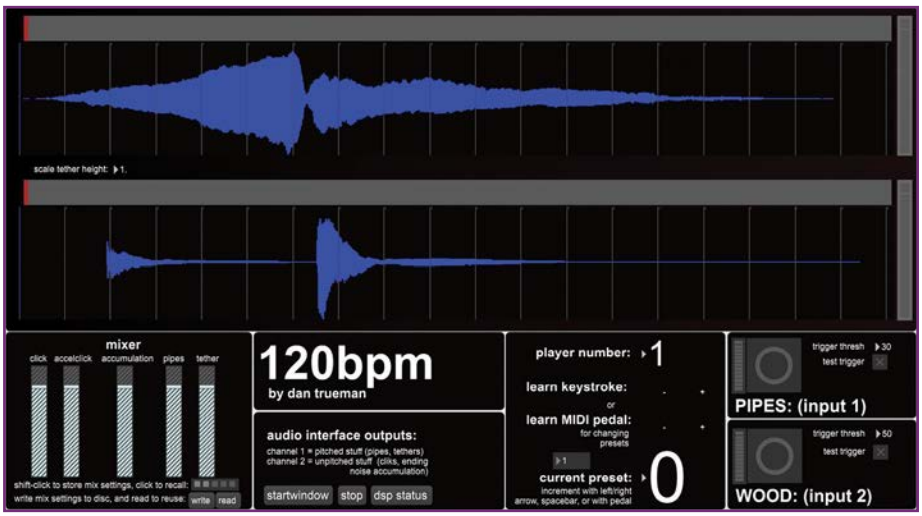
I have two pieces of advice that I would offer to anyone in a similar situation. 1. When choosing a project such as this, the amount of time you give yourself to complete it is paramount. You will want enough time for everything to go wrong, but you can't give yourself enough time to be able to put problems off until later. 2. There is no "useless" information in the process of learning how to use a technological system. Every miniscule morsel of information that you can catalog and remember will undoubtedly come back to be useful. Don't approach the tech of the piece as a task to be accomplished, or some goal you need to achieve. Just view it as a skill like any other — not to be defeated, but understood, to the best of your ability.

In putting together any rather technologically involved project, there are several inherent dangers involved. Chiefly among them is the risk that your audience members leave the performance thinking mainly about the novelty of the performance rather than about their enjoyment of the music itself. To combat this, the quartet kept a few ideas in the forefront of our minds as we put this piece together. First, we generally tried to avoid the "stock percussion ensemble" sound at all costs. This mostly had to do with instrumentation, and that helped us find what we all considered to be a fairly distinct sound for the group. Second, we all recognized that despite rehearsing extensively and having a thoroughly constructed game-plan, the piece still needed to feel organic and fresh every time we played it. Fortunately, the piece lent itself to this quite easily. Much of the instrumentation is quite open-ended, and at times all that is provided to the performers is a tempo and a time signature.

Third, and most important, was the need to always maintain a "big picture" view. The dreaded tunnel vision would occasionally creep in, of course, and after spending hours of rehearsal time trying to find the perfect sound for the feedback bass drum, I would remember that it was only a single cog in a much larger music box. It is often too easy for us to fixate on what we believe to be the coolest or most interesting part of a piece, but if we don't spread our attention elsewhere, we end up with a product that only remains interesting until the novelty of that one aspect wears off.

Putting "Neither Anvil nor Pulley" on stage has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever been a part of, and I find myself wondering if I will be able to rediscover the unabashed joy I felt near the end of the performance. I cannot explain the gratitude I feel towards my colleagues for being a part of the project with me. I know that my quartet members — Houston Fleischmann, Kurt Gartner, and Nathan Smith — feel the same way, and we are all eternally grateful to Paras for the wonderful films, and Dan for the beautiful music. If I were to distill my feelings about the project as a whole down to a single sentiment, it would be that I never thought that debugging a circuit path in an impossibly uncomfortable-to-reach patch bay inside a rack case could be so fulfilling. If I were to speak to anyone hesitating to take on a project simply because it looks too challenging or too time consuming or seems not feasible for any given reason, I would tell them

Figure 5. The software used for movement II provides plenty of information to the performer, and is designed for tweaking, both in rehearsal and performance.

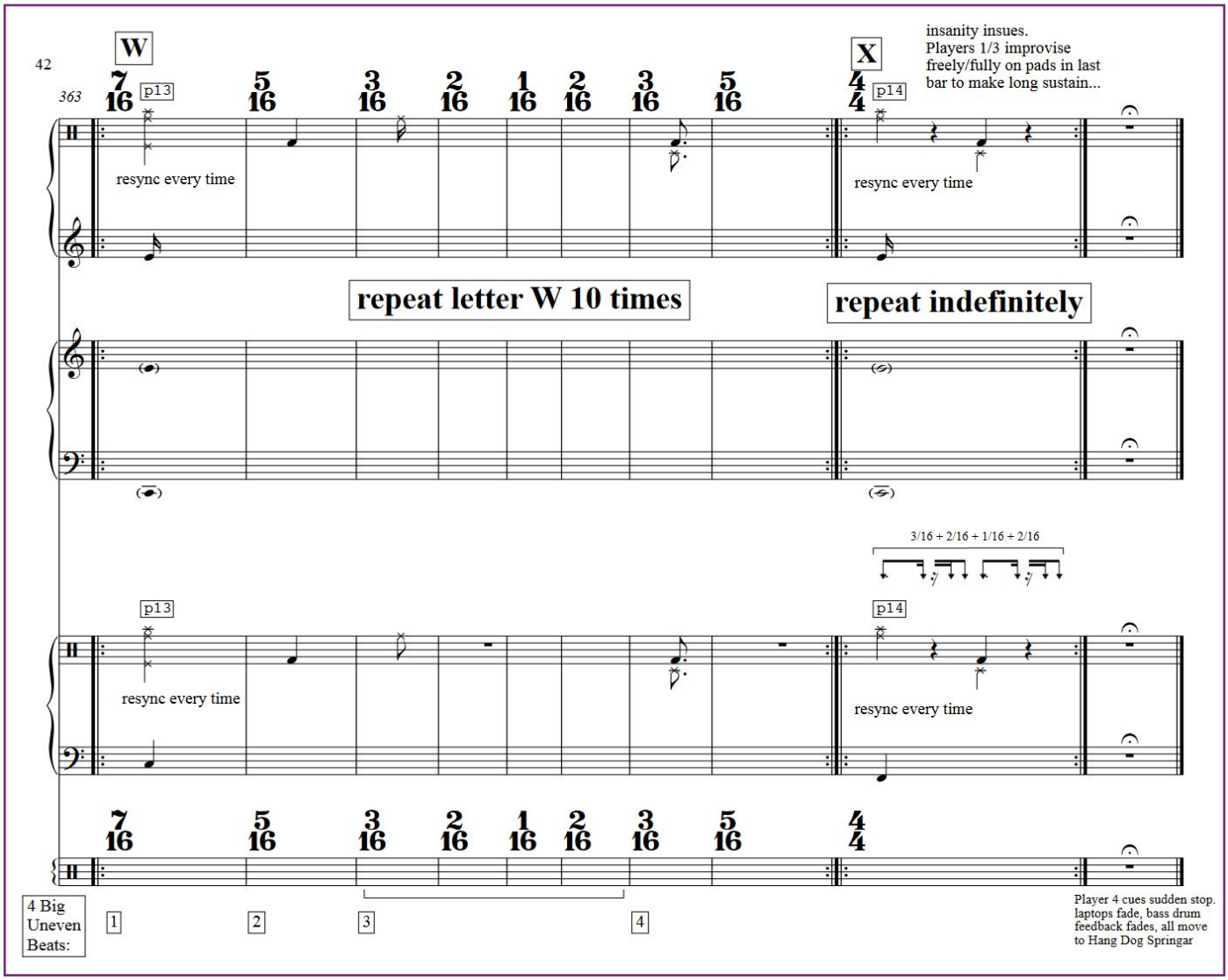


that I reject that idea. It is feasible. Find passionate colleagues, find the funding, and go for it. There are people around you who want that project to succeed just as much as you do. You just have to find them.

For access to score, parts, software, and a link to the recording of the Sō Percussion performance of "Neither Anvil nor Pulley," visit Dan Trueman's website, Many Arrows Music: https://manyarrowsmusic.com/neither-anvil-nor-pulley/

Jacob Morgan is a percussionist and a passionate advocate of new music. He is currently completing a bachelor's degree in music performance at Kansas State University under the direction of Dr. Kurt Gartner and Neil Dunn. He is the Principal Percussionist for the Kansas State Symphony Orchestra, and has regularly performed with the Kansas State Percussion Ensemble, Kansas State Wind Ensemble, Kansas State Latin Jazz Ensemble, and the Kansas State Marching Band. He has also performed with the Manhattan Municipal Band, the Manhattan Symphony Orchestra, and the Chamber Orchestra of the Smoky Valley.

Figure 6. The score in movement IV is mostly open space. However, the movement sounds anything but empty. The space is filled with structured improvisations, the hectic yet rigid drum machines, and, of course, the drone of the feedback bass drum.



Developing a Culture of Excellence

By Scott Brown

I am often asked how we developed the percussion program at Dickerson Middle School into one of the premier middle school programs in the country and maintain the quality over a 20+ year period. A big part of our program, and my driving philosophy, is that I strongly believe that we teach kids; the subject is secondary. I focus on developing a culture of kindness, empathy, respect, dedication, etc. Once students understand how we will interact with each other and basic expectations of how they will operate within the program, then learning, preparing, and creating music becomes much easier. Two of the main aspects of the "character development" within the program are the "25 Rules for Life!" and our participation in United Sound.

THE 25 RULES

The very first thing I do with my beginning percussion students is go through our "25 Rules" — generally 3–5 rules a day to start class for the first week or so. This may not sound like the most interesting way to start a new venture, but it actually becomes something the students look forward to each day. Each rule either has an example of how that particular rule is — or will be — important in their success as a person, or comes with a personal story of why that rule is on the list. The rules are not necessarily the same as "school rules." I tell them if they ever see me running down the hallway, they should turn and run with me because something is very wrong.

Our rules are intended to help them be better people and, hopefully, more successful adults. The rules do change slightly from year to year, as I think of different things or times change. For example, pre-pandemic, one of the rules was "Learn to give a decent handshake," and I would make sure each student knew how to give a handshake. Obviously, during the pandemic that one was replaced with something else. Some rules are very basic: "1. When responding to any adult, you must answer by saying 'Yes ma'am/sir' or 'No ma'am/sir.' Just nodding your head or saying any form of yes or no is not acceptable." Or "2. Make eye contact. When someone is speaking, keep your eyes on him or her at all times. If someone makes a comment, turn and face that person." We talk about how just those two rules could make the difference in getting a job, scholarship, or college acceptance.

Some rules deal specifically with how we treat and interact with others: "14. When we are on a field trip, there will not be talking as we enter a building. You WILL be polite to all you come in contact with in restaurants, hotels, etc. as well as your bus driver and tour guides." When I started at Dickerson in 2001, the chorus and orchestra could take overnight field trips, but the band was not allowed to because of previous behavior issues. We were allowed to take overnight trips only when an ensemble was invited to perform for a prestigious event. When the percussion ensemble was invited to perform for the Georgia Music Educators Association Conference in Savannah, we were allowed to go on the trip. The Monday after the trip our

principal received a fax from the hotel manager stating how respectful and well-behaved our students were. After that trip, we were allowed to take the band on overnight trips. Now we *always* receive compliments from managers, servers, other guests/customers, etc. every time we take a trip.

Some of the rules are more "life advice" suggestions to help prepare them for future success: "10. Figure out how to fix things yourself…I probably won't help you," and "20. Use your resources, you have more than any generation before you," are simply geared toward instilling independence in the students. When I was growing up, I had to put in effort to learn anything about percussion. I had to drive somewhere for a lesson or purchase a book, as there was no internet or smart phones, and I want the students to develop that independence in learning and figuring out how things (like a hi-hat clutch!) work.

The purpose of the rules is not to maintain order or define boundaries, but more to provide a guide or possible pathway to become a "successful, functioning, human" and a collective approach to help us develop a culture of excellence as an organization.

UNITED SOUND

Another important way we develop character and culture within our program is through our participation in United Sound, a program in which peer mentors work with new musicians (students with intellectual or developmental disabilities) in a music-classroom setting to develop musical skills as well as social skills, inclusion, coordination, etc. The peer mentors attend video trainings and work with me, along with Pamela Bone and Jennifer Sutton from our special-education department, to tailor a program for each of our new musicians to assist in their development.

For the new musicians, the vehicle is band (in this case percussion) and learning an instrument, but the purpose and goal within the program is much broader. For the majority of their education, these students are placed in a separate class and have very little interaction with other students their age. We discuss with the peer mentors that this social involvement and acceptance is as important to those students as anything else we will do in the class. The students were enjoying percussion class so much that several of them often refused to leave when it was over. Our peer mentors came up with the idea to walk them to their next class, which now extends that social environment to the hallways.

Beyond the social aspect, the peer mentors work in groups of three to assist the new musicians through their development program. In the students we are working with there is typically a wide range of ability, which creates different goals and development needs. For some students the goals have been to learn their left and right, or colors, or the alphabet, while others have been able to work on learning how to read music using the United Sound curriculum. Two of our new musicians, who struggle

Dickerson Percussion
25 Rules for Life!

1. **When responding to any adult, you must answer by saying "Yes ma'am/sir" or "No mam/sir." Just nodding your head or saying any form of yes or no is not acceptable.**
2. Make eye contact. When someone is speaking, keep your eyes on him or her at all times. If someone makes a comment, turn and face that person.
3. *Always say "thank you" when I give you something. If you don't say "thank you" it will be taken back. There is no excuse for not showing appreciation.*
4. IF SOMEONE IN THE CLASS DOES SOMETHING WELL, WE WILL CONGRATULATE THAT PERSON.
5. If you win or do well at something, do not brag. If you lose, do not show anger. Instead, say something positive or don't say anything at all. To show anger or sarcasm, such as "I wasn't trying anyway," shows weakness.
6. **Do not smack your lips, tsk, roll your eyes, or show disrespect with gestures.**
7. When you are given something by someone, never insult that person by making negative comments about the gift or by insinuating that it wasn't appreciated.
8. *Surprise others by performing random acts of kindness. Go out of your way to do something surprisingly kind and generous for someone at least once a month.*
9. At times throughout the year, I may give rewards for good behavior, pass-offs, exemplary performance, acts of kindness, etc. If you ever ask for a reward, however, it will not be given. It is rude to ask if you are getting something for doing the right thing. You should be a good person and do your best because you are trying to better yourself, not because you are anticipating a reward.
10. **Figure out how to fix things yourself…I probably won't help you.**
11. *Be respectful of other classes in the building. Move silently through the hallways so as not to disturb the learning of others.*
12. When I give you an assignment, there is to be no complaining. This will result in an "alternate" assignment, which may be less enjoyable.
13. When you are with a substitute teacher, or chaperone, you will treat them with respect and kindness.
14. **When we are on a field trip, there will be no talking as we enter a building. You WILL be polite to all you come in contact with in restaurants, hotels, etc. as well as your bus driver and tour guides!**
15. When we return from a trip, you will shake my hand as well as the hand of each chaperone. You will thank us for taking the time to take you on the trip and let us know that you appreciate having the opportunity to go. I am not concerned with being thanked; I am concerned with teaching you that it is appropriate to show appreciation when someone has gone out of his or her way to do something for you.
16. *If any student in the school is bothering you, let me know. I am your teacher, and I am not going to let anyone in this school bully you or make you feel uncomfortable. In return, I ask that you not take matters into your own hands; let me deal with the student(s).*
17. LEARN HOW TO GIVE A DECENT HAND-SHAKE (OR FIST BUMP/ELBOW BUMP..)
18. No matter what the circumstances, always be honest. Even if you have done something wrong, it is best to admit it to me, because I will respect that.
19. Embrace competition! You improve whether you win or lose, and "real life" is full of it!
20. **Use your resources, you have more than any generation before you!**
21. *Accept that you are going to make mistakes. Learn from them and move on.*
22. Learn to be a "geek" and embrace it!
23. Learn how to properly move, and assemble, all instruments and equipment.
24. Visualize what you want before starting.
25. **Be the person your dog thinks you are!**

with verbal communication, have been learning sign language in their regular class, so several of our peer mentors have started to learn sign language so they can assist with this and improve communication.

The benefits for the new musicians are substantial, and probably fairly obvious. Perhaps not as obvious, but equally important, is the impact that our participation in United Sound has on the peer mentors and our percussion program as a whole. The students develop skills such as teamwork, goal setting, problem solving, creativity, etc. as they work in their groups to identify skills to develop with the new members and create a plan of action. These are all clearly important traits to develop as young adults. Possibly more important to the broader growth of the peer mentors and our program are the character traits that the students develop. Through their daily interactions with the new musicians, it is easy to witness the growth of their empathy, care, patience, encouragement, and — possibly most importantly in today's society — genuine happiness for the success of others.

When other people see our students at performances or visit to work with them, I am consistently told how pleasant, mature, responsive, polite, happy, fun, etc. my kids are, in addition to compliments about the quality of their performance. I fully believe that the quality of our performances is a direct reflection of the character of the students and the personality of our program. When the students are kind, diligent, supportive, etc., everything else becomes much easier and more enjoyable. Teach kids, not instruments, and focus on developing the culture before developing the program and you will be much more likely to enjoy sustained success. At the very least you will have impacted lives for the better!

If you are interested in learning more about United Sound, please visit their website: *https://www.unitedsound.org/*

Scott Brown is the Assistant Band Director at Dickerson M.S. in Marietta, Georgia and Percussion Coordinator for the Bands of America Summer Camp Concert Band Division. He is also co-director of the North Georgia Percussion Camp and Atlanta Percussion Symposium and serves on the PAS Education Committee. Through working with the Lassiter and Walton High School Bands, Scott has been part of two Bands of America National Championships, numerous BOA Regional Championships, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade (twice), and the Tournament of Roses Parade (twice). His concert percussion ensembles have performed multiple times for The Midwest Clinic, PASIC, the GMEA Conference, and the Music for All National Festival. The Dickerson Middle School Percussion Ensemble was named "National Winner" in the 2023 Mark of Excellence/ National Percussion Ensemble Honor's Project. Scott has served as an adjudicator for competitions throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, and South America and presented clinics for The Midwest Clinic, PASIC, MEA conferences and at several universities and international events.

Justin Faulkner: Creating a Sonic Palette that Evokes Emotion

By Colleen Clark

Drummer, educator, and philanthropist Justin Faulkner has cultivated a sound that invites, entertains, informs, and heals. Throughout his career, Faulkner has shared the stage with such musical luminaries as Kenny Barron, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Peter Nero, Jimmy Heath, Orrin Evans, Ornette Coleman, Wynton Marsalis, Sean Jones, Tim Warfield, Bernard Purdie, Pharoah Saunders, Terence Blanchard, Mingus Big Band/Dynasty/Orchestra, Bootsie Barnes, Jacky Terrasson, Terrence Howard, Bilal, and Christian McBride, and he continues to be the drummer of choice for numerous others. In 2009, and on his 18th birthday, Justin began playing in the band that has become "family" to him, the Branford Marsalis Quartet. Now, nearly 15 years later, Justin is not only known for his musicality but for his love of education and mentorship.

A Philadelphia native, Faulkner grew up surrounded by music. By the time he was four years old, his mother (a concert pianist), his father, and his grandmother all knew that Justin could not only keep a beat but was retaining all the music that was being presented. His affinity for "the song" would lead him down the path of transcription at an early age; he just didn't know it yet. The tools he would acquire as a young music student would greatly affect the start and continuance of his tenure with Branford Marsalis.

I spoke with Justin right after he was named the Director of Jazz at the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra Music Institute and learned more about his dedication as an educator and performer.

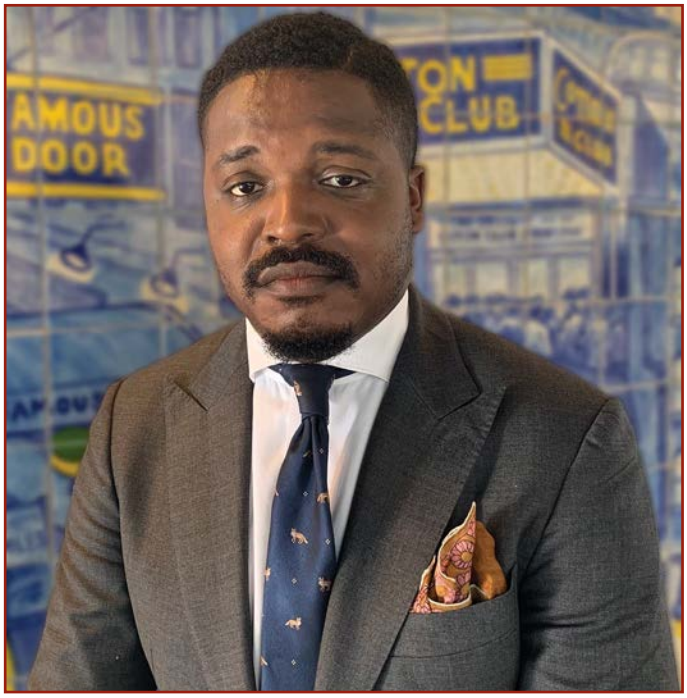


PHOTO BY RODERICK WARD

Colleen Clark: Could you introduce *Percussive Notes* readers to your background and how you started playing music?

Justin Faulkner: I started playing drums when I was about three years old. I saw a PBS commercial where there was a child playing pots and pans, and then there's this transition where the child morphs into an adult. And I think the adult is Tommy Igoe. I saw that and I thought, "This looks cool!" So, I started attempting to do what the kid was doing, and eventually, my parents and my grandmother saw that I could keep a beat. My mother was a child-prodigy classical pianist. My father's a music head; he's the one who introduced me to jazz. They bought me this Fisher-Price drum, which was this yellow and blue drum with red drumsticks, and it looks like a colonial field drum, but the sticks are attached.

The drummer at my church was the second influence I had

to start playing drums. He was named Benjamin Martin; he was the pastor's son. In church, you very rarely see cats playing traditional grip, but he and Tommy Igoe both played traditional. I got to see the commercial almost every day. And then I got to see Benjamin play every Sunday.

The Philadelphia Orchestra percussion section came in to do a masterclass in my elementary school. I thought it was the coolest thing that they were playing all of these different percussion instruments. I was already playing at home on my drumset, learning beats, and my dad and mother listened to music constantly. So I'm trying to mimic the stuff that I'm hearing. Later I found out that I was transcribing at like age four, but I didn't know that's what that was. I'm listening to and trying to play with Jimmy Cobb's playing on *Kind of Blue*. I'm listening to Miles Davis's *ESP*, trying to play with Tony [Williams], and I'm also playing in church.

When I was around 11, the Kimmel Center opened. They had a jazz program, and I became the drummer for that. Then I met my first mentor who would give me gigs. That was Jamal (Jamaaladeen) Tacuma — a fixture in the extemporaneous free-jazz scene. He gave me my first gig at 13 years old. I played every week. I got paid 70 bucks. It was awesome. I played that gig for three years, which led me eventually to recording with Ornette Coleman. Then I met Orrin Evans, who became a mentor of mine. Orrin started taking me to New York to play gigs at the 55 Bar, Cornelia Street, late-night grooves at the Blue Note, and more.

A lesson I learned very early is that you shouldn't have fear when it comes to taking a chance on young talent. There shouldn't be apprehension there; if anything, there should be inspiration. All of these cats were in Philly just kind of doing their thing, making the scene, making hits, playing, traveling, coming back and forth. So I grew up in this super rich culture on the jazz side and on the R&B side, because we had the Philly international scene.

Clark: That's a testament to what I'm assuming is something you're very proud of: what you're giving back to Philadelphia now through your teaching leadership.

Faulkner: My job is to make sure that there are consistent practitioners and artists of this music available for the students to have access to. The other part of my philosophy comes from how Branford [Marsalis] found me when I was 16 at a masterclass with my high school jazz band. He went down the line and told everybody what they needed to work on. He got to me and he was like, "You know what you're doing." I'm thinking to myself, "This is crazy."

Once I got in his band, they were very adamant about studying. When I say studying, I'm talking about like molecular-level analysis. It was almost like getting into the forensics and details of what makes a song a song. All of these pieces of the puzzle have helped me create a philosophy that I believe. Philosophy is a strong word, but it's a way of thinking, a way of approaching and giving young people access to the truth of this music very early on.

I was asked to be a part of the faculty at Temple University six years ago. Teaching is a reflection of what I've experienced. I'm realizing there are certain things that need to be addressed within my own playing. But I still get an opportunity to offer a perspective of what it takes to be a professional musician in 2024. What it takes to be a great partner and bandmate on and off the bandstand. I know many cats where the playing is maybe 10%, but the 90% is, "Can we live with you for these next three weeks?" It's about personalities, right? What does it take to consistently be employed as a musician? Because, as much as I love the artistic part, I'm also about commerce. I do my best to wear decently fitted clothing. I like suits that have a certain look to them, so they're not cheap. My goal is to make sure that I provide a relatively fuller scope of what it takes to do this from an artistic and business standpoint. And that's kind of how I've structured almost everything that I'm working on, including becoming the Director of Jazz for the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra Music Institute.

Clark: What do you hope that music education will look like in the future?

Faulkner: I want music education to look like an aspect of the utopian society that we all talk about having. I'm very blessed to have a significant number of young women in my program — a significant number of people who identify throughout the entire gender spectrum. I have a United Nations structure within the program — students from all different backgrounds. And the biggest thing for me is that this music has a sound that is the unifying factor for all of us. If we appreciate and honor this sound, we can come from anywhere. This is the thing that brings us together.

I'm looking forward to there being an increase in individuals who have maybe felt like the music wasn't for them due to their past experiences, or even historically what has happened in the past. I also want there to be a willingness for institutions to teach that jazz has a sound and a vocabulary and an identity that does inform the future for whatever it is that you want to do. I think there are so few people on a grand scale that are willing to truly spend time equally in 1910 and 1970. Since we are talking about the Percussive Arts Society, the 40 PAS rudiments work for everyone! It's our version of major and minor scales. I'm really adamant about students having both a percussion foundation and the studying to make sure that you won't develop carpal tunnel.

I'm just hoping that overall jazz education can be rooted in the foundation of jazz that will then influence the future of whatever offshoot amalgamation you choose to do. I'm very fortunate: one of the first bands that I played in, I was the only guy. I played in Tia Fuller's Quartet for years, and it was Tia,

Miriam Sullivan and Shamie Royston. I was out on tour with my sisters, and they are kicking my behind, you know? Tia's counting off these tunes that I've been studying since I was a kid. But they are wiping the floor with me. So, I told myself that I needed to rise to the occasion. I really want the space to be open for anyone that wants to play this music. I want that space to be available to them. That's what the future of music education and jazz education looks like for me.

Clark: What are some things in your playing and musical experience that have stayed the same in Branford's Quartet and some things that have changed?

Faulkner: I didn't realize the skillsets that I had, due to my musical upbringing and experience. My first day in the band, we were in Seattle playing at Jazz Alley and we were backstage. Branford was like, "You need to bring your hard drive to everybody's room. You can play, but you don't know anything. We need you to learn music." They gave me almost a hundred gigabytes of music collectively. That beginning portion [of joining the band], I was attempting to bring a lot of raw energy to the band because I had listened to the stuff that they had done with Jeff "Tain" Watts. At the very beginning, I was really trying to make sure that I was playing the songs correctly.

Branford's philosophy is of the song being the most important thing and the song having structure. There are certain tunes we play where it's predetermined that this person's going to climax in their solo, this person is going to hand it off. The thing that's the improvisation is how do we get there? Some people don't believe in that philosophy, but I believe it's an effective way of playing. Some of the greatest songs that we know of had a predetermined thing. Perhaps it was the magic of the individuals who were playing, that became one. They brought their thing to the table, and now we have what we have. I learned about song structure in a way that was really, really righteous.

Now we're 15 years in and five records deep. Now it's just conversational — the level of dialogue and the responsiveness between all of us when we're playing. We are all connected in a telepathic way, almost. The reason why we're all able to communicate is because we have a shared vernacular. With Branford, we have a belief system that includes creating a sonic palette that evokes emotion. We're trying to make sure that there's as much of the human experience as possible in the music we're creating. And I think that that transcends all of the pieces of the puzzle that you need in order to create. The music that we play, it's incredible.

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A Fusion of East and West in the Percussion Literature of Chou Wen-Chung

By Dr. Yudong Wang

Chou Wen-Chung (1923–2019) was a pioneer in synthesizing Chinese aesthetics and Western classical music. Although he influenced such Chinese-American composers as Chen Yi, Zhou Long, and Tan Dun, his own work remains largely unknown. Two of Wen-Chung's instrumental works, "Echoes from the Gorge" (1989) and "Yü Ko" (1965), will be examined here, as they focus on his synthesis of Chinese aesthetics and Western classical music, and his contributions to Western classical percussion literature. "Echoes" draws musical inspiration from the concept of "I Ching," musically reflected in Edgard Varèse's "Ionisation" (1931), since both were written for an indefinite-pitched percussion ensemble.

This article will elaborate on the concepts Wen-Chung has applied from Chinese aesthetics into classic Western instrumental compositions. The author believes that using specific mallets and sticks on percussion instruments largely dominates the sound quality reflected on Chinese aesthetics, such as the concept of "yin-yang," "Guqin" or "qin" (ancient Chinese zither) music, and the six trigrams from "I Ching."

EASTERN AESTHETICS IN CHINESE-AMERICAN COMPOSERS

Contemporary Chinese-American composers such as Chen Yi (b.1953), Chou Long (b.1953), Tan Dun (b.1957), and Bright Sheng (b.1955) have, in the past few decades, started combining exotic elements or concepts from Eastern cultural aesthetics with traditional Western composition techniques into their works. For example, Tan Dun's "Out of Peking Opera" is an orchestral piece that directly incorporates elements from the "jing hu," the fiddling tradition of Peking Opera. It also features small Chinese crash cymbals and small to medium gongs in the percussion section, reflecting the traditional instrumentation of Peking Opera.

Another example can be found in Chen Yi's "YangKo," for solo violin and two percussionists, which is adapted from her own orchestral work, the second movement of "Chinese Folk Dance Suite" for violin and orchestra. According to Yi, "YangKo" originated in northern China and is a major folk-dance form popularized in mass performances across the country. In the performances, "people often play rhythmic patterns on drums hung around their waists while singing and dancing."[1] In this orchestral movement, the solo violin plays what Yi describes as a "sweet and gracious melodic line," while all members of the orchestra sing non-pitched syllables in different layers as a soft background, imitating a percussive sound to produce an ever-present pulse.[2] In her adapted chamber version, she added a bass drum, woodblock, small Chinese crash cymbal, and small gong, making it more realistic and practical than the orchestral version.

Among these composers, Wen-Chung is an outstanding Chinese-American classical composer who is a generation older than the others, making him a particularly significant figure in laying the groundwork that will continue decades later. He briefly cited ten preliminary assumptions that might lead to some general aesthetic principles. These are: 1. Assimilation of foreign musical cultures; 2. Interpretation of music for the people and for the elite; 3. Timbre as complement to pitch; 4. Language as progenitor of esthetics; 5. The triad of poetry, painting, and music; 6. Allusiveness in expression; 7. Terseness in structure; 8. Harmony with the universe; 9. Beyond imitation of nature; 10. Emphasis on spiritual cultivation.[3]

Much of Wen-Chung's music uses

these aesthetic principles. For example, he uses "timbre as complement to pitch" in his composition "Echoes" and "allusiveness in expression" in his work "Yü Ko."

BACKGROUND

Wen-Chung was born in Yantai, China in 1923 and moved to the United States in 1946. His earlier life had already straddled the cultures of East and West, due to constantly moving from Qingdao, Wuhan, Nanjing, and finally to Shanghai, China. During his first 15 years, most Chinese cities were colonized by foreign concessions where he had regular exposure to European culture, such as food, literature, and music. Under his family's literati tradition, he learned Chinese calligraphy and poetry from his father Chou Zhongjie (1891–1987), in addition to studying violin repertoire of solely Western works.[4] Wen-Chung often walked into his father's library to explore many exciting Chinese novels and Chinese translations of Western fairy tales and classics, which "sparked his imagination and interest in cultural differences."[5]

His hobby of music formally led him to study at Shanghai Music School when he was fifteen years old. During the Second Sino-Japanese War, he constantly studied with foreign violinists and took music theory lessons in Shanghai Music School. This is when he began to show interest in composition.[6]

During those tumultuous years after the Japanese invasion, Wen-Chung completed a full course of study in civil engineering. Just one week after he began his architecture study at Yale for the patriotic mission of rebuilding his war-demolished country in 1946, he decided that "it was through the power of music and the arts that he could affect the most profound influence on a shattered Chinese society."[7] Hence, he enrolled at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where he studied under composer Carl McKinley and Russian-born American composer Nicholas Slonimsky. There, he heard the music of Edgard Varèse for the first time, but the idea of studying with Varèse was beyond his imagination at the time.[8]

Later on, he came to New York in 1949 to study composition with Otto Luening at Columbia University and took private lessons with Varèse. Wen-Chung began a significant relationship with Varèse, editing and completing his unfinished score "Nocturnal" based on the composer's notes and sketches.[9] He was exposed to Varèse's idea of spatial musical sound as an organic living matter. Wen-Chung believes that "Varèse's music is built on the interactions of layered sound derived from basic nuclear ideas.... These shapes of sound, when projected into different sound fields in space, are conceptually unified but sonically diverse. They are full of suggestive qualities that stimulate the perceiver's sensibility."[10] All of these concepts of Varèse's musical ideas influenced Wen-Chung's musical composition style.

After he received his master's degree at Columbia University in 1954, Wen-Chung became an assistant at Columbia's Electronic Music Laboratory, where he was concurrently appointed director of a research project on Chinese music and drama through a three-year Rockefeller Foundation grant in 1955.[11] This research project reinforced his thinking on synthesizing theories of calligraphy, "qin," single tones, and "I Ching." According to Seok-Kwee Chew's dissertation, the concept of single tones as musical entities is based on "aesthetics of 'qin' music, where deviations of each tone are structural and not mere decorative elements."[12] In 1964, Wen-Chung officially joined the Columbia faculty and created the first doctoral program in composition. He also taught an increasing number of international students until his retirement in 1991 and was named the first Fritz Reiner Professor of Musical Composition in 1984.[13]

In addition to achievement in the academic field, Wen-Chung devoted himself to improve the cultural relationship between the United States and China. In 1978, he founded the Center for United States-China Arts Exchange at Columbia University and became a pioneer in reconnecting cultural ties that had been severed for 30 years. Some of the ground-breaking projects included arranging for playwright Arthur Miller to direct the first Chinese-language production of *Death of a Salesman* with the People's Art Theater in Beijing and developing New York's legendary "Pied Piper of Dance" (named by UNESCO as the 1986 Event of the Year).[14]

SCHOLARLY INSIGHTS ON WEN-CHUNG'S COMPOSITIONAL AESTHETICS

A few dissertations in the late 20th to early 21st centuries that address Wen-Chung's compositional aesthetics include documents by Chun-Ming Kenneth Kwan,[15] Seok-Kwee Chew,[16] and Peter M. Chang.[17] Some of the journal articles in that same time period also illustrate certain compositional and biographical aspects about him, including Joseph S. C. Lam's journal article on a festival of Sino-American music and culture held in Cincinnati.[18] In terms of the integration of Chinese culture in a Western context, the article reported that the festival of Sino-American music held at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in 1996 examined "past and present cultural traditions in China," and explored issues of cultural confluence in the music of Chinese, Taiwanese, and Chinese-American composers.[19] During the festival, Wen-Chung gave a presentation insisting that the future of art music lies in a merging of Eastern and Western traditions, but currently there is a problem with the unbalanced synthesis of cultural traditions between East and West.

Peter M. Chang argues that "Wen-Chung's motivations in making musical synthesis should also include the effect of bi-cultural education, his creative impulses, his interest in experimentation, and his basic need for advancing his career as a creative musician in the West."[20] In general, Chang spent one chapter discussing early Chinese composers' approaches to musical synthesis, in addition to the

differences to Wen-Chung's personal approach to musical synthesis. On the contrary, Wen-Chung was trying to find compatible elements in general artistic principles and in the traditional intellectual values known as "shi" or "wenren," instead of completely restricting himself to working with musical material.[21] This chapter also illustrated that the background of early integration of Chinese music and culture in a Western context was referenced from the 1930s.

The author believes Chang is convincing enough for readers to acknowledge the history of the musical synthesis approach by the first generation of Chinese composers during the mid-19th to late 20th centuries. Chang also provides a contrary context to Wen-Chung's individual approach to musical synthesis as a comparison. Coincidentally, it lines up with Lindsay Berg's argument (his thesis on New Wave Composition), as "Wen-Chung's critical success is also largely the result of increased openness in mid-20th century Western avant-garde composition towards intercultural influences and the effectiveness of his self-presentations."[22]

All these sources present a new perspective on Wen-Chung's approach to incorporate Chinese cultural aesthetics with both Western classical and contemporary instrumental composition techniques. Nevertheless, several unresolved questions remain when examining his compositions, such as the impact of contemporary Chinese-American composers on percussion ensemble writing, the integration of ancient musical traditions with modern instruments, and the application of principles of "I-Ching" and "yin-yang" by non-Chinese contemporary composers.

Influenced by concepts found in the theories of "yin-yang" and the "I Ching," Daoism, brush calligraphy, and "qin" music, as well as early and modern European theories, Wen-Chung established an ever-evolving theory of variable modes, "pien."[23] According to Paul Griffiths, a program-notes writer from Columbia University, "'pien' is based on three-note sets that could be combined and altered in defined ways, a principle that again had twofold roots, in Chinese practice and contemporary Western music."[24] He applied this theory in his composition "Pien" (1966), a piece that is partially based upon the structure of the "I Ching."[25] Additionally, he created six "pien" modes based on the six "I Ching" trigrams of thunder, wind, sun, lake, rain, and mountain. As Wen-Chung noted, "percussion as the non-pitched entity, interacts vertically with the pitched entity by amplifying and reflecting its material."[26] The constant flow of rhythms, pitches, dynamics, and tempos in each section resemble Chinese calligraphy.

"ECHOES FROM THE GORGE"

Wen-Chung's "Echoes from the Gorge" (1989) is scored for four percussionists employing roughly 14 instruments that fall into three categories, including "skin-based" drums, "metal-based" cymbals, and "wood-based" woodblocks at gradations of low to high pitch schemes. He also writes for metal and wooden clusters as well as wood and metal chimes. In the performance notes, Wen-Chung specifically indicates the use of several different types of sticks and mallets, and the contact locations on certain instruments along with other musical instructions regarding tempo, performance of grace-notes, cadenza passages, rolls, dynamic marks, and structures. For stick and mallet choices, he indicates 26 different choices of varied soft, medium, and hard felt, yarn, rubber, plastic, drumsticks, and/or other wooden implements. For note values and accents, he indicates that the rhythmic structure of this score is not based on meter, but on permutations of six rhythmic modes, which in turn are based on ratios of 3:2:1 and their aggregates. The interrelationship among the four parts is dependent on the groupings with accents and rests evolved out of those ratios. Wen-Chung also states that all tempi in the score are derived from the same basic ratios and are expressed in the following two interlocked sets of metric relations, similar to metric modulation. However, the given metronome marks are suggestions, serving as a guide only. All grace-notes are indicated with upward stems and all measured notes are indicated with downward stems. Tremolos and measured rolls are indicated specifically as well.

Wen-Chung's keen awareness of sounds and timbres, indicated in his performance guidelines, provide an excellent example in terms of percussion compositions to other composers. Percussionists know the best sound sonorities for each percussion instrument by using specific types of implements. There are some situations where a composer may not be familiar with the sounds needed. As a

"Echoes From the Gorge" percussion layout

result, the percussionist may utilize odd types of sticks or mallets, which cause inappropriate sounds or damage to the instruments. Communication with a percussionist before composing percussion parts is always recommended and warranted. Even in Wen-Chung's score, written adjustments to types of mallets on different instruments were necessary to derive the best sound quality.

Due to Wen-Chung's relationship with Varèse, there are a few similarities but also glaring differences between his "Echoes from the Gorge" and Varèse's "Ionisation." Although both works are written for indefinite-pitched percussion instruments and sounds, the differences between Varèse's concept of musical timbre, texture, and rhythmic structure, and Wen-Chung's Chinese concept of the percussive sound of music — along with his use of the "I Ching" principle in organizing rhythmic modes — are readily recognizable. In "Ionisation," the rhythmic structure is based on the use of certain rhythmic figures associated with a particular instrument. The rhythmic design in "Echoes" is based on permutation.

"Echoes" is divided into 12 programmatic sections, with a prelude as the introduction. Each programmatic title evokes typical images often portrayed in classical Chinese calligraphy, as well as timbral articulations associated with the "qin," and/or a particular instrumental timbre. For example, in measures 172–197 of "Clear Moon," the prominent sonority is based on cymbals. In measures 215–234 of "Old Tree by the Cold Spring," the prominent sonority is based on woodblocks, and other sonorities include snare drums, cowbells, and cymbals. In measures 272–291 of "Rolling Pearls," the prominent sonority is based on snare drum, and other sonorities include tom-toms, timbales, tenor drum, and field drum.

This formal structure is parallel with the "qin" composition "Gaosan Liushui" ("High Mountain Flowing Water") by Yu Boya. According to Kwan in his dissertation, movements 1–8 in "Echoes" represent a counterpart of high mountain (static) while movements 9–12 are reflected as flowing water (moving).[27] Additional evidence of formal parallels between "Echoes" and traditional "qin" music is found in the introductory material. In many "qin" pieces, the introduction is called "Diaoyi." Though no content is specified, it is often used for exploring a mode and for testing the tuning of the strings before the player starts the piece.[28] In "Echoes," the introductory material is designed to explore the basic rhythmic, timbral, and registral procedures to be used in the main part of the work.

Wen-Chung says that the rhythmic modes in "Echoes" are built with reference to the principle of "yin-yang," and the symbolic ratio of 3:2:1, a Taoist concept that is profoundly influenced from "I Ching." The English translation of this concept is that the "Dao" ("a way or path") produced one, one produced two, two produced three, and three produced all. In Wen-Chung's score, he wrote that "the rhythmic structure of this score is not based on meters but permutations of six rhythmic modes, which in turn are based on permutations of durational ratios of 3:2:1 and their aggregates."[29] All rhythmic patterns can be referred to as variations of these sources. One of them is a whole note and a half note, in which different rhythmic patterns are generated dividing the beats. Therefore, the whole note plus the half note becomes a half note plus a quarter note, which, in turn, generates a quarter note plus an eighth note, etc. The rotation or permutation of a rhythmic pattern or the combination of several patterns provides even greater rhythmic variety. This is often seen as regrouping of these patterns in accordance with a ratio of 3:2:1 (e.g., augmentation, diminution, inversion, retrograde, and rotation).

Wen-Chung also applied counterpoint amongst the four parts. In the contrapuntal treatment of the four parts, the composition illustrates both the unity of the parts as a cohesive whole and the independence of each individual part at various points. This is achieved through the combination of either the top and bottom two voices, the two inner and outer voices, or voice one with voice three and voice two with voice four.

"YÜ KO"

Wen-Chung's "Yü Ko" (1965) is scored for nine instruments including violin, alto flute, English horn, bass clarinet, two trombones, piano, and two percussion instruments. The title translates as "Song of the Fisherman." The fisherman is a symbol of man in harmony with nature. According to Wen-Chung's website, "Yü Ko" is based on an ancient "qin" melody in tablature notation composed by Mao Min Chung (c. 1280).[30] He adapted Chung's work using thematic material, a basic rhythmic profile, and pitch content into his own version. As Peter Chang states in his thesis, "Instead of a single instrument like the piano, the varied timbre of a chamber ensemble provides a wide range of possibilities for emulating various 'qin' timbres, variable tone inflections, or microtones on Western instruments."[31] In the performance, listeners will hear a lot of glissandi and vibrato in violin and winds parts. The use of a thimble on the strings inside the piano creates the closed timbre, and quality texture of sounds reminiscent of the "qin."

The function of the parts played by the two percussionists is to evoke a mood of bright and dark timbres within the piece. The percussion one part requires a tom-tom, timbales (low and high), bongos (low and high), and a set of temple blocks. The percussion two part employs a bass drum, gong, suspended cymbals (low and high), triangle, anvils (low, medium, and high), and woodblocks (low and high). Although Wen-Chung wrote for two percussionists, both parts can be combined and played by one percussionist. The author believes combining the parts allows a single percussionist to control the timbres of instruments used through careful instrument selection as well as allow a single player to be a more productive ensemble member. In terms of mallet choices for a single percussionist, four different types of mallets are utilized in order to respect

Wen-Chung's timbral choices (e.g., soft yarn, soft plastic, soft felt, and soft rubber mallet, along with minimal use of a brush, wood stick, and triangle beater). Additionally, the author substituted three graduated Chinese tom-toms in their performance for one low tom-tom and two timbales, so that a warmer and more romantic sound environment is produced.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the significance of "Yü Ko," parodying the sound of ancient Chinese instruments with Western classical instruments, introduces Chinese art aesthetics to the West and helps to popularize Chinese cultural aesthetics to the world. Likewise, "Echoes" beautifully illustrates Wen-Chung's compositional synthesis of Western music theory with the Chinese ancient philosophy of "yin-yang" and "I Ching." Additionally, the programmatic titles and formal structure of "Echoes" evoke a certain timbre of the Chinese calligraphy and "qin" articulations.

This synthesis has influenced composers across the world. For example, American composer Dwayne Rice (b.1974) composed a work entitled "I Ching" (2008) for a large percussion ensemble. According to the program notes, the inspiration for this work came from the images of the eight trigrams.[32] Danish composer Per Nørgård's (b. 1932) massive solo percussion work, also titled "I Ching," bases its four movements on specific evocative hexagrams.

In general, Wen-Chung combined Chinese philosophy and artistic aesthetics with Western compositional techniques into his synthesized music approach. The author hopes for a better understanding of the influence of the cultural exchange between the United States and China through Chou Wen-Chung's compositional concepts and those of contemporary Chinese-American composers for fusion of East and West.

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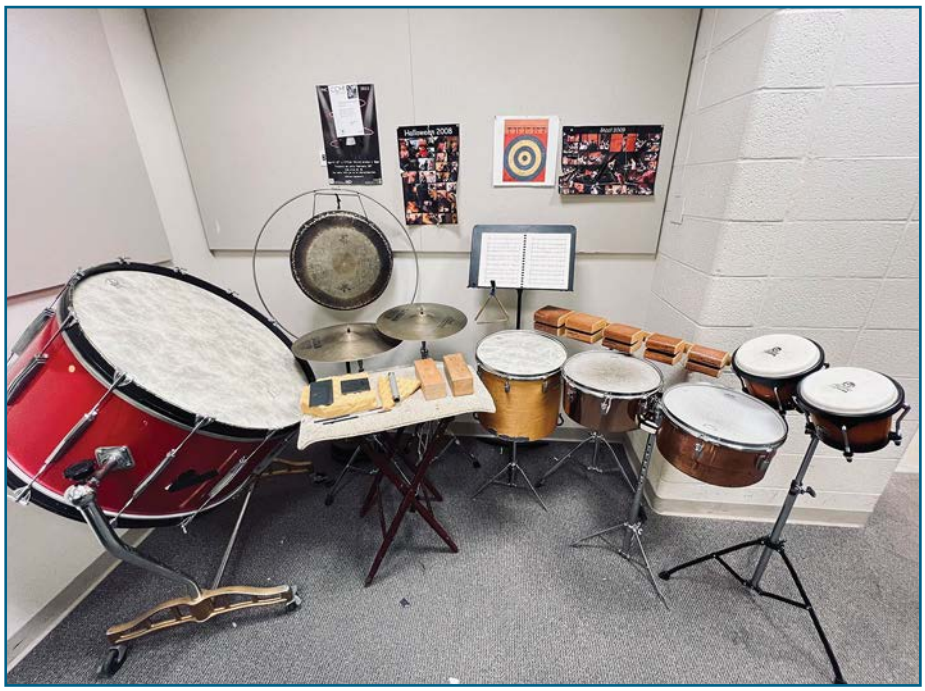
"Yü Ko" percussion layout



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VIDEOS

"Echoes from the Gorge." *https://youtu.be/p1LH0Bpxmgo*
"Yü Ko." *https://youtu.be/jbjrUCUGmdo*

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The Genesis of the Name Zildjian

The name Zildjian might connect the Biblical Israelites and Hittites with Armenians and Turks

By Bruce Kaminsky

The Zildjian Cymbal Company, located in Norwell, Massachusetts, was founded in Constantinople in 1623 during the 17th-century Ottoman Empire. But the Zildjian name, known for centuries as a Turkish cymbal manufacturer, might have its roots in a Hebrew name from the Book of Genesis.

The literal translation of *Zildjian* comes from a combination of Turkish and Armenian languages. It means "cymbal maker's son," and this name was given to an Armenian craftsman named Avedis, who first created the famed cymbals for the Turkish Ottoman Empire Sultan, Mustafa I, in 1618. Turkish and Armenian are recognized as Indo-European languages. But the word *Zil*, which is Turkish for cymbal, might have its origins in the Hebrew name *Zillah*, from the Semitic language of Biblical Hebrew.

Zillah was a woman mentioned in the first book of the Bible: Genesis, chapter four, verse 19. She was the second wife of a man named Lemech, and her name has two meanings: 1. To be in the shadows; and 2. To ring like a bell. The Hebrew word for cymbal is *m'zillah*. Zillah was the mother of Tubal-cain, found three verses later in Genesis chapter four, Verse 22. According to that verse, Tubal-cain was "the first person to shape brass and iron." Brass is the main metal used in the making of cymbals, and all this was detailed in the Bible before Noah and the flood!

Through the Biblical name Zillah, we might be able to make a connection between the Semitic language-speaking Israelites of Canaan and their neighbors, the Indo-European language-speaking Hittites, who are also mentioned in the Book of Genesis.

The Hittite Empire was in Anatolia, in what is now modern-day Turkey, during the Bronze Age (2000 to 700 BCE). They were famous for metalwork in bronze (an alloy of copper and tin), brass (an alloy of copper and zinc), and iron, the metals of Tubal-cain. The Hittites and the Israelites traded together, and no doubt shared some common terms. The Hittite Empire survived until the 8th century BCE. Many other groups of people ruled that land afterwards.

Avedis, the cymbal maker, was an Armenian. The Armenians, also known as the *Hay*, are thought to have come from the breakup of the Hittite Empire and regard themselves as descendants of Hayk, Noah's great-great grandson from Ararat, also in modern day Turkey.

Sultan Mustafa I, the ruler who gave Avedis the title "Zildjian" was an Ottoman Turk. The Ottoman Turks migrated to Anatolia, former land of the Hittites, from Central Asia in the 13th century. The Ottoman Empire lasted until the end of World War I.

Avedis's Zildjian cymbals were an important part of the famed Janissary military bands of the Ottoman Turk. The Janissary was the elite corps that protected the Sultan himself. These bands were the template for the modern-day marching/military bands.

So, from the Biblical name Zillah, we might get the word *zil* that describes what the man Avedis made so well to be given the name Zildjian.

Bruce Kaminsky is an Adjunct Professor of Music History at Drexel University and Montgomery County Community College in Pennsylvania. He is also a bassist and the inventor of the KYDD electric upright bass.

The Caxambu Drum: Specificities and its Use by Villa-Lobos

By Dr. Pedro Sá

Several percussion dictionaries state that the caxambu is a tom-tom held between the knees and struck simultaneously with hands and sticks. This article seeks to clarify what the caxambu drum really is, placing it in its context in Brazilian drumming and specifically in the work of Heitor Villa-Lobos.

In 1965, the Villa-Lobos Museum in Rio de Janeiro published a catalog with an erroneous list of instruments that could be substituted if the originals were missing. Unfortunately, the following two editions of the catalog (1972 and 1986) also maintained these errors. The dictionaries I'm referring to certainly used this erroneous list as a reference. Fortunately, the 2021 catalog edition of the Villa-Lobos Museum presents the correct list of instruments under the supervision of my master Luiz D'Anunciação. My clinic at PASIC 2016 pointed out these mistakes about substitution of instruments in works by Villa-Lobos, based on the publication by D'Anunciação (2006). My sister, Janaína Sá, and I wrote two articles about this subject for *Percussive Notes*, published in the May 2018 and March 2019 issues.

The caxambu has a medium-low pitch and is not aggressive. Villa-Lobos introduced the instrument in his work "Choros n. 10," using only the timbral intonation "open sound," with bare hands, without sticks (see "Choros n. 10," rehearsal number 8). The caxambu, when played with any kind of sticks or mallets, loses its functional identity. This is because it belongs to the hand-drum family in which the authentic sound is marked by the percussionist playing with bare hands — skin against skin. The caxambu is traditionally made with goatskin tacked to the shell by small metal pins. If you replace the instrument with a tom-tom, the tom-tom's rim can hurt the player's hand when they play it.

Brazilian percussion of African origin brings together a large family of drums with a single membrane and similar acoustic properties to each other. They come in a variety of sizes and vary in the pitch of the fundamental tone. The drums come in a variety of shapes including conical, cylindrical shapes carved out of tree trunks, or hollowed out by using barrels. The caxambu drum belongs to this family of instruments.

The term caxambu gained notoriety due to its involvement with one of the predecessors of samba, the caxambu dance, also known as jongo, one of the "fathers" of samba. Jongo is a circle dance that was originated by Black people of

Bantu origin who were brought as slaves to work on the coffee plantations of the Vale do Paraíba, in the countryside of the states Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, and São Paulo. Men and women take part in this dance, which is performed outdoors and at night; the oral tradition of the jongueiros (participants in the dance) tells us that it was danced by slaves, who passed it onto their descendants. The jongo can still be found in Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, and São Paulo states.

Rustic construction of the instrument, including tuning, imprints a timbral mark to be considered, precisely because it is the detail that personalizes the sound identity of this group of membranophones. Not considering the caxambu is to oppose an acoustic reality and, above all, to ignore the traditionalism of a culture that we, Brazilian people, want to preserve. In the jongo dance, the caxambu instrument is often called barrica, cambina, papai, or other names dictated by regionalism.

Regarding the instruments of the jongo dance, three drums of different sizes are used: tambu, caxambu, and candongueiro. The tambu is the largest and lowest drum of the jongo. In terms of size and pitch, the caxambu and the candongueiro come next, the latter having the highest pitch. The drums are played with the bare hands, without sticks. In some places, such as Jongo da Serrinha, located in Morro da Serrinha in Madureira (Rio de Janeiro city), the angoma-puíta (a kind of low cuíca) has been replaced by the tambu.

CLOSING REMARKS

Since the erroneous publications of the Villa-Lobos Museum catalog regarding the substitution of instruments in Villa-Lobos' works (1965, 1972, and 1986 editions), I have noticed inconsistencies regarding the correct terminology for the caxambu drum in several percussion dictionaries. Since 2022, I've been part of the team at the Villa-Lobos Museum in Rio de Janeiro, as a percussion consultant, feeling honored to maintain the legacy of my master Luiz D'Anunciação and having the honor of working with the greatest living Villa-Lobos expert, the musicologist Manoel Corrêa do Lago, in the revision of Villa-Lobos' orchestral works. Stay tuned for more books coming soon! If you have any questions, please email me at *pedro.timpano@gmail.com*.

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Goatskin tacked to the shell of a caxambu, attached by small metal pins.

Dr. Pedro Sá has been a timpanist for four decades. Since 2002 he has been principal timpanist at Petrobras Symphony Orchestra (Opes) in Rio de Janeiro. Performance studies have been with such artists as Luiz D'Anunciação, Mestre Caboclinho, Miquel Bernat, Arthur Lipner, Michael Rosen, and Paul Yancich. He has also studied composition with Nelson de Macêdo. Pedro holds a doctor's degree in Music Performance from Unirio, and he has been Adjunct Professor of Percussion at the UFRJ School of Music since 2007, where he also serves as Associate Researcher/ Percussion Consultant at the Museum of Musical Instruments Delgado de Carvalho. Pedro has given solo performances and educational presentations at venues throughout the U.S., including performances with UNCG Percussion Ensemble and a masterclass at Oberlin Percussion Institute. Together with Janaína Sá, he is a founding member of the Duo Sá de Percussão, having performed and taught at several PASICs and music-educator conventions.

Evolution of "The Connecticut Halftime"

By Kyle Forsthoff

Since the time of the American Civil War (1861–65), "The Connecticut Halftime" has been a staple of the American rudimental drum repertoire. Its simple and direct vocabulary, coupled with the incremental development of its variation forms, has secured its place as a foundational piece in the pedagogy of drummers world-wide. This article will explore the publication history of "The Connecticut Halftime," including an obscure version not seen in print for nearly a century.

H.C. HART'S CONNECTICUT HALFTIME

The beating that would become known as "The Connecticut Halftime" first appeared in print in Colonel H.C. Hart's *New and Improved Instructor for the Drum*, published in New York in 1862. In that manual, the beating is rendered in a graphic notation adapted from a British drummer named Samuel Wilcox, then engaged as an instructor of the Wolcott Drum Band of Wolcott, Conn.[1] Hart's beating is used to accompany a fife tune called "Rosebud Reel," presented here as the second part of the Tattoo duty sequence, and is essentially the same as the basic form of the well-known modern beating with the exception of a sextuplet that closes the fourth strain instead of a Lesson 25. The tune and beating from the Hart book can be seen in Figure 1.[2] Figure 2 shows Hart's drum beating in modern notation.[3]

J. BURNS MOORE'S CONNECTICUT HALFTIME

The version of "The Connecticut Half-

Figure 1: "Rosebud Reel" with Halftime beating from the Hart book.

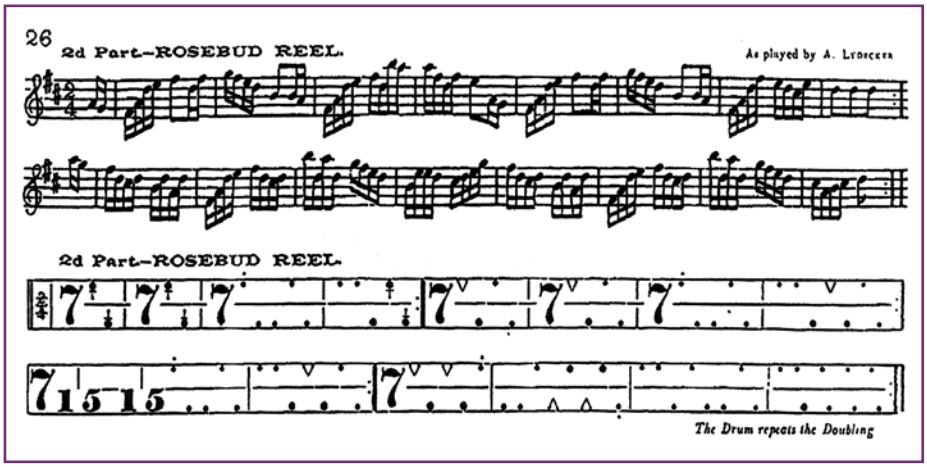
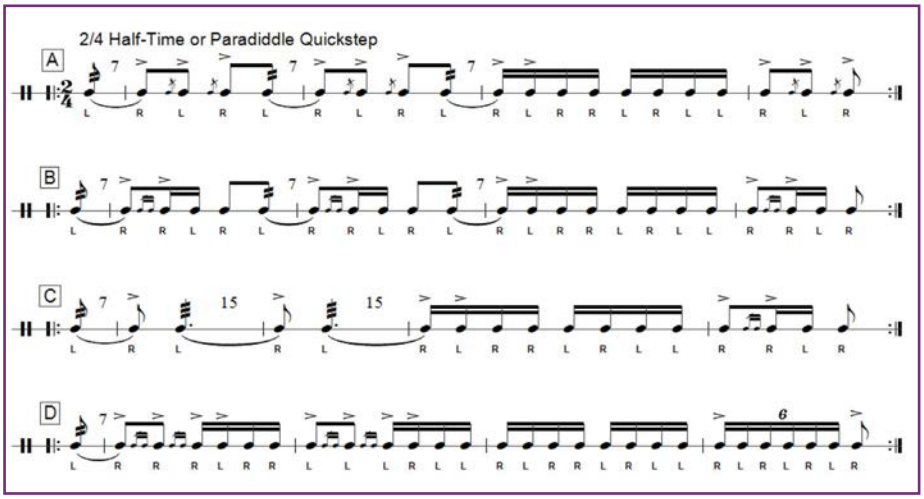


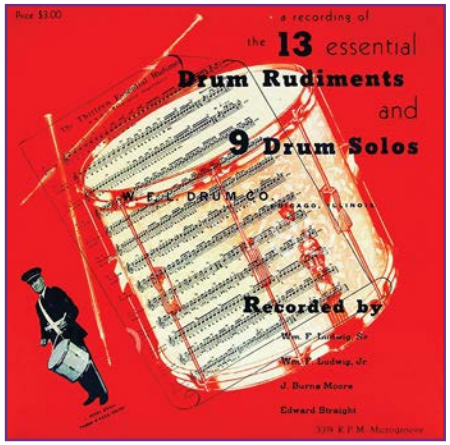
Figure 2: Halftime beating from the Hart book in modern notation.



time" most widely known today first appeared in *The Art of Drumming* by J. Burns Moore (1872–1951), published by the William F Ludwig Drum Company in 1937. Due to its wide circulation over several decades, this is likely the version most readers are familiar with. Burns Moore's version was later published in William Ludwig's *Collection Drum Solos* in 1942, the Ludwig *Contest Solos* pamphlet (no date), and in *The Solo Snare Drummer, Vol. 1* in 1985 by John Pratt, et al. It also appeared on two Ludwig promotional LP records, first played by Burns Moore himself in 1940 on *The Wm F Ludwig Rudimental Drum Record No. 1*, and then recorded by Frank Arsenault in the late 1950s on *The 26 Standard American Rudiments*. The basic beating was also included in the less-widely distributed *The Sturtze Drum Instructor* (1956), a source that would have been known to many drummers in the northeast.

J. Burns Moore, date unknown

The Wm F Ludwig Rudimental Drum Record No. 1



In Burns Moore's arrangement, the traditional four-strain beating is repeated three times, each time increasing in difficulty through a series of variation techniques, a process known in rudimental drumming as "filling." The practice of filling may have developed for several reasons. Filling is an effective way to keep drummers engaged during the repeats of tunes, while established variation schemes gave drummers a modular but simple method of increasing the length and technical difficulty of solos used in the various competitive circuits flourishing at this time, among them the Connecticut Fifers & Drummers Association (CF&DA).

FRANK FANCHER'S 2/4

Frank Fancher (1885–1966) was born in New Haven, Conn. and received his early instruction from J. Burns Moore. Highly regarded throughout the rudimental community, Fancher won over 180 first-place medals and championships during his competitive career. Fancher moved to Chicago in the mid-1920s and became one of Ludwig & Ludwig's first endorsing artists, even joining William Ludwig, Sr. as an honorary member of the U.S. Army Band for Calvin Coolidge's 1925 inaugural parade.

Frank Fancher promo photo in the 1928 Slingerland catalog

The late pages of the first edition of Sanford Augustus "Gus" Moeller's *Art of Drumming*, published in 1925, contain two pages of music titled "Fancher's 2/4 Number One" and "Fancher's 2/4 Number Two." Taken together, these two pieces comprise another four-iteration version of "The Connecticut Halftime" that is quite similar to Burns Moore's arrangement except for the third filling and some other nuanced differences. What is most noteworthy is that Fancher's published version predates Burns Moore's by eight years, making it the first version that would have appeared in print since Hart. Also of note, "Fancher's 2/4" is the only music in the body of the Moeller book that possesses its own copyright information and that is not attributed to Moeller himself. "Fancher's 2/4" can be seen in Figure 3.

It is interesting to observe that the initial statement of the beating and the first two fillings are basically identical between the Fancher and Burns Moore versions (note that Fancher offers an optional sticking variation for advanced players in the second strain of each iteration). This would suggest that perhaps there was a certain amount of standardized performance practice, with each author then taking an individualized approach to the third filling. Given the nature of the competition scene, this is understandable. Further, it makes sense that Fancher's version of "The Connecticut Halftime" would bear many similarities to his teacher's. Though Fancher was able to publish before Burns Moore, it could possibly be inferred that Burns Moore taught his version to Fancher, and then Fancher made adjustments to suit his own needs.

The Museum of Fife & Drum has a 1960 recording of Fancher in its archive,

accessible via the following link: *https://companyoffifeanddrum.org/archives/features/sound-files/frank-fancher-album*. Fancher's performance of "The Connecticut Halftime," slightly different from the published version, can be heard on the track "Beatings" at the 8:10 mark.

"Fancher's 2/4" was published in the Moeller book in 1925, and his image was featured in Ludwig's 1927 catalog (as was Moeller's). A year later, Fancher can be seen in Slingerland's 1928 catalog promoting a Frank Fancher signature-model rod-tension snare drum, and his music was removed from the Moeller book with its first revision in 1929. It has not been in print since.

From its roots as an adaptable Civil War-era drum beating, through the years of its early publication and use as a competition piece in the 1920s–1950s, to its modern status as a rudimental classic spawning a myriad of ever-expanding variations, "The Connecticut Halftime" has proven itself a stalwart of the American rudimental language and will continue to inspire drummers from a host of styles and traditions for generations to come.

All photos courtesy of the Museum of Fife & Drum, Ivoryton, Conn.

ENDNOTES

1. The Wolcott Drum Band moved to nearby Waterbury in 1881 and has been known as the Mattatuck Drum Band since that time.
2. The indication "The Drum repeats the Doubling" is not related to the Halftime beating itself. The Doubling is the next beating in the Tattoo duty sequence presented in the manual.
3. The title "2/4 Halftime or Paradiddle Quickstep" appears in an abridged edition of Hart's manual.

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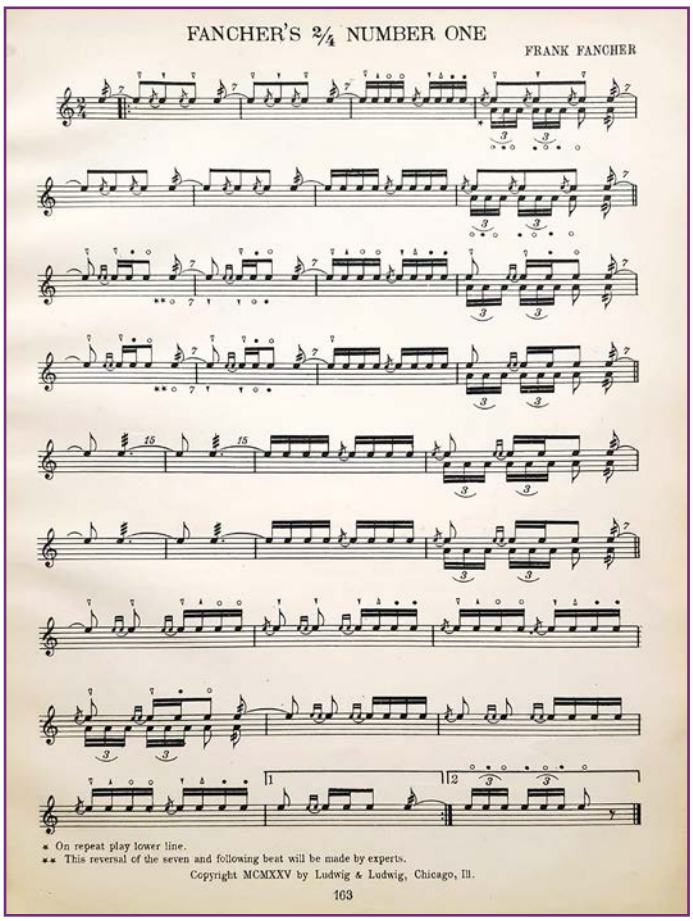
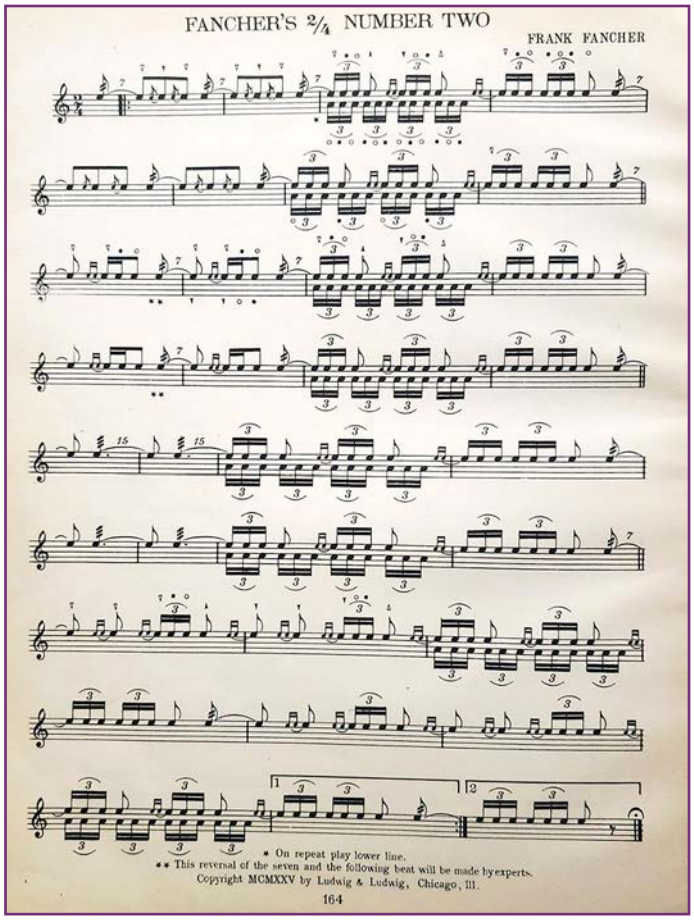
Figure 3: Fancher's 2/4 from Gus Moeller's Art of Drumming (1925 ed), pg 163–164





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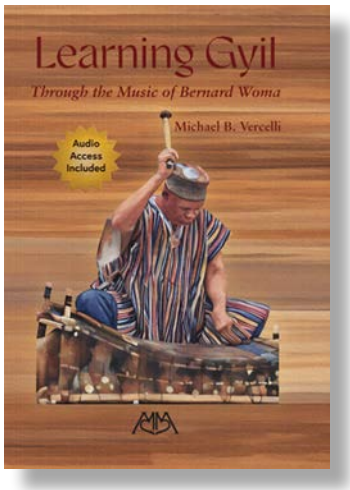


GENERAL REFERENCE

Learning Gyil Through the Music of Bernard Woma
Michael Vercelli
$29.95
Meredith Music

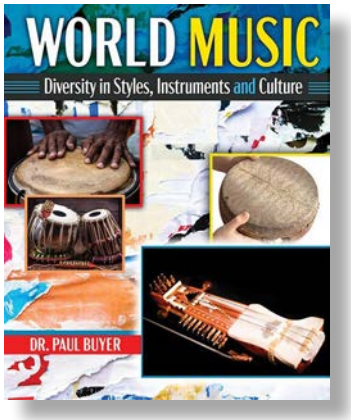
As stated in the opening material, this book is a collection of writings, lessons, songs, and techniques centered around Bernard Woma and the Dagara xylophone, known as the gyil. Unfortunately, with Bernard's passing in 2018, it also became somewhat of a memorial to his wonderful life and his musical and pedagogical contributions to the percussion world.

Michael Vercelli states in the introduction, "This book was intended to be a collaborative project, and despite his illness and exhaustive touring schedule, Bernard left me with many ideas, descriptions, and definitions to include." Many audio examples were recorded by Bernard and many passages of text come directly from Vercelli's study with him.

The book is divided into ten chapters: Gyil and Drum Technique, Ne Waa Seb, The Lenu and Kpagru, Bewaa: Tome Na, Bewaa: Saa Be Waana, Bewaa: Yaa Yaa Kole, Yiila Guola, Bagr-bine, The Kuor Drum, and Conclusion. Each chapter includes many instructional photos, diagrams, exercises, and songs written in Western musical notation. The text and accompanying materials are accessible to anyone looking to learn about this instrument.

This textbook is an incredible resource for anyone looking to learn about Bernard Woma, the Dagara tradition, and specifically the gyil. I recommend this text to any percussionist to gain an understanding of this wonderful man and the tradition that he embodied. Bravo Michael and all involved!

—Justin Bunting



World Music: Diversity in Styles, Instruments, and Culture
Paul Buyer
$80.00 Print/$40.00 E-book
Kendall Hunt

Released in 2024, Paul Buyer's *World Music: Diversity in Styles, Instruments, and Culture* is a concise yet thorough textbook intended for use in a one-semester collegiate-level course on world music. It is comprised of 12 chapters and is curated to include the music of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, Japan, Trinidad, Cuba, and others. As stated by the author, these cultures were selected as a "sample of unique, distinctive, and contrasting musical traditions — an approach that can easily be applied to other world music not included here."

The book's introductory chapters discuss the foundational elements of the text including terminology, key concepts of world music, and instrument classifications. Nearly all remaining chapters are devoted to the cultures stated above with information on the historical developments of these regions and specific musical traits or instruments associated with these cultures. What I found most intriguing was each chapter ends with a section called "Musician Spotlight" that highlights three significant figures within the culture's artform. In addition to the informative writing, the text is filled with images, classroom activities, and video resources that are accessed online. Each chapter also includes a detailed list of references for further research and exploration.

Though intended for use in a world music course, Buyer's book is valuable for any secondary or collegiate percussion instructor. The information provided about our instrument area could be used in studio classes, individual lessons, or methods courses. It is a worthwhile investment and fantastic addition to your pedagogical library.

—Danielle Moreau

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION SOLO

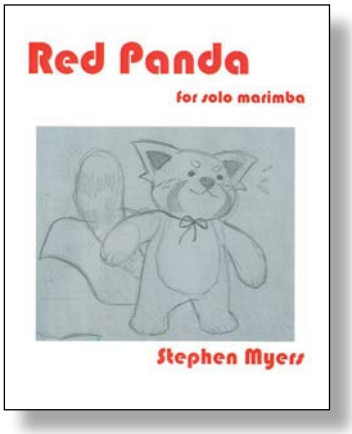
Lost in a Thought III
Riley Giese
$10.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation: 4.3-octave marimba
Web: *score sample, audio recording*

This short, 4-mallet solo work for marimba requires only a low-A instrument. According to composer Riley Giese, the piece is meant to "convey the feeling of a daydream." The piece, at only two minutes long, further supports this idea, being "short and fleeting."

The composer utilizes primarily quiet dynamics, leaving room for individual expressive ideas like *rubato*. Technically, the work is of beginner

to intermediate difficulty except for a few measures containing large leaps in a single hand or quick contrary motion between hands. "Lost in a Thought" provides a great canvas for a developing player to focus on musicality without excessive technical challenges. It would be a sensible choice for a high school student developing technique or a "quick learn" for an experienced undergraduate student.

—Marco Schirripa



Red Panda II
Stephen Myers
$15.00
Per-Mus Publications
Instrumentation: 4.3-octave marimba
Web: *video recording*

"Red Panda" is a three-minute work for solo marimba appropriate for developing four-mallet players. Using examples of mixed meter and a variety of style changes, the playful nature of this solo makes it appealing both for students and educators.

A variety of introductory four-mallet techniques are used throughout this work. The opening section utilizes alternating sticking and double verticals between the hands at intervals from a third to a sixth. As the piece progresses, double and triple laterals, metered rolls, and single-line passages are introduced before returning to the thematic material to end the piece. Stephen Myers provides significant dynamic contract and phrase detail without restricting performers from making their own musical decisions. I found the rubato section particularly useful, as all techniques stated above are utilized here.

"Red Panda" is a short yet charming piece playable by a wide range of students. Because it is written for a 4.3-octave marimba, it is feasible for performers at many high school programs as well as collegiate-level students.

—Danielle Moreau

Sketches for Marimba IV
Abigale Schultz
$20.00
Per-Mus Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: *audio recording*

"Sketches for Marimba" contains four movements, each presenting different musical ideas. Individual movements have durations ranging from about 1½ to 2½ minutes, with the complete work being roughly eight minutes. The first movement, "Innocent," centers on a clear melody with accompaniment at a medium allegro tempo; a proficiency of single independent strokes and right hand/left hand coordination will be needed. "Playful" is the title of the second movement and continues the melody-with-accompaniment idea of the first movement, but it has added elements, such as 3:2 cross rhythms, right-hand double vertical and double lateral strokes, and multiple meter changes. The third movement, "Pensive," is an expressive Andante chorale that is rolled throughout, a departure from the previous two movements. The final movement, "Happy-Go-Lucky," contains two distinct sections. The first is a series of sixteenth notes, frequently patterned with a left-hand single note followed by a right-hand double lateral stroke. The second is a medium upbeat swing section that begins roughly a third of the way into the movement and lasts to its end. This section contains an abundance of double vertical strokes with occasional single-independent-stroke turnarounds.

The four movements of "Sketches" do a great job of representing a variety of mallet fundamentals within an overall lyrical setting. However, a working knowledge of these fundamentals is strongly recommended before starting to learn this work. This piece is a fine addition to the intermediate/advanced marimba repertoire, especially for those looking for lyrical works that will strengthen and apply their marimba fundamentals outside of mundane technical exercises.

—Tim Feerst

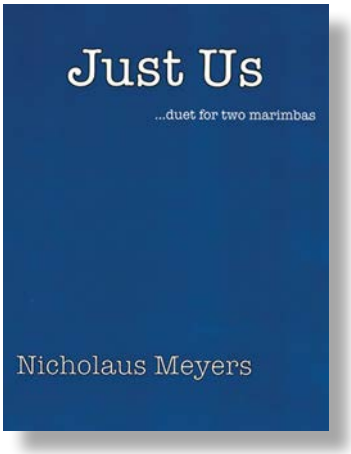
Temple VI
Isaac Harari
$19.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: *score sample, audio and video recordings*

"Temple" will fit right in on many recital programs that seek to balance audience accessibility with technical showmanship. At seven minutes in length (or a little less, if the performer has eaten their Wheaties), this physically challenging marimba solo borrows heavily from minimalist techniques used by Reich and Takemitsu (there is a clear link between the opening material of "Temple" and Takemitsu's "Cross-Hatch") to patiently build and then explore various textures that develop a recurring melodic motive. The piece is unapologetically episodic, weaving through moments of breathless activity as well as stretches of tidal patience.

I was struck by the fact that this piece heavily incorporates minimalism as a developmental device, but it is not itself a wholly minimalist work. Sitting at the crests and peaks of the different minimalist episodes are pockets of dazzling virtuosic material that are, in my opinion, the highlights of the work from both a compositional and performance perspective. Were it not for these moments, this might be considered an intermediate four-mallet solo, but a solid mastery of polyrhythmic independence and lateral mallet strokes are necessary to perform this piece in its entirety. The work requires the use of a 5-octave marimba, but there is little enough material below the low F that performers who have a 4.5-octave marimba should be able to adapt the piece with little difficulty.

For performers seeking a challenging yet audience-friendly marimba solo that blends elements of minimalism, groove, and flashes of virtuosity, I recommend giving "Temple" a look.

—Brian Graiser



KEYBOARD PERCUSSION DUET

Just Us III
Nicholaus Meyers
$15.00
Per-Mus Publications
Instrumentation (2 players): one 4.3-octave marimba
Web: *audio recording*

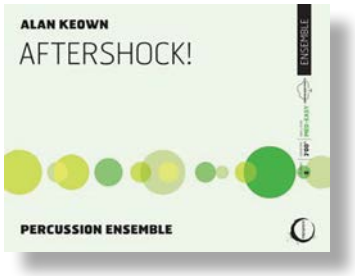
"Just Us" is a marimba duet utilizing a single 4.3-octave marimba in three sections. The first utilizes several contrasting themes that are then passed between the players throughout its first 40 measures. The second section begins with the players passing triplet double-stops between each

other before moving into more thematic material from the first section. Finally, the piece returns to the original themes of the beginning of the work, reprising that material with some from the section before building to a climactic finish.

Technically, the piece is very idiomatic, with both players only needing experience with two-mallet technique. The work is in 12/8 except for a single 6/8 measure. Musically, the dynamic range is reserved with the performers only needing to navigate between *piano* and *forte*, and rhythmically the piece never moves past eighth-note subdivisions.

This work would be appropriate for high school programs with a single marimba or maybe even an advanced middle school program. At just over four minutes in length, it would work well for solo and ensemble festivals or percussion ensemble concerts.

—Brian Nozny



PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Aftershock! II
Alan Keown
$36.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation (8 players): high and low bongos, high and low congas, 4 toms
Web: *score sample, audio recording*

"Aftershock!" is a sequel to Alan Keown's "Shockwave!," also composed for an elementary-level percussion ensemble with the same instrumentation. Because they are both energetic and fun, the two pieces would work nicely as the opening and closing of a concert.

"Aftershock!" is in 4/4 and based on a reoccurring syncopated sixteenth-note rhythm. In fact, the entire three-minute work is based on eighth- and sixteenth-note based rhythms. Keown provides mostly right-hand-lead sticking for these rhythms (although they could easily be adjusted for left-hand lead). Therefore, "Aftershock!" works well as a pedagogical reinforcement for dominant-hand-lead sticking.

There are a wide range of dynamics, and all eight parts are equal in difficulty. There is much additive and unison playing (often split into two groups of four players), which can allow more experienced players to help lead/coach less experienced players. There are also a few simple visuals and vocalizations, adding to the engaging nature of this piece.

The instruments called for are often found in middle and high school band rooms, but if not, I imagine substitutions can be made without disrupting the integrity of the work (the homogenous timbres and pitch-spread seem to be the most important elements). "Aftershock!" is an accessible, exciting, and engaging work that performers and audiences will find fun!

—Joseph Van Hassel

False Impression IV
Darrien Spicak
$40.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation (4 players): impact drum, bongos, 2 congas, 8 concert toms, 2 woodblocks,
Web: *score sample, audio and video recordings*

"False Impression" presents wonderful and exciting rhythmic challenges for some adventurous players. This quartet is around five minutes in length and packs a lot into that time.

Each player's setup is relatively small, utilizing a limited number of non-pitched percussion. Although it's a lean-and-mean setup, there's enough variety to create the many textures that support the main point of the piece: an exploration in rhythm. Players will find that to be the more technical demand for this piece. Most of the work uses a quick tempo and multiple meter changes. With heavy use of hemiola, tempo changes, and a rubato impact drum solo, there's almost a constant sense of intrigue regarding the meter from the listener's point of view. Sprinkle in some carefully crafted metric modulation, and this is definitely something that will keep the audience engaged and on their toes!

Aside from the notes and rhythms, there are program notes detailing the composer's thoughts regarding the composition and multiple performance suggestions, implement suggestions, and a suggested setup diagram. It's obvious that the composer put a lot of thought and due diligence into this work, and future players of this work would do well to do the same. This work is certainly a great addition to any upcoming concert.

—Ben Cantrell

Hidden Universe IV
Ben Cato
$36.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation (3 players): 5-octave marimba
Web: *score sample, audio and video recordings*

"Hidden Universe" joins a growing list of compositions for shared marimba. Aside from the obvious logistical advantage of only needing to have one instrument, there is a unique character to the music-making between players when they are standing at the same marimba. In both respects, I appreciate this piece and its minimal instrumentation.

Ben Cato writes, "[The piece] was composed as a tribute to the curiosity of the unknown among the stars." In the opening, the layered sixteenth notes with moving accents are reminiscent of "Vespertine Formations" by Christopher Deane. Though Deane's piece was inspired by observing flocks of birds, the similarity in portraying looking up to the sky is interesting.

The A section features a sixteenth-note ostinato in Player 3's part, while the other two parts work as a duet in harmony, yet rhythmic unison. The B section is very highly syncopated. Player 3 has some melodic material on top of a rhythmic bass line in the other hand. Players 1 and 2 are creating a descending stream of sixteenth notes in each measure, with Player 1 providing the beat and the "e," while Player 2 provides the "and" and "ah."' Clearly, performers on the Player 1 and 2 parts especially need to be strong, independent players.

This is elevated even more in the next section, which features almost 30 measures of hocket between Players 1 and 2. Player 1 has eighth notes and Player 2 fills in the "e" and "ah" in between. Sustaining this for an entire section of the piece presents a strong challenge to those performing it. The piece closes with a coda reminiscent of the beginning.

I recommend this piece for an advanced high school or college percussion ensemble looking for an impactful addition to any program. This piece works particularly well as an opener, as it is less than four minutes long and will grab the audience's attention from the beginning.

—Justin Bunting

A Late One IV
Linda Dachtyl
$30.00
Per-Mus Publications
Instrumentation (6 players): bells, vibraphone, 4.3-octave marimba, 5-octave marimba, drumset

Linda Dachtyl, a jazz organist who is equally adept as a drummer, percussionist, and composer, has a unique skill for crafting interesting melodies, and when arranged for percussion ensembles, these melodies really stand out. In the case of "A Late One," a tune that is also the title track to Dachtyl's 2015 jazz album by the same name, the melody is a lyrical, mixed-meter delight!

Adapted as a flexible percussion-ensemble arrangement, "A Late One" can be played with different instrumentation. Optional parts are available for bass and piano, which can fill out the texture to cover for or double one or all of the marimba parts, creating a piece that can be played by as many as eight players or as few as four, featuring vibraphone, piano, bass, and drumset.

While the meter changes frequently between 5/4 and 3/4, the parts are very repetitive and easy to navigate on each instrument. Each of the mallet parts, apart from the vibraphone part, is playable with two mallets. While the vibraphonist is asked to play four-note chords at rehearsals B and D, the progression is repeated several times and is straightforward to navigate.

The piece offers an interesting opportunity for a multi-level percussion ensemble to play a work that can challenge performers at a variety of levels. Given the repetition throughout, each of the parts should be easy to navigate for intermediate players. The bell part adds a nice color to the arrangement but plays sparingly throughout, allowing an opportunity for less experienced mallet players to be involved. Similarly, the drumset part is written as a through-composed lead sheet, which can be read as is or adapted within the style by more advanced players. The vibraphone and Marimba 1 parts are more involved than the other parts as they alternate playing the melody throughout the piece. Both parts are given chord

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changes at Rehearsal D; however, the vibraphone part has chords in root position. While easy to identify, they are a little awkward to play on the instrument. The player or director may consider working on different voicings of these chords to give the player options and help them navigate the vamp more easily.

Notably, the piece offers two opportunities for solo improvisation: an open vamp at Rehearsal D and a two-measure break during the coda. Each of these progressions is easy to navigate, and a tip sheet by the composer is included to help ease anxiety for novice improvisers.

The work calls for three marimba parts, playable on two instruments. The Marimba 3 part is playable on a low-F marimba except for the final note, which includes a doubled E-flat that could easily be doubled in the bass or raised up an octave if a low-C instrument is unavailable.

At around five minutes, this piece would make an interesting addition to a percussion or jazz ensemble concert and can be played comfortably by intermediate high school or college percussion ensembles. While there are several transcriptions of jazz tunes for percussion ensemble, it is less common to find original repertoire arranged by the composer for percussion ensemble. This direct link between composer and arrangement within the jazz medium creates a lively arrangement that will be fun for the performers and audience alike.

—Quintin Mallette

Motion No. 1 III
Nicholas V. Hall
$32.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation (2 players): bongos, flat bass drum
Web: *score sample, audio and video recordings*

This 4½-minute duet is quite reminiscent of the sounds, rhythmic interplay, and energy of "Trio Per Uno" by Nebojsa Zivkovic. While there are nods to the Zikvovic work in terms of the primary timbres utilized (bass drum, bongos, rims), the difficulty and complexity of this duet is not as demanding, which will make it more accessible to younger players.

Based primarily on sixteenth notes with the occasional thirty-second note rhythmic ping-pong sections, this work is fairly straightforward in its delivery and musical narrative. Beginning with a consistent sixteenth-note ostinato that is interrupted with accents, quick rhythmic flourishes, and a predictable dialogue between the two players, the piece starts simply and progresses through increased intricacy as it moves forward. Composer Nicholas V. Hall included a metric modulation about half-way through the work, which adds to the building excitement of the piece that concludes with a very appealing mixture of all the percussive sounds previously utilized.

This is a great work for younger players who might be new to chamber music and do not want to "break the bank" in terms of setting up a lot of instruments for their practice sessions and performance.

—Joshua D. Smith

Plane of Existence IV–V
Carson Chlup
$48.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation (9 players): glockenspiel, 2 vibraphones, two 4.3-octave marimbas (opt. 5-octave), 5-octave marimba, crotales, sizzle cymbal, tam tam, 2 Zil-Bels, snare drum, shaker, ride cymbal, 2 mark trees, 3 toms, snare drum, ocean drum, bass drum, suspended cymbal, kick drum, 2 brake drums
Web: *score sample, audio recording*

"Plane of Existence" stands out among percussion ensemble pieces as a compelling choice for advanced groups. Its unique orchestration creates an open, undulating sound that evolves in rhythmic complexity, with each instrument contributing meaningfully to the overall texture.

The piece opens with resonant, sparse textures that establish an atmosphere of anticipation and introduce the main theme. As it progresses into a more rhythmically intense middle section, every instrument is thoughtfully employed to reinforce the thematic material. The conclusion mirrors the beginning, but with a different contemplative quality that resembles a reflective exhale. The writing evokes a cinematic feel, with moments of intense motion followed by sudden pauses or slowdowns, and the thematic material creates cohesion across contrasting sections, evoking vivid imagery.

The orchestration is particularly impressive, as every instrument serves a distinct purpose, contributing to a nuanced, seamless transition between sections. Instruments often complement rather than contrast, such as brake drums supporting melodic lines — an ingenious touch. Overall, "Plane of Existence" is a piece worth adding to any ensemble's repertoire.

—Cassie Bunting

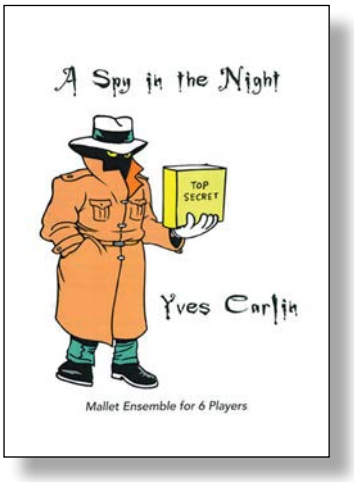
Reach II
John Herndon
$35.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation (2–11 players): two 4-octave marimbas, xylophone, vibraphone, glockenspiel, chimes, snare drum, timpani, bass drum, triangle, crash cymbals
Web: *score sample, audio recording*

"Reach" is a new work for beginning percussion students that can be performed with as few as two players or as many as 11. John Herndon breaks the ensemble into three different sections of melody, harmony, and percussion. The two-player version uses one marimba, with students performing the Marimba 1 and 2 parts. He offers suggestions on instruments to be used for different player numbers. This allows the work to be accessible to smaller and larger groups alike.

The work uses simple rhythms consisting only of eighth, quarter, half, and whole notes. The rhythmic base in the percussion grouping closely follows the rhythm of the melody lines. Melodically, the piece uses only eight pitches in primarily stepwise motion, allowing younger students to perform more accurately. The harmonic instruments use only six pitches and closely follow the melody rhythmically. The form is ABA with a coda. This allows students to learn the piece much quicker with the repetitions of the A section, along with the repetitive nature of the sections themselves.

Herndon's offering to the elementary percussion ensemble repertoire is not only well written but is very much needed. The flexibility of the instrumentation and number of players allows for any school or group to perform his work. Students will enjoy performing this piece, and the audience is sure to be pleased as well. Hopefully we will soon see more composers writing pieces such as this one for our younger students!

—Josh Armstrong



A Spy in the Night II
Yves Carlin
$15.00
Per-Mus Publications
Instrumentation (6 players): glockenspiel, chimes, vibraphone, xylophone, 5-octave marimba.

This new composition for mallet ensemble comes to us from Belgian guitarist and percussionist Yves Carlin. It is a short-and-sweet piece that offers the opportunity to introduce several musical elements, while still presenting something that young players will find enjoyable and can learn quickly.

In terms of form, this piece is incredibly straightforward. It begins with a four-measure phrase in the glockenspiel, which is then repeated with accompaniment from one of the marimba players. This happens again with the addition of another player, then another, until all six players have layered in with their unique four-measure accompaniment. The piece then switches briefly to a second theme before returning to the original material and cadencing to the end. Each part only comprises two four-bar phrases that are repeated a select number of times, making it an easy learn for the youngest of players.

Along with the simplicity of the parts, a lot of minor details in this work make it a great pedagogical tool for beginning students. For instance, it is in 12/8, and based on the simplicity of the parts, it is written for players who probably have not encountered this time signature in their band rooms. This also offers a chance to teach minor modes, being that it is in B-minor, as well as providing practice reading parts in bass clef, since both marimba parts are written in this manner.

Since it is in a minor mode and includes a fair amount of chromatic gestures, its character is mysterious and interesting. This will make the work fun to learn for any young group that is still learning how to play the keyboard instruments. This will be a welcome addition to middle school percussion groups everywhere.

—Kyle Cherwinski

Thundersnow III
Miles Locke
$55.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation (18–24+ players): glockenspiel,

crotales (2 oct.), chimes, 3 vibraphones, 5 bows, xylophone, sizzle cymbal, 3 marimbas (4.3, 4.5, and 5-octave), 6 concert toms, tuned wine glasses (C, D-flat, F, G, A-flat, B-flat), 5 thunder tubes, F and G whirly tubes, 4 timpani, piano, synthesizer, drumset (including China and splash cymbals), marching snare drum, 3 triangles, tam-tam, 2 tambourines (orchestral and headless), garden weasels (or substitute triangle), sleighbells, mark tree, slapstick, suspended cymbal, woodblock, concert bass drum (opt. second concert bass drum), China cymbal, bell tree, antiphonal bass/impact drums
Web: *score sample, audio recording*

Miles Locke takes the listener on a 6½-minute journey through a snow-frosted landscape in "Thundersnow," his composition for 18–24 players. Written in the style of percussion orchestra originated by Oklahoma University and popularized by groups like the Texas Christian University percussion ensemble, this piece is perfect for an advanced high school ensemble or beginner collegiate ensemble. The piece is dramatic in scope, utilizing over a dozen keyboard players and almost as many drummers, and in effects, with whirly tubes, thunder tubes, tuned wine glasses, and optional antiphonal drums.

"Thundersnow" starts off ethereal, with a translucent texture created by bowed vibraphone, tuned water glasses, triangles, sleighbells, and suspended cymbal. Much as a battle scene might ominously unfold in a movie, the tempo gradually increases and more voices enter the texture, with mallet players churning out accelerating sixteenth notes against thrumming eighth-note chords from the piano. A sudden silence and then sharp attack from slapstick and snare rimshot ushers in the thundering drums and driving, faster tempo. The piece continues to develop and evolve, with a dance-like 7/8 and 7/16 middle section that gradually decomposes into a soft, meditative, chorale-like interlude. After that moment of respite, the ensemble comes churning back in with the faster, most dense ensemble writing of the piece. This chaotic energy drives the piece into its final dramatic *fortississimo* chord.

There are many challenges for the ensemble in this piece. These include numerous tempo changes — some abrupt, some gradual — and even more instances of meter changes. There are extended passages in 7/8 and 7/16, and the material in these odd meters is not just simple grooves. There are syncopated, squirmy melodic lines that require careful subdivision, and the lines are often passed from player to player. This piece requires careful listening and strong ensemble awareness from the players.

The piece includes a piano part and an optional synthesizer part. The piano part is involved enough to need someone with a piano background to cover it. The synthesizer part, however, is simple, consisting primarily of single-note lines or octave long tones. Any passages utilizing both right and left hand at the same time are simple block chords.

The flexible instrumentation and varying difficulty levels of the parts make this an ideal composition for large, intermediate-level ensembles. Directors can choose to utilize anywhere from 18 to over 24 players, and there are substitution suggestions for some of the more unusual instruments. While none of the parts are insubstantial, there is enough variability in difficulty to allow a range of ages/abilities to be involved. The breadth of dynamic and tempo range, wide palette of colors, and dramatic moments of impact make this a show-stopper piece for high school and collegiate concerts alike.

—Hannah Weaver

MULTIPLE PERCUSSION SOLO

Tambor **IV**
Kyle Skinner
$18.00
Tapspace Publications
Instrumentation: concert snare drum, tambourine
Web: *score sample, audio and video recordings*

A clever addition to the multiple percussion repertoire and uniquely categorized as a snare drum and tambourine solo on the publisher's website, this piece reminds me of other snare drum solos with an additional instrument, such as "Impressions" by Nikolas Martynciow. Like "Impressions," though, the combining of instruments is not what makes this a great piece; the writing does.

Kyle Skinner does a great job of mixing textures: simultaneous tambourine and snare drum, solo snare drum, solo tambourine, and a section reminiscent of frame drumming with fingers. My fear was that this solo would be a long gimmick, but the composer does a great job of avoiding the trap of doing too much with a good idea. The balance between each section is appropriate, and none of the techniques are overdone.

Rhythmically, this solo presents some creativity, particularly in how the composer plays with meter. One example: in 3/4, when the tambourine enters with a shake roll, the snare drum part uses rhythms that allude to 6/8; while it is a simple connection, it creates a clear change in feel. To close the solo, he cleverly uses these same rhythms to transition back into 3/4 from seven. There are also many tempo changes. Some are sudden, while with others, metric modulation is utilized.

Notable techniques include striking the body with the tambourine, doing a shake roll while playing snare with other hand, drumstick on tambourine head, up and down strokes with tambourine, finger rimshots, finger flicks, and double-stroke roll with fingers. A very creative moment that may take some practice involves smoothly moving from a tambourine friction roll into a snare drum rimshot. The bulk of the technical challenge in this piece is the coordination of playing tambourine and snare drum simultaneously.

Separately, the snare drum and tambourine parts make worthwhile etudes for either instrument. This solo has so much to offer and is a great study piece for advanced high school students and beyond. It also looks like a lot of fun.

—Stephen Busath

RECORDINGS

Eternal Shoreland
Berndt Thurner and Petra Ackermann
Chen Li Music

This album features the music of Stuart Saunders Smith. There are two tracks, the first featuring Berndt Thurner on unaccompanied vibraphone (approximately 42 minutes in length) on a piece titled "Eternity." The second track, "Shoreline," features the combination of spoken voice (performed by Smith), unaccompanied vibraphone (Thurner), and viola (Petra Ackerman), lasting 22 minutes. Both tracks reflect Smith's intense, introspective thoughtfulness. Both Thurner and Ackerman are talented improvisatory musicians whose skillful atonal lyricism complement each other.

There are liner notes from Smith that are directly applicable to the compositional style on this CD: "How do I compose?...I no longer revise. I feel my way, with no interference of my mind. Why? We only have now and our memories... Since 1970, I have tried to compose lovely music — a music that is a place of safety and meditation. I'm haunted by the sheer terror that is the natural world. There is so much pain and sorrow in the world, one can accept that, or make art that is a place to dwell — a room of comfort."

—Jim Lambert

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AUTHOR CORRECTION

In our recent ad in the Oct. 2024 *Percussive Notes* PASIC Preview issue, one of the books we included was *Instruction Course for Xylophone*. The author listed by mistake was Garwood Whaley; it should have been the esteemed George Hamilton Green. We apologize for the error.
—Garwood Whaley, President/Founder, Meredith Music Publications

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From the Rhythm! Discovery Center Collection

José Bethancourt's Marimba Grande

Gift of Emil Richards, 1993.02.02

Guatemalan-born Jose Bethancourt (March 11, 1906 – August 13, 1978) began playing marimba in his father's orchestra at age seven. In 1921, while attending the National Conservatory of Music in Mexico City, he was offered an opportunity to perform in the United States, ultimately moving to Chicago and establishing a highly successful career as a bandleader, teacher, composer/arranger, and recording artist as a marimbist. He excelled on Mexican Buzz Marimbas as well as the American design. As a member of the NBC Radio Orchestra in Chicago he performed on many popular programs such as *Lucky Strike*, *Kodak Company*, and *Farm and Home Hour*, as well as his own shows and a highly successful stint on Ziegfeld's production of *Rio Rita*.

Guatamalan marimba orchestras typically consist of two different-sized instruments, the larger of which known as the Marimba Grande. Though traditional Guatemalan marimbas were diatonic, single-row instruments, this chromatic marimba, a "marimba doble," was likely made by the Bethancourt family and has the now-standard two rows of keys — one of naturals and one of chromatics. Its range is 6.5 octaves from F1 to C8, allowing four players to perform on it at the same time. The two upper players, piccolo and tiple, double the melody in octaves holding two mallets each. The lower players, centro and bajo, provide the chordal harmony and bass, each using three mallets — two in the right hand and one in the left.

The keys, made of horminga wood, are suspended on a cord that runs through wooden posts. The cedar resonators are four-sided boxes with pointed ends. At the end of each resonator for the lowest 3½ octaves, F–C, is fitted a device having a thin membrane, traditionally made of pig intestines and called a *tela*, that produces a buzzing sound. The remaining higher-pitched keys sound the same as a normal standard xylophone.

The front of the case is decorated with carved flower designs, one of which is broken, while the corners are decorated with elaborately engraved flowers made of hardwood. The case and stand are made in two parts that separate at the middle for the entire length of the instrument, which measures 104 inches in length, 44½ inches in width, and has a height of 37¼ inches.
Though likely, it is not known if this specific instrument was used on any of the many known recordings and broadcasts of Bethancourt.

—James A. Strain, PAS Historian

Upper end of case showing the carved flower decoration. Note the very end of the case where the vertical split between the frame boxes can be seen and the thin vertical wooden posts supporting the key strings.

Lower end of case showing the front decorated with a flower. Note the buzzing devices located on the tip of each resonator.

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March 1	Utah Valley University
March 8	University of Tennessee Percussion Festival
March 8	University of Missouri
March 8	Bowling Green State University
April 7	University of Central Florida, Celebrates the Arts
April 19	Portland State University
April 26	Colorado State University
May 10	Langham Creek High School, Houston, TX

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