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Why I Put this Resource Together

I remember as a young band director simply not having a clue. I got through my first marching season with a modicum of success when suddenly it hit me: What were we going to do in the spring semester? I was very fortunate to work with two very strong band directors at the time, and when I asked them this question they pointed me towards a wonderful resource for concert band: *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*. It is, as of the time of this writing, a 10-volume collection of articles that not only helps with the preparation of music but also helps with the selection of quality literature. Only the “good stuff” finds its way onto the pages of those books. It was a real life-saver for me as a young director as I tried to prepare my students musically with quality literature.

My beginnings as a percussion director were very similar. Unfortunately, I didn’t have other percussion directors at my school to lean on and, when I started in 2003, the only place I knew existed where I could purchase music for percussion ensemble was Row-Loff. Their music was great for my percussion ensemble, and I still play some of their works with my groups, but there is so much good music out there, and I had no idea it even existed or where I could get it. It wasn’t until I started bringing in clinicians to work with my group that I was able to ask questions about where to get more music.

Professionals of all ages and experiences will find something useful in this book. It is very unlike a typical percussion resource. The vast majority of the resources for percussion pedagogy are articles with a very specific subject matter typically relating to performing. Vic Firth Co., Innovative Percussion, and a host of online forums are great places to find those articles, and they are easily accessed by anyone who knows to look for them. There is not, however, a vast resource for rehearsal tips focused on specific quality works for percussion ensemble—until now.

I feel, however, that it is worth saying that when I decided to go forward with this project I had one group foremost in my mind: young percussion directors and professors early in their career. I wish that I would have possessed a resource like this when I began teaching in 2003. All of the articles are written by professionals with experiences that range from past performances of their specific pieces to time spent with the composers during the time the works were written. Several of these articles are written by the composers themselves, offering a unique opportunity for everyone who reads this book that very few individuals are afforded: the ability to get a glimpse inside the mind of those composers to see just what they were really going after and why they wrote the piece.

Beyond the articles, the beginning of this book is filled with information that I have personally found essential. I am hardly the “end-all-be-all” in education. Instead, I offer these chapters as an attempt to provoke thought within the reader. I hope that what I wrote helps you in your classroom. These words might also be a catalyst that takes you in a completely different direction. If this provokes thought within you, regardless of where it leads you, then this text will have fulfilled its intended purpose. In the words of Bill Watterson, “Your preparation for the real world is not in the answers you’ve learned, but in the questions you’ve learned how to ask yourself.”

I wish you the best of luck in your musical journey, with the hope that this book helps you enjoy the ride!

—Dan McGuire
Composer
Percussionist, composer, and educator Brian Blume (b. 1985) has performed as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral player, and studio percussionist, with groups such as the Carmel Symphony Orchestra, Terre Haute Symphony Orchestra, Columbus Indiana Philharmonic, and BluBlume Percussion Duo. He recently joined the percussion section with the Imperial Symphony Orchestra in Lakeland, Florida. Brian performed at Super Bowl XLVI in Indianapolis with Madonna, Cee Lo Green, and Kelly Clarkson, and he was in the Indianapolis Colts drumline and Glassmen Drum and Bugle Corps.

Brian currently serves as Assistant Professor of Percussion at Southeastern University, where he teaches applied percussion, percussion techniques, music theory, world music, and the school’s first ever drumline, the Fireline. Prior to his appointment at SEU, Brian taught percussion at Center Grove High School (Greenwood, IN), who boasts one of the nation’s premier high school percussion programs. Brian has also taught several drum corps and the Indiana University Drumline. He is a sought-after adjudicator and clinician and has presented at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, state PAS Day of Percussion events, and several universities and high schools across the country. As a composer, Brian has received numerous commissions and has works published by Tapspace Publications, PercMaster Publications, and drop6 media. His work for TV broadcast has been aired nationwide on ESPN, CBS, Big Ten Network, and MTV.

Brian earned both Master and Bachelor of Music degrees in percussion performance from Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music. He is an artist endorser for Pearl/Adams, Innovative Percussion, Remo, and Grover Pro Percussion, and he is a member of the Percussive Arts Society (member, Composition Committee), ASCAP, and NAfME. Brian lives in Lakeland with his wife and two children.

Composition
Written by Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg, Peer Gynt is the incidental music to Henrik Ibsen’s 1867 play of the same name. Grieg later extracted eight movements to create two four-movement suites. “Anitra's Dance” comes from the first of these two suites (as the third movement), followed by the better-known fourth movement, “In the Hall of the Mountain King.”

“Anitra’s Dance” is originally scored for strings and triangle, and much of the piece calls for pizzicato playing in the strings. The percussive natures of the pizzicato articulations transfers rather seamlessly to the idiom of percussion ensemble. In this arrangement, the form, key, harmony, and style of the piece remain unchanged. However, arranger Brian Blume took some liberties in orchestration, texture, and timbre by adding several non-pitched percussion instruments to expand the timbral palette, as well as enhancing segments of melodic material with arpeggiated harmonies and rapid scalar passages (primarily in the marimba voice).

This piece may work well in a concert class indoor percussion setting, as well as a standard concert percussion ensemble concert by an advanced high school or university.

Technical Considerations
This work provides a range of technical difficulties and challenges, with some performers’ parts being quite challenging and others much less so. The marimbas, vibraphones, and xylophone carry most of the melodic material and present the most technical challenges, while the remaining parts have fewer notes, but just as much importance. The relatively fast tempo of the piece adds to the level of difficulty for all performers. There are several specific technical considerations to be noted throughout the piece as follows.

Vibraphone pedaling is especially important to present the music in a convincing style. This requires both vibraphone performers to have a strong command over pedaling and articulation. As noted in the performance notes at the front of the score, vibraphone pedaling is indicated by slur markings and staccato & tenuto articulations. All notes under a single slur will be played under one pedal. Staccato notes should be played with very little pedal, which is then lifted quickly after the note is struck. Tenuto notes should be played full value with pedal down for as long as the note value indicated. If no markings are present, assume pedal down for the full value of the note.

Marimbas must hold four mallets throughout the piece, though several sections will require only two of the four. Performers must be strong at playing with two mallets while holding four. Similarly, vibraphones need four mallets for one section, but due to limited rests, they will likely need to hold four mallets throughout the piece. Xylophone and glockenspiel parts may be performed with two mallets.
Stickings are left to the discretion of the performers/ensemble directors. Ideally similar/unison parts are performed with matching sticking choices. Marimba and vibraphone performers may choose to make more or less use of four mallets, depending on their comfort and skill level. For example, M1 at mm. 32—35 may play the 16th notes with just two of the mallets (i.e. inside mallets), or may choose to incorporate a 3rd and/or 4th mallet (i.e. 4232 or 4312).

Percussion 1 may use the same triangle beater (probably medium weight/size) throughout the piece for the triangle and suspended cymbal.

Percussion 3 will have a few stick changes throughout the piece, beginning with “swizzle sticks” (drumstick on one end, felt/yarn on the other end). At m. 47, the performer will hold a BD beater in one hand and triangle beater in the other. Efficient and quiet stick changes will require a trap table with a soft surface on which the performer may set sticks/beaters. All scrapes in this part should start just before the downbeat and end on the downbeat where the note occurs.

Dead strokes are indicated with “+” and should only be played when a “+” is present.

**Stylistic Considerations**

As indicated in the tempo marking (and the title), this piece is a mazurka, which is a lively folk dance for couples in a triple meter with an emphasis on the second beat. Performers should have in mind the light and active dance associated with this music in order to best express the stylistic feel.

The rest on beat three in m. 2 directs the ensemble to take a brief breath after the introductory note before moving into the dance itself.

At letter A, the melody (xylo and M1) has short hairpin swells with no top dynamic level given. These should be interpreted as subtle swells to give the line more direction. Similar passages are present throughout the piece and should be approached the same way.

Throughout the piece, it is important to be sure the ensemble is balanced in such a way that the melody is heard clearly. This is made clear in the score through the dynamic markings, but the conductor should use his/her ear to ensure this is achieved. Examples include the following:

- Xylophone and M1 at mm. 7–10
- Glock, vibes, M1, and M2 at mm. 11–14
- Glock and vibes at mm. 24–27
- etc.

The non-pitched percussion parts are present to add color and depth to the pitched percussion parts. Appropriate balance between non-pitched and pitched parts should be attained; generally the non-pitched instruments must be careful not to overpower the pitched instruments.

The downbeat of letter E includes two grace notes in the melody (xylo/M1) in place of the 16th notes used elsewhere for the same melodic material. This is a notational solution/consideration due to the ritardando leading up to letter E. Those two grace notes should be performed at the 16th note speed of the “a tempo”, just the same as all the other pickup notes in the melody.

In mm. 87-88, each marimba part should be heard most at their entrances, but immediately back off so the next one may be heard clearly before a crescendo to the end of the phrase.

**Equipment Needs**

- 3 Marimbas (two 4.3-octave, one 5.0-octave)
- 2 Vibraphones (3.0-octave)
- Xylophone and bell tree
- Glockenspiel
- Chimes
- Timpani (4 drums)
- Perc 1 – triangle, suspended cymbal
- Perc 2 – windchimes, concert bass drum (shared w/ P3), ride cymbal, finger cymbals
- Perc 3 – suspended cymbal, concert bass drum (shared w/ P2) w/ “swizzle” sticks
- Double bass (optional)

While it may be seen as less authentic, if a double bass player is not available but you wish to have the added low end, an option is to perform that part using a synthesizer or virtual instrument which simulates an acoustic double bass. Be sure it balances properly through the speakers with the rest of the ensemble.

The two suspended cymbals used (Perc 1 and Perc 3) should be different sizes/pitches in order to distinguish between them. The ride cymbal (Perc 2) should provide clear stick definition.

General stick and mallet suggestions are indicated in each player’s part.

**Publisher**

*Anitra’s Dance* is published by Tapspace Publications (www.tapspace.com)
Composer
Matt Moore is a percussion educator, composer, arranger, adjudicator, and performer in the Dallas / Fort Worth area where he serves as Director of Percussion at Eaton High School. In recent years, Moore has appeared with the Las Colinas Symphony Orchestra, Lone Star Wind Orchestra and Percussion Ensemble, Texas Christian University Percussion Orchestra, received second place in the 2012 Young Texas Artists Music Competition, and has performed as a solo marimba artist in Steinway Hall’s “Second Sunday” concert series. As a marching performer, he was a member of numerous Drum Corps and Winter Guard International programs, including Carolina Crown, Southwind, and the 2008 World Champion Rhythm X Indoor Percussion.

Mr. Moore holds a Master's degree with honors from Texas Christian University and a Bachelor's degree with honors from Campbellsville University. His professional affiliations include the Texas Music Educators Association, the Percussive Arts Society, Pi Kappa Lambda national music honor society, and he is an educational artist for Innovative Percussion sticks and mallets. Moore lives with his wife Aline in Lewisville, Texas.

Composition
Critical Mass is a 10-minute work composed and commissioned by Dr. Brian West and the TCU Percussion Orchestra in 2012.

"In nuclear physics, the term “critical mass” refers to the smallest amount of fissile material needed for a sustained nuclear chain reaction. The term is also broadly used in a number of fields from business to socioeconomics to software development to encapsulate similar notions, usually in regards to the stage at which a process becomes self-sustaining. Critical Mass for 12 player percussion ensemble portrays this idea as it gains, and at times loses its ability to sustain itself over the course of the piece’s three sections. Just as critical mass and a stable momentum seem to have been finally achieved in the final portion of the piece, the ensemble struggles to remain in control and finds catastrophe imminent..." —Matt Moore

Stylistic & Technical Considerations
Scored for twelve players, Critical Mass is a work for percussion orchestra in three main sections (ABA) based on a dark yet tuneful theme. While the work is mostly written in a thickly-textured, functional-harmonic style in C#-minor, Moore takes full advantage of the rhythmic features of keyboard instruments and their warm resonance in addition to the sound-palette of the three percussionists to produce a memorable, sonically-rich work for percussion orchestra. From a pedagogical standpoint, Critical Mass presents musical and technical challenges suitable for college ensembles as well as advanced high-school ensembles. Most notably, the tempo for the majority of the work draws the need for an extensive use of 32nd notes—particularly from the marimbists and percussionists—throughout. While the initial clear pulse presented by a single chime is passed between instruments throughout the work, a strong awareness of time and sensitivity of touch is also required from each player due to the composer’s frequent use of dovetailing rhythmic and melodic gestures. Drawn from the work’s title, these short cells gradually gain momentum before flourishing between various members of the ensemble to create long, ethereal lines against densely-rich harmonic textures.

Regarding the keyboard players, Critical Mass demands a high-level of four-mallet technique from the vibraphones and marimbas – particularly M3 and M4. In the slow middle section, a solo vibraphone carries the ensemble forward with beautiful contrasting melodies featuring rhapsodic accompaniment. While the scoring excludes the three percussionists almost entirely, the nature of this middle section is a commendable vehicle to showcase an ensemble’s sensitivity and delicacy. Soon after this section’s textures evaporate, the short rhythmic cells from the opening reappear before pushing the work into its final section. Serving as a reprise, this final section takes an unfamiliar turn beginning at m. 170 with a quick, crescendoing xylophone run. After pushing through a shrilling, final reiteration of the main theme, fast scalar passages permeate the chaotic closing moments before reaching “critical mass” with an exhilarating ending at fff.
Equipment Needs
Critical Mass calls for twelve players:
Player 1: Crotales & Bells
Player 2: Chimes & Xylophone
Player 3: Vibraphone 1
Player 4: Vibraphone 2
Player 5: Marimba 1 (4.3 octave)
Player 6: Marimba 2 (4.3 octave)
Player 7: Marimba 3 (4.5 octave, opt. 5.0 octave) & Suspended Cymbal
Player 8: Marimba 4 (5.0 octave)
Player 9: Timpani
Player 10: Percussion 1 (Suspended Cymbal, Ride Cymbal, Snare Drum, 4 Concert Toms)
Player 11: Percussion 2 (Triangle, Wind Chimes, 2 Suspended Cymbals, Tam-Tam)
Player 12: Percussion 3 (Brake Drum, Sound Plate, Tam-Tam, Kick Drum, Concert Bass Drum)

Suggested Listening
Prelude to Paradise, Albany Records, 2015, Performed by TCU Percussion Orchestra

Publisher
Critical Mass is published by C. Alan Publications (http://www.c-alanpublications.com/).
Composer

David Maslanka is an internationally renowned composer, most famous for his music for winds. Among his more than 150 works are over 50 pieces for wind ensemble, including eight symphonies, seventeen concertos, a mass, and many concert pieces. He has also written a variety of orchestral scores, choral pieces, chamber music for winds, and many works for solo instrument and piano. He draws largely on the music of J.S. Bach for compositional structures and tonal materials. Many of his compositions are based around spirituality, often through the use of Christian hymns or other religious symbolism. He sums up his compositional philosophy here:

“I have tried, and continue to try, to absorb our musical language. The result in my music has been the evolution to sometimes radically simplify elements. This is in response to the huge proliferation of musical procedures in the 20th century. … This means finding central issues and digesting them slowly until they make soul sense, rather than skittering over the surface of a thousand different styles. For me this means a daily patient retracing of the Bach Chorales, and also the writing of my own four-part chorales in that highly restricted style. The result of my contemplating these highly restricted, yet timeless, sets of tonal relationships is a tremendous sense of groundedness and liberation in my own work.”

Among his most famous percussion works are two widely performed marimba solos: “Variations on ‘Lost Love’” (1997) and “My Lady White” (1980). His other works for percussion ensemble are “Arcadia II: Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble” (1982), “Hohner” (1999), “Hurtling Through Space at an Unimaginable Speed” (2011), “Montana Music: 3 Dances for Percussion” (1992), and “Time Stream” for steel drum ensemble (2012). He has also composed a concert-length quartet for two pianos and two percussion, a duet for marimba and alto saxophone, a concerto for marimba and wind ensemble, a concerto for percussion and wind ensemble, and a short concerto for percussion and chamber orchestra.

Composition

“Crown of Thorns” is the second of Maslanka’s six percussion ensemble pieces. It was commissioned, premiered, and recorded by the University of Oklahoma Percussion Ensemble in 1991. Under the direction of Richard C. Gipson, the OU Percussion Ensemble recorded five albums total, the most ever recorded by a university percussion group. “Crown of Thorns” is now a standard in percussion ensemble literature. Its continued success exemplifies the autonomy now granted to the percussion ensemble, and illustrates the significance of the marimba choir within the body of percussion music. This fourteen minute work is suitable for collegiate players.

Stylistic Considerations

Maslanka provides a detailed explanation of the piece’s sonata form in the score. Players should all understand this form in order to interpret the piece accurately from beginning to end. It may be helpful to have students label each section (theme 1, theme 2, development, etc.) in their parts.

The melody is outlined clearly in introductory sections but can easily be buried under the demanding sixteenth note runs in multiple voices. All players should be able to identify the most important voices so as not to lose the melody. Melody players should do their best to connect the soaring lines, playing them as legato as possible even when they do not physically sustain the sound via rolls. When rolls are required, they should be played as smoothly as possible despite the notably large intervals.

Like many of Maslanka’s pieces, “Crown of Thorns” consists of many fast sixteenth note sections, juxtaposed with exposed, calm chorales. He states in the score, “Persistent attention to pulse at marked tempos will allow the long expressive line of the piece to emerge properly.” The quick sixteenth note runs will not create the correct atmosphere if played even slightly under tempo; players—and conductors—must fight the desire to take the most difficult sections at a “comfortable” speed. Relaxation and accurate practice will instill the correct muscle strength required to play these passages musically. Maslanka believes in the power of his music when played as he writes it, and he insists that a musician’s belief in his or her ability to perform it, along with a freedom from fear of inaccuracy, will result in the best possible performance.
Technical Considerations

Though the marimba parts are the most technically demanding in this octet, all parts present their own unique challenges. The bass marimba part is slightly less demanding, but this player must have a very steady sense of time. The glockenspiel part is also quite exposed.

It is possible, but less common, to perform this piece without a conductor. Players with solid communication skills, consistent inner tempos, and a good understanding of the form should be able to perform this piece as a true chamber work. Even if using a conductor, the Interlude (m. 144—162) will be comfortable unconducted, as the players must rely heavily on each other to play clean unisons.

At the end of the Interlude, the Development begins quite suddenly (m. 163). This entrance should be rehearsed until all players are comfortable with the Development's new tempo. If playing with a conductor, all players should know exactly what the conductor will be doing, so they can keep their motions small and inconspicuous for this unexpected musical change. Other places where the conductor will need to specify their interpretation are mm. 180—181 and mm. 199—200. It may be helpful to conduct each of these pairs as one bar of five beats, at the tempo of the dotted eighth note.

There are a few other sections in which players will have to communicate clearly. Marimbas II, III, and IV have rapid alternating sextuplets and thirty-second notes in mm. 99—120, the final portion of Theme 3. It is helpful for these players to practice with each other as much as possible to ensure consistent interpretation of the rhythms and to feel comfortable with each other. The same idea occurs at mm. 202—211 and mm. 269—287.

As mentioned above, Maslanka is known for his particularity with tempos, style markings, and articulations. Even when it seems difficult, it is best to adhere to his directions accurately.

Equipment Needed

1 glockenspiel
2 vibraphones
1 4.0 marimba (Marimba I)
3 4.3 marimbas (Marimbas II, III, and IV)
1 5.0 marimba (Bass)

Most players will need at least two grades of mallets in order to execute the wide range of dynamics and articulations.

Publisher

“Crown of Thorns” is published by the Oklahoma University Percussion Press. Score and parts can be purchased together.
Composer
Jim Casella (b. 1970) is a composer and music publisher. He is best known for the music he’s created for percussion ensembles and the world-class drum corps Vanguard (Santa Clara, CA) and Cavaliers (Rosemont, IL). The company he co-founded, Tapspace, is one of the leading publishers of percussion music in the world. He also created the percussion software sample library called Virtual Drumline which has become a mainstay for composers and arrangers everywhere.

Casella’s signature series of drumsticks and keyboard mallets are manufactured by Innovative Percussion and are popular worldwide. He serves on the board of advisors for the Percussive Arts Society (PAS), the world’s largest percussion organization.

In addition to his work in the percussion industry, Jim Casella is an award-winning composer of film and commercial music. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

Composition
Cyclone is an advanced work for percussion ensemble featuring a quartet of marimbists (sharing two facing instruments) who are accompanied by piano and 7 multipercussionists. The piece was commissioned by Lewis Norfleet, director of the Union High School percussion ensemble from Camas, Washington, to be premiered at their performance at the 2010 Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois.

Cyclone was inspired by events encountered by my close friend Ryan Dahlem and his father John during their expedition to summit Mount Everest in the spring months of 2010. During this time I found myself somewhat obsessed with their journey, fascinated by the determination required and the physical toll caused by high altitudes.

The composition primarily consists of two parts. The first part represents the optimism and determination inspired by the goal of climbing the world’s highest peak. First and foremost, the marimbas introduce the main device of circular (cyclone-like) motion by way of quick, repetitive 6-note figures that overlap between the facing marimbists. Frequent echo effects are meant to imply a grandeur and spaciousness to the environment. A driving rhythm and structured melody comprise this section, with perhaps a slight sense of uneasiness to the harmonic structure—hope mixed with some anxiety.

As part two takes over midway through the work, the tonality changes leading to a more vulnerable and unpredictable energy that doesn’t relent. The marimbas generally remain the focal point throughout, but the accompaniment becomes even more active, utilizing a variety of fast-switching and frenetic colors from each multipercussion setup. As the intensity increases toward the final climax, the four marimbists embark on a relentless flurry of contrapuntal 16th-note activity. During this time, they each continually ascend the instruments, volleying with each other’s positions, as well as physically running around the instruments as their ascension persists within the circular and violent round-about.

Technical Considerations
Except for the chordal rolls between rehearsal A—B, the featured marimbists can accomplish their parts with two mallets each. Choose a medium-hard mallet that will give decent articulation at the upper range of the instrument without becoming too brittle on the lower ranges. Since players frequently go between the two, finding a versatile mallet that sounds good in both registers will be important.

The marimbas must be positioned such that players can reach across their own instrument and play on the “black keys” of the opposing marimba.

During the “runaround” section at rehearsal Q, the primary musical material comes from the non-marimba elements of the ensemble. The primary melody is in the timpani and left hand of the piano (also mimicked in the concert toms). As such, it’s important that the marimbists balance their music beneath the other elements. This can be deceiving since the visual antics can tempt marimbists to treat their parts like a feature.

The piano plays an important role in this piece. It sounds best with an acoustic instrument rather than using an electronic keyboard (though that’s perfectly acceptable as well). If using an acoustic piano, consider amplifying it a bit so that the piano can be more easily balanced among the louder percussion instruments on stage. If using an electronic keyboard, consider experimenting with layering in a low pad patch in the more pronounced left-hand parts, particularly at rehearsal H and Q. Some extra support on those parts can be helpful.
There are a number of antiphonal snare drum parts (played with wire brushes) between the percussion 1 and percussion 2 parts. Aim to position these two players on opposite ends of the stage in order to achieve the most dramatic antiphonal effect from side-to-side. Also, while these snare drum parts should sound clear and accurate, their sound should be soft enough so that it doesn’t pierce the texture of the ensemble. Aiming for a flatter angle to the head can help to diminish an overly articulate sound.

During the three-bar accelerando into rehearsal M, players should cue off the tom part (percussion 2) so that the crescendo can be properly paced, and so that the release of the accelerando is together. Once arriving at rehearsal M, the trash can lid (percussion 1) establishes the circular rhythmic motif at a new tempo. This player should take care not to run away with the tempo. Taking the tempo too fast here can create other challenges in upcoming phrases. Also, during the M phrase (and beyond), there are a number of deep, exaggerated crescendi in low toms, timpani, and piano. These players should try to visually cue off each other since it will be difficult to hear. These crescendi should be explosive, but they’ll only be effective if they’re performed together.

**Stylistic Considerations**

In general, there is a high degree of activity occurring throughout the piece, especially in the latter half. Rarely do players double others for very long, so individual responsibility to balance and tempo control is paramount to ensemble cohesiveness. Players are encouraged to use the source recording (provided by Tapspace with the score) as a rehearsal device in identifying how their parts fit into the whole.

Since this is a high-energy piece that uses a number of typically-loud instruments, it’s important that players consider how louder instruments balance within the overall mix. As a general rule, toms, snares, and cymbals should be approached less soloistically, ensuring that the primary material they accompany is not being overshadowed. It is very easy to overplay and overbalance in this piece. The most successful performances are ones in which dynamics from louder instruments aren’t overblown.

At rehearsal H to rehearsal J, the primary melodic material comes from the vibraphone, piano, and glockenspiel. The marimba material here is more of an antiphonal, wave-like “effect” than primary melodic material. As such, the highest dynamic of the marimbas should be slightly beneath that of the melody. Furthermore, the percussion 1 and 3 parts comprise a sort of “drumset” style accompaniment, while the toms (percussion 2) play some soloistic interjections. It’ll be very tempting for the tom player to overplay here, so again, balance these elements beneath the primary melodic material so the phrase doesn’t become overbearing.

Ideally, this piece would be performed without a conductor, however that’s likely an unrealistic endeavor for many groups. In order to achieve this, ample care must be taken from each member of the ensemble so that a strong sense of role identity is present. And since there’s a lot of frenetic activity in the latter half of the piece, players will need to be flexible in adapting to unexpected ensemble fluctuations, with or without a conductor.

**Equipment Needs**

- Marimba 1 (Player 1): Low A marimba, shared with player 2
- Marimba 1 (Player 2): Low A marimba, shared with player 1
- Marimba 2 (Player 3): Low A marimba, shared with player 4, China cymbal
- Marimba 2 (Player 4): Low A marimba, shared with player 3
- Glockenspiel: glockenspiel, suspended cymbal, low zil-bell, bell plate, low tom tom, anvil
- Xylophone: xylophone, crotales (2-octaves), suspended cymbal
- Vibraphone: vibraphone, suspended cymbal, opera gong (laid horizontally on foam for easy articulation of rhythms, and partial ringing)
- Piano
- Timpani: timpani (4 drums), suspended cymbal
- Percussion 1 snare drum, 3 cowbells, splash cymbal, hi-hats, ride cymbal, tam tam, trash can lid, floor tom, 3 roto toms
- Percussion 2: snare drum, sizzle cymbal, triangle, 4 concert toms, suspended cymbal, China cymbal, bongos
- Percussion 3: chimes, thundersheet, concert bass drum, bell tree, woodblock, cabasa, slapstick, suspended cymbal, China cymbal

**Publisher**

*Cyclone* is published by Tapspace and is available worldwide at [www.tapspace.com](http://www.tapspace.com).
Danse Macabre
Camille Saint-Saëns; Trans. Josh Gottry
by Josh Gottry

Composer
A respected educator and internationally recognized composer, Josh Gottry has been working with the next generation of percussionists for over twenty years. Mr. Gottry earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Percussion Performance at Northern Arizona University and his Master of Music degree in Composition at Arizona State University and is currently part of the music faculty at Chandler-Gilbert Community College, teaching courses in percussion, composition, and music humanities. Additionally, he works regularly with percussion ensembles and students at all grade levels as a clinician and within his private lesson studio. His performance record includes professional orchestras, music theater, community and chamber ensembles, as well as solo performances and recitals.

Mr. Gottry is an ASCAP award-winning composer whose works have been credited as engaging, pedagogical, and brilliantly creative. His pieces have been performed extensively at universities, junior high and high schools, and multiple national conferences. He is a member of the Percussive Arts Society and the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, has been published in Percussive Notes, Rhythm!Scene, and The PAS Educators’ Companion, and currently serves as editor for Rhythm!Scene.

Historical Perspective
This work is a direct transcription from the original orchestra score (op. 40) by French composer Camille Saint-Saëns. It is a landmark work for orchestra, written in 1874, and was the first piece to incorporate xylophone in the symphony orchestra. It was originally scored for solo violin and an orchestra consisting of strings, harp, one piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two B-flat clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, and a percussion section that includes timpani, xylophone, bass drum, cymbals, and triangle.

This percussion ensemble transcription is scored for vibraphone, xylophone, marimba (four players on two instruments), bells, chimes, timpani, bass drum, crash cymbals, and triangle. This percussion adaptation retains the form and key of Saint-Saëns score. Also left unchanged from the original orchestration are the non-pitched percussion parts and historic xylophone excerpts.

Technical Considerations
As with the original score, this work is set in 3/4 time, but is felt as one beat per measure. While the rhythmic figures are very accessible for high school or college percussionists, the execution of those rhythms within the context of the ensemble will require an intentional attention to the subdivision of that single pulse. A notable example in this regard is a passage of continuous eighth-note triplets that are split in quarter-note groupings between three marimba voices.

With the exception of the vibraphone and marimba 3 parts, all keyboard voices are playable with two mallets throughout. Keyboard parts, particularly marimba, vibes, and xylophone, are significantly more challenging than the non-pitched percussion parts, but these technically easier parts will still require a musical maturity typically expected in orchestral percussion performance. Additionally, given that much of the orchestral score is reduced to the vibraphone and four marimba voices, these parts are virtually continuous through the duration of this nearly seven minute work.

Mr. Gottry is a clinician/endorser for Meinl Percussion, Mike Balter Mallets, Remo Drumheads, Vic Firth Drumsticks, and Yamaha Percussion, and has presented clinics at the Arizona Music Educators Association Conference, Arizona PAS Day of Percussion, New Mexico PAS Day of Percussion, and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention. Mr. Gottry’s website is gottrypercussion.com.
**Stylistic Considerations**

As would be expected with any transcription, the importance of studying the original score and orchestral recordings cannot be overemphasized. Some of the marimba rolls replace string tremolos, while others are orchestrated as such simply to sustain longer note values. The articulation of the former should be intentionally more present than the latter. Similarly, while keyboard percussion instruments cannot perform arco and pizzicato as is notated for string instruments, an awareness of which passages are which within the original string parts can be reflected in the type of stroke used.

At times, the vibraphone part performs the solo violin passages, other times it replaces the harp, and in some phrases it is simply part of the orchestral ensemble sound. Likewise, at times the xylophone part is lifted directly from the original, written by Saint-Saëns as a picturesque representation of dancing skeletons, while in other passages the same instrument is asked to join with the marimbas in replacing string or woodwind parts. An effort for each player to recognize their voice or contribution to the ensemble within each section will allow for a significantly more effective realization of the printed score.

Mallet suggestions for each instrument are carefully provided within the score and parts, but would be subject to interpretation by the ensemble given the instruments used and performance space. At all times, the ensemble is asked to balance an awareness of the original orchestral sound with an effort to exploit the unique character and strengths of the percussion instruments and ensemble.

**Equipment Needs**

- Bells, chimes, xylophone, vibraphone, 4.3-octave marimba (shared), 4.3- or 4.5-octave marimba (shared), timpani (32”, 29”, 26”, 23”), triangle, crash cymbals, bass drum.

**Suggested Listening**


Any professional symphony recording of the original orchestral work

**Publisher**

“Danse Macabre” is published by C. Alan Publications ([www.c-alanpublications.com](http://www.c-alanpublications.com))
Fractalia
Owen Clayton Condon
by Jeremy Maytum

Owen Clayton Condon (b. 1978)

Fractalia (2011)
Publisher: Self-published (edited by Ben Ivey)
Duration: 6 minutes
Recordings: Third Coast Percussion: “Unknown Symmetry”, 2013
Instrumentation: Percussion Quartet: 2 Low-A marimbas (4 players), 8 concert toms (each player with a high and low tom)

Composer Biography
Owen Clayton Condon made his solo debut in 1996 with the Louisville Symphony Orchestra after winning the orchestra's Young Artist Competition. In 2000, he won the New England Conservatory's Concerto Competition, and performed with the NEC Symphony Orchestra in Jordan Hall. Condon's acoustic and electronic works, including Fractalia, have been featured as the soundtrack to video and light installations at Frank Lloyd Wright's "Fallingwater" and Anish Kapoor's "Cloud Gate", the famous sculpture (affectionately referred to as "The Bean") in Chicago's Millennium Park. Mr. Condon performs with the Millennium Chamber Players, and has performed with the Chicago Civic Orchestra; the University of Chicago's Contempo series; and has appeared as a guest artist with the Eighth Blackbird contemporary music group. Recently, he performed on behalf of Northwestern University at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Condon studied with Frank Epstein and Will Hudgins at the New England Conservatory. He completed his doctoral studies in music at Northwestern University, where he studied with Michael Burritt and James Ross. Condon is currently working as a sound artist, having recently composed music for an interactive new media installation in Chicago called “Luminous Field at Millennium Park” with light artist Luftwerk.

Program Notes
Former Third Coast Percussion member Owen Clayton Condon writes music influenced by minimalism, electronica and taiko drumming. His piece, Fractalia, written for Third Coast Percussion in 2011, is a sonic celebration of fractals, geometric shapes whose parts are each a reduced-size copy of the whole (derived from the Latin fractus, meaning “broken”). The kaleidoscopic fractured melodies within Fractalia are created by passing a repeated figure through four players in different registers of the marimba.

“A recursive geometric algorithm makes the smaller parts of a structure replicates of the larger parts. Describing it in words is, frankly, more difficult than a purely mathematical one. But suffice it to say that under it all in this composition, a single motivic pattern, passed from player to player in different octaves, is what unifies the work for the listener, heady math aside.”
—Owen Clayton Condon

Historical Perspective
The repertoire for marimba quartet has grown substantially since the year 2000, and one of the most versatile pieces to emerge in recent years is Owen Condon's Fractalia from 2011. As part of a set of pieces Condon wrote while a member of Third Coast Percussion, Fractalia takes advantage of both the expressive and articulate characteristics of the marimba while utilizing the power of taiko drumming to create a seamless texture of rich harmonic and rhythmic depth. Since the piece only requires 2 marimbas, it is programmable for high school groups up to professional ensembles and can be easily taken out on tour due to the limited instrumentation. Additionally, because the piece is relatively short in length and exciting, it makes for a great concert opener or closer. Fractalia has become a go-to piece for ensembles of all levels and remains a crowd favorite whenever it is programmed.

Technical Considerations
Before diving into the technical aspects of the piece itself, the overall setup is important to highlight because it is rather unique. To allow for efficient ensemble communication and a clear listening environment, have the ensemble set up the marimbas facing each other with a space in between for 2 sets of concert toms for the upper marimba players. One of the trickiest aspects of the piece is the spatial difficulties each player must deal with between the marimba and their corresponding concert toms. There is a great video on Vic Firth's YouTube channel of Third Coast performing the piece that can be referenced for the excellent playing and effective concert tom setup. Players 1 and 4 play the lower ends of each marimba and should setup their drums to their immediate left. By tilting the higher drum vertically, this allows for easier playing between the head and the shell while also resembling the traditional aesthetic of taiko drumming.
Since a bulk of the piece contains repeated rhythmic figures on a single note throughout extended ostinatos (with interjecting drum figures as well), a strong keyboard double stroke with consistent sound quality is essential. The introduction contains a twelve bar cascading motive that changes every two bars. For this, the ensemble interpretation of the eighth-note and two sixteenth-note figure should be exactly the same to achieve the desired effect. Have the players play the pattern on a single articulate surface (such as the floor) to work out the timing and interpretation of passage, then have them play it as written. Be careful to not change the rhythmic integrity as the dynamic changes. This process works as well for the music at Letter B when the concert toms are introduced. To improve the clarity of the drums and their balance with the marimbas, try using a piece of moon gel on each drum to dampen the resonance a bit yet still allow for a good fundamental tone. Letters C and D are all about strong ensemble timing and clear sixteenth-note subdivisions, so taking these sections slowly with a metronome for a few rehearsals will help solidify how all the parts should lines up.

Letter E can be a challenging section because of the overlapping marimba ostinato that weaves itself through the syncopated drum duet. The marimba pattern repeats every five eighth-notes and is played over the bar-line throughout. One marimba shifts the pattern over by a single eighth-note in mm. 63 by repeating the two low F#'s in succession, creating a canon between them for the next eight measures. Because of how the pattern is written, all but one set of repeated notes should be double stroked. Depending on the player’s strength and/or preference, either the high F#, D, or C# can be alternated so that the pattern starts over in the right hand. In Section F, a similar supportive motive is introduced in the lower registers and shifted to players 1 and 4. Again, strive for very even and clear double strokes and be careful not to “crush” the spacing of each repeated note whether they are double or single-stroked.

The double bar-line at mm. 81 begins an extended polyrhythmic section that contains some of the most beautiful and meditative music of the entire piece, and is quite challenging to execute from an individual and ensemble standpoint. For everything to line up and “feel good”, players 1 and 4 need to be steady and solid with their timing and rhythmic integrity so the split part played between players 2 and 3 can comfortably lay over the top of the texture. Slow practice with a metronome is the key here, as it it easy to push and pull the dotted-eighth-note figures without careful attention to timing. As the piece comes to a thunderous conclusion, keep a nice and relaxed stroke even through the arpeggiated figures in the marimbas, allowing the upstroke of the motion from one note to connect to the downstroke of the next note. This will increase accuracy as well as help maintain a consistent quality of sound.

**Stylistic Considerations**

*Fractalia* is a very unique piece stylistically, with its roots in minimalism, electronica, and taiko drumming. When making decisions regarding how to induce style into a certain motive or section, always keep in mind the overall picture and/or aesthetic desired. The careful manipulation of the frequent dynamic changes throughout *Fractalia* can turn a good performance of the piece into a great performance. It is an essential part of the piece’s construction. With this in mind, the performer’s ear remains a great tool when navigating ensemble dynamic motion, among many others.

Balance and blend remain an important part of the puzzle to any piece, but especially throughout *Fractalia* since it is based on geometric shapes called fractals. Each player’s part represents a piece of the whole, so pay careful attention to how the ensemble moves in and out of the repeated rhythmic figures and many harmonic shifts throughout the piece. A good mallet that works on both the drums and the full range of the marimba can be difficult to find, so experiment with different hardesses and materials. One possible solution is the Anders Ástrand signature mallets from Innovative Percussion. They provide both a fundamental core sound to the marimbas without being too brittle and are wrapped tight enough to give punch to the concert toms when needed.

When considering the physical act of performing, it is important the performers embrace the visual aesthetic of *Fractalia*. One of the most interesting aspects of attending a percussion concert today isn’t just what the music sounds like, but what it LOOKS like. Much of the style of a piece can be affected by how the musicians perform the music. Refer to the Vic Firth Youtube performance of *Fractalia* by Third Coast again to highlight how the performers move and use their bodies to convey the music. Be careful that the visual never takes away from the aural, however. It should complement it as well as heighten the audience’s experience of the live performance.

Above all, performing should ultimately be a fun experience for everyone involved, an idea that shouldn’t be forgotten in the world of percussion and the performing arts.
Historical Perspective
Composed in 2009 and published in 2010, this is a contemporary “drummy” percussion ensemble intended as a performance work for intermediate ensembles with a pedagogical underpinning. Based on variations of a traditional cascara pattern, this piece is similar to other 21st-century works that incorporate world rhythms in an ensemble setting using standard percussion instruments.

Technical Considerations
The primary pedagogical intent of this work is to provide performers an opportunity to specifically work rhythmic alignment and precision in a groove-based ensemble. As such, the work includes several ensemble unison phrases interspersed within extended passages of fragmented, off-set, and hocket rhythms woven through multiple time signatures. These figures are orchestrated on two surfaces for each player (one tom and one wood block), creating textural variations and allowing for an underlying melodic line, of sorts, within the drum voices.

The sections in simple meter (4/4, 3/4, and 2/4) are likely to be more accessible for most players, while the first quarter of the work, set in 12/8 time, is likely to be the most challenging. Directors and ensemble members are encouraged to seek out and/or create exercises isolating and combining various quarter- and eighth-note figures within compound meter (6/8 or 12/8) to develop comfort and confidence necessary for this portion of the piece.

Accents, often for the purpose of bringing out the pseudo-melodic line, and sudden dynamic changes appear throughout the work, and must be executed precisely. There are no rolls, grace notes, or sixteenth notes in the piece, but the changing meter, fast tempo, and rhythmic independence will provide a greater challenge to performers than may be apparent at first glance.

Stylistic Considerations
Critical to the stylistic interpretation and clarity of this piece is the use of accents, dynamics, and the two distinct instrument voices for each player. Since accents can be interpreted in multiple ways depending on context, performers are encouraged in this piece to use more of a drumset or rudimental approach to the contrast between accented and non-accented notes; that is to say that the difference between the two should be significant and executed primarily with a change in stick height, creating both a visual and audible manifestation. Additionally, efforts should be made for uniformity of stick height between members of the ensemble, as well as uniformity of sticking (as much as possible) to enhance the visual component of this work.
In terms of balance, at all times the tom should be considered the primary voice for each player, with the wood block serving as a textural or accompanying instrument. The intensity of the work—marked “Aggressively” in the first measure—should be maintained throughout, regardless of dynamic or texture.

During the short passages of rest that appear for each player, every effort should be made to present an engagement with the continuing groove, and each entrance should be visually obvious to enhance the audience’s perspective of the layering voices. Be certain to generate a significant crescendo in the final ten measures to ensure the effectiveness of the final climax and punctuation. In performance, it is recommended that students freeze after the final two notes and hold that position until well after the sound from the drums has completely dissipated.

**Equipment Needs**

Five concert toms and five wood blocks (or synthetic substitute). The five toms should be pitched high to low (player 1 to player 5) with the interval between each drum being as consistent as possible. Ideally, the five wood blocks should also be similarly pitched high to low and should be the same material for all members of the ensemble (e.g. all plastic or all wood). Acceptable substitutes for the concert toms could include marching bass drums, snare drums with snares off, or even bongos and/or congas. Sticks should be chosen as would be appropriate for the drums and blocks used (e.g. standard snare sticks should not be used on wood blocks, but would be appropriate if synthetic blocks are used).

**Suggested Listening**

https://soundcloud.com/c-alanpublications/just-like-that
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V020w4UGX-M

**Publisher**

“Just Like That” is published by C. Alan Publications (www.c-alanpublications.com)
Composer

Jim Casella (b. 1970) is a composer and music publisher. He is best known for the music he’s created for percussion ensembles and the world-class drum corps Vanguard (Santa Clara, CA) and Cavaliers (Rosemont, IL). The company he co-founded, Tapspace, is one of the leading publishers of percussion music in the world. He also created the percussion software sample library called Virtual Drumline which has become a mainstay for composers and arrangers everywhere.

Casella’s signature series of drumsticks and keyboard mallets are manufactured by Innovative Percussion and are popular worldwide. He serves on the board of advisors for the Percussive Arts Society (PAS), the world’s largest percussion organization.

In addition to his work in the percussion industry, Jim Casella is an award-winning composer of film and commercial music. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

Composition

Katraterra is an advanced 9-player percussion ensemble composed in 2003. It was commissioned by Tim Sivils to be premiered by the Sequin High School percussion ensemble (Sequin, Texas) at the Bands of America National Percussion Festival in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The arc of the piece is largely built upon ostinato layering and timbre variations, featuring a variety of soloists along with bombastic, contrapuntal outbursts from the full ensemble. Katraterra is intended to be performed by college-level ensembles (or very advanced high school ensembles) and it is roughly 5 minutes in duration.

Technical Considerations

At the start of the piece, the three wooden keyboard parts (xylophone and 2 marimbas) create a layered texture of 16th notes to introduce the primary 5/8 ostinato which contains accents on 1, 3, and the upbeat of 4. These layers are built upon chords with close intervals in which double-stops are to be performed with four mallets via alternating double-vertical strokes. Due to the placement of some of these chords they can become a bit awkward to perform (at rehearsal B for example). This usually requires players to stand at a more sideways-facing position with their mallets in an unusual layout on the keys. It may take a bit of experimentation to find a stance and arm position that feels comfortable. During these moments, switching from one chord to the next can be a little tricky, so performers can omit a note or two on either side of the transition if necessary.

Technically speaking, this piece will require players to have a strong command of syncopation and groove while understanding how to weave syncopated phrasings over the barline and through complementary contrapuntal parts. It is advised that players be given the audio recording (included with the score from Tapspace) and use it as a guide for individual practice.

Stylistic Considerations

One of the most challenging aspects to this piece is that the primary time signature of 5/8 frequently transitions in and out of 3/4 (adding one 8th-note to the ostinato). This transition occurs in a way that isn’t easy to perceive unless following along with a score, but it does create a bit of a challenge if you’re conducting the piece, and can create a rhythmic tongue-twister of sorts for players if they’re not completely locked into the form. Furthermore, many parts in the piece will employ phrasing that doesn’t conform to the written time signature, crossing the barline in ways that can elude obvious feel. As such, both players and conductors will need to maintain a strong sense of how these layers weave in and out of each other.

At rehearsal H, a basic open/closed hi-hat part is introduced which, due to the varying time signatures of 5/8 and 3/4, will cross the barline in ways that don’t always place the part’s emphasis on consistent or strong beats. It’s important for this player to be self-sufficient in maintaining their part within the existing rhythmic form without taking the lead. The 4/4-based feel of this hi-hat part can derail less rhythmically-confident ensembles (or conductors). To compound the issue, the vibraphone and marimba 1 parts introduce yet another layer of complexity with a syncopated 3/4 pattern that make it extra difficult to feel 5/8 here.

In the same spirit of over-the-barline phrasing, in the fifth bar of rehearsal K, player 8 introduced a quarter-note-based kick drum part which throws a tricky feel over the top of the existing 5/8 ostinato. While the part is intended to create some rhythm dissonance, it’s important that it not dominate the texture while the piece transitions into the solo section (at rehearsal L).

Depending on what feels more comfortable, the 5/8 portions can be conducted in a 2/4 pattern (2+3 8ths) or a 3/4 pattern (4+3+3 16ths). In most cases, the former is likely the best choice,
however there are occasions where the phrasing of certain parts may not always feel natural with the 2+3 pattern. Regardless, it’s important for the conductor not to interject themselves too fully into the performance. I’ve seen many performances of this piece where an overzealous conductor creates friction, preventing players from fully achieving the rhythmic accuracy required by so much of the counterpoint throughout the piece.

In the most ideal setting, the piece would be performed as chamber music without a conductor. Doing so would require performers to have the utmost understanding and mastery of how their parts interact with others which may vary from phrase-to-phrase.

**Equipment Needs**

With the exception of the timpani part, all players require some degree of multipercussion-based setups. The suggested setup page (included in the score from Tapspace) contains various stick and mallet recommendations for each player. The breakdown of instrumentation is as follows.

Player 1: xylophone, glockenspiel, 2 cowbells (low and medium), log drum with at least two low pitches (shared with player 8)
Player 2: vibraphone, china cymbal, suspended cymbal, brake drum
Player 3: marimba (4-octave marimba will work fine), china cymbal, high woodblock, suspended cymbal
Player 4: marimba (low-A), suspended cymbal, large woodblock
Player 5: four timpani (32”, 29”, 26”, 23”)
Player 6: concert bass drum, chimes, triangle
Player 7: snare drum, triangle, pedal hi-hat, brake drum, woodblock
Player 8: four tom toms, chinese opera gong, log drum with at least two low pitches (shared with player 1), suspended cymbal, kick drum, splash cymbal
Player 9: bongos, tambourine, 2 cowbells (low and medium), woodblock, low conga, suspended cymbal

**Suggested Listening**

There is a great performance of Singapore’s Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (Jonathan Fox, director) performing Katraterra in a chamber ensemble style (without conductor). This video can be found by going to the Katraterra page on the Tapspace website.

**Publisher**

Katraterra is published by Tapspace and is available worldwide at www.tapspace.com.
Composer

Steve Reich is a New York-based Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and pioneer of minimalism. Often called “America’s greatest living composer” (The Village Voice), Reich’s music explores steady pulse, repetition, and a unique harmonic language that has certainly “altered the direction of musical history” (The Guardian). Reich’s teachers include Darius Milhaud, Luciano Berio, and Vincent Persichetti.

Composition

Written for two vibraphones and two marimbas in three movements lasting about 15 minutes in duration, Mallet Quartet is Reich’s fourth composition to solely feature mallet-keyboard percussion and has been one of the most performed works in the rising genre of mallet-keyboard quartets, densely rich with interlocking rhythms, canons, and slowly-evolving harmonies. Similar to many of Reich’s chamber works featuring percussion, Mallet Quartet divides its instrument’s voices, two in this case, to each maintain a strict role within the music. For the majority of the work, the marimbas provide harmonic support and rhythmic drive while the vibraphones present virtually every melodic component encountered. It is worth noting that this is Reich’s first work in his oeuvre calling for a 5.0-octave marimba. Through the use of various compositional techniques of canonic variations, large-scale tonal shifts, and rhythmic modification, Mallet Quartet effectively creates a minimalist atmosphere with a unique compositional approach.

Mallet Quartet was co-commissioned by the Amadinda Percussion Group for their 25th anniversary, NEXUS, Sō Percussion, and Synergy Percussion.

Stylistic & Technical Considerations

Compared with his earlier works for percussion such as Drumming and Music for Pieces of Wood, Mallet Quartet can be viewed as far less “mechanical” and, as with many of his works, the minimal use of dynamics and articulations leaves much to the interpretation of the ensemble. With this interpretive freedom, it is important to consider Reich’s compositional processes throughout the work such as effective presentations of canons. Furthermore, the challenges of physical endurance and mental concentration—that permeate the works of Reich—must be confronted.

Movement I:

As the longest of Mallet Quartet, this movement is divided into five sections with an introduction and coda. While the marimbas provide harmonic support and transitory material, the vibraphones provide the melodic material in a canon throughout. While each section is introduced by a short marimba interlude, V1 presents each canon melody twice before V2 joins at a displacement of either one eighth-note or one quarter-note. It is important to balance these two voices throughout the movement as to not inhibit the natural “harmonies” they build. In other words, the two vibraphones should be balanced to ensure the sound a single instrument.

Regarding the marimbas, the opening sixteen measures set the main rhythmic vocabulary of the entire movement through the use of rich, open harmonies. While each player’s respective voicings and rhythms are unique, a balanced sonority should be sought after to set a tonal bed underneath the vibraphone canon melodies. Furthermore, many marimba voicings—particularly those with close seconds—may be physically awkward but richness of fundamental tone should be considered for a full sound. Rather than executing these passages on the edges of the upper manual, try turning the body with the mallets at wide intervals in order to strike at or near the center of the bar.

Lastly, this movement demands a high level of mental concentration from all players. While the introduction is easily felt in a 3/2 meter, the first canon melody (as well as many consequent melodies) can be perceived in 4/2 or other meters, which create challenges for the marimba players, whose patterns are always in 3/2. To mitigate this issue, players should study these melodies and find checkpoints throughout which coincide with their individual patterns.

Movement II:

As the shortest of the work, the middle movement consists of four sections in A B A’ B’ form. As noted in his program notes, Reich was originally concerned that the movement might be too thin, but “it ends up being the most striking, and certainly the least expected, of the piece.” With this immediate shift in texture, more space is created thus requiring a high level of patience from the ensemble to maintain a steady tempo. While V1 provides most of the melodic material throughout, it is important for the two marimbas to match sound and style with their hocketing accompanimental gestures in a seamless fashion.
Movement III:
In Mallet Quartet's final movement, Reich's main compositional processes feature canonic variations, rising textures, as well as the extensive use of constantly alternating meter—a technique which first emerged in the works of Reich with Tehillim (1981). Similar to the first movement, this movement is in eight sections segmented by short marimba interludes as well as an introduction and coda. While the first movement featured a single melody repeated twice before presented in canon with the second vibraphone, the third movement presents each melody once before repeated in canon displaced between two and seven eighth-notes. Perceptually, the canon melody appears "glide" over the fast, multi-meter patterns of the marimbas, which in turn forces all performers to flex their mental muscles yet again as to not break away from each section's phrasings.

In the work's final coda, the ubiquitous Reichian characteristic of rising textures permeates the final moments of Mallet Quartet. Over the course of the final 54 measures, all voices gradually rise in range to create an uplifting sense of finality. As the bass voices begin to diminish, interpretive decisions may be made by the ensemble to further explore this natural push. While no dynamics are indicated, a more effective and convincing conclusion is possible with this in mind.

Vibraphones:
While the second and third movements require all players to perform utilizing four mallets, vibraphone players have a choice of performing with two or four mallets in the first movement. Groups such as Sō Percussion and Third Coast Percussion utilize four mallets for an angular and permutational approach while other ensembles such as Amadinda and NEXUS utilize two mallets for a looser, more relaxed feel.

Marimbas:
While the marimba players must face several challenges in Mallet Quartet, the issue of part-reading may perhaps be the most daunting. Due to the active role of these voices, performers have virtually little to no time for standard page-turns over the course of 25+ pages. To mitigate this issue, players have one of several options:
- Memorize all or parts of the work
- Scan and utilize a tablet/laptop with a Bluetooth page-turner
- Create a short-hand which the performer understands for him/herself by distilling the patterns into a few pages (see below)

Mallet Selection:
While many different types of mallets would be viable options for Mallet Quartet, it is important to keep a few concepts under consideration. For the marimbas, a balance between clear, articulate rhythms and warm, richness in tone. For the vibraphones, clarity in melodic and canonic presentation at both loud and soft dynamics.

Equipment Needs
Mallet Quartet calls for four players on:
- Two Vibraphones
- Two Marimbas (4.5-octave & 5.0-octave)

Suggested Listening
Reich: WTC 9/11, Nonesuch Records, 2011, Performed by Sō Percussion
Third Coast Percussion / Steve Reich, Cedille Records, 2016, Performed by Third Coast Percussion

Publisher
Mallet Quartet is published by Boosey & Hawkes (www.boosey.com) and distributed by Hal Leonard Corporation (www.halleonard.com).

Short-hand for Marimba 1, mm. 1-16

Short-hand for Marimba 1, mm. 574-end
Mo Java
Lalo Davila
by Rebecca McDaniel

Composer
Lalo Davila is currently Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at Middle Tennessee State University. Lalo received his Bachelor of Music degree from Texas A&M Corpus Christi and a Master of Music degree from the University of North Texas. He was named in “Nashville’s Top Five 1998 Percussionist of the Year” category. Lalo spent three years (1984–1986) performing and instructing with the University of North Texas PAS Championship Drum Line, and his MTSU drum-line received first place awards at the PAS indoor competition in 2001 and 2004. He has served as an instructor for the Phantom Regiment, Sky Ryders, Blue Colts, and the Star of Indiana Drum and Bugle Corps. He has performed with groups in many genres: the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra, the Nashville Symphony, the Nashville Jazz Orchestra, the Nashville Chamber Orchestra, the Nashville Chamber Chorus, the Nashville Ballet, Sixpence None The Richer, Clay Walker, Vikki Carr, Allen Vizzutti, Arturo Sandoval, and Shari Lewis. Currently, Lalo performs with several Latin groups including Orkesta Eme Pe. Most recently, his voice can be heard both as Jafar in Disney’s Dual Language Series Aladdin, and in the 2012 DreamWorks movie People Like Us. He also plays percussion on the PlayStation game Sly Cooper: Thieves in Time.

Known as an outstanding clinician and adjudicator, Lalo has conducted clinics throughout the United States, Australia, Paris, Mexico, Sweden, Cuba, and Japan. He is the author of several successful collections of solos and duets for beginning to intermediate percussionists, many of which are published by Row-Loff Publications. Some of his better known titles are Contemporary Rudimental Studies and Solos; Play at First Sight: The Ultimate Musician’s Guide to Better Sight-Reading; Uncommon Duos (a collection of duets for timpani and snare drum); and Jingle Jamz: Modern Tambourine Solos and Duets for the Contemporary Percussionist.

Composition
“Mo Java” is published by Row-Loff Publications, one of the nation’s most popular vendors of percussion music. Row-Loff specializes in music that is both educational and entertaining for students and audiences. “Mo Java” is no exception here; the rhythms and melodies are approachable and groovy and may just have your students dancing around the band room. This Medium/Grade IV level work is suitable for advanced middle school students. The piece is a fun way to get younger students excited about percussion ensemble and to introduce the communication skills necessary for playing chamber music.

“Mo Java” is approximately three minutes long and is on five State Solo & Ensemble Lists: Florida, Indiana, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia.

Stylistic Considerations
“Mo Java” is essentially a Caribbean dance tune for percussion ensemble. Active listening between performers is critical to achieve a comfortable groove, and even younger ensembles would benefit from performing this work without a conductor to encourage listening. Programming this piece would also present a great opportunity to introduce traditional Caribbean and Afro-Cuban instruments such as congas, cowbells, timbales, and shakers. Further, it would be beneficial to discuss how these instruments function alongside the drum set within the styles that Davila is hinting at, such as Calypso, Soca, and Tumbao.

Not having a conductor is true to the piece’s style and gives a great opportunity to improve listening and unified pulse while the students can still hear constant time from the rhythm section. If you (the director) are more comfortable on drum set than any of the students, it may be helpful for you to play the drum set part; this will make the students feel comfortable while still letting them experience playing without a conductor. The only thing a conductor might be able to help with is reassuring the players that they are in the correct place, as much of the material is repeated. Instead, be sure to explain how the sections repeat and relate as the students are learning the piece, so they can use the form to help guide themselves. It would even be appropriate to have students solo over the form. With younger players, it will likely be necessary to define who will solo, when, and for how long.

Technical Considerations
The piece is in A-B-A-B form, making it straightforward to understand and memorize. The rhythms are not extremely complex, but since the piece is in cut time (half note = 112 bpm), they must be executed quickly. Successive dotted quarter notes that sometimes extend over the bar line may pose a challenge for students who struggle with syncopations or with timekeeping. The tendency to rush these dotted quarter rhythms can be countered by a strong rhythm section. These players don’t need extreme technical proficiency but should have a steady sense of time. Their parts are not complex, but they certainly hold the piece together.
Because the tune is repetitive, it’s easy for students, especially young players, to forget to play musically or to use dynamics. Encourage them to emphasize the dynamics so the piece doesn’t sound the same throughout.

**Equipment Needs**

“Mo Java” is composed for nine to ten players, but parts can be easily doubled as much as necessary. The marimba parts do not have a wide range, so it is easy to have two students sharing a keyboard. The following instruments are required:

Keyboards: xylophone, two 4.3 marimbas, vibraphone. (Optional steel drums double the melody parts.)

Drums and Accessories: timbales, splash cymbal, police whistle, congas, three cowbells, two shakers, shakere.

Rhythm section: drumset, bass guitar.

If playing with only nine players, some of the accessory percussion parts, mostly instruments that would be found in a steel band’s rhythm section or “engine room,” may need to be substituted or sacrificed. It is possible for one player to play both congas and cowbells if she uses sticks on both instruments, which is not uncommon in a Caribbean engine room. The congas should then be played with a medium steel pan (cello) mallet or other medium rubber mallet and the cowbell either with a similar mallet or with a drum stick, depending on the desired volume. Otherwise, the congas should be played traditionally, with hands. A common addition to the engine room is a brake drum or other “iron,” so this could be added if there are more than ten students. The brake drummer could play constant sixteenth notes or basic four-sixteenth-note rhythms. Engine room sections sometimes have multiple brake drum and shaker players, so these rhythmic parts may also be doubled to allow for more players.

**Publisher**

“Mo Java” is published by Row-Loff Publications (www.rowloff.com), and the score and parts are usually purchased together.
Composer

Francisco Perez is a percussionist, composer, and educator from Pflugerville, TX. As an active performer, he has accepted international engagements in Guatemala, Mexico, Spain, and China, and toured extensively throughout the US including performances at prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention. He regularly performs with the Lexington Philharmonic and the blueSHIFT Percussion Quartet. In the marching arts, Francisco has played snare drum for The Cavaliers (2011 & 2012) and Crossmen Drum & Bugle Corps (2010). In 2011, he helped secure the prestigious Fred Sanford Award for Best Percussion Performance under the direction of Mike McIntosh and Dr. Brian Tinkel. His music is published by C. Alan Publications and Tapspace Publications.

Francisco received his Bachelor of Music Education from Texas Christian University under Dr. Brian West and his Master’s in Percussion Performance from the University of Kentucky under James Campbell, where he is currently a candidate for the Doctorate of Musical Arts in Percussion Performance. (www.perezperc.com)

Composition

Nalu is a marimba quartet written for four players on two marimbas, 7-minutes in duration.

“In the Hawaiian language, the word ‘nalu’ stands for wave, in reference to those in the waters surrounding the islands of Hawaii. Through the use of counterpoint, syncopation, hocket, and hints of minimalist techniques, Nalu emulates the varying moods and textures of these ever-changing waves in the Pacific. Though this work’s contrasting sections intend to portray the many states of the ocean’s waters, one notable memory from a trip in 2013 and my fascination for the beauty of nature shaped the beginning and ending of Nalu. Soon after arriving on the beach the first morning, a few grey clouds formed over the shore. With the sun shining brightly just above the horizon, the delicate trickles from the drizzle gently joined the faint wave breaks from the distance in a slow crescendo. Then, seemingly out of nowhere, an immense downpour and powerful gust overcame the coast, orchestrating a surge of sound from the ocean’s surface and the aggressive crashes on the shore. After a short while, the sun’s radiant rays seemed to dissolve the dark clouds within minutes and the glistening clear blue water of the Pacific returned to its calm state from beforehand. Just as the days cycle through light and dark, the waves and waters of the blue cycle though a multitude of characters, only to return to its original still, serene state.” —Francisco Perez

Stylistic & Technical Considerations

While only requiring two mallets for each player, a strong sense of pulse and rhythmic integrity is necessary throughout the entirety of the work to keep the reoccurring syncopated passages clear. With the majority of the work stemming from a tonal language in A♭-major based on common sixteenth-note patterns, Nalu presents a vehicle for high-school students and young college ensembles to showcase melodic sensitivity and ensemble cohesion through a simplified set-up.

Player 2 slowly presents the work’s theme during the introduction (notated by tenuto markings) in conjunction with the main rhythmic motive presented by Player 1 before being fully unveiled at measure 30 by Players 1 & 2. Furthermore, Player 4 plays a pivotal harmonic and rhythmic role throughout with challenging passages. Beginning at m. 138, all voices should be completely balanced in tone and phrasing to ensure a convincing push into the work’s climax at m. 155. Finally, Player 2’s “breakdown” of the thematic material should be clearly heard during the final eight measures of the work.

Equipment Needs

Nalu calls for four players:
4.3-octave marimba (shared by Players 2 & 3)
4.5-octave marimba (shared by Players 1 & 4)

Publisher

Nalu is published by C. Alan Publications (http://www.c-alanpublications.com/).
**Composer**

Previously the Director of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music Percussion Ensemble, Mitchell Peters, was formerly principal timpanist and percussionist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Prior to his appointment in 1969, he was principal percussionist with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Peters has recorded extensively with both the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, in addition to various appearances on motion picture and television soundtracks. He was a member of the Philharmonic New Music Group, and has performed and recorded numerous contemporary works. As author and composer, Peters’ percussion works and instructional materials are highly regarded throughout the United States and abroad. He owns and operates a music publishing company, which handles percussion works exclusively. He completed highly acclaimed method books for timpani and mallet instruments, published by the Alfred Music Publishing Company. In 2006 he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Sabian Cymbal Company. He was also on the faculty of the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara from 1990-2002. His degrees are from the Eastman School of Music, where he also received the Performers Certificate. (from www.southernpercussion.com)

**Technical Considerations**

Developing well-rounded percussionists is one of the most important things that educators can do to prepare students for successful future musical endeavors. Each part in *Piece for Percussion* requires its player to read pitches and play rhythmically-involved passages on non-pitched instruments. While the parts differ according to ability level and skills required to execute them, every player is exposed to a variety of musical elements.

One of the reasons that *Piece for Percussion* is a quality work for young chamber musicians is that each part contains some form of “instrument change” throughout the course of the piece. Player 1 switches from snare drum to xylophone; Player 2 moves between toms, castanets, and bells; and Player 3 must change timpani pitches between contrasting sections in the piece. However, changing instruments has the largest impact on Player 4’s part, which requires the performer to manage six different instruments throughout the entire piece.

Switching between instruments is very difficult because it requires a large amount of planning and organization, along with specific movement and activity that is not notated because it occurs during rests in the music. Player 4 must have a specific plan for their set up so they can smoothly transition from one instrument to another. All of the instruments and the appropriate implements (bass drum mallets, chime hammers, temple block mallets, triangle beaters) must be organized and easily accessible. In addition to learning the notes in their part, Player 4 must take the time to rehearse moving from instrument to instrument in the allotted time. This must all happen while counting rests and mentally preparing for their next entrance, so be sure to keep this in mind when assigning parts. Also, it is possible to split this part between two players and to play this piece as a quintet. See the “Equipment Distribution” section below for this option.

**Composition**

*Piece for Percussion* was composed in the late 1960s and published in 1969. Dedicated to Charles Blackman, this is an ideal piece for young percussion quartet. While Peters may be more well known for his solo keyboard works (*Yellow After the Rain, Sea Refractions, Waves*) and his method books (*Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced Snare Drum Studies; Fundamental Method for Keyboard Percussion; Fundamental Method for Timpani*), this small ensemble composition contains many fundamental elements of chamber music performance in a setting that is also accessible for audience members. Pitched and non-pitched instruments share the spotlight throughout the work, and each player is tasked with performing on a variety of those instruments in their own personal setup. Ideally, *Piece for Percussion* should be performed without a conductor so that the ensemble can work on collaborating and functioning as a true chamber ensemble. However, the piece is still viable with a conductor, especially with younger performers.

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**Piece for Percussion**

Mitchell Peters

by Gordon Hicken
**Piece for Percussion** requires Player 1 to utilize four mallets from letter I through letter L. While this may seem daunting to a young player (or a non-percussionist band director), this part only utilizes four-voice block chords and a limited number of pitches. If you’re unfamiliar with four-mallet technique but you would like for your students to perform this piece, go back to your percussion methods text or YouTube and find a simple guide to the basics of Burton Grip. This grip is straightforward enough for you to get your student playing block chords right away, and the student should be able to gain enough command of the technique to play this part.

As for the xylophone passages at rehearsal B and P, Player 1 can actually execute these phases with two or three mallets. If attempting with three mallets, the performer can hold two mallets in their stronger hand and one in their weaker hand, and place one mallet over each note (G, C, and F in both cases), eliminating the need for double sticking across the interval of a perfect fourth. The melodic passage from rehearsal L through N should be executed with only two mallets (one in each hand). The performer has plenty of time to discard two mallets from the block chord passage in order to resume playing the melodic line seven measures after L. Be sure to have a flat music stand covered with a black towel for quick switches between sticks and mallets.

Player 3 is the only person who does not switch instruments during **Piece for Percussion**, but they are required to change pitches while the other performers are playing. Peters writes this part for three timpani, and the best way to distribute the pitches is to initially tune the 29” drum to G, the 26” drum to C, and the 23” drum to F. While these initial pitches can fit on the 32”, 29”, and 26” drums respectively, the pitch changes (all of which are located on the bottom drum) are easily within range on a 29” drum. A 32” timpano is not guaranteed to have the upper range to facilitate these pitch changes.

The first notated pitch change is from G to B-flat at rehearsal I. The chimes sound a B-flat right at rehearsal I, so the timpanist has a reference pitch for this quick change. It is also best for the player to tune after the chimes begin to play so they can both hear the pitch and not create sound during the silence of the previous measure. The next pitch change at rehearsal M is much quicker and does not give the timpanist any time to listen for a pitch. The performer should practice quickly moving down between an A-flat and B-flat so that they can feel the change for a pitch. The performer has plenty of time to discard two mallets from the timpano part (located on the bottom drum) are easily within range on a 29” drum. A 32” timpano is not guaranteed to have the upper range to facilitate these pitch changes.

With all of this being said, if you have four timpani, you could use all of the drums and eliminate some of the tuning changes. From low to high, tune G, B-flat, C, and F on each drum. The change from B-flat to A-flat at rehearsal M is unavoidable, but this does eliminate a change from G to B-flat for the middle section of the piece. However, this means that the timpanist will have to navigate quick rhythmic passages over a larger distance because of the extra drum. I would suggest playing this part “as written” on three drums. It provides a manageable opportunity to work on pitch changes and it also makes the part much easier to execute physically.

Player 2’s part may contain the most “straightforward” technical requirements in the piece, but this performer must be equally comfortable on keyboard and non-pitched percussion instruments. Due to the quick switches between toms and castanets, it is best to use machine castanets (mounted and playable with two hands). The castanet machine should be placed on a sturdy table with a soft surface (e.g. carpet) to minimize extraneous vibrations and provide a stick tray for all of Player 2’s implements.

The tom part requires some special attention to sticking in order to navigate three separate drums (this also applies to the timpani part). Some repetitive sticking may be required to easily navigate certain passages, such as rehearsal letter A. It would be awkward to alternate every note from the right hand to the left in this passage, so a more ideal approach is to use a Right-Left-Left sticking. This will allow a slight emphasis at the beginning of each note grouping and it keeps the player from crossing hand-over-hand to reach various drums. It is also important to establish specific stickings that change at the end of a pattern. In the seventh measure of rehearsal C, Player 2 should use a Right, Left-Right-Left-Right, Left sticking to move down the drums and avoid awkward hand motion.

Specific sticking strategies also apply to the bells passage at rehearsal L. This is a very quiet accompaniment passage and the performer has no time to discard their “metal mallets” at this point. In order to make this easily navigable, employ a Right-Left-Left-Right sticking throughout this phrase. This way, the right hand will always play notes on the upper manual of the keyboard and a slight metric emphasis will be easily attainable on the downbeat of each measure.

**Stylistic Considerations**
While **Piece for Percussion** is written in a 3/4 time signature with a consistent tempo of 180 beats per minute, Peters creates different feelings of pulse within these structural boundaries. This piece is essentially divided into a large A-B-A’ form, and the A and A’ sections emphasize the feeling of 3/4 meter along with implied groupings usually found in 6/8 meter. Each player moves back and forth between a driving quarter note pulse and a more relaxed-feeling dotted quarter note pulse, almost as if the different pulses are competing to establish themselves. However, the middle section of **Piece for Percussion** alters the implied pulse to one beat per measure. Even though the quarter note remains at 180 beats per minute, the listener perceives the pulse as the dotted half note, which feels like 60 beats per minute. Peters establishes this feeling with the chime part playing the
the sustain of the metallic instruments utilized throughout that section, the other parts provide supporting material with more complex rhythms, but they all exist within the bounds of the one-beat-per-bar pulse.

Peters’ choice of instrumentation is perfect for an advanced middle school or high school ensemble, because most of the included instruments are commonly found in public school band rooms. However, implement choice is left up to the performers and/or director for the most part. The only mallets that are specified in the score are “metal mallets” for the bells solo at rehearsal letter J and “triangle beater” for the suspended finger cymbal in the same passage. Triangle beaters are an ideal implement choice because they will allow the performer to create similar articulations from the triangle and finger cymbal, and “metal mallets” will work well for the bells solo. If you don’t have access to metal mallets (usually made from brass), you can substitute very hard plastic mallets. The goal is to create a very bright, cutting sound so that the bells are the prominent melodic voice in this particular passage.

Implements are not specified for any other instruments, but thoughtful selection can create pleasant sonic combinations in contrasting musical situations. Towards the beginning and end of the piece, the xylophone and temple blocks engage in a dialogue that utilizes the implied 6/8 meter discussed above. Appropriate mallets should highlight natural tone qualities of each instrument, but also produce similar articulation in order to unify the dialogue. For the temple blocks, hard rubber mallets will provide a deep, round sound with enough articulation to cut through the ensemble. Standard “hard” xylophone mallets will produce an articulate sound, but will lack the depth of sound presented by the temple blocks. Hard rubber mallets (maybe even the same mallets that are used on the temple blocks) may work in this situation, but they could lack articulation required from the xylophone. Try some soft or medium plastic mallets (think ragtime xylophone) that will provide a nice mix of articulation and warmer resonance. For the middle passage of *Piece for Percussion*, the xylophone player will want to use softer mallets to execute the rolls located in the melodic passage after rehearsal letter L. A medium rubber mallet will allow the rolls to sound more like sustained pitches instead of rapid, articulate rhythms. Also, this type of mallet will help the xylophone blend as accompaniment while the bells play the melody.

Timpani mallet choice is critical because this part changes roles as the piece progresses. For the first third of the piece, the timpanist drives the ensemble with rhythmically active ostinai. The best mallet for this type of passage is a “staccato” mallet with a wooden core and a tight felt wrap. This probably shouldn’t be the hardest mallet that you can find, because a somewhat warm sound is desired for passages with longer notes like the beginning or rehearsal letter E. However, the player should be able to play through the felt wrap to the core of the mallet for the extremely articulate passages marked “marcato” at rehearsal letter H. During the middle section of *Piece for Percussion*, a more round, less articulate sound is desired to complement the sustain of the metallic instruments utilized throughout that passage. A softer mallet with a loose felt wrap is much more appropriate for this section. Not necessarily the softest mallet in a line of timpani mallets, but maybe the second- or third-softest mallet that a company makes. This means that there will be a quick mallet switch while tuning right before rehearsal letter N. If this is not feasible, use a “general” timpani mallet that is also slightly articulated throughout the entire piece.

Overall, the most important stylistic concern in *Piece for Percussion* is creating an exciting and contrasting performance. Players should be comfortable with the inherent groove present throughout the work. While there are different pulse feelings in this composition, every section should naturally fit together. When performed with great accuracy and confidence, the interlocking 3/4 and 6/8 rhythmic structures create exciting composite rhythmic passages. Peters gives young performers an opportunity to hone ensemble skills and practice communication within a challenging composition that is still achievable for students who are new to chamber music.

### Equipment Needs
- Snare Drum
- Bass Drum
- Bells
- Xylophone
- Chimes (only the pitches B-flat and A-flat)
- 3 Graduated Toms (Small, Medium, Large)
- 3 Temple Blocks
- Castanets
- Tambourine
- Triangle
- Suspended Finger Cymbal (or High-Pitched Crotale)
- 3 Timpani (29”, 26”, 23”)

### Distribution:
- Player 1: Snare Drum, Xylophone
- Player 2: 3 Graduated Toms, Bells, Castanets
- Player 3: 3 Timpani
- Player 4: 3 Temple Blocks, Bass Drum, Tambourine, Triangle, Suspended Finger Cymbal (or High-Pitched Crotale)

### Possible division of Player 4 part between two percussionists:
- Player 4A: Tambourine, Temple Blocks, Chimes
- Player 4B: Bass Drum, Triangle and Suspended Finger Cymbal

### Suggested Listening
Many live performance videos of varying quality are available on YouTube at the time of publication.
Composer
Dr. Brian S. Mason, Associate Professor of Percussion, coordinates the percussion studies program at Morehead State University in Morehead, KY. He directs the percussion ensembles, MSU Steel, and the award-winning marching percussion ensemble, featured on VicFirth.com’s web-based instructional video series Marching Percussion 101. He is a member of the Percussive Arts Society Board of Advisors, President of the KY Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society, Associate Principal Percussion with the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra, Principal Percussion for the Cave Run Symphony Orchestra, and appears as a guest artist with high school and university percussion ensembles across the US.

A highly respected innovator of the contemporary marching percussion ensemble, Brian’s career in the Drum Corps International activity spanned more than two decades, claiming two World Championships and three High Percussion titles, along with many other awards and honors during his tenure with the Cavaliers (1987–1996), Yamato (1997–1999), Phantom Regiment (1998–2002), and the Santa Clara Vanguard (2006–2010). He also serves as a member of the Winter Guard International Percussion Judge team, one of the more respected and highly regarded rosters of adjudicators in the marching arts. In high demand as a clinician, performer, arranger, composer, and adjudicator, Brian has appeared throughout the United States, Asia, Europe, Canada, and Mexico, and his compositions have been performed around the world.

Brian received his D.M.A. and B.M. as a student of James B. Campbell at the University of Kentucky, and his M.M. at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas as a student of Dr. Dean Gronemeier. He is a member of the Vic Firth Education Committee and the P.A.S. Health and Wellness Committee, and the PAS Marching Percussion Committee. Brian has published articles in Percussive Notes, has been interviewed in Modern Drummer and Band and Orchestra Magazine, and co-authored the 2000 Modern Drummer Readers Poll’s «No. 1 Drum Set Method Book,» The Commandments of R&B Drumming (Warner Brothers). Brian is a performing artist for Mapex Drums, and Majestic Percussion, Vic Firth sticks and mallets, Zildjian cymbals, Evans drumheads, Black Swamp Percussion, and Etymotic Hearing Protection, and his original works are published through Row-Loff Productions, Bachovich Music Publications, and Tap Space Publications.

Composition
“Rochambeaux was written for the Phantom Regiment percussion ensemble, receiving first place in the 2001 DCI percussion ensemble competition. The three distinct sections of this work represent the three elements of Rochambeaux – rock, paper, and scissors. At the time this work was composed, Mason was performing with guitarist and producer, Dave Beegle, known for his use of multi-meter and ethnic modalities.” —Brian Mason

Rochambeaux is listed as a grade 5 percussion ensemble piece, 4 minutes in length. The composition is written for 10 or 11 players (if guest soloist is used). Further details about instrumentation are listed below.

Instrument Needs
3 marimbas (4.3-octave, low A)*
3 vibraphones
crotales (1 octave)
4 timpani
bass guitar
drumset
4 suspended cymbals
2 gong drums
Accessories (djembe, vibraslap, mark tree, triangle,
African claves, 2 shekeres, woodblock)
*4 marimbas will be needed if guest soloist is used.

Mallet Selection
An important thing to realize is that the keyboard players will also end up playing other instruments. For example, the three vibraphone players also play suspended cymbal. The Marimba 1 player will play woodblock. The Marimba 2 player will also play the African claves. Additionally, the Marimba 3 player will play the gong drums. It should also be noted that these players have plenty of time to get to these instruments as well as make proper mallet changes if staged effectively. For most, if not all of the keyboard playing, the author of this article advises employing a more articulate mallet due to the relatively high density and speed (at times) of the notes being played—clarity is the goal here!

Some type of djembe stand may prove to be useful to the person playing the Percussion part, as he/she will need to get to and from the instrument rather quickly.
Performance Notes
The following is information that can also be found in the score:

In order to give clarification to the sticking issues, the sticking examples given are from the perspective of this mallet diagram:

Figure 1. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by permission.

However, the composer believes that the vibraphonists should use the Burton Grip and the marimbists can choose whichever grip they prefer. If players use the Burton Grip in the traditional sense (mallet 4 as the ‘lead’ mallet), then the player will want to substitute mallet 4 for the mallet 3 indications.

Example 1 is the initial marimba ostinato and recurs throughout the piece. The sticking at the end of the second measure may seem a bit odd with the double-stroke followed by mallet 2 (creating a 2-1-2 motion as the pattern turns around), but when the right hand is harmonized (Lead/Solo and Marimba 1), the pattern makes more sense. The second set of stickings is for Marimba 3.

Example 1. Figure 2. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by Permission.

Example 2 is the vibraphone ostinato, beginning in measure 49, which also recurs throughout the piece. Burton Grip players will want to substitute mallet 4 for the mallet 3 indications.

Example 2. Figure 3. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by Permission.

Example 3 is the first keyboard tutti, beginning in measure 13. Burton Grip players will want to substitute mallet 4 for the mallet 3 indications. It should be noted that the 32nd-note rhythms, while only accented on the first note of the grouping, should have strong left-hand clarity from the performer in order to make the rhythm speak properly.

Example 3. Figure 4. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by Permission.

Example 4 is during the marimba soli at measure 70. Burton Grip players will want to substitute mallet 4 for the mallet 3 indications. It should be noted that this type of sticking is common with jazz performers (one hand in the black notes and one hand in the white notes, sticking accordingly). Use this approach with the 32nd-note passage in measure 65 during the vibe soli.

Example 4. Figure 5. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by Permission.

Example 3 is the first keyboard tutti, beginning in measure 13. Burton Grip players will want to substitute mallet 4 for the mallet 3 indications. It should be noted that the 32nd-note rhythms, while only accented on the first note of the grouping, should have strong left-hand clarity from the performer in order to make the rhythm speak properly.

Example 3. Figure 4. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by Permission.

Other Items of Note
The drum set player should probably use rutes (bundled rods) or something similar.

The Lead/Solo part is for using a guest soloist. If this occurs, refer to the soloist setup (the soloist should play marimba).

Strong accents at D in the marimba and vibe parts to contrast the superimposed feel of the 7/4.

Strong accents during the keyboard tutti at F, especially in the 6/4 measure, in order to highlight the metric modulation.

The nodal part in marimba 3 and measure 54 should emulate something that you might hear in a loop and should be more rhythmic than tonal. This should weave well into the drum set part to create a seamless groove.

Feel free to open up at J and create any type of ‘jam’ or feature for your percussionists that you wish. The material from K to L should end the feature section in order to transition (metric modulation) back to the original feel.
The tutti at O should use alternating sticking patterns (no doubles). The only exception is to use mallet 1 on the downbeat of measure 104 and all recurring instances to follow.

From O to the break before the last chord, the feel should continue to be more energized and frenzied, with the break feeling abrupt. Take a good breath before playing the last chord. During this chord, the drum set player should fill it up (fermata ram) and then cue the release; marimba players should be careful not to damage the instruments during this high-energy moment.

The drum set part at rehearsal P is written to emulate a double-bass groove (between the kick and the floor tom); the player may wish to utilize a true double-bass setup.

The gong drums at rehearsal J refer to large, single-headed impact toms. A mounted 22” kick drum would work well for these.

Setup Considerations

Figure 6. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by permission.

The following illustration shows the “soloist setup” to be used when performing with a featured guest soloist.

Figure 7. Rochambeaux by Brian Mason. Used by permission.

The illustration above shows the “standard setup” to be used when no guest soloist is featured.
Composer
Jim Casella (b. 1970) is a composer and music publisher. He is best known for the music he's created for percussion ensembles and the world-class drum corps Vanguard (Santa Clara, CA) and Cavaliers (Rosemont, IL). The company he co-founded, Tapspace, is one of the leading publishers of percussion music in the world. He also created the percussion software sample library called Virtual Drumline which has become a mainstay for composers and arrangers everywhere.

Casella's signature series of drumsticks and keyboard mallets are manufactured by Innovative Percussion and are popular worldwide. He serves on the board of advisors for the Percussive Arts Society (PAS), the world's largest percussion organization.

In addition to his work in the percussion industry, Jim Casella is an award-winning composer of film and commercial music. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

Composition
Scuttlebutt is an intermediate percussion ensemble composed in 2014. It is written for 8 players, lasts approximately 4.5 minutes in duration, and is designed to be a good fit for most high school level ensembles. The repetitive and catchy nature of the piece should help less-experienced players in gaining the confidence needed to execute their parts.

Context
Scuttlebutt is the third in a series of groove-based pieces for intermediate and developing percussion ensembles. It follows Technology and Stormbreak, both of which are octets, rely on similar basic limited instrumentations, and syncopated, repetitive patterns to which younger ensembles effectively relate.

Technical Considerations
A series of solos feature the concert tom, snare drum, and timpani players, with smaller solo interjections from the rest of the ensemble as well. When assigning parts, consider putting the strongest players on parts with the most substantial solo material.

Special care should be taken in determining whether material is primary or accompaniment. Much of the underlying rhythm is repetitive and accompanimental in nature and should be played beneath the volume level of the primary material. For example, at rehearsal A, the xylophone part is actually just part of the groove, essentially “comping” beneath the glockenspiel melody. However, in the fourth bar of this phrase, the xylophone answers the melody with an interjection that could be deemed as “primary” material. As such, this would be played louder, after which the xylophone part would drop back down to a more accompaniment-level volume in bar 5.

Consider ways in which the various unpitched percussion parts mimic the nature of a drumset. When performed successfully, all parts should synchronize to sound as one unified and groovy rhythm section.

Stylistic Considerations
The primary feel of Scuttlebutt has the drive of electronic dance music with a half-tempo backbeat. Bursts of four offbeat sixteenth notes are frequently interjected to answer the primary melody. Through repetition, these bursts are designed to train young players to become familiar with the feel of rhythms common in funk music. Also, at various times triplet figures are overlaid in contrast to the more duple-based groove. While these may not be immediately intuitive for younger players, figures like these aren’t uncommon in percussion ensemble and other forms of chamber music. They’re introduced here in a way that’s relatable to the groove with the goal of making them feel comfortable despite their momentary rhythmic dissonance.

Near the end of the piece the half-time groove becomes a driving disco beat that can involve the audience clapping along before ultimately ending in a high-energy recap of the main theme.

I recommend teachers find funky dance music and assign it as “listening homework” for students. The sky’s the limit on what to listen to, but you can’t go wrong with music by Earth Wind and Fire, Tower of Power, Snarky Puppy, or The Meters. The more students can naturally feel the groove within the music, the easier time they’ll have executing its nuance and “pocket,” and the more fun they’ll have playing it!
**Equipment Needs**

**Instruments**
- xylophone
- glockenspiel
- 2 suspended cymbals
- tam tam
- 3 timpani
- bass drum
- snare drum
- temple blocks (5 pitches)
- cabasa
- hi-hat
- 4 toms
- 3 cowbells
- tambourine
- triangle
- splash cymbal
- vibra slap

**Instrumentation considerations**

The glockenspiel player is occasionally called upon to play on the upper register of the xylophone. Consider this when setting up so the player can make quick and easy transitions between instruments.

Consider having the hi-hat player use a double-sided stick (regular stick on one end, hard felt on the other) so that quick transitions to temple blocks can be played with felt rather than using wood sticks on the blocks (which could potentially damage the instrument).

If a cabasa is unavailable, the opening part can be played using bundle rods on closed hi-hats.

The bass drum should be equipped with a towel on the playing head to dampen it while it's being played. Notes marked with a staccato should be muffled. Notes without staccato should be played without dampening. Dampened notes should imply the sound of a kick drum. Undampened notes should sound more like a resonant concert bass.

**Publisher**

*Scuttlebutt* is published by Tapspace and is available worldwide at www.tapspace.com.
Composer
Applebaum received his Ph.D. in composition from the University of California at San Diego where he studied principally with Brian Ferneyhough. His solo, chamber, choral, orchestral, operatic, and electroacoustic work has been performed throughout North and South America, Europe, Africa, Australia, and Asia with notable performances at the Darmstadt Sessions.

Many of his pieces are characterized by challenges to the conventional boundaries of musical ontology: works for three conductors and no players, a concerto for florist and orchestra, pieces for instruments made of junk, notational specifications that appear on the faces of custom wristwatches, works for an invented sign language choreographed to sound, amplified Dadaist rituals, and a 72-foot long graphic score displayed in a museum and accompanied by no instructions for its interpretation. His TED Talk—about boredom—has been seen by more than three million viewers.

He has received commissions from Betty Freeman, the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, the Fromm Foundation, the Kronos Quartet, the Vienna Modern Festival, the Paul Dresher Ensemble, the St. Lawrence String Quartet, the Meridian Arts Ensemble, Chamber Music America, the Spoleto Festival, and numerous others. The San Francisco Contemporary Music Players premiered his composition Rabbit Hole, an elaborate chamber ensemble work based on page turns. He has also engaged in many intermedia collaborations, including neural artists, film-makers, florists, animators, architects, choreographers, and laptop DJs.

Applebaum is also an accomplished jazz pianist who has performed from Sumatra to Ouagadougou and who concertizes internationally with his father, Bob Applebaum, in the Applebaum Jazz Piano Duo. His music appears on the Innova, Tzadik, Capstone, Blue Leaf, SEAMUS, New Focus, ChampD’Action, and Evergreen labels. He serves on the board of Other Minds and as a trustee of Carleton College.

Applebaum has held professorial positions at Carleton College and Mississippi State University. He subsequently taught classes in Antwerp, Santiago, Singapore, Paris, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Oxford. In 2000 he joined the faculty at Stanford where he directs [sic]—the Stanford Improvisation Collective, received the 2003 Walter J. Gores Award for excellence in teaching, and was named the Hazy Family University Fellow in Undergraduate Education and Leland & Edith Smith Professor of Music.

Composition
From the “Program Notes” portion of the score:

When Steve Schick asked me for a new work to be commissioned by the Banff Centre for the Roots and Rhizomes Percussion Residency I worried “What kind of percussion piece do you write for a percussionist who has done everything?” I’m still not sure what the proper answer is to this question. But along the way I thought about putting ontological pressure on the boundary conditions of the medium itself; I considered the idea of paradoxically expanding Steve’s seemingly comprehensive domain of musical experience through focused constraints; and I gravitated, perhaps habitually, toward a kind of super-disciplined absurdity—as if invoking a parallel world whose eccentric culture is governed by elaborate rules perceived but not understood. In short, I managed to compose Straitjacket, a provisional answer of sorts.

Straitjacket, privately subtitled “four restraint systems for solo percussion and percussion quartet,” intersects conceptually with formal techniques employed by the French literary group Oulipo: the palindrome, the isopangram, the lipogram, and the taquinoid.

The following information on each movement is taken directly from the score.

Movement I—Palindrome
The palindrome reads the same forward and backward, as in “A man, a plan, a canal—Panama.” The first movement is scored for six drum sets played in unison and with excruciating fastidiousness (despite a profusion of metric modulations and abundant coordination challenges for the limbs), the quartet playing matched kits consisting of kick drum, snare, and hi-hat, the soloist playing two analogous kits with substitute timbres of the player’s choice. At the epicenter of the piece—its palindromic mirror—the soloist switches kits.

This palindrome, however, is a bit irregular. The first side is built up using a technique accurately, if pretentiously, dubbed sequential metamorphosis censorship. The scheme is mind-numbingly elaborate, but the gist is that the musical narrative gradually increases and decreases the degree to which adjacent musical
materials are transformed. For example, the second measure is a clear modification of the first measure; however, the third measure is a bit more distant from the second, as if an intermediary transformative step were missing; and so on. The conceptual gap widens and narrows, producing moments of logical consequence as well as profoundly incongruous ones.

But when this sequence folds back on itself, only some of the prior measures are sounded. New measures appear instead (algorithmically selected among those unsounded, intermediary bits that conceptually bridged the earlier gaps). At the same time there exist other composed intermediary bits that are never sounded on either side of the mirror. Perhaps it is clearer to imagine that my tasks is to first compose a number series and its retrograde: 12345 – 54321. But then the palindrome is distilled: 125–541. As such, certain bits (1, 5) are heard in both directions; certain bits (2) are heard only forward; certain bits (4) are heard only in reverse; and certain bits (3) exist conceptually, but are never sounded. Consequently, discursive gaps of varying size abound, from the most gently evolving discourse to the most fractured and surreal.

Movement II—Isopangram
A pangram uses every letter in the alphabet at least once, as in “A quick brown fox jumps over the lazy brown dog.” Whereas this 38-character phrase repeats some letters, an isopangram uses each letter in the alphabet once and only once.

The second movement of Straitjacket replaces the notional alphabet with a lexicon of 118 hand gestures, a kind of index in which each gesture is performed by the soloist once and only once. (That is, material is invented and then explicated only one time, without the tedium of development.) These silent actions are precisely described in the score (each with a corresponding paragraph of detailed instructions in an eleven-page appendix) and arrayed in a carefully specified rhythm. Although silent, they are accompanied by a quartet of “foley artists” who give voice to the gestures through a battery of instrumental timbres, each heard exactly twice.

Movement III—Lipogram
In opposition to univocalism—in which a text is written with just one vowel, such as Georges Perec’s What a Man!, a short story using only the vowel “A”—the lipogram avoids a particular letter. The most arresting example is Perec’s astonishing novel La Disparition that manages to avoid the letter “E” throughout its several hundred pages (and whose translation into English by Gilbert Adair—A Void—is perhaps an even more remarkable feat). More concisely, Harry Matthews explains that the phrase “To be or not to be, that is the question” becomes, by way of lipogram in A, “To be or not to be, this is the question;” by way of lipogram in E it becomes “Survival or oblivion: that is our quandary;” and by way of lipogram in T it becomes “Being or non-being, such is my dilemma.”

To me the idea of avoidance conjured a corresponding musical act of removal. Hence, in the third movement the ensemble plays a single vibraphone, the quartet articulating unison chords and the soloist muting particular bars in an act of sonic elimination.

Movement IV—Taquinoid
A representational painting in the shape of a square, if cut into a matrix of smaller squares and reassembled in random order, would likely result in a jumbled meaning. But a taquinoid works in any ordering because each piece has a visual narrative that makes sense when extended to any adjacent neighbor.

In movement IV five pictures are drawn by the ensemble, their scrawling amplified by contact microphones attached to the easels. A visual continuity appears horizontally across the pictures (and if they were placed in a vertical column). Admittedly, the pictures are not optimized for just any order. However, a new accord emerges across all five pictures: the players have arrived at their unique pictures through a unison rhythm, a harmonized quantity (but not comportment) of visual strokes and dots.

* * *

Why must these program notes be so verbose, loquacious, effusive, and prolix? And why even tease the audience with program notes when they can’t hear any of this blather in the music? Paper or plastic?

These are good questions, an occasion to shift toward a more essential if prosaic matter: the composer wishes to express his deepest gratitude to Steven Schick for requesting, with characteristic verve and nerve, yet another new piece—the latest project over a multi-decade span of wonderfully collaborative and endlessly revitalizing musical high jinx; to Barry Shiffman for the invitation to Banff and the unwavering courage and intelligence to indulge such a fine summit of talented, forward-thinking, and passionate percussion wackos; to the Banff Centre for their interminable support, uncommon competence, and unquestioning empathy; and to the intrepid players of Straitjacket who have lent their enthusiastic moxie and assiduous attention to the enterprise of realizing idiosyncratic art.

PS—can a program note have a post-script?: If you should demand a metric by which to evaluate my music, the works always aspire to engender two questions—“What the hell was that?” and “Can I hear more?”

All of the above text was taken from the “Program Notes” portion of the score.
Instrument Needs, Performance Notes, and Other Considerations

In Figure 1 below, Applebaum suggests the layout below for setup purposes.

**Stage Layout (Movements I-IV):**

The easels are brought onstage immediately prior to their use.

The vibraphone is brought to the center of the stage immediately prior to its use.

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**Movement I. Palindrome**

The ensemble performs in unison. The four quartet percussionists play matching (or evenly mismatched) drum sets, each consisting of a kick drum, snare drum, and hi-hat.1 During measures 1-33, the soloist plays one set of contrasting timbres of his or her choice, also in unison; these are ergonomically arranged as a corresponding drum kit, likely using conventional drum set hardware. During measures 34-66, the soloist plays a second set of contrasting timbres, similarly arranged. The figure below (Figure 2) displays a legend of the notation found in the first movement.

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**Movement II. Isopangram**

The soloist is seated on a chair at center stage, well-lit (by a spotlight, if possible), and flanked on both sides by pairs of percussionists playing a large battery of small percussion noises. The soloist makes various choreographed hand gestures. A detailed description of the gestures appears in an appendix to the score. Below is a list of the instruments and objects needed by each percussionist.

**Percussion One**
- Manual typewriter^2
- Slapstick
- Shaker
- Mortar & pestle
- Claves
- Wood saw and board
- Large book
- Electric pencil sharpener & pencil
- Ceramic mug (into which several large coins are dropped)
- Whirlygig (corrugated plastic tube whirled overhead)
- Paper for tearing

**Percussion Two**
- Roll of noisy duct tape
- Heavy Scissors
- Large metal can and marble
- Large magazine (whose pages are turned)
- Bubble wrap^3
- Flexitone
- Can of compressed air
- Finger cymbals (heavy Tibetan on string)
- Branches to be broken (ossia: dry spaghetti)
- Length of heavy chain
- Audubon bird call (red squeaker with rotating key)
- Balloon
- Percussion Two also makes a loud kissing sound

**Percussion Three**
- Tambourine (mounted, with jangles)
- Medium or large tom-tom (prepared with a length of small chain)
- Reception desk bell
- Styrofoam (to be massaged)
- Sizzle cymbal
- Splash cymbal
- Steel bowl, partly filled with water to be swirled
- Bass drum

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1. The final instrumentation of this movement will involve six “drum sets”.
2. Some typewriters require electricity. Thus, an extension cord and a nearby power outlet need to be considered.
3. The bubble wrap is to be stepped on.

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Figure 1. Straitjacket, 2009. Used with permission.

Figure 2. Straitjacket, 2009. Used with permission.
Two bricks to be rubbed together
Tam-tam
Triangle
Dangling plastic (freezer) bag
Percussion Three also makes loud tongue clicks
Thundersheet
Percussion Three requires a friction mallet

**Percussion Four**
Castañets
Cow bell
Triangle
Two metal pipes
Woodblock
Cardboard box
Guiro
Gong
Low almglocke
High and low glass bottles
Ratchet
Aluminum cans (to be crushed with the foot)
Pie pan
Aluminum foil, suspended
Soup can (or large metal container)

Notes:
- Repeated items (e.g. shakers, triangles) should have unique sounds.
- The pitch of the almglocke and gong should not be in an octave, perfect fifth, or perfect fourth relationship
- The players will also clap and rub their hands and exclaim numbers (measures 13-18).
- The paper can be torn (Percussion One) by only one hand by taping one edge of the paper to the lip of a music stand, letting it dangle below, and pre-tearing (starting) strips which can be quickly grasped and torn in a downward motion.

**Movement III. Lipogram**

Figure 3. Straitjacket, 2009. Used with permission.

The quartet, with matched mallets, play loud unison chords from all four corners of the vibraphone.4 The soloist, depressing the sustain pedal for each articulation, silences many of the pitches – in the given order – by ritualistically muting them with the fingertips. At the end of each passage, the given notes will remain vibrating. The rhythm of the muting – as well as the overall duration of each passage – is to be improvised by the soloist, taking care to complete the muting before the final notes have decayed, especially when higher (and thus faster decaying) pitches are involved.

The movement consists of 33 passages, numbered only for reference. In performance, #1 must be played first, and #33 (marked “coda”) must be played last. However, passages #2 through #32 may be played in any order. Furthermore, any number of passages may be omitted (from a particular performance and only in exceptional cases will all 33 passages be played). The decision regarding omitted passages and their order may be made according to an individual or group aesthetic, or according to random procedures; it may be made long before the performance or just prior; and the players may or may not choose to observe the results before taking the stage (e.g. the movement may be sight-read).

Figure 4. Straitjacket, 2009. Used with permission.5

The passages appear in the bound score. A set of single-sided, loose leaves printed on heavier card stock should be used in concert, stacked on a single music stand with one player sliding pages form right to left during the soloist’s activities, thereby revealing the next chord to be articulated on each subsequent page.

Figure 3 above indicates the corner of the vibraphone from which each quartet player performs. However, the player numbers need not remain consistent among movements. For example, the percussionist performing the part of Player 4 during Isopangram may perform the part of Player 1, 2, 3, or 4 of Lipogram.

The rotors may be turned off for the entire movement (in which case they should be set in the closed position for maximum resonance), or turned on for the entire movement. Prior to the first passage (#1) the soloist may elect to play the vibraphone’s

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4. For this movement, only one vibraphone is needed. The soloist will stand where he/she would typically stand while playing the vibraphone. The other four percussionists are stationed at each corner, as in Figure 2.

5. Movement III. Lipogram, passage #5.
highest Eb with a bow, \(mf\) and with the sustain pedal depressed; the sustain pedal should remain depressed through the completion of passage #1.

**Movement IV. Taquinoid**

Five easels are quickly brought out and placed in a line across the front of the stage.\(^6\) On each easel is a large piece of paper, affixed (with tape or a large tension clip at the top) to thin sheets of plywood, and visible to the audience. As the players draw on their sheets of paper, the sounds of the their thick charcoal pencils (or markers) are amplified by piezo contact pick-ups – one per easel and taped to the back of the boards in order to get a vivid “inside-the-sound” explosion of pencil moving on paper. Although the five artists scratch and jab in rhythmic unison, they render unique pictures, as given in the score.

The score is read from left to right (See Figure 5 for an example of the first two measures). Each successive box represents one or more pictorial additions that are performed in the given rhythm. Most boxes correspond to one musical measure; however, some boxes (#3, #9, #10, and #12) correspond to two measures. Some boxes necessitate only one illustrative action; others necessitate as many as five actions. The actions are numbered – in both the box and under the rhythmic notation – in the order performed, starting with the number “1”. The exception is the final measure which starts with the number “2” in order to consistently refer to a figure referenced in the prior measure.

**Figure 5. Straitjacket, 2009. Used by permission.**

Dots are made with a single jabbing gesture (and produce a single sound). Large markers may produce a satisfactory large dot; however, particularly if pencils are used, the dot may be elaborated as a short line (again the product of only one sonic articulation).

Rapid, unmeasured tremolandi (boxes #5, #8, #9, #17, and #18) correspond to rapid reciprocation of the marker or pencil, thereby producing filled (shaded) areas. Players may not completely fill an area within the given time. However, during the final two measures the various areas are refilled, thereby allowing more complete darkening.

By contrast, box #12 calls for some fifty staccato points (dots), thereby producing a kind of grayscale fill.

The players should attempt to reproduce the pictures as given. However, it must be acknowledged that the players’ versions—made in the heat of performance and without the benefit of circle templates or straightedges—will be charmingly imprecise.

From the audience’s perspective, the final product should approximate the final page in the score (see Figure 6), complete with its sense of horizontal continuity. (The astute observer will also note various implied vertical continuities.) If the work is not memorized, music stands may be located between the easels; these should be quickly removed at the conclusion so that the easels can be slid together, their immediate adjacency more clearly displaying the visual continuity among the pictures – rendered as panels of a “quintych.” An alternative is to reduce the score further and tape it to artist palettes held by each player. (In any case, players may choose to hold a small summary picture in one hand during the piece, thereby reminding them of the final goal.)

**Figure 6. Straitjacket, 2009. Used with permission.**

Given the player numbering in Figure 1, the players will need to swap pictures at the conclusion in order to produce the correct ordering of the “quintych”: players 1 and 4 swapping pictures, and players 2 and 3 swapping pictures. A completely acceptable alternative is to simply reassign the percussion parts.

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\(^6\) From personal experience, I have found that placing these easels in a manner that allows them to be “pre-set” before the performance is ideal. For instance, if this piece is performed on a raised staging area, the easels can be stationed at the foot of the stage, below stage level.
Technical Considerations

Movement I. Palindrome
A moderate amount of skill in navigating a multiple percussion setup is required. There are a vast amount of metric modulations, 17 to be exact. Advanced tuplet figures are frequently found, along with artificial rhythms (5:4). Rhythmically speaking, this is by far the most difficult movement.

Movement II. Isopangram
Careful preparation of this movement is required (by the four percussionists turned foley artists) in an effort to move from instrument to instrument without the feeling of chaos, especially as each percussionist has a vast array of instruments. The percussionists will want to ensure that each sound occurs precisely with the gesture it corresponds to. Furthermore, the soloist will want to ensure consistent performances of this movement in an effort to aid the cohesion of the gestures with the sounds/noises.

Movement III. Lipogram
The most prevalent issue in this movement of Straitjacket is getting all four percussionists to play each chord precisely together. I have found it beneficial to have one of the four percussionists show a quick one- or two-count preparatory beat to the other three percussionists. My recommendation is that this person be either Percussion Two or Percussion Three with the main reason of being able to hide these preparatory gestures from the audience. It is also recommended that Percussion Two and Percussion Three take a small step (or perhaps slightly lean) out of the way so that they audience may see the soloist more clearly.

Movement IV. Taquinoid
When learning this movement on an individual basis, I found it beneficial from an expense standpoint as well as a convenience standpoint, to practice with a pencil on notebook paper. However, when the player begins to rehearse with the other players on the full-size easels and large papers (or poster boards), scale of the drawing must come into consideration. The ensemble will also need to discuss the angle of the marker, if it is a chisel-edge type of marker, such as a Sharpie Magnum. Additionally the ensemble will want to ensure that the edges of the shapes that correspond to shapes on other boards are cohesively interpreted. (e.g. the large, thick rectangle that exists on the soloist’s board and Percussion Three’s board. Take into careful consideration the thickness of the shape, the location of the dots, etc. so that it appears as a mirror image.)

Publishing
Straitjacket is self-published by Mark Applebaum.
(www.markapplebaum.com)
Streams
Warren Benson
by James Campbell

Composer
The distinguished composer Warren Benson (1924-2005) is best known for his innovative and expressive music for wind ensemble and his finely wrought song cycles. With such striking works as The Leaves Are Falling (1964), The Solitary Dancer (1966), The Passing Bell (1974) and Symphony II-Lost Songs (1983), Benson created compositions for band and wind ensemble that are masterworks in the repertoire and acclaimed as “among the most important of this century” (United States Marine Band, Bicentennial Collection). His fondness for contemporary poetry led him to write a large body of solo vocal music, much of it for voices with instruments. Benson set to music the poetry of many recognized poets including Tennessee Williams, Kenneth Patchen, May Swenson, Earle Birney, Octavio Paz, and perhaps most memorably, Louise Bogan (Five Lyrics of Louise Bogan [1977], for mezzo soprano and flute), along with Shadow Wind (1968; revised 1992/93), also a masterpiece in its revised version for mezzo-soprano and wind ensemble.

From his early days as a percussionist and timpanist for the Detroit Symphony, Benson was captivated by the variety of sounds percussion instruments can produce and used these in compositions for winds ensemble and a wide variety of music for chamber ensembles. His catalog includes over 150 compositions touching on almost all significant genres of music. His music has been performed in more than 50 countries throughout the world and some 30 works have been recorded.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Benson received four Fulbright grants, and was the author and director of the first pilot project of the Ford Foundation’s Contemporary Music Project, whose aim was to create new music for schools. He was also honored with a John Simon Guggenheim Composer Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts composer commissions and the Diploma de Honor from the Republic of Argentina. He held three residencies at the MacDowell Colony, was elected to the National Band Association Academy of Wind and Percussion Arts in 1988, and the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame in 2003. Benson was also a founding member of the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles.

Warren Benson was Professor of Percussion and Composition for fourteen years at Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York. In 1967 he became Professor of Composition at the Eastman School of Music, and was named Kilbourn Distinguished Professor and University Mentor. From 1986–88, he served as Meadows Distinguished Visiting Professor of Composition at Southern Methodist University. He then returned to Eastman where he taught until his retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1993.1

Composition
Warren Benson wrote Streams in 1964 with the first performance given by the Ithaca College Percussion Ensemble, Terry Hulick, conductor, who commissioned it as well.

Author Alan D. Wagner interviewed Warren Benson in his book “A Bio-Bibliography of Composer Warren Benson” and shed some light on the vision for Streams. The composition is dedicated to Canadian poet Earle Birney whose ideas about poetry, together with “the kind of things like jet streams and other kinds of streams and layers of things—more hidden than real” inspired the work.2 The subtle work mostly casts a range of dynamics from piano to niente during its duration of six minutes.

Historical Perspective
The first wave of music for percussion ensemble began in 1930 with Roldan’s Ritmicas No. 5 (son) and No. 6 (rhumba) and with Varese’s landmark work Ionisation (1931).

Paul Price arrives at the University of Illinois in 1949 and establishes the first accredited college percussion ensemble course. Perhaps this marks the start of the second wave of percussion ensemble literature. Since there was a need for new literature, Price asked his students to compose for the percussion ensemble. Michael Colgrass was a student at the University of Illinois, during Price’s tenure, and his Three Brothers was written for this group in 1951.

1. http://www.warrenbenson.com
There are several other important percussion works written in 1964 as well:

- **Bombardments No.2**, by Robert Moran (b. 1937). A graphic notation score for 1 – 5 players.
- **Concert for Percussion** by George Andrix (b. 1932). A concert-length work for 12 players written for Terry Hulick and the Ithaca College Percussion Ensemble.
- **The King of Denmark** by Morton Feldman (1926-1987). The percussion solo is a very short work for Feldman, lasting only six minutes. This study of instrumental color is notated graphically with numbers, letters and symbols representing instruments and articulations. Like Streams, The King of Denmark remains very quiet throughout.

**Technical Considerations**

This work demands extreme concentration from the seven members of the ensemble because it is extremely slow, needs a delicate touch, and often has rhythmic motives distributed in a hocket technique or in a sequential fashion. Benson often cautioned conductors and ensembles to project the soft sounds to the back of the concert hall, when performing Streams.

The work is marked “Very slowly” with the half note at 32 bpm. The work opens in 3/2 meter and I suggest conducting this section in a sub-divided 3, with 6 beats per measure. You can conduct the start of measure 26 as a quarter-note triplet to give clarity to the entrance in the vibes, marimba, and bells. Start conducting the half-note as the beat in measure 28. Measure 38 should be subdivided to give 8 beats in the bar to provide clarity to the staggered entrances. You can stay with half-notes as your pulse until you get to measures 46–48 (in 6), and again in measure 51 (also in 6).

Vocalization is also required for the players and adds an unusual ethereal quality when scored with the soft percussion. Performers should take in enough air to make these effects last; think like a low brass player or singer and fill your lungs from the bottom – up. Players are asked to ‘hum’ random pitches as well as matching pitch with a keyboard instrument. I consulted vocal colleagues to coach my group and you may find it helpful to do the same. It was suggested that the players produce the ‘hum’ by closing the lips and keeping open space in the mouth. Take in air through the nose and hum the consonant “N”.

There are two instances where players are asked to create a whisper. Think of pronouncing “show”, like you are blowing out a candle. Maintain the energy (air) as you glissando.

Player 4 uses a slide whistle. I suggest using the most professional model you can find. Some of the toy-store-variety whistles will not produce the proper tone or pitch range at the soft dynamic levels required.

I often try to find custom sounds for instruments like the sleigh bells. Consider substituting a more exotic bell cluster for the generic sound of standard sleigh bells. A trip to the gift shop or craft store may yield some interesting sounds for you to string together.

Players should notate the aggregate rhythms in their parts at measures 25, 38, and 51; so they know their place in the sequence of the composite rhythm. I suggest that in each of these sections, each player utilizes a fluid, full stroke to help with touch and timing; adding a sort of visual stream to the interpretation as well.

At measure 16 there is an effect of overlapping suspended cymbals. Try to create a ‘waterfall effect’ by making the players aware of the delicate crescendo/decrescendo required and maintain balance and blend.

**Stylistic Considerations**

The opening ‘A’ section features layers of dissonant intervals (sevenths and ninths) produced by sustained rolls on keyboard instruments and timpani. The distinct colors of sustained sleigh bells, triangle, and slide whistle provide contrast as they momentarily rise above the texture and then disappear. This section continues as a cascading wave of cymbals melts into the first vocalization that leads to what might be considered an arrival point with the subtle, unison attack at measure 24. The most active rhythm, found so far, is created with scraped cymbals. These fade as the timpani motive hints at the next section which begins at measure 28.

The ‘B’ section begins with a steady pulse provided by the vibraphone. The rest of the sonic material is more vocalization and the use of silence. This section ends with another active arrival point of delicate brush work on the cymbals.

The ‘A’ section returns with the vibraphone in measure 39. The rhythmic gestures in the tambourine, triangle, and sleigh bells provide a motivic dialogue leading to the short return of the vibraphone pulse and pitch from the ‘B’ section. The work slowly fades into silence.
Equipment Needs

Percussion 1
- Vibraphone
- Suspended Cymbal 1

Percussion 2
- Marimba [4 octave, C-C]
- Suspended Cymbal 2

Percussion 3
- Bells
- Suspended Cymbal 3

Percussion 4
- Slide Whistle
- Suspended Cymbal 4

Percussion 5
- Small Triangle
- Tambourine
- Suspended Cymbal 5

Percussion 6
- Suspended Sleigh Bells
- Suspended Cymbal 6
- Large Tam-tam

Percussion 7
- Timpani [4 standard sizes]

Instruments
The six suspended cymbals should be graduated in pitch from highest (1) to lowest (6).

Mallets
Use your imagination and creativity in choosing implements. Although Benson makes some specific requests, the options available to us in the 21st century are far greater than in 1964. I generally try to find mallets that have the least contact sound for this work. The most difficult sound to pull off is the use of brushes by the timpanist. Without calf heads, you need to find a way to effectively interpret the brush wipe at measure 39. I’ve had luck placing a thin sheet of paper on the head and playing the brush on top of that. Triangle beaters or cymbal rakes can be substituted for the use of a nail on cymbal scrapes.

Suggested Listening
Although Streams has been commercially recorded by a few academic ensembles, these may be no longer available. You might be more inspired by listening to the works of Morton Feldman or John Luther Adams to fine tune your concepts of soft and slow.

Publisher
Streams is published by E. B. Marks Music Co., distributed by Hal Leonard Corp.
Composer
Caroline Adelaide Shaw is a New York-based musician. She is the youngest ever winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Music, for her enigmatic composition Partita for 8 Voices. Her career defies categorization—she performs as a violin soloist, chamber musician, and as a vocalist in the Grammy-winning ensemble Roomful of Teeth. Recent commissions include works for Carnegie Hall, the Guggenheim Museum, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra with Jonathan Biss, and mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter. She also frequently collaborates with Kanye West. Currently a doctoral candidate at Princeton, Caroline also studied at Rice and Yale. Caroline loves the color yellow, otters, Beethoven opus 74, Mozart opera, the smell of rosemary, and the sound of a janky mandolin. (from www.carolineshaw.com)

Composition
The following can be found at www.carolineshaw.com.

Why “Taxidermy”? I just find the word strangely compelling, and it evokes something grand, awkward, epic, silent, funny, and just a bit creepy — all characteristics of this piece, in a way. The repeated phrase toward the end (“the detail of the pattern is movement”) is a little concept I love trying (and failing) to imagine. It comes from T.S. Eliot’s beautiful and perplexing Burnt Norton (from the Four Quartets), and I’ve used it before in other work — as a kind of whimsical existentialist mantra.

When I emailed her to gather further information about influences behind the piece, this was her response:

“I’ve been meaning to do a better program note one of these days. The one I’ve used til now is here <http://caroline-shaw-editions.myshopify.com/products/taxidermy>. Unintentionally, but very meaningfully, I think. When I was writing Taxidermy, I was thinking of these light, slightly chaotic textures (like the flower pots in the beginning) yielding to something very formal, grand, and solid (like the vibe/marimba chords). And, for what it’s worth, I was also kind of influenced by the musician St. Vincent — especially her very strange video https://vimeo.com/36052867 directed by Hiro Murai. Ha, I’m not sure I’d put that in a program note! It’s an odd aesthetic relationship. Something to do with museums, taxidermy, formality, and the beauty of odd things.

I also love the gently, everyday, simple nature of clay flower pots. The sound of them, but also their unassuming simplicity.”

The “strange video” Shaw refers to here is a music video for a song called Cheerleader by St. Vincent.

Instrument Needs and Other Considerations
The parts are as assigned: Adam, Eric, Jason, and Josh. These names refer to the ensemble Sō Percussion, for whom this piece was written (Eric Cha-Beach, Josh Quillen, Adam Sliwinski, and Jason Treuting).

Figure 1. Taxidermy, 2012. Used by permission.

The total instrumentation need can be found in Figure 1 (1 marimba, 1 vibraphone, and a total of 12 flower pots.)

The selection of the flowerpots is an important factor when programming this piece. Clay flowerpots are mentioned in the email correspondence from Shaw. However, that specification is not mentioned on her website or on the score. That being said, ceramic flowerpots (with somewhat of a glossy coating) will be more durable and will produce a more desired resonance. The only negative drawback to the ceramic flowerpots is the fact that they are almost always more expensive than their clay counterparts.

The vibraphone used can be a standard “F to F” or 3-octave vibraphone. The lowest note played on the marimba is an Eb on the ledger line below the bass clef, meaning that a 5-octave marimba is required. In terms of the flowerpots, no pitches are
specifically called for. It is my personal opinion that the resonance is going to be the biggest factor in choosing flowerpots. After 12 flowerpots are secured, I suggest experimenting with different combinations to find chords or tone clusters that are desirable. Figure 2 below shows how the piece begins.

Figure 2. Taxidermy, 2012. Used by permission.

After a few repetitions of this first measure, the person playing Eric’s part has the figure in the illustration below. (See Figure 3)

Figure 3. Taxidermy, 2012. Used by permission.

This “ricochet” is accomplished most easily by using a rat-tan mallet that strikes the lip of the flowerpot and is allowed to bounce multiple times, as in an open “buzz” or “multiple bounce” roll.

This piece utilizes a great amount of space between articulations at times, which requires a mature approach and a high level of ensemble awareness and communication. There are numerous times within Taxidermy when different ensemble members will need to cue attacks, repeats, etc. It is a good idea to set up the instruments in a way so that each of the 4 members can see each other at all times, while still allowing the audience to see everything that is happening. A “U” shape or horseshoe shape works quite well (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Taxidermy, 2012. Used by permission.

Performance Tips
The piece comes as a score only, without separate parts. Given the nature of how the piece is written and the ensemble awareness it demands, playing from individual parts (in my opinion) would be more difficult, unnecessarily risky, and possibly detrimental to the overall effect. My recommendation is that the piece (once purchased) should be copied for each player. Then, each player can make his or her own poster board for easier page turns (9 pages total).

From a technical standpoint, the biggest challenge in the piece is obtaining the coordination needed in being able to play 16th notes and 8th notes while speaking. Furthermore, the ensemble will want to avoid two main problems. 1) The spoken text causing the playing on vibraphone, marimba, and/or flowerpots to be inaccurate or dynamically imbalanced or 2) the rhythms being played on vibraphone, marimba, and/or flowerpots causing the spoken text to sound erratic. I believe a desired sound for the text should be similar to that of the flowerpots – simple, yet clear.

Another thing to consider when rehearsing this piece is how well the average human voice blends with the low register of the marimba and the texture of the flowerpots. For this reason, I found it to be paramount to achieve clarity without excessive volume. Think of how one would read poetry to an audience of one to four people in a quiet room – with intent and purpose, but without demand or aggression.

The spoken text contains sentence fragments that overlap at times. It is important to realize that these vocal parts must be balanced so that no one person is “dominating” the conversation. In Figure 5, you will see how the spoken text is somewhat staggered. The desired effect here is a calm, but deliberate one, without the feeling of “rushing” through the text.

Figure 5. Taxidermy, 2012. Used by permission.

For reference, the different combinations of texts recited in the piece are:

Publishing and Purchasing
For scores of her work, visit https://caroline-shaw-editions.myshopify.com.
Composer
John Cage (1912–1992) was one of the most influential composers of the twentieth century. He brought percussion instruments out of supportive roles in orchestras and bands and encouraged their independence within solo and chamber music. Following the example of the Italian Futurist composers Luigi Russolo, Francesco Balilla Pratella, and others, he ceased accepting the confines of harmony and melody and focused instead on rhythm and timbre. With these ideas at his compositional core, he liberated music from its common role of expressing an idea or emotion and instead let sounds speak for themselves. He and his colleagues on the Pacific Coast, including Lou Harrison, Henry Cowell, Johanna Beyer, and Gerald Strang, wrote many of the first percussion ensemble works and often performed them themselves, as many professional percussionists were not willing or able to do so at the time.

Below are some characteristic aspects of Cage's music:

- Use of instruments from around the world
- Use of found object percussion instruments (e.g. tin cans, pots, etc.)
- Use of industrial objects as instruments (e.g. spring coils, brake drums, etc.)
- Extended techniques and other alterations to existing instruments, some created by Cage
- Incorporation of “silence” and ambient noise as necessary parts of the composition
- Mathematical rhythmic structures
- Aleatoric (also called “chance”) music, with a wide variety of defined parameters or lack thereof

These characteristics were particularly influential on other West Coast composers of the 1930s–1950s and have since become common aspects of today's percussion music. Cage's persistence and dedication to a new, broader definition of music encouraged the creativity and development of many composers of his era and pushed percussion to evolve to its current state, while leaving room for the continuous evolution of music and other art forms.

Historical Perspective
John Cage composed twelve works for percussion ensemble between 1935 and 1943. These pieces, and the series of concerts he and his colleagues performed in the intervening time, are largely responsible for the growth of the percussion ensemble in the early twentieth century. His Constructions were composed from 1939-42 while Cage was working at the Cornish School of the Arts in Seattle, Washington. “First Construction (in Metal)” (1939) is a sextet (plus an assistant for the prepared piano player), and both “Second Construction” (1940) and “Third Construction” (1941) are quartets.

Composition
“Third Construction” was premiered in May 1941 in San Francisco and performed by an ensemble of non-percussionists, including John Cage’s wife, Xenia. The composition remained mostly unnoticed for the next thirty years, until the Blackearth Percussion Group recorded the work in the mid-1970s. Bob Becker, a member of Nexus Percussion and now an internationally renowned percussionist, discovered the recording by accident and soon insisted that Nexus learn the work. Nexus soon performed “Third Construction” and established a relationship with John Cage, performing many of his works over the next several decades. Now considered by many to be one of the world’s most successful and long-running percussion ensembles, Nexus has played a key role in the perpetuation and performance practice of John Cage’s works for percussion.

“Third Construction” exhibits at least three of the Cage-ian characteristics mentioned above: world instruments, found objects, and a mathematical rhythmic structure. The instruments are discussed below in the “Equipment Needed” section. The rhythmic structure is an example of Cage’s “square root formula,” in which the number of sections is equal to the number of measures in each of those sections. “Third Construction” consists of twenty-four sections, each with twenty-four measures that are denoted by the rehearsal letters in the score. The phrases within these sections are organized by rotations of this series of numbers: [2,8,2,4,5,3]. Each player’s phrases come in groups of these sizes, but no two players use the same order. The phrase groupings are shown below:

player 4: [8,2,4,5,3,2],
player 1: [2,8,2,4,5,3],
player 3: [3,2,8,2,4,5],
player 2: [5,3,2,8,2,4].

The work is approximately thirteen minutes long and is appropriate for intermediate to advanced college level players.
Stylistic Considerations

Though the score does not contain many specific directions, the ones that are given are quite important to follow. Dynamics highlight the contrast between dense, chaotic sections (e.g. B–D, P–Q) and quiet, less energetic sections (e.g. E–stringendo, J–L) and should be adhered to meticulously.

The only tempo given numerically is at the opening: half note = 108 bpm. This is the typical performance tempo. None of the tempo changes during the piece are drastic; all remain in the context of that initial tempo. Letter H should be noticeably quicker than before but should not be frantic. The accelerando that begins at letter W continues through the end of the piece, which is the peak of a simultaneous accelerando and crescendo.

It is important that players know the rhythmic structure, especially as there is no conductor to guide them through the form. Players should examine points where their phrases begin or end with others’. These occurrences are often at double barlines, which will be a more obvious point of emphasis, but may also occur elsewhere.

One change, made first by Nexus Percussion, has become common for some performing ensembles: a few pitch bends in Player III’s conch shell part. On long notes, the player will bend the pitch of the conch shell slightly down and then back up as he crescendos. This is not indicated in the score and is not necessary, but has become performance practice over the past several years.

Technical Considerations

Students will need to understand odd note groupings such as quintuplets and septuplets, and be able to execute those rhythms both individually and with one or more other players.

At times, the density of the polyrhythms in “Third Construction” can be overwhelming. Each player must be confident in his/her own part AND able to understand what others are playing without being influenced by contrasting rhythms in other parts.

Equipment Needs and Other Instrument Tips

Unlike the other two Constructions, “Third Construction” does not require a piano, so it is a bit less logistically challenging. The instruments required are listed below, along with some suggested substitutes beneath each part. Each player has the following general instruments plus some more specific items: five graduated tin cans, three graduated drums, a clave, and a rattle of some sort (some of the rattles are specified in the score, but substitutions are acceptable). Graduated congas, bongos, and toms are common. Consider how each players’ drums and cans relate to each other. Whose should be highest, lowest, etc.? There are no indications about this in the score.

Player I: Northwest Indian rattle, 5 graduated tin cans, 3 graduated drums, claves, large Chinese cymbal (suspended), maracas, teponaxtle

* A teponaxtle is a log drum. Two pitches are required. It is often played with a medium rubber mallet.

*2 m. before letter H, the maracas are to be muted and played on the drum. Simply use the first finger to mute them and then strike the drum normally.

Player II: 3 graduated drums, 5 graduated tin cans, claves, 2 cowbells, Indo-Chinese rattle (wooden, with many separate chambers), lion’s roar

*Cowbells should be fairly resonant. Consider mounting them on a cymbal stand if necessary to achieve the best sound. Almglocken are also acceptable.

Player III: 3 graduated drums, tambourine, 5 graduated tin cans, quijada, claves, cricket callers (split bamboo), conch shell

*A traditional quijada is a donkey jawbone with slightly loose teeth. The teeth rattle when the jawbone is tapped against your hand. Today, a vibraslap is often substituted for a quijada. However, the quijada notes here are often short, which tends to be easier to accomplish with a traditional instrument (they can be purchased from many large percussion vendors such as Steve Weiss Music). If that is not feasible, the player may need to mute the vibraslap by clapping the rod more tightly or muting the soundbox after playing.

* Consider tambourine choice: your top orchestral tambourine may not fit the sound world here.

*Note the conch shell part: it is quite well-known in this piece and has a prominent voice. A strong sound is necessary!

*Two cricket callers are required (one high, one low), and they must be sustained. Thus, the small box-shaped crickets are not a good instrument here. Split bamboo cricket callers make a buzzing sound that can be sustained by repeatedly striking them on your leg.

Player IV: Tin can with tacks, 5 graduated tin cans, claves, maracas, 3 graduated drums, wooden ratchet, bass drum roar

*Bass drum roar is simply a lion’s roar in a low drum. A low tom or kick drum is acceptable if a concert bass drum is not feasible.

It is possible to play the claves traditionally, but the speed required makes this method fairly difficult. Often, players build clave holders so that the clave is suspended and can be played with both hands, using a hard plastic or acrylic mallet (see image below).
Very few implements are indicated. One common implement for the tin cans is the rattan shaft of any mallet that must be used elsewhere in the piece. Adhere to the indications that are present, but otherwise, focus on teaching students how to search for the sound they want and use the appropriate implement to achieve it. There is no “one” correct instrumentation or sound for “Third Construction.” This piece is a good opportunity to get students thinking seriously about their instrument choices and to emphasize Cage’s concern with timbre as a historical reinforcement of the perspective they should adopt when choosing their instruments.

Reference Recordings and Additional Resources:
Over the past six years, Mode Records has been releasing a four-volume collection entitled John Cage: The Works for Percussion. All four volumes are performed by internationally renowned American ensembles and soloists and are available for purchase.

Amadinda, Nexus Percussion, and Sō Percussion all have excellent recordings of “Third Construction” on YouTube. In addition to their full performance, Sō Percussion also has an educational series about “Third Construction,” including analyses of each part, discussions about instrument choices, and examples of helpful rehearsal techniques.

For more information about John Cage and his other works, I recommend searching the Percussive Arts Society’s Publication Archive. A PAS membership is required to access this resource. For the general public, there are numerous books on Cage and his music, as well as his own writings. A particularly helpful resource for understanding Cage’s musical and compositional philosophies is his short essay, “The Future of Music – Credo.” This resource is publicly available in print and online.

There are also a few apps, mainly for the iPhone, that provide entertaining ways to learn about John Cage’s music. The three most popular are Third Coast Percussion: John Cage, and the Prepared Piano and 4’33” apps, released by the John Cage Trust.

Publisher

The score and parts must usually be purchased separately.
Threads
Paul Lansky
by Jeremy Maytum

Paul Lansky (b.1944)

Threads (2005)
Publisher: Carl Fischer
Duration: 30 minutes
Recordings: Sō Percussion—Threads, Cantaloupe Music CA21064
Time Travelers—Textures and Threads, Bridge Records 9435

Instrumentation
Percussion Quartet:
Percussion I—vibraphone, timbales, djembe/doumbek, crotales (2 oct.), temple blocks or woodblocks, 4 wooden slats
Percussion II—vibraphone, noisemakers (cowbell, sleigh bells, junk metal, finger cymbals, etc.), pedal bass drum, 4 concert toms
Percussion III—glockenspiel, bongos, 2 congas, cowbell, agogo bells, claves, 4 untuned bottles
Percussion IV—tuned metal pipes (2 oct. B minor scales, with low A), 4 untuned flower pots, 4 Chinese toms, 4 concert toms

Composer Biography
Born in New York City in 1944, Paul Lansky’s early musical studies were at the High School of Music and Art in Manhattan. He subsequently attended Queens College, where he studied composition with George Perle and Hugo Weisgall, and Princeton University, where he worked with Milton Babbitt, Earl Kim and others. Originally intending to pursue a career as a French horn player, he played with the Dorian Wind Quintet in 1966-67 before going on to Princeton University for graduate studies. He was on the composition faculty at Princeton from 1969 to 2015. Until the mid-1990s, the bulk of Lansky’s work was in computer music and he has long been recognized as one of the pioneers in the field. During the mid-1990s he began to turn more intensively toward the writing of instrumental music, composing works for performers such as Nancy Zeltsman and David Starobin. His Three Moves for Marimba, written for and recorded by Zeltsman, has gained wide recognition as one of the most challenging and rewarding pieces for the instrument. Lansky’s recent instrumental music eschews attempts to “break new ground,” relying instead on a fresh approach toward tonality and harmony that references musical traditions of various kinds, from Machaut to Stravinsky. Having “scratched the itch” to be innovative for thirty years with his computer music, Lansky is now primarily focused on giving live performers rewarding experiences with his unique instrumental music.

Note From the Composer
“Threads was written for Sō Percussion in 2005. The group was originally interested in a transcription of my ‘kitchen gamelan’ computer piece Table’s Clear. That didn’t seem like fun to me so they suggested I write a new piece. I began by writing a set of ten studies, which they read for me in the Brooklyn studio. Next I wrote a few movements based on the studies and the pieces began to unfold as they developed into larger movements. Then I noticed that I was devising three kinds of movements: one made with lyrical ‘metals’, another with abstract and busy toys, and yet another with loud drumming. The analogy to arias, recitatives, and choruses in Bach cantatas occurred to me so I ‘threaded’ together three alternating versions of these types and added a chorale prelude at the end, setting an original chorale tune. Threads has now been playing by dozens of groups and I find it extremely interesting to hear the similarities and differences. No two are alike, yet they are all recognizable as performances of Threads” —Paul Lansky

Historical Perspective
Since its inception some twelve years ago, Paul Lansky’s Threads has cemented itself not only as one of the premier masterworks in the ever-growing chamber percussion idiom, but also at the forefront of contemporary chamber music performance as a whole into the 21st century. To be able to sit at the proverbial table with the other professional instrumental quartets of the world, percussionists have longed for pieces with the compositional depth and high quality evening-length demand present in the chamber repertoire of the string, wind, and brass varieties.

With the continued rise of highly virtuosic and elite-level chamber playing of percussion quartets like Sō Percussion, Third Coast Percussion, and the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet, repertoire to support the highest degree of chamber percussion performance has become increasingly in-demand. With that being said, Threads belongs in the conversation regarding pieces every serious percussion quartet should endeavor to perform, along with the likes of Cage’s Third Construction, Lang’s so-called-laws-of-nature, and Reich’s Mallet Quartet.

Technical Considerations
Despite the moderate difficulty of the individual parts when compared to other pieces of its caliber in the percussion ensemble repertoire, the real challenge with Threads lies within the extreme ensemble awareness demands placed on
the performers throughout the work’s ten movements. Among these include instances of cold attacks after long silences, very articulate instruments playing unison rhythms that often must line up vertically, and extremely exposed playing that require a great deal of concentration as well as touch and finesse. With all this being said, Threads can also be used to teach younger ensembles about the challenges of chamber performance since some of the movements are not technically out of reach for most players.

Since the piece is divided into ten short movements, as one would imagine there are some more challenging than others. The Preludes and Arias — mvmts. I, IV, VII, and X — act as the melodic threads throughout the piece, and include music mostly for the mallet instruments of the ensemble (vibes, glock, pipes, crotales) along with some sparse drum music played with fingers. Although some ensembles use four mallets at times to execute certain passages, all parts can be performed with only two mallets. One of the important ensemble motives of the piece is first heard at mm. 19 in the Prelude, a seemingly simple and rather static dotted-eighth sixteenth figure phrased as “long-short”. While it may look innocent enough in the score, do not overlook the difficulty in playing this figure together every time it comes up. A good exercise for rehearsing these passages is to have the players sing their part while conducting along with a metronome to ensure each player interprets the rhythm and phrasing correctly and together. Then take the conducting away and have them play the part along with the metronome, keeping in mind the awareness they gained from the first step. Finally, take the metronome away. It is often helpful to freeze the motion of the mallets on beat “3” before the downbeat of each subsequent bar. This helps the players visually see where ensemble timing lies, and can help with the cold attacks of each figure. Keep in mind these gestures should never be too big or distracting, which could take away from the experience of the listener.

For the Chorus music—mvmts. III, VI, and IX—it is important that the ensemble feel all the small subdivisions exactly the same, since the parts are frequently syncopated, layered, and often form singular musical lines between multiple players. The key here is slow practice! Each player should feel very comfortable with their own part before trying to put it together with the rest of the ensemble. The opening primal statement of the first Chorus (III) can be challenging to feel together and play accurately due to the variation in space and syncopation. Try having the players execute the same motion between each figure to improve the attacks and create a unison tone. Additionally, there are many sections where one player is playing on and off beat eighth notes, while another is playing the sixteenth-note upbeats to create a continuous thread of music. Lansky frequently accompanies these moments with another voice playing the composite rhythm, so have everyone listen to that voice to keep everything together. Approach the upbeat sixteenth-notes as you would eighth-notes that are one the beat, with full and connected strokes. This is easier said than done, but with practice can be achieved. The technical approach for each player should remain relaxed and fluid, as rigid and jerky motions are difficult to align and match sound quality regardless of the surface being struck.

The Recitatives — mvmts. II, V, and VIII — are some of the more challenging pieces in Threads because of the textual, rhythmic, and instrumental demands placed on the performers. Rather than remaining stationary within an individual setup, players often have to switch instruments/implements quickly and with little notice. Having an efficient setup on both the micro (individual setups) and macro (full ensemble setup) levels will greatly improve ensemble timing and rhythmic precision. This is especially important when navigating the layered rhythmic groupings of fours, fives, and sixes that permeate both Recitative I and II. The ensemble should practice these unison patterns on one surface before moving the figures around as written, and be careful the double strokes (which can’t really be avoided because of the writing) are even and don’t lack the sound quality of their single stroke counterparts.

One important thought to remember is that every great chamber ensemble “listens” intently with both their ears and their eyes. Without eye contact and a welcoming approach to playing with other musicians, rewarding chamber experiences and great musical performances are difficult to achieve.

Stylistic Considerations

The term “style” in music can often be misconstrued and overused, but is an essential tool in any great musician’s toolbox. Being able to induce elements of style into a piece can make or break how it is conveyed to the audience, and may ultimately change the emotional and physical response one may have on the performance. One reason why Threads has cemented itself among the great percussion works is that it gives the performers an incredible amount of stylistic and musical freedom, from both a phrasing and compositional standpoint as well as the ability to choose many of the instruments. The lyrical and tender character of the arias pave way for the forceful and powerful music of the choruses. Furthermore, the quirky and mechanical writing of the recitatives highlights the light-hearted and whimsical nature that many percussion instruments embrace. An keen awareness and understanding of these contrasting characters is crucial when conveying the essence of Threads.

The arias contain an abundance of opportunities for the players to express themselves musically. Although most of this music lies on the soft and tender side of the dynamic spectrum, remember to consistently achieve a full sound throughout each movement. In other words, the dynamic marking “p” does not mean thin or weak. The opening vibraphone music of the Prelude carries the proverbial “weight” of the entire work while simultaneously introducing much of the thematic material that anchors the metallic voices. Choose a mallet with a soft enough wrap to control the lyrical character, but with enough core to the sound to cut through the texture when needed. The glockenspiel and pipe parts should remain sharp and clear throughout, but never piercing. The lack of shaping and phrase markings throughout the piece (not just the arias) allow the performers to be very creative and expressive. As a general phrasing rule of thumb, let the performer’s ears guide them through the piece — they will find some incredible musical moments that transcend the ink on the page.
If the aria movements reflect music more tranquil and contemplative in nature, the choruses demonstrate how volume and power can be equally impactful and exciting. To avoid the risk of these movements sounding obnoxious and unpleasant, the players should keep in mind that they are still playing melodic and lyrical music, except this time it just so happens to be written for non-pitched drums and woods. There are brilliant unison passages where equal balance is important to achieve the desired effect, and other times one or two voices are playing solos or duets while the supporting voices proved the “harmonic” foundation. To achieve a balanced chamber sound and not go overboard with the dynamics, most ensembles have Player III and IV use their hands on the bongos/congas and djembe/doumbek, respectively. This essentially forces the ensemble to balance down to the rhythmic foundation often played by Player III, while simultaneously producing a more characteristic sound on the instruments as well as allowing more setup choices and less mallet changes. From this, it becomes easier to play together and listen around the ensemble during the tricky passages that can throw off even the most accomplished of performers. Just like the melodic music of the arias, go for a full and round sound when choosing implements. Wood timpani mallets with a round head (with or without a layer of moleskin) for the concert toms can help achieve this desired sound.

The recitatives offer the performers the most creativity when it comes to instrument and implement selection. While there are certainly moments of great expression and phrasing, the style is mostly mechanical and static in nature. In contrast with the fluid and connected music of the other movements, the recitatives lend themselves to a more rigid and disjunct stylistic approach. Don’t be afraid to stretch your comfort zone and experiment with different approaches that best capture the spirit of this unique music.

As far as instrumental selection goes, experiment with different types of bottles — whether they are rounded like wine or beer bottles, or mostly flat like whiskey bottles. In general, go for as thick a glass as possible so they don’t break and have a more fundamental tone. For the flowerpots, clay is a very fragile material but has resonant qualities, so be prepared to have a couple extra on hand when the inevitable time comes that one breaks. To decrease this risk while still getting the sound of real clay, try using the separate plates instead of the pot itself. They are usually thicker and easier to play because they are flat and the playing areas can be positioned much closer together when laid out. Additionally, they won’t roll around on a flat surface and don’t have to be suspended. Experiment with different implements such as chopsticks, leather-wrapped sticks, and backs of rattan mallets for a distinct sound. One of the joys of learning and performing this piece is the process and experimentation involved in the seemingly never-ending search for great sounds.

*A few notes regarding the metal pipes*
- If manufacturing your own set of pipes proves to be too time-consuming and involved, there is the option to purchase a set that is made-to-order. Contact Dr. Brian Nozny (bnozny@troy.edu) at Troy University. He makes an incredible set of pipes for Threads, which can also be used for the following pieces:

Parallel — Brian Nozny
Extremes – Jason Treuting
Haunt of Last Nightfall – David Little
Witheld – Thad Anderson (written for tuned metals but uses tuned pipes a lot of times)

- To securely suspend the pipes and still allow for maximum ringing duration, use a foam insulation material such as backer rod (found at Home Depot). Lay the pipes in a single row on the foam along their nodal points, a few inches inside the top and bottom of each pipe. This distance will obviously vary depending on the size of the pipe, but is similar to how vibraphone bars are laid across their respective frame.
Composer
Born in Argentina, Alejandro Viñao (1951-) started his compositional studies with Russian composer Jacobo Ficher before leaving for the United Kingdom to continue his studies at the Royal Conservatory College of Music. In 1988, Viñao completed his doctoral work in composition from the City University in London. After completing his academic studies, Viñao has resided in London ever since, subsequently receiving his citizenship in 1990. Viñao has received numerous international awards and recognition throughout his career, including first prize at The International Rostrum at the Unesco World Music Council (1984), the ‘Golden Nica’ Prix Ars Electronica (1992), and the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship in composition (1994) for his orchestral work, Apocryphal Dances (1997).

Historical Perspective
In recent history, Viñao has become one of the most prolific composers for percussion with his ensemble and solo works being frequently performed within the professional and academic percussion community. Today, it is common to hear Viñao’s works performed on recitals, percussion ensemble concerts, competitions, and auditions. Specifically over the last decade, Viñao’s music has often been showcased at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC), either within university ensemble concerts, solo competitions, or master classes.

With a total duration of nearly twenty-five minutes, Water consists of three total movements including Edge of Tide (Filo de Marea), Through the wild Rain (A través de la lluvia salvaje), and Todos los ríos El río (All the rivers The river). As the titles suggest, each one of these movements evokes different images of water such as ocean tides, rainstorms, and rivers. Water was commissioned by a consortium of institutions and individuals led by Prof. Michael Burritt, Professor of Percussion at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester. In addition, the consortium was organized through the New Music Marimba Inc., a non-profit musical organization founded by William Moersch.

The music of Viñao is notoriously difficult but incredibly worthwhile to perform. This work for percussion ensemble is suited for the advanced university percussion ensemble but individual movements might be appropriate for more ambitious ensembles. In particular, the final movement works extremely well as a standalone piece with a duration of roughly 8-9 minutes. Finally, the piano part for Water is extremely difficult and requires a talented pianist. In addition, the pianist must be comfortable with advanced rhythms and polyrhythms.

The creation of musical drama through multiple time is truly what makes Viñao’s music unique. Through musical analysis, it is possible to define the two states of multiple time as static and dynamic. Static multiple time designates fixed rhythmic relationships established within music, always secure and locked in. This includes instances of fixed polyrhythms as well as examples of echo effects. In contrast, dynamic multiple time features the musical acceleration and deceleration of melodic lines, a radical polyphonic approach to rhythm and tempo.

The combination of static and dynamic multiple time within Water creates intense moments of musical drama. These fixed points in which the various timings converge are known as attractors, a term used by Viñao that essentially describes a cadence driven by rhythm rather than harmonic motion. The use of musical grooves, often times created through the use of tenuto markings, also drive each musical line towards these attractors. In addition, these grooves provide the rhythmic vibrancy of the work, specifically in the final movement where the music reaches a dance-like fervor. Another unique compositional aspect used to create musical drama is the focus on vertical melodic motion, in which multiple musical lines are descending or ascending towards an attractor. This is especially evident within the first movement, where the listener can hear the rising and falling tide of the ocean. Finally, this notion of vertical space combined with a sense of horizontal motion through rhythm creates a unique three-dimensional musical space. There truly is nothing like it.

While the popularity of Viñao’s music is undeniable, the internal compositional complexity deserves further research. His works are characterized by an increased emphasis on rhythm which serves as the primary driving component of each musical com-
position. As such, Viñao’s music resonates within the percussion community where rhythm is understandably a defining musical component. However, his music does not simply showcase musical rhythm—it elevates it. Due to these innovations in rhythm, Viñao has clearly distinguished himself as one of the most exciting new composers within the span of the growing repertoire of solo and chamber percussion works.

**Technical Considerations**

**Conducting Water**

One of the signature musical components of Viñao’s music includes the use of multiple time, defined as the perceived presence of multiple tempi within a musical work. Due to this importance, the obvious question must be asked: how does the presence of a conductor affect how the listener perceives time? The role of a conductor is to lead a musical ensemble by conducting a shared sense of timing. However, does the presence of a conductor conflict with Viñao’s desire to illustrate multiple tempi?

In an interview with the author, Viñao described his preference for the absence of a conductor within his percussion works, but he did note that having an accurate performance is all that matters, with or without conductor. Considering the sheer difficulty of *Water*, it is recommended to have a conductor when first learning the work. An ensemble should only consider performing this work without a conductor if they have the most intimate knowledge of their part as well as the rest of the ensemble. Even at this point, it would not take much of an error for the entire ensemble to lose their metrical alignment at points. Only the most dedicated and professional ensemble should consider this.

**Instrumentation and Setup**

Within *Water*, Viñao does not specify any exact desired configuration for the ensemble, leaving this decision to the conductor and performer at their discretion. As such, various ensembles which have performed *Water* have come to dramatically different instrument configurations to solve a myriad of technical challenges.

In defining your setup, the first logical step is to define the location of the mallet instruments in relation to the location of the piano. There are essentially two possibilities when considering the piano placement: inside or out. More specifically, the piano should either be located within the center of the ensemble surrounded by mallet instruments or on the edge of the ensemble allowing a closer connection between the individual percussionists. In addition, it is also important to identify the shared instruments which are used by multiple players. These include chimes (tubular bells), glockenspiel, marimba 2, and crotales. In short, make sure your setup allows for the percussionists to quickly reach any shared instruments. Of course, it is also possible to simply find another set of the shared instrument to avoid any logistical issues.

While there is no defined logistical setup provided for *Water*, the option to include the piano as the nucleus of the ensemble seems to be the most popular performance option. First, it allows the pianist to have a direct view of the conductor, something that could be difficult to achieve when placed at the edge of the ensemble. Next, this placement of the piano allows greater cohesion between piano and percussion. In many ways, the piano is the most difficult part within *Water* and by having it centrally located, the rest of the ensemble can coordinate around it.

**The Use of Congas and Bongos within Water**

Within the second movement, *Through the wild Rain*, Viñao incorporates the use of congas and bongos, iconic instruments of the Latin American rhythm section. The presence of these drums further solidifies the connection to other Latin grooves, such as the tango, within this movement. While the writings for these instruments are primarily rhythmic, such as establishing and energizing musical grooves, there are several other concerns as a performer when preparing this part for performance.

First, what tuning system should be utilized in this second movement? Within the performance notes of *Water*, Viñao specifically notes that the tumba drum, the lowest conga drum, be tuned to an “A” within the second movement. However, one can deduct that this tuning is important within mm. 34–76, where the congas blend with the marimba to create a singular instrument.

When choosing the specific pitches of each drum, be sure to consider a few possible musical scenarios. First, should the exact pitch of each drum match any other tonal content found within the second movement of *Water*? If so, does the sounding drum have the capacity to reach this pitch? Furthermore, does this desired pitch produce the best possible sound out of the drum? With these questions in mind, the figure below demonstrates a possible tuning system that seeks to match Viñao’s musical construction while still always producing the best possible intrinsic sound from the instrument. In addition, these pitches best match the traditional Latin musical styles of which they imitate within *Water*.

![Possible Tuning System for Bongos and Congas within Water, 2nd Movement](image)

**Stylistic Considerations**

Within the third movement of *Water*, *Todos los ríos El rio*, the use of tenuto markings function to create a groove, providing a sense of weight and emphasis during a rhythmic pattern. These tenuto markings should not be considered simple accents, but rather must be associated with added weight. If simply interpreting these tenuto markings as accents, performers can often times provide too much velocity in the stroke, creating a sound that might be classified as harsh, brittle, or too strong. To achieve a sense of weight, the performer might need to use a
little bit of arm movement, incorporating a larger muscle group without added stroke velocity. It takes a mature performer to know the appropriate amount of touch to achieve this technical interpretation.

Another common performance instruction from Viñao includes the notion of “bouncing,” an essential component to simulate the effect of an echo. As pointed out previously in analysis, Viñao envisions the mallets bouncing off the bar similar to a bouncing ball, losing energy and height with each bounce—an incredibly appropriate analogy for percussionists and provides vivid imagery necessary to perform this instruction.

**Equipment Needs**
The instrumentation for *Water* consists of a piano, two marimbas (5 octaves), two xylophones, two vibraphones, glockenspiel, chimes, crotale, three congas and two bongos to be performed by a total of six total players. Some instruments can be doubled to help facilitate an easier configuration of instruments, such as the inclusion of multiple glockenspiels for different players.