

Dr. Glenn Schaft - Percussion Clinic

Percussion As Organized Sound

Youngstown State University Wind and Percussion Invitational - 2/25/11

See <www.ysu.edu/percussion> for instructional downloads or to contact Dr. Schaft

I. General Musical Concepts:

1. What is music? Composer Edgard Varese defined it as "organized sound".
2. Elements of music: pitch (includes harmony), rhythm, dynamics (intensity), texture (density and instrumentation), timbre (tone color), and form.

II. Percussion Concepts:

1. Types of percussion instruments - membranophones, idiophones, aerophones
2. Percussion is struck, shaken, scraped/friction
3. Timbre (tone color) variables - hardness of instrument, hardness of implement, stroke velocity, playing area, size of contact point, angle of attack, resonance of implement and instrument
4. Ideal technique is contextual; determined by desired sound
 - A. Body parts / levers- shoulders, upper arm, elbow, forearm, wrist, fingers
 - B. Grip:
 - i. Fulcrum - single vs. multiple pivot points
 - ii. Resonance - implement and instrument, grip pressure, contact area, contact time, identify maximum resonance with metal drumsticks, a neoprene pad, or hard surface
 - C. Stroke/movement concepts and techniques - ideal movement is contextual, consideration of efficiency (power speed, endurance), desired timbre, desired emotion (feeling)
 - i. Optimal tension vs. minimal tension: Efficiency is a major concern but not the only concern. Music is an art form, not merely an efficiency contest.
 - ii. Fluidity of motion is the prerequisite to speed, power, endurance, injury-free career, and a full-spectrum sound

iii. Three universal stroke types, geometric shapes, & dynamic/geographic function

a. Rebound (V shape) stroke - equal length & velocity approach and return, produces equal volume notes or gradually changing dynamics

b. Down stroke-prep for softer note

c. Up stroke - prep for louder note

5. Stance - the batters box, feet parallel (no eversion or inversion) shoulder width

6. Drum height and angle, angle of stick attack and neutral wrist position

7. Concert snare drum/rudimental drumming stick selection - variables include:

mass - ca. 65 grams

length - 16 3/4 inches

diameter - 11/16" + 8mm.

long taper for best rebound response

tip shape - large ball or acorn

pitch matched

weight matched - on a postal scale

straight stick (roll them) and straight wood grain

vibration/resonance matched-test on a hard surface

8. Alignment - three points - stick tip, wrist bone, elbow

9. Basic hand positions - German (palm down), French (thumb up), American (hybrid)

III. **The Mantra** - mental/physical preparation

1. breath (long nasal inhale and exhale)

2. visualize

3. feel - kinesthetic

4. audiate -

5. play

IV. Sticking and Technique Exercises:

1. Wrist only technique - piston stroke, (velocity stroke) free stroke; provides articulation. One to one ratio - attack to wrist stroke cycle.

2. Sanford Moeller technique - shoulder generated chain reaction, whip action stroke; provides speed, power, and endurance. Variable ratio - attacks to motion cycles.

3. Open-close fingers (down-up), (push-pull) wrist technique; provides finesse speed, and efficiency. Two to one ratio - attacks per wrist stroke cycle.

4. Rebound stroke comparison exercise- 8 sets of triplets per sticking - singles, doubles, triples, fours, ascend and descend sequentially through stickings or jump around

5. Orchestral rolls

A. Multiple bounce roll - for softest dynamics

Play macrobeat ca. 60 BPM, 1-6 Microbeat Divisions

B. Triple bounce roll - general purpose

One hand at a time, 1,e,an rhythm, x sets per hand, at various BPM

Hand sequentially - in constant triplets at various speeds and dynamics

6. Flam rudiments -Flam triple, flam tap, alternate flams, flam accent, swiss trip

7. Drag rudiments - Drag triple, drag tap, alternate drags, drag accent,

8. Combinations - singles and doubles

Pukada - 3 note cycle (single + double)

RLL RRL RLR LRR LLR LRL

Paradiddles - 8 note cycle (2 singles + double, repeat on other hand)

RLRR,LRLR RLLR,LRRL RRLR,LLRL RLRL,LRLR

V. Rhythm - the flow of movements through time

3 Universal Elements - Macrobeats, Microbeats, Rhythm Patterns

Exercises:

Table of Microbeats - macrobeat = 60 BPM, 1-10 divisions

Ping-Pong Microbeats - begin at 60 BPM, 1-8 divisions

Rhythm Patterns - Duple and Triple Feel Grid Accents