

Percussive ARTiculation

Adam Groh – Graceland University
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Drummer vs. Percussionist vs. Musician – What are you hoping to be?

Articulation: Direction to a performer typically through symbols and icons on a musical score that indicate characteristics of the attack, duration, and decay of a given note.

Accent – Stress or special emphasis of a beat to mark its position in a measure

Marcato – Strong accent, slightly separated

Tenuto – Perform this note for its full rhythmic value

Staccato – Detached, separated, and distinct

Staccatissimo – Detached and short, even more extreme than staccato

Slur – All notes smoothly connected and grouped together

Be a collector of sounds.

How do percussionists manipulate their sound?

“You sound how you look.”

6 M’s – “Make a Musical Motion that Matches the Musical Moment.”

Variables

Sticking Choices

Straight, Alternating, Doubles, Triples, Combinations (Rudiments)

Functional vs. Artistic

Focus on what’s above the staff, not underneath.

Think in terms of bowings, alternate fingerings, and piano fingerings

Stoke

Speed – Faster = brighter, more articulation

Height – Protect your sound (and your instrument)

Follow-through – Stay connected to the notes (like a pianist).

Grip Pressure

“Dial it up or down” to change articulation

Implement Selection

The golden rule. – Mass = Volume, Hardness = Articulation.

Choose mallets that work WITH you.

How do I bring articulation into my curriculum?

- 1) Talk the talk.
- 2) Incorporate articulation into exercises, warm-ups, assigned etudes.
- 3) Experiment WITH your students.
- 4) Be on the lookout for sounds you like.
- 5) Know what’s in your students’ mallet bags.

Special Thanks To:

Graceland University
Pearl Drums/Adams Musical Instruments
Vic Firth Sticks and Mallets



Pearl



VIC FIRTH

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