

Tweets and Blogs

Percussion Pedagogy Proverbs

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The Midwest Clinic

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Meeting Room W179

#Performance

HEAR a great sound, CREATE a great sound!

Think the Quality of Sound - FIRST.

You have to practice "not-stopping" for mistakes to perform at your best.

Move before you groove.

Think of rhythm as gesture rather than timing.

#Technique

Be creative and imaginative with all 4 techniques: *Strike*, *Shake*, *Scrape*, and *Crash*.

Use the right muscles for the right job.

Play softly with your whole body.

Playing percussion - sometimes you have to go OPPOSITE your natural tendencies.

A roll is just an illusion of a sustained sound.

Play single-stroke rolls as slow as the sound allows.

Don't crowd your instrument.

#Touch

Quit trying to HIT stuff!

Get more "lift" into your playing.

Articulation for Percussionists. Percussion instruments don't sustain like wind or string instruments. These guidelines will provide you with strategies to achieve proper stylistic blend with others.

LEGATO: A directive to perform a certain passage of a composition in a smooth, graceful, connected style.

- Maintain a light touch on the mallets at the grip point.
- Use a very fluid, full-stroke with a natural rebound to create a legato attack.
- Allow the percussion instruments to sustain naturally.
- As the percussionist gains experience, softer implements and changes in playing area will enhance the legato articulation.

STACCATO: A style of playing notes in a light, detached, and distinct manner.

- Maintain a firm touch on the mallets at the grip point.
- Use a very quick down-stroke with a quick up-stroke to create a staccato attack.
- Quicker strokes are brighter, more emphasized. As the percussionist gains experience, dampening, harder implements, and changes in playing area will enhance the staccato articulation. The use of "dead-strokes" or quasi dead-strokes can be effective on some instruments.

TENUTO: A directive to perform a certain note or chord of a composition in a sustained manner for its full duration.

- Maintain a full, supportive grip in the entire hand.
- Use a slow down-stroke with a small upstroke and added weight from the arm to create a tenuto attack.
- Think striking angle for Tenuto strokes – J-strokes, V-strokes, O-strokes. As the percussionist gains experience, softer implements, and changes in the playing angle will enhance the tenuto articulation.

MARCATO: A style of playing that means marked, accented or stressed with a slight separation between notes.

- Maintain a full, supportive grip in the entire hand.
- Use a quick down-stroke with a quick upstroke to create a marcato attack.
- As the percussionist gains experience, harder implements, partial dampening, and/or changes in playing area will enhance the marcato style.

#Expression

Sound quality - Sometimes you help your instrument, sometimes your instrument helps you.

First, define the rhythmic engine.

Think of a rest as active silence and keep the sticks in motion to achieve a smoother crescendo/decrescendo and shape.

There are SOLO dynamics and ENSEMBLE dynamics.

Keep your performance "unfolding".

Use your heart as much as your head.

#Attitude

Mastery is a moving target.

There is no such thing as “cheating” in music.

“Flexability” is more important than “capability”.

Approach the music as a friend, not the enemy.

Tune out the distractions.

When taking auditions: play offense, not defense.

You'll never get better if you don't know when you sound bad.

3 important skills: sight-read, sight-read, sight-read! “RIGHT-READ”.

Surround yourself with musicians who are better than you.

Respect the “3-up Rule”: Show up, keep up, shut up!

- Arrive early and be ready to practice. Percussionists must be highly organized to contribute to a successful rehearsal. There is equipment to move and setup, mallets to organize, and instruments to tune before you even play a note.
- Stay focused. Listen to the music deeply and become familiar with as many other parts as you can; bass lines, melodies, accompaniments. The more you know what's going on in the score, the better you can accurately and expressively perform your part.
- Don't distract other players or let them distract you. Strive to be the musician that you enjoy rehearsing alongside and making music with.

#Further Reading/Exploring:

Band Expressions, Book One and Two, Band Curriculum, Percussion Team Author, Alfred Publishing Company, 2003, 2006.

“Teaching Young Percussionists to Make Musical Choices”, *The Drum and Percussion Cookbook: Creative Recipes for Players and Teachers*, Meredith Music Publications, 2008.

“AME for Success”, *The Yamaha Hub*, hub.yamaha.com, March 2014.

“The L.A.W.S. of Percussion - Quick Tips to Better Percussion Playing”, *The Yamaha Hub*, hub.yamaha.com, February 2014.

“Developing a Musical Percussion Section in your Band and Orchestra”, *The Bearing Edge*, the official blog of Yamaha Percussion, <http://yamahapercussion.wordpress.com>, January 2013.

James Campbell has received worldwide recognition as a performer, pedagogue and author, and is a respected figure in the development of the contemporary percussion ensemble. He has toured extensively throughout The Americas, Europe, and Asia. Currently Provost's Distinguished Service Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, he also holds the positions of Principal Percussionist with the Lexington Philharmonic, drummer with the Kentucky Jazz Repertory Orchestra, and Past-President of the Percussive Arts Society.

Well known for his long past association with the internationally renowned Rosemont Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps, Jim has served as their principal instructor, arranger, and Program Coordinator and was inducted into the Drum Corps International Hall of Fame. He served as Percussion Director for the McDonald's All-American High School Band and was inducted into the Bands of America Hall of Fame, which recognizes individuals who have greatly impacted the nation's band activity and music education.

As a performer, Jim has appeared at the International Society of Music Education World Conference, International Patagonia Percussion Festival, Journées de la Percussion, PercuSonidos Percussion Festival, Swedish Arts and Musicians Interest Organization, Australian Percussion Eisteddfod, MENC National In-Service Conference, Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic, MusicFest Canada, All-Japan Band Clinic, The Music for All World Percussion Symposium, State MEA conventions across the country, and frequently appears as an artist at the Percussive Arts Society International Conventions (PASIC).

Among his award-winning works for percussion, Jim has published with Meredith Music, C.L. Barnhouse Co., C. Alan Publications, Innovative Percussion, Row-Loff Productions, Bachovich Music Publications, and Alfred Publications with whom he served as the Percussion Team Author for the Expressions Music Curriculum. Jim is an artist and endorsee for Innovative Percussion, Evans Drumheads, Grover Pro Percussion, and is a member of the Latin Percussion Educational Advisory Board. He is an Artist and Educator for the Avedis Zildjian Cymbal Company and a Performing Artist for Yamaha Corporation of America, Band & Orchestra Division.

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