

Dr. Glenn Schaft - Percussion Clinic

Percussion As Organized Sound

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, momentum = stroke velocity and mass, 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

III. The Mantra - mental/physical preparation

1. breath (long nasal inhale and exhale)
2. visualize
3. feel - kinesthetic
4. audiate -
5. play

IV. 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