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,LRLR  RRRR,LLRL  LRRR,LRRL

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