

Basic Percussion Techniques for Band & Classroom Federation Room – Maryborough Music Conference 2007 Monday 9 July 2007

Presenter – **Gordon Hughes**
gordon@rhythmscape.com.au
www.rhythmscape.com.au

Introduction

General techniques for the classroom and band/ensemble –

Aim: '*chill, it's only percussion- let's get it happening!*'

- **Anatomy** and **playing** points/tips/tricks
- **Discussion of ranges of instruments and notation**
 - Examples of good writing (...some examples of regrettable writing)
- **Overall** look at stick selection and substitution of instruments
'Precious vs. making it happen' (it is about *the students*)
Hardware usage
- **Sequential instrument development list for Band**
Role of the percussion section in Band
(full discussion in next session 8.30-10.00am Tuesday 10 July 2007)
- **Questions time** (hopefully!)

Percussion – definition. What is percussion?

The oldest of instrument (families), global, associative, ethnic and ... always growing

Tuned percussion

[Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Marimba, Tubular bells (or Chimes), Vibraphone]

Repertoire for the wise** – Britten (Billy Bud), Shostakovich (Symphonies), Copland (Symphony No.3, Rodeo)
Tip - get rolls happening early – it's not difficult

**** There are others. This is only a starting point. Challenge students to listen for percussion parts and discuss what they think makes great percussion writing.**

Untuned Percussion

Snare Drum

Tip - The concept of a snare drum roll is not difficult to teach – most people miss that it requires two steps

Repertoire for the wise – Nielsen (Symphony no.5), Rimsky-Korsakov

Bass Drum

Tip - Different areas of the skin are used to create different sounds/timbres – explore, don't just hit

Repertoire for the wise – Britten (War Requiem), Mahler (Symphony No. 2)

Crash Cymbals

Suspended Cymbal

Tip - Suspended Cymbal rolls can make or break the work of an ensemble

Tip - Crash cymbal – must blend with instrumental timbres occurring at the time
Get inside the sound – lift and create the moment

Repertoire for the wise - Suspended cymbal - Grainger (Irish Tune)
Crash Cymbals - (Mahler Symphony No. 2)

Timpani

Tip -Tuning is vital (and often overlooked). Correct playing areas must be used
Repertoire for the wise – Mahler (Symphonies), Beethoven (Symphonies), Holst (Planets)

Auxiliary percussion

.....and the rest

Triangle, castanets, maracas, guiro, finger cymbals, tambourine, whip etc etc etc (!)

Tip - Most of these instruments are relatively inexpensive. Develop a collection, explore timbres
Repertoire for the wise
 Triangle – Korngold (Die Tot Stadt)
 Tambourine – Walton (Portsmouth Point Overture)

(**some...**) Translations

English	Italian	German	French	Spanish
glockenspiel orchestra bells chimes (US) bell lira (portable) bell lyre (portable)	glockenspiel metallofono campanelli	Glockenspiel Lyra (portable)	glockenspiel jeu de timbres (jeu de clochettes = clarion)	juego de timbres órgano de campanas lira (portable)
kettle drums timpani	timpani	Pauken	timbales	timbales
cymbals	piatti	Becken	cymbales	cimbalos
xylophone	xilifono	Xylophon	xylophone	xilófono xilófon
snare drum	cassa chiara	kleine Trommel Rührtrommel Marschtrommel Schnarrtrommel	caisse claire	caja clara

(**some...**) Abbreviations

Bass Drum	B.D. (B. Dr.)
Castanets	Casts.
Chimes/Tubular Bells	Bells, Chimes, T.bells
Cymbals	Cym, Cyms, Sus Cym
Glockenspiel	Glock, Glsp, Glck, Bells
Snare Drum	S.D. S. Dr., Sn. Dr.
Tambourine	Tamb.

Tenor Drum	T.D. (T.Dr., Ten. Dr.)
Triangle	Trgl. (Tri.)

author - g.hughes 2007