

Teaching Percussion through Percussion Ensemble

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Whatcha Baion by Josh Gottry

Published by HoneyRock (2007)

2 minutes; Easy; 9-13 players

Instrumentation:

1. Bells
2. Chimes (opt.)
3. Xylophone (xylophone or marimba 1 may be omitted)
4. Marimba 1
5. Marimba 2 (share 3.5 octave or larger marimba with player four)
6. Timpani (3)
7. High-Hat
8. Wood Block or Claves
9. Bongos (opt.)
10. Snare Drum
11. Agogo Bells or Cowbell (opt.)
12. Floor Tom
13. Bass Drum

Composer Notes:

Written for the Santan Junior High percussion class, *Whatcha Baion?* was designed to be a flexible composition for junior high programs that desire to introduce students to percussion ensemble. This ensemble can be performed by players with a wide range of skill levels and utilizes instruments that are commonly found in junior high band rooms. It would also make a great addition to concerts by more experienced ensembles that need to quickly put together audience-friendly or "pop" style programs.

Teaching Points: 2:3 Clave; 4-Mallet Block Chords

The image displays two musical staves. The top staff is for the Wood Block, starting with a tempo marking of quarter note = 84. The notation shows a sequence of notes: a quarter rest, a quarter note, a quarter rest, a quarter note, a quarter rest, a quarter note, a quarter rest, and a quarter note. The dynamic marking is *mf*. The bottom staff is for Marimba 2, also with a tempo marking of quarter note = 84. It begins with a 10-measure rest, followed by a section labeled 'A' containing four measures of block chords. The dynamic marking is *mf*. Below section 'A' is section 'B', which consists of four measures of block chords.

Dance of the Wind-Up Toy by Chris Crockarell

Published by Row-Loff Productions (1993)

2 minutes 30 seconds; Easy; 9 players

Instrumentation:

1. Bells
2. Xylophone
3. Vibraphone
4. Marimba 1
5. Marimba 2 (share 4.3 octave marimba with player four)
6. Tambourine, Snare Drum, High Tom, Ride Cymbal
7. Ratchet, Triangle, Suspended Cymbal, Siren Whistle
8. Wood Block, Temple Blocks, Bass Drum
9. Timpani (32", 29", 26", 23")

Composer Notes:

Dance of the Wind-Up Toy was written in the early years of Row-Loff Productions. There was a concern about the void of easier percussion ensemble literature in the marketplace. This piece was intended to be fun and entertaining for the students yet with subliminal basic theory such as easy chord changes and basic arpeggio movement for the keyboards as well as basic percussion instruments using repetitive rhythms in order to serve as a listening tool for other players. I feel that it is very important in the early stages of percussion performance to allow the student to be a part of a repetitive groove. The timpani part has its stand-out moments as well as supplying a strong lower tonal and rhythmic foundation throughout the piece. Just for fun, there are a few "toy" instruments written that help establish that "Wind-Up Toy" sound.

Teaching Point: Multiple Percussion Logistics

The musical score is written for a single percussion instrument, likely a cymbal, and consists of four staves of music. The first staff (measures 62-66) is marked *ff* and features a repetitive rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The second staff (measures 67-71) is marked *mf* and continues the rhythmic pattern. The third staff (measures 72-76) is marked *ff* and includes a section labeled "siren" (measure 74) and "crash cymbals or sus. w/ stick" (measures 74-75). The fourth staff (measures 77-82) is marked *mf* and includes a "Ritard" section (measures 77-79), a section marked "2" (measures 80-81), and a section marked "ratchet" (measures 81-82). The score concludes with a final measure (82) marked *ff* and an accent.

Cha-Cha Blues

Published by C. Alan Publications (2008)

2 minutes 15 seconds; Medium-Easy; 8 players

Instrumentation:

1. Xylophone
2. Vibraphone
3. Marimba 1
4. Marimba 2 (share 4.3 octave marimba with player three)
5. Claves
6. Guiro
7. Congas
8. Drumset
9. Bass Guitar (optional)

Composer Notes:

The 12-bar blues is quite possibly one of the most influential musical forms of the past century. This simple chord progression has been incorporated and modified by some of the greatest musicians in rock and jazz. It is flexible enough to work in virtually any style, including of course, the Cha Cha. After an opening ensemble statement and a few bars of the groove, the standard 12-bar blues format begins with the xylophone serving as the primary melodic instrument. Following two statements of the tune, the ensemble shifts into a *montuno* (repetitive ostinato) section which eventually becomes the vamp over which individuals in the ensemble can solo.

Teaching Point: Cha-Cha Patterns (clave, maracas, congas, drumset)

The image displays three musical staves for the Cha-Cha Blues piece. The top staff is a melody line with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The middle staff is a drum pattern with letters P, F, S, D, P, F, O, O, P, F, S, O, O, D, O, O above the notes and L, L, R, R, L, L, R, R, L, L, R, R, R, L, R, R below. The bottom staff is a bass line with a 7/8 time signature and includes a circled plus sign above the first two measures.

Kincho Daiko by Minoru Miki

Published by Go Fish Music (1991)

3 minutes 15 seconds; Medium-Easy; 5 or more players

Instrumentation:

1. Recorder(s) or Marimba(s)
2. Cowbell
3. Temple Blocks
4. Snare Drum
5. Bass Drum

Publisher Notes:

Kincho Daiko is an intermediate ensemble piece for recorders (or marimbas) and four percussionists. The piece uses traditional Japanese rhythms and motives to help invoke a strong stylistic imprint on the players and audience. This piece was written for Komatsushima-city Amateur Percussion Group on Shikoku Island in Japan.

Teaching Points: Japanese Percussion; Rim Sounds

Minoru Miki is one of the most active and recognized composers from Japan and has created numerous substantial works for percussion. Listen to other works by Miki including:

Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra

Marimba Spiritual

Time for Marimba

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'S. Dr.' and the bottom staff is labeled 'B. Dr.'. Both staves contain rhythmic notation with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes. The S. Dr. staff begins with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The notation is consistent across both staves, suggesting a rhythmic accompaniment for the snare and bass drums.

120 Degrees by Josh Gottry

Published by C. Alan Publications (2000)

4 minutes; Medium; 8 players

Instrumentation:

1. Marimba (4.0 octave or larger)
2. Vibraphone (or Bells)
3. Xylophone
4. Snare Drum
5. Bongos
6. Crash Cymbals and Ride Cymbal
7. Bass Drum
8. Timpani (32", 29", 26", 23")

Composer Notes:

Written entirely in compound meter and primarily in 12/8 time, the overall form of *120 degrees* is ABCBA with the C section in half-time and featuring unison timpani and keyboard lines. The A section focuses primarily on a vibraphone melody with an underlying groove established by the other keyboards and percussion. The B section is more driving in style and features a timpani solo followed by trade-offs between the timpani and bongos. Based strongly with a feel in four, this piece effectively includes groupings of four eighth notes within 12/8 for contradictory and complimentary rhythmic effects. This piece was written for and premiered by the Chandler Summer Percussion Ensemble in 1999.

Teaching Point: Compound Meter Rhythmic Groupings

The image shows a musical score for the first three measures of the A section of '120 Degrees'. The score is written for eight instruments: Marimba (Mar.), Vibraphone (Vib.), Xylophone (Xyl.), Snare Drum (Sn.), Bongos (Bon.), Cymbals (Cym.), Bass Drum (Bd.), and Timpani (Timp.). The Marimba part begins with a circled 'A' above the first measure. The Vibraphone part starts in the second measure with a melody. The Xylophone part has a steady eighth-note pattern. The Snare Drum, Bongos, and Cymbals parts provide a rhythmic accompaniment. The Bass Drum and Timpani parts have a simple rhythmic pattern. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Techno-Pop by Nathan Daughtrey

Published by C. Alan Publications (2007)

3 minutes 20 seconds; Medium; 7 players

Instrumentation:

1. Bells and Xylophone
2. Vibraphone
3. Marimba 1
4. Marimba 2 (4.3 octave instrument shared with player 3)
5. Concert Toms (4)
6. Vibraslap, Suspended Cymbal, Wind Chimes, Cowbell, Tambourine
7. Drumset

Composer Notes:

Techno-Pop was inspired by techno music, a type of purely electronic dance music that originated in Detroit in the 1980s. Techno has since found its way into dance clubs and raves all over.

Teaching Points: Three Against Four Hemiola

The musical score is titled "E Xylophone" and is arranged for seven percussion instruments. The notation is as follows:

- Bells Xylo.:** Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Dynamics: *f*.
- Vib.:** Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Dynamics: *f no ped.*
- Mar. 1:** Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Dynamics: *f*.
- Mar. 2:** Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3. Dynamics: *f*.
- Perc. 1:** Percussion clef, 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Dynamics: *f*.
- Perc. 2:** Percussion clef, 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Dynamics: *f*.
- D. S.:** Percussion clef, 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Dynamics: *f*.

Shifting Waves

Published by Drop 6 Media, Inc. (2002)

3 minutes 45 seconds; Medium; 10 players

Instrumentation:

1. Bells
2. Vibraphone
3. Chimes
4. Xylophone
5. Marimba 1 (4.3 octave)
6. Marimba 2 (4.3 octave)
7. High-hat, Tambourine, Wood Block, Snare Drum
8. Congas (2), Cowbell, Castanets, Bell Tree
9. Triangle, Sus. Cymbal, Hand Claps, High-hat (shared), Bass Drum (shared), Mark Tree
10. Bass Drum, Low Concert Tom, China Cymbal, Ride Cymbal, Cabasa

Composer Notes:

Shifting Waves is a combination of continually changing ostinatos. The first marimba serves as the rhythmic and melodic focus of the piece as it combines two- and three-note patterns in 6/8 and later two- and five-note patterns in 5/4, all over constant eighth notes. After a brief lyrical interlude in the middle of the ensemble, the texture of the piece begins to gradually thicken. Lighter sounds (i.e. high hat, wood block) are systematically replaced with heavier sounds (snare drum, bass drum, etc.), leading to a strong reprise of the opening figure and a unison conclusion.

Teaching Points: Metric Modulation

The image shows a musical score for two marimbas, M1 and M2. The score is divided into two sections. The first section is in 6/8 time and features a melodic line for M1 and a rhythmic accompaniment for M2. The second section is in 5/4 time and features a melodic line for M1 and a rhythmic accompaniment for M2. The tempo is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The key signature is one sharp (F#).