

**PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA**

**Indianapolis Convention Center**

**16 NOVEMBER 2019**

**Rm. 205**

**12:00pm – 12:50pm**

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE-FUNDAMENTALS SESSION**

**MUSICAL TECHNIQUES ON TAMBOURINE:  
PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUNG PERCUSSIONIST**

PRESENTED BY  
DANIEL SMITHIGER

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE



- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. MANY THANKS**
- 3. FOREIGN TERMINOLOGY**
- 4. BRIEF HISTORY OF TAMBOURINE**
- 5. SHELL/JINGLES/GRIPPING AREA**
- 6. TAMBOURINE HEAD**
- 7. TAMBOURINE MANUFACTURERS**
- 8. TODAY'S - SELECTION of TAMBOURINES**

**GENERAL SOUNDS/HANDS "ON" Portion**

*(\*utilizing various students, members of the audience)*

- Resting position
- Playing Techniques/Rolls
- Transitions
- Demonstration of the various techniques (rhythmic patterns, separate sheet)

**SELECTED TAMBOURINE EXCERPTS**

(orchestra, wind band)

- 9. RESOURCES FOR TAMBOURINE (Selected)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Hello, my name is Daniel Smithiger – I am serving as my 10<sup>th</sup> year as Director of the Percussion Area at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. I teach Studio Percussion Lessons, Percussion Ensemble, Steel Band, Percussion Methods, Percussion History & Literature and Pedagogy.

This FUNdamentals session will focus on technique and musical expression on the tambourine. Directed towards high school students and teachers, the session will address techniques and the exploration of sounds in a variety of situations, demonstrated through selected excerpts, and musical selections. The session will include a "hands on" experience, as I will integrate selected participants (volunteers) in demonstrations.

## **MANY THANKS**

**So that I do not forget anyone or anything, I want to make sure I get my “thank you’s” taken - care of....**

**I would like to thank PASIC for allowing me this opportunity to present to you today.**

**I would like to thank Pete DeSalvo and the PAS Education Committee for allowing me to work with you over the past 11 years.**

**I would like to thank Southern Illinois University Edwardsville**

**And a very big thank you to Tim Church & Black Swamp Percussion, along with Sabian Cymbals and Remo**

## FOREIGN TERMINOLOGY

ENGLISH	ITALIAN	FRENCH	GERMAN
<i>tambourine</i>	<i>tamburo basco,</i> <i>tamburino</i>	<i>tambour de basque</i>	<i>tamburin,</i> <i>schellentrommel</i>

OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES: *timbrels* (translated from *toph*)

Also known as-

There are many names and “styles” of tambourines from different cultures:

riq (Arabic)  
kanjira (India)  
pandeiro (Brazil)  
duff (India)  
daf (Iran, other)  
mazhar (Egypt)  
bendir (Turkey, north Africa)

## BRIEF HISTORY OF TAMBOURINE

The tambourine is a shallow handheld drum made of a circular wooden frame with a calfskin or plastic drumhead, stretched across the top. The tambourine has small metal discs called jingles, set into its frame. They produce sound when the tambourine is struck, shaken, rubbed. Early tambourines were played with Turkish army musicians known as "Janissaries." In some versions, the tambourine's jingles were replaced by ringlets of metal wire or clusters of small bells.

Tambourines have an ancient history, often associated with women performers in Greek and Middle-Eastern societies. Some of the first composers to use tambourine in the orchestra were Gluck (*Echo and Narcissus*, 1779) and Mozart (*German Dances*, 1787). James Blades also describes the tambourine (k(h) anjari) as being a typical Asiatic tambourine with a deep shell, with few jingles than its western counterpart, and occasional small clusters of ankle bells. It was played in an upright position with the head glued, or nailed, facing outward. The fingers of the hand holding the tambourine struck the vellum (head) near the rim. The fingers on the other hand would strike the skin in various places.

## **SHELL/JINGLES/GRIPPING AREA**

- Shells are typically made of wood (though some models are made of plastic)
- Tambourines range from 8" to 12" in diameter though a common diameter in public schools is 10"
- Single Row and Double Row jingles exist (Double Row may be the most common in public schools)
- Jingles are serrated or corrugated
- Jingle Slots: stacked; are off-set
- Holding area
- Hole for Tambourine Mount

## **TAMBOURINE HEAD**

Calfskin  
Goat  
Synthetic

- Tunable heads exist (though sometimes add more weight to the tambourine)
- Electric Heating Pad may be need for humid environments (also possibly a hair dryer)

## **TAMBOURINE MANUFACTURERS**

Black Swamp Percussion  
Grover Percussion  
Harlan  
Meinl  
Pearl  
Ron Vaughn  
Steve Weiss Music

Plastic headed tambourines do not produce as good (or characteristic) of a sound....

Recommendation in keeping tambourine in a bag (to protect the jingles)

## **TODAY'S - SELECTION of TAMBOURINES include-**

### **Black Swamp Percussion Tambourines**

Bright, "crunchy" and "cutting", articulate -

Dark, "wet"

Bright, "pure"

TD1, TS1, Chromium 25

TD2

TD3, TS3, German Silver

Mixed, complex sonority

Mixed jingles

"crunchy" , German Silver is high in range

TD4, TS4 Beryllium Copper

TC1 Chromium Bronze

TC2 Chromium Silver

### **Harlan Tambourine**

German Silver, Single Row Jingles

Sound: the difference in sound between tambourines rests primarily on the sound/type of the jingle installed in the frame.

### **Common Descriptions of sound include:**

Rustling, Metallic, Dry, Bright, Brilliant, Shimmer, Crunchy, Silvery, Festive, Dark, Sparkly, Cutting, Wet, Pure

## **ARTICULATION**

Dry

Crunchy

Wet

# **GENERAL SOUNDS/HANDS “ON” Portion**

*(\*utilizing various students, members of the audience)*

## **RESTING POSITION**

45-degree Angle vs. other angles (least possible way for jingles to make noise)

## **PLAYING TECHNIQUES**

Hold up at Chest Level with non-dominant hand

- Keep thumb on top with middle/ring fingers
- Play with Dominant Hand
- using “pinch of salt” method (a.k.a. “braced fingers” – thumb is pressed to forefinger)
- using varying number of fingers; fingertips
- use of knuckles
- use fist for accented or marcato passages
- elevation of tambourine, manipulate height based-on sound "projection"  
(for example hold lower for softer dynamic/less projection vs. hold higher for louder dynamics)
- explore various areas on the head
- using HAND - KNEE technique, alternating on your knee, leg for fast rhythmic passages
- rest tambourine in KNEE, play with fingertips
- hold tambourine upside down, play on edge of shell
- Don't rule out using HEEL to TOE method/using TOE to HEEL method (ala Pandeiro technique)

## **ROLLS**

- ROLLS: shake rolls – starting & stopping rolls (attacks/releases, accents)
- finger rolls – starting & stopping rolls (attacks/releases, accents)
- Follow the circumference
- Friction- alter the angle of finger as it approaches the tambourine head
- Definite Start and Stop of Rolls
- Shimmer Roll (vertical position)
- Extended Shake Roll (hold tambourine facing OUTward, hand holding tambourine produces the shake, and fingers  
on opposite hands produce a stroke in contrary motion to the hand holding the tambourine)
- use stand to mount
- stick roll (using two drumsticks on a mounted tambourine)
- angled pad on table “to mount”

## **TRANSITIONS**

- Be careful to quietly pick-up or set-down the instrument

**SELECTED TAMBOURINE RHYTHMICAL EXERCISES**  
(separate sheet)

**SELECTED TAMBOURINE EXCERPTS (with recording)**

**WIND BAND**

Bernstein, L. *Slava!*

\*Daugherty, Michael. *Flamingo*

Hanson, Howard. *Laude*

Iannaccone, A. "Sparkling Air Bursts with Dancing Sunlight" from *After a Gentle Rain*

Holst, G. "Intermezzo" From *First Military Suite in E<sup>b</sup>*

Mackey, John. *The Frozen Cathedral*

\*Mackey, John. *Undertow*

Nixon, Roger. *Fiesta Del Pacifico*

Reed, A. *Armenian Dance Part 1*

Schmitt, F. *Dionysiaques*

*Asphalt Cocktail*

**ORCHESTRA**

\*Berlioz, Hector. *Roman Carnival Overture*

Berlioz, Hector. *Benvenuto Cellini* (2 Tambourines)

Bizet, G. "Aragonaise" from *Carmen Suite No.1*

Britten, B. Movement IV from *Four Sea Interludes from Peter Grimes*

Chabrier. *Espana*

Dvorak, A. *Carnival Overture*

Ravel, Maurice. *Daphnis et. Chloe – Suite No. 2*

Rimsky-Korsakov, Nicolai. *Scheherazade*

Stravinsky, I. *Petroushka* (1947)

Tchaikovsky, P.I.

- "Danse Arab" from The Nutcracker Suite

- "Trepak" from The Nutcracker Suite

- *Italian Capriccio*

Von Weber, Carl Maria. Incidental Music for *Preciosa*

Von Weber, Carl Maria. *Oberon*

Wagner, Richard. *Das Liebesverbot* (Overture)

Wagner, Richard. *Lohengrin*

Wagner, Richard. *Tannhauser* (Paris Version)

\*played today with recording

## **RESOURCES FOR TAMBOURINE** (Selected)

Blades, James. *Percussion Instruments and Their History*. West Port, Connecticut: Bold Strummer Ltd. 1992.

Carroll, Raynor. *Orchestral Repertoire for Tambourine, Triangle & Castanets*. Pasadena, California: Batterie Music, 1998.

Cook, Gary. *Teaching Percussion*, with DVD. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Belmont, California: Thomson Schirmer, 2006.

Grover, Neil and Anthony J. Cirone and Garwood Whaley. *The Art of Tambourine and Triangle Playing*. Clearwater, Florida: Meredith Music Publications. 2001.

Payson, Al. *Techniques of Playing Bass Drum, Cymbals, and Accessories*. Payson Percussion Products. 1971.

Sivils, Charles Timothy. *Notable Percussion Excerpts of the Twentieth Century Wind-Band Repertoire*. Dissertation from the Ohio State University, 1995.

Stiers, Ben. *Tambourine Performance: Basic Concepts for Superior Performance*.

The Complete Percussionist (DVD). The United States Army Field Band

Vincent, David. *Basic Tambourine Technique*. Percussive Notes. Summer 1987, pgs.23-24.

## **ONLINE Resources** (Selected)

<https://gottrypercussion.com/tambourine-technique/>

<https://williamjamespercussion.com/tag/tambourine-exercises/>

<https://www.robknopper.com/blog/2017/8/27/how-to-warm-up-on-tambourine>

<https://vicfirth.zildjian.com/education/percussion-101-tambourine.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aq3vov8-fw8>



Daniel Smithiger is the Instructor of Percussion, and Director of Basketball Bands at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, in Edwardsville, Illinois. He teaches applied percussion, percussion ensemble, percussion methods, percussion history and literature, percussion pedagogy, sectionals, SIUe Steel, and directs the Basketball Bands. Since his appointment in the Fall 2010, Mr. Smithiger has grown the Percussion Studio, created the SIUe Steel Band, created the Percussion Institute at SIUe (Summer Percussion Camp), the Marching Percussion Festival at SIUe, created the Greater St. Louis Percussion Ensemble, and the SIUe Marimba Band. He has also initiated the Department's annual ILMEA Audition Clinics.

Dan Smithiger currently remains in demand as a performer, judge and clinician. He has taught and performed in Taiwan, Canada, England, France, Austria, Germany, Trinidad as well as across Arizona, Nevada, California, Texas, Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, and Tennessee. He has performed with the St. Louis Philharmonic, the St. Louis Wind Symphony, the Dubuque Symphony, the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, the San Angelo Symphony, the Midland-Odessa Symphony, the Mesa Symphony, the Tucson Symphony, the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra, Edwardsville Community Orchestra and the Flagstaff Festival of the Arts Orchestra. As a faculty member, he has performed solo recitals, and as a chamber musician on the campus of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, as well as with previous employment at McKendree University, and Angelo State University. Recently this Fall 2019, Mr. Smithiger toured with SIUe colleague Dawn Striker-Roberts (Oboe) and performed at Episcopal Collegiate School, Ouachita Baptist University in Arkansas.

His students have won and achieved distinction, recognition in competitions, and are teaching and performing across the United States. Mr. Smithiger is a Black Swamp Percussion Artist and Educator, and serves on the Education team for Sabian Cymbals and Remo. He serves as the coordinator and a judge in the Black Swamp Percussion Ensemble Showcase, and the BSP Solo Multiple Percussion Showcase. He has also served on the Education Committee for the Percussive Arts Society (2009-2019), hosted the Illinois Day of Percussion (2010) while at McKendree University, and been active judging in state chapters (Arizona, Illinois) of the Percussive Arts Society. He is a member of Phi Mu Alpha, honorary member of Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma. Mr. Smithiger earned his Bachelor of Music Education in Instrumental Music at Northern Arizona University. He completed his Master of Music and DMA Residency at the University of Arizona.

