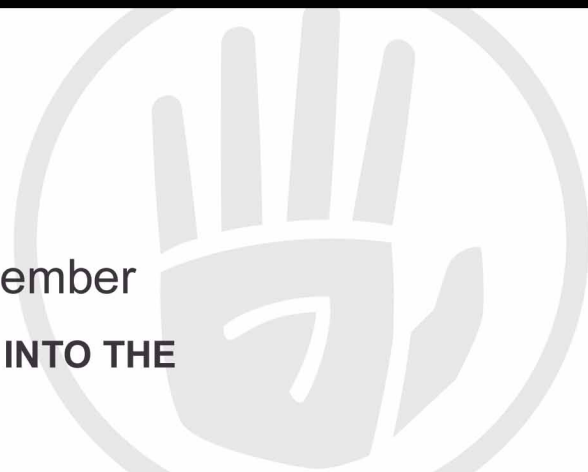




# Dr. Ryan C. Lewis

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## INTEGRATING WORLD MUSIC INTO THE PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE



**The Situation:** As technology, communications, and globalization continue to dissolve borders and make the world a smaller place, it is more important than ever that we get to know our global neighbors. One of the most thorough and effective ways to become acquainted with people of another culture is through music, since music and percussion, in particular, are common elements found in many cultures throughout the world. Music can be a clear a window into a people, their priorities, how they interact with those within and outside of their culture, their ideal societal structure, religious tenets, what makes them laugh and cry and dance and sing.

**The Dilemma:** Percussionists and music educators alike oftentimes feel pressure to integrate multiculturalism and world music in curricula, whether due to personal interest, student curiosity, audience edification, concert variety, or in an effort to satisfy educational goals and standards. Percussion performance and education already includes a seemingly infinite variety of instruments and techniques, thus it is quite fair to ask how world music can be effectively integrated into curricula and performances in the face of other musical and educational priorities.

**The Solution:** In lieu of creating and instituting new ensembles, courses, or multi-cultural experiences for students, integrating world music into an existing percussion ensemble program can be truly effective for educators, students, and audiences alike.

**The Obstacles:** Directors may be intimidated by the perceived obstacles involved in bringing world music into the percussion ensemble because (1) they are unfamiliar with literature available that includes world music influences, (2) are concerned about acquiring rare and expensive authentic instruments, (3) are hesitant to learn a body of new instrumental techniques,

and (4) are apprehensive to teach the music of a people with only a cursory knowledge of that culture.

**The Literature:** Fortunately, there exists a large body of published compositions for percussion ensemble that utilize already familiar and readily available Western instruments and techniques. These works allow educators and percussionists to become acquainted with another culture through its music and do not require experience as an ethnomusicologist (see lists of selected multicultural percussion ensemble works and reference sources below).

**The Examples:** Four compositions in particular serve as examples of the many works for percussion ensemble that meet the above criteria in that they incorporate authentic world music elements into works in Western notation, utilize common Western instruments, are accessible to beginning through advanced ensembles and percussionists, and provide the opportunity to experience the music of cultures from around the world.

1. *Hoo-Daiko* by Robert Damm (Japan): Taiko drumming originated in Japan in the mid-twentieth century and combines contemporary rhythms and ancient instruments. *Hoo-Daiko* utilizes six players total: five performing one each on tonal marching bass drums angled in chairs, cradle stands, or stadium stands, and one playing a set congas or bongos, Chinese cymbal, and concert bass drum. The piece takes its name from the tree used to make wooden taiko drumsticks, which for this work can be made from broom handles, hardwood dowels, or marching snare drum sticks. The composer uses marching bass drums to emulate the drum and rim sounds played on larger taiko drums, while the congas or bongos emulate the sound of the higher pitched drums associated with the style. There is a great deal of space for creativity, solo improvisation,



choreography, and use of the athletic stances and movements associated with taiko drum performances.

2. *Gending Bali* by Rick Kvistad (Indonesia): Gamelan ensembles are metal percussion orchestras most often associated with the Indonesian islands of Bali and Java. These groups often involve a large number of musicians performing on specially tuned metal bars and gongs in a wide variety of sizes. *Gending Bali* utilizes seven players and is notated in Western style, but utilizes specific note groupings found in gamelan music. Like *Hoo-Daiko*, this work is a terrific example of how Western instruments may be substituted for rare authentic instruments in that the role of Balinese genders, kendangs, and gongs are taken on by two vibraphones, marimba, two tom toms or timbales or congas, a small gong or temple block, and two timpani. Four players are stationed two each at two vibraphones and are called upon to strike bars with one hand and simultaneously dampen the previous note, which imitates not just the sound but also the actual technique used to perform on Balinese genders. The interlocking rhythms between the four players are common in gamelan ensembles, which often symbolize interlocking elements of Balinese culture: human and spiritual, traditional and modern, etc.

3. *Sonhando em Salvador* by Julie Hill (Brazil): The title of this work is Portuguese for “Dreaming of Salvador,” which is appropriate as the composition contains reflections on the composer’s experience in Salvador da Bahia, a Brazilian town north of Rio de Janeiro. Instead of being based on the fast rhythms associated with traditional samba school groups, this piece is inspired by a style known as samba reggae, which features Brazilian, African, and Caribbean elements, a slower tempo, and a drums only instrumentation. Though the six parts were composed with authentic Brazilian instruments in mind such as the timbau, repique, tarol, and three surdos, effective substitutions can be made using various combinations of djembes, congas, tom toms, snare drums, and floor toms. The traditional rhythms involved are grouped in repeated patterns and phrases that allow for dancing, choreography, doubling or tripling of parts, and singing in Portuguese.

4. *Afro-Amero* by Phil Faini (Multicultural Fusion): While more similar to standard percussion ensemble concert works than the previous examples in terms of instrumentation, techniques, and notation, *Afro-Amero* blends

various world music influences rather than focusing on a single cultural style. The work represents a fusion of cultural musical elements from Africa, South America, and North America in that it features the West African agbekor bell pattern, Latin clave rhythm, Brazilian surdo ostinato, and American rock back beat drum set groove. Eight players utilize standard techniques on standard instruments, such as xylophone, marimba, vibraphone, chimes, timpani, triangle, two cowbells, bell tree, six tom toms, maracas, snare drum, two suspended cymbals, hi-hat, tam tam, and bass drum. *Afro-Amero* is a wonderful example of musical syncretism in that it is representative of the combination of multiple musical influences occurring today in both concert and popular music genres.

## SELECTED MULTICULTURAL PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE REPERTOIRE

Title – Composer – Number of Players

### AFRICA

*Atenteben* – Bob Becker 7  
*Frembe* – John Bergamo 4  
*African Song* – William Cahn 7  
*Millet Music* – Matthew Davidson Variable  
*Afro-Amero* – Phil Faini 8  
*Highlife* – Phil Faini 10-12  
*African Search* – Steven Kastuck 8  
*Variation on a Ghanian Theme* – Daniel Levitan 3  
*A La Nanigo* – Mitchell Peters 5  
*Ogoun Badagris* – Christopher Rouse 5  
*Akadinda Trio* – Emmanuel Sejourne 3  
*African Welcome Piece* – Michael Udow 12  
*African Sketches* – J. Kent Williams 4  
*Shona Celebration* – B. Michael Williams 8  
*Three Shona Songs* – B. Michael Williams 8

### AFRO-LATINO

*Ritmica No. 5* – Amadeo Roldan 11  
*Ritmica No. 6* – Amadeo Roldan 11  
*Ogoun Badagris* – Christopher Rouse 5  
*El Cumbanchero* – Phil Faini 12  
*Four Comments for Latin Hand Instruments* – Larry Snider 4  
*Trio for Ogoun* – N. Scott Robinson 6  
*A La Nanigo* – Mitchell Peters 5

### ASIA

*Three Asiatic Dances* – George Frock 6

## **BRAZIL**

*Chichi Chichi Samba* – Jose Bethancourt/Peters 9  
*Brazilian Street Dance* – Thomas Brown 7  
*Rudi's Batuque* – Julie Hill 6+  
*Sonhando em Salvador* – Julie Hill 6+  
*Tres Miniaturas Brasileiras* – Osvaldo Lacerda 4  
*A La Samba* – Mitchell Peters 6  
*Samba de Verno* – Stephen Primatic 7  
*Cenas Brasileiras (Brazilian Scenes)* – Ney Rosauro 4  
*Fred No Frevo* – Ney Rosauro 4  
*Mitos Brasileiros (Brazilian Myths)* – Ney Rosauro 4  
*Samba* – Ney Rosauro 6

## **CARIBBEAN**

*City Soca* – Arthur Lipner 8  
*Caribbean Festival* – David Mancini 7

## **CHINA**

*Ancient Temple Gardens* – William Cahn 5  
*The Swords of Moda-Ling* – Gordon Peters 7

## **ECUADOR**

*Vamos a Ecuador* – Steve Chavez 4

## **HAWAII**

*Ku-Ka-Illimoku* – Christopher Rouse 4

## **INDIA**

*Mudra* – Bob Becker 5  
*Palta* – Bob Becker 7  
*Piru Bole* – John Bergamo Variable  
*Fantasy on a Raga* – Ronald Keezer 8  
*Six Invocations to the Svava Mandala* – Walter Mays 13

## **INDONESIA**

*Gending Bali* – Rick Kvistad 7

## **JAPAN**

*Taiko Night* – Daniel William Boothe 11+  
*Japanese Impressions* – Anthony Cirone 5  
*Hoo-Daiko* – Robert Damm 6  
*Taiko* – Scott Harding 8  
*Marimba Spiritual* – Minoru Miki 4  
*Japanese Overture* – Ney Rosauro 7-8

## **MEXICO**

*Escale Mexicaine* – Yannig Beauperin/Guillot 3  
*Mexican Marimba Arrangements* – Ruth Jeanne 4-5

## **PUERTO RICO**

*Three Puerto Rican Songs* – Morris Lang 6

## **RUSSIA**

*Balalaika: Russian Folk Song Suite* – Traditional/Cahn 5

## **MULTICULTURAL FUSION**

*Tabla-Tahmeel No. 1* – Halim El-Dabh Variable  
*Hindi-Yaat No. 1* – Halim El-Dabh 5  
*World Beat Sonata* – Robert Damm 6  
*Hot Pants* – Joseph Krygier Variable  
*Friends* – David MacBride 4  
*Taqsim* – Scott Meister 7  
*Alone or Together* – Eugene Novotney Variable  
*Cross* – Eugene Novotney Variable  
*Puzzle Piece* – Rich O'Meara 3  
*Lift Off!* – Russell Peck 3  
*Nagoya Marimbas* – Steve Reich 2  
*Mirage* – N. Scott Robinson 2  
*Bear Talk* – N. Scott Robinson 2  
*Music for Cross Cultures No. 1* – Michael Udow 12

**Dr. Ryan C. Lewis is Assistant Professor of Percussion at Ouachita Baptist University where he teaches Applied Percussion, Percussion Techniques, and Music History courses and directs the Percussion Ensemble, Tiger Marching Band, and Tiger Steel Band.**



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