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Fine Arts Center Percussion III 2008-2009 Course Syllabus

School Name: The Greenville Fine Arts Center
Course Name: Percussion III
Instructor: Gary A. Robinson, D.M.A.
Office Room Number: Suite #126
Phone number and extension: 355-2568
Email Address: grobinso@greenville.k12.sc.us
Class Time/Room Number: 1:15-2:10 m-f

Course Description

Percussion III is open to musicians with significant accomplishment in at least two of the five major areas of classical percussion (snare drum, drum set, timpani, two-mallet marimba, and four-mallet marimba) through those with a broad knowledge of classical percussion in general. Previous, successful study in the techniques and literature of these instruments is required, and training in music theory is strongly recommended. Students in Advanced Percussion may choose to deepen their knowledge of an already familiar instrument through intensive study or build fundamental skills on a less familiar instrument. Simultaneous study of at least two instrumental areas, however, is required. Advanced Percussion students may also design a broad study of all five areas, covering a number of semesters, in preparation for a college or university major in percussion. The instructor must approve all courses of study. Students in Advanced Percussion also gain knowledge of the minor percussion instruments (cymbals, bass drum, triangle, tambourine, etcetera) through the rehearsal and performance of percussion ensemble music. Classes include group, instruction, individual instruction, and studio practice time.

Percussion III Summary: 2008-2009 Students, Goals, Materials, and Timeline

Percussion III: Zach Purdun & Robert Mullis (Jaron Ferrer's plans are below)

Overall goal: to develop and apply beginning to intermediate skills on two and four-mallet marimba, timpani, and percussion ensemble performance

Materials Zach Purdun and Robert Mullis will be expected to have on hand and provide:

- Set of four matched, medium-hard marimba mallets
- At least one pair of medium-hard timpani mallets
- Wessels, Mark. *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*. Mark Wessels Publications (www.mwpublications.com)
- Howarth, Gifford. *Simply Four*. Tap Space Publications (www.tapSPACE.com)

It is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that the Purdun and Mullis families look into purchase of a new student marimba or a used marimba from sources like eBay for at-home practice. As they more proficient, varied, and sophisticated in their marimba – and timpani – playing, the 55-minute practice session created by the daily FAC percussion class will **QUICKLY** become inadequate. The combination of marimba, timpani, and percussion ensemble practice should rapidly approach a minimum of 90 minutes daily. As stated in the caption about practicing above, good practice sessions commonly encompass two to three hours.

Semester I Goals: Firmly establish elementary-intermediate marimba technique, reading, and performance skills; establish elementary-level timpani skills; apply accumulated technical and musical skills in the rehearsal and performance of percussion ensemble music. Components include:

- Two-Mallet Marimba: Continue studying and complete Mark Wessels' *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*; continue major scales and arpeggios
- Two-mallet Marimba Ensemble Work: prepare duets from Roger Faulmann's *Bach for Bars* and/or Thomas Brown's *Mallet Duets* for performance in October and January recitals
- Timpani: Continue technique work from Spring '08; begin and complete exercises located in the back of Mark Wessels' *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*
- Additional timpani method materials as well as solo performance works from FAC's music library

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- Percussion ensemble: works TBA for up to six percussionists will be assigned for performance in quarterly recitals
- Concert/Field Trip to Eau Claire High School, Columbia, SC; Friday, October 10, 2008 TENTATIVE
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 1; Friday, October 17, 2008 FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM: TENTATIVE
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 2; Wednesday, January 14, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM

Semester II Goals: Continue intermediate two-mallet marimba and timpani skills; begin and develop, through the level of “advanced beginner,” four-mallet marimba technique, reading, and performance of repertoire; continue intermediate to advanced level percussion performance skills. Components include:

- Two-Mallet Marimba: Continue studying using method materials provided by the Fine Arts Center (probably texts by George Lawrence Stone or Mitchell Peters), minor scales and arpeggios
- Four-mallet marimba: begin studies in Gifford Howarth’s *Simply Four*; possibly prepare performance etudes from this text for performance in March Recital No. 3
- Learn and perform solo TBA (possible Mitchell Peter’s *Yellow After the Rain*) for May Recital No. 4
- Timpani: continue formal study using Saul Goodman’s *Modern Method for Timpani* (text available from FAC music library)
- Additional timpani method materials as well as solo performance works from FAC’s music library
- Percussion ensemble: works TBA for up to six percussionists will be assigned for performance in quarterly recitals
- Generation-to-Generation Concert, Thursday, March 23, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:00 PM
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 3; Thursday, March 12, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 4; Wednesday, May 13, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM
- Fine Arts Center Showcase; Friday, May 15

Percussion III: Jaron Ferrer

Overall goal: develop foundational technique and necessary repertoire for successful college auditions in January-March of 2009; continue development of these skills in preparation for college

Jaron will be expected to have on hand and provide:

- Set of four matched, medium-hard marimba mallets
- Cooperman “Nick Petrella” snare drum sticks
- At least one pair of medium-hard timpani mallets (three pairs: soft, medium, and hard, would be preferable)
- Wessels, Mark. *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*. Mark Wessels Publications (www.mwpublications.com)
- Howarth, Gifford. *Simply Four*. Tap Space Publications (www.tapSPACE.com)
- Wilcoxon, Charlie: *The All American Drummer 150 Rudimental Solos*, Ludwig Music Publishing Company
- Anthony Cirone: *Portraits in Rhythm*, Alfred Publications
- Other materials TBA

It is STRONGLY RECOMMENDED that Jaron and family look into purchase of a new student marimba or a used marimba from sources like eBay for at-home practice. Jaron’s daily practice should average two-three hours daily during Semester I.

Semester I Goals: Overall goal: develop foundational technique and necessary repertoire for successful college auditions in January-March of 2009; prepare for possible All-County Band audition in January 2009

- Master 12-16 rudimental snare drum solos from Charlie Wilcoxon’s *All-American Drummer*; choose and perfect one for performance in college auditions and for All-County Band Auditions
- Master 8-10 concert snare drum etudes from Anthony Cirone’s *Portraits in Rhythm*; choose and perfect one for performance in college audition
- Continue timpani technique work from Spring ’08; begin and complete exercises located in the back of Mark Wessels’ *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*
- Additional timpani method materials as well as solo performance works from FAC’s music library
- Continue two-mallet marimba work (technique, reading, snc scales) with texts provided by the Fine Arts Center
- Prepare first movement of JS Bach (ed. Morris Goldenberg) *Violin Concerto in A Minor* for college auditions
- Begin four-mallet marimba studies in Gifford Howarth’s *Simply Four*
- Prepare Rich O’Meara’s *Tune for Mary O* for college auditions
- Percussion ensemble: works TBA for up to six percussionists will be assigned for performance in quarterly recitals
- Concert/Field Trip to Eau Claire High School, Columbia, SC; Friday, October 10, 2008 TENTATIVE
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 1; Friday, October 17, 2008 FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM: TENTATIVE
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 2; Wednesday, January 14, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM (Note: you will perform as much of your college audition repertoire as the program allows)

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Semester II Goals: continue development of, especially, two and four-mallet marimba skills, timpani skills, and percussion ensemble performance skills in anticipation of college in fall 2009. Components include:

- Perform college auditions
- Greenville-All-County Band Auditions: January 15, 2009, Mauldin HS
- All-County Band Clinic, February 2009 TBA
- Continue study of marimba and timpani with study and performance materials appropriate to your level and motivation
- Percussion ensemble: works TBA for up to six percussionists will be assigned for performance in quarterly recitals
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 3; Thursday, March 12, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM
- Generation-to-Generation Concert, Thursday, April 23, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:00 PM
- Winds & Percussion Recital No. 4; Wednesday, May 13, 2009, FAC Recital Hall, 7:30 PM
- Fine Arts Center Showcase; Friday, May 15

Fee

The Fine Arts Center asks for a \$25 fee from each participating student. This fee will **come back to students** in the form of solo music and additional materials purchased throughout the year.

Materials And Equipment

There is no end to how many mallets a percussionist can own. Differing models (and even iterations) of timpani and marimba mallets will each elicit a unique character of sound; mature players will own numerous models to realize their artistic intentions. Though percussionists are seldom expected to own their own bass drums, xylophones or tympani, they ARE expected to have mallets to at least play them! At home, students should have whatever is needed for home practice, such a drum pad and access to a drum set. Families who look forward to their student majoring in percussion should seriously consider the purchase of a good practice marimba, such as the Adams 4.3 octave “Soloist” marimba with Padouk Bars (model MSPV43). Available at a competitive price from a local instrument dealer or from one of the online companies listed above, the Adams costs about a much as a moderate quality flute or clarinet, and represents an excellent and lasting value.

All Students Are Expected To Practice At Home

Advanced Percussion students know this already. There are no exceptions to this “law” because the physical and neurological development that is a part of playing an instrument requires a great deal individual problem solving and repetition. Two hours daily – combining studio time at the Fine Arts Center and home practice – is a good benchmark. (When I have the “liberty” of practicing as much as I need to, I personally find that three hours of practice a day insures that I will improve noticeably.)

Tentative Course Outline: See Above

Major Assignments and Projects

- Each week, students will perform parts of ongoing projects for each other, and will receive a grade based upon incremental achievements towards their goals.
- At the end of the first and third quarters, each student will be responsible to perform, for his/her peers, a program consisting of materials representative of the preceding nine weeks, and will receive a grade based upon their achievements. Performance in the quarterly recital may be substituted for this in-class performance.
- At the end of the second and fourth quarters, each student will be responsible to perform, for his/her peers, a program consisting of materials as representative of the preceding semester. This performance will be counted as a semester exam. Performance in the quarterly recital may be substituted for this in-class performance.

Grades are weighted as follows:

Term: weekly assignments = 80%, term test or recital performance = 20%

Semester I: Term I = 40%, Term II = 40%, semester or recital performance = 20%

Semester I: Term III = 40%, Term IV = 40%, semester or recital performance = 20%

Final: Semester I = 50% and Semester II = 50%

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Other

Attendance and Tardy Policy: refer to Fine Arts Center handbook

Classroom Rules and Expectations:

- Report on time to each class. Please let me know in advance if you must miss the class for any reason.
- Each class, bring all appropriate sticks and mallets, your class anthology, other current class materials, and a pencil.
- If you are asked to work on your own or in a small group, use your time wisely and constructively.
- No food or beverages – with the exception of water – are allowed at the Fine Arts Center
- Be kind and thoughtful to your classmates.
- Strive always to do and to be your best

Plan for Routine Communication With Parents:

- Occasional e-letter sent to my students and families with assignments, schedules, and notices of events
- Posting of the above and additional information on my blog: <http://www.facorchestra.blogspot.com/>
- **Quarterly Fine Arts Center Newsletter is mailed to all parents of Fine Arts Center students.**
- Parents are contacted promptly in the event of academic or disciplinary problems.
- A log of parent phone calls is maintained in teacher's office.