

Royall Drummes & Martiall Musick



by
"Tabourot"
Second Edition

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Benjamin Clark. *Drum Book 1797*. From unpublished MS owned by the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA. Printed by permission of the Society. Faces page 142

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FANFARE AND ROLL-OFF

a.k.a.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1930s an early music revival has been occurring in the U.S. and abroad. "Early music", a term commonly used for music of the Middle Ages through the early classical period, is now an accepted part of the musical mainstream. Although there is apparently no shortage of tabor drums and tambourines at places like renaissance fairs, comparatively little has been written about the role of percussion in early music.

Percussionists who like early music and would like to follow early performance practice when performing it are often frustrated by the fact that so much of the extant information is in obscure and unexpected places. Often it is buried in non-musical sources. The entire subject of early percussion is usually treated superficially—if at all—by the Official Early Music Club. The situation is not improved by the fact that the Official Percussion Club often ignores early music along with many folk and ethnic instruments which would be appropriate in it.

Combined with these problems has been the virtual inundation of percussion sections with vinyl heads, a real advantage for bands which must perform outdoors in many kinds of weather. What is good for sports events may be very bad for early music. Vinyl timpani heads, for example, can generate a fog of bass tone and muddy articulation which can completely ruin a piece of contrapuntal baroque music. A person accustomed to the sports-driven atmosphere of a high school band can find the management of natural skin heads confusing, especially if the weather will not cooperate.

The difficulties of purely manual tuning with hand screws on baroque timpani, the scarcity of good modern sticks for early drums, and the current frequent insistence on matched grip for snare drum (not an easy way to play if one side of the drum is high as in traditional style), can all work against developing good historic performance practice.

What happens if a few drummers and a piccolo or trumpet playing friend (actually it should be fife and natural trumpet) are invited to participate in a patriotic or historical occasion, perform in a baroque cantata orchestra, or provide background music for historic drama? If they genuinely wish to work toward historical accuracy they must often help themselves.



More often than not non-percussionists are in charge of these occasions. Some will tolerate—or even request!—musical anachronisms in percussion which they would never allow in other instruments. Often erroneous assumptions are made about early percussion performance practice, i.e., that it was so simple anyone could have done it, that it was restricted to noisy outdoor occasions, etc. To percussionists who wish to be both historical and musical such experiences can be very frustrating. They frequently must do their own research, a difficult enough job. Sometimes they must try to educate the leader about early percussion problems and performance practice without appearing impolite or patronizing.

Royall Drummes & Martiall Musick was written to help modern percussionists begin learning to think like historic percussionists who played early military, civic and court music. The relative scarcity of sources compared with those for other instruments can make one feel profoundly insecure. But there are more of them available than many people realize, and they can be accessed!

Improvisation, a normal part of early performance practice, will be covered. It is not like having some miraculous out-of-body experience in which you meet a mysterious spiritual being who teaches you to play baroque military jazz. On the contrary, it is a fairly logical process. The hard part is learning to edit the burgeoning flow of ideas generated by your imagination.

Reading lists will be supplied and suitable places to shop for instruments, raw materials and music will be recommended. If you have not done so already, go to your local library and get acquainted with Interlibrary Loan (ILL). Most American libraries are on the ILL network, and the ILL wind has blown so many good things this author's way that I cannot recommend it enough. Even if you live in a very small city, you can access material from huge university libraries on ILL. You can also get photocopies from works restricted to library use either free or for a nominal fee.

If you a percussionist and are not on the World Percussion Network (WPN), by all means contact the Percussive Arts Society in Lawton, OK and get on it. This will enable you to brainpick any other percussionist in the USA who is willing to have his/her brain picked.

Best of all, get on the Internet! This incredibly efficient tool has a few "early music" sites which are woefully deficient in early percussion information. At press time there is apparently only one historic percussion site: <http://www.ccsi.com/~bobs>. In the folk music department there is some good material on things like Celtic and Brazilian instruments available on Worldwide Web. But the 'Net needs all the serious early percussionists it can get!

An underlying problem in writing any factual book is walking a fine line between covering a subject thoroughly and rewriting what has already been written. Certain things will not be treated in depth. These include an exhaustive study of every detail of the Camp Duty since it has been done very well by others. This book will not explain basic music theory, teach snare drum rudiments or cover fundamentals like timpani tuning. Some excellent things have already been written, and a list of some of the most basic and outstandingly good ones is provided.

A brand-new section on the historical development of snare drum rudiments and national variations in



early playing styles has been added to the second edition.

Royall Drummes & Martiall Musick will be quite detailed regarding the behavior of calf heads and nitty-gritty techniques for dealing with short timpani tuning times using archaic tuning systems. It includes various strategies for avoiding split heads, loss of collar, excess humidity, lack of moisture and other nameless horrors that go bump in the night. It contains hints about playing a Turkish style bass drum, shopping for historic cymbals and advice on constructing your own Turkish crescent or jingling johnny.

This book will furnish a basic framework of information about the uses and misuses of percussion in early military music along with guides and suggestions for further learning. It will also speculate about such things as where some of our rudiments came from and reasons why they may have developed as they did, and whether jazz may have originated at least in part within the military context. (In other words, questions which may never be answered. But if no one ever asks the questions, this is almost a guarantee that they never will be.)

The reader will be shown some problem-solving techniques and strategies which may be useful in doing research to create accurate historic re-enactments, provide authentic music for historic drama, etc. These include such arcana as deciphering almost unreadable early drum music—or at least one author's attempt to do so! Other problems explored include the following: Were the uniforms portrayed in a historic battle painting accurate? Why did a regiment engaged in an American Revolutionary battle fire at the wrong time? Was the person in an eighteenth century battle painting identified as the regimental drummer by a modern art critic in fact the drummer? Not everyone may agree with the solutions, and that is their right.

Regarding the Great Grip Controversy. People usually adopt the grip they do for snare drum sticks because they were taught traditional military grip or modern matched grip. They do not normally select these grips because they are stupid. When a drum is hung from one point, one side is high, making traditional military grip (stick in the crook of the thumb, resting on the ring finger) more comfortable and the player less prone to elbow the person on one's left. When a drum is level, modern grip is quite comfortable.

If you decide to switch to traditional grip for early music, there will be some initial discomfort. Simply set aside some regular time to practice traditional grip. Don't rush the process; take a break if you're hurting or tired. One very good thing about switching to traditional grip is that so far as we know early military music was not played over 120 mm; therefore you can afford to be patient with yourself. (You will also need patience for dealing with people who insist you're using the "wrong" grip, meaning not *their* grip!)

The author and The Tactus Press hope that *Royall Drummes & Martiall Musick* will help you on your trip into the time warp of old military music and baroque timpani playing. It is meant to help you have a good beginning and start feeling comfortable in a new place which can be full of wonderful sounds, challenging music and interesting reading. Enjoy!



which went through many reprints, survive. Bartholomew's book was translated into English by John of Trevisa in 1398 and became not only the first English work containing any solid musical information but, supposedly, the first book printed on English paper by Wynkyn de Worde about 1495. [9]

The word "tabor" may have been a generic word among musically unsophisticated people for any drumlike object, tambourine included, which was not a naqqara. Learned people familiar with musical writings apparently distinguished between several drum types because they neither looked nor sounded alike. When played alone, the tabor was usually played with one stick although the use of two sticks is not completely unknown. English tabors were usually fairly shallow, whereas the Provençal tabor of southern France (*tambourin de Provence* or *tambour de Provence*) was deep. [10]

Since deep drum notes are non-directional and audible over great distances, it seems reasonable that large drums were probably used for public announcements and outdoor events such as parades, tournaments and military engagements. Indoors such drums would have been overwhelming, leaving the smaller tabor a likely choice for indoor dancing and processional music.

Very large drums date back to ancient Sumeria, and James Blades feels that Isidore's symphonia could have been an early form of bass drum. [11] The medieval Middle East also had very large drums. Rabbi Meshullam Ben R. Menahem of Volterra wrote in 1481 of a civic greeting ceremony for the Turkish king's brother in a city called Ramleh (formerly Gath), about six miles from Jaffa. Writes Rabbi Meshullam: "... by command of the King all the lords of Jerusalem came to greet him ... besides the citizens who came to see him, and they struck on timbrels more than four cubits round; and they have no musical instruments but this." [12] A cubit, approximately the length of a human forearm, is considered to be 17-21 inches. If Rabbi Meshullam was referring to the diameter, these timbrels would indeed have been enormous—68 to 84 inches. But if he meant the circumference, something more conservative—10.8 to 13.4 inches—would be likely.

An early sixteenth century painting by Vittore Carpaccio (1450-1525) shows a typically Oriental outdoor band including a large Turkish drum, apparently about 24 inches diameter judging from the scale of figures, being played in the same manner as the modern eastern European tapan—a heavy beater in one hand and a lighter switch-like stick in the other, as does a pen and ink drawing of a group of Turkish musicians by Agostino Tassi (1580-1644). [13]

Animals large enough to provide heads for oversized drums were probably available from quite early. Juliet Clutton-Brock, a principal scientific officer of the British Museum's Department of Zoology, observes that although in the early stages of domestication animals tend without exception to be smaller than wild ones, once domestication is accomplished they either remain smaller than feral animals or become much larger. She also notes an imbalance in growth rate of various physical parts, probably induced by stress-related hormonal changes. [14]

Georges Duby corroborates this for the English sheep industry, in which Cistercian monks played a leading role with their enlightened animal husbandry methods. He observes that from the thirteenth century, parchments of increasing size are preserved to the present time in muniment rooms. [15] One



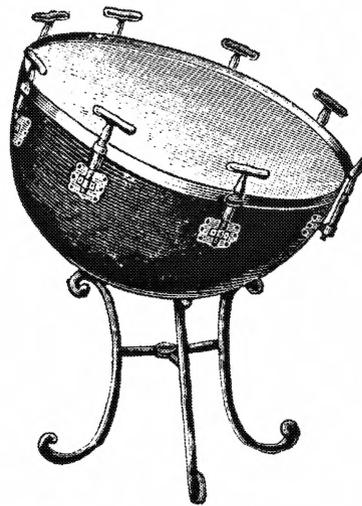
14. Ibid., pp. 23-24.

15. Ibid., p. 71.

16. Ibid., p. 62.

17. Ibid., pp. 56, 59-60.

18. Ibid., pp. 72, 74-75.





MAKING BAROQUE MUSIC WITH BAROQUE TIMPANI

I think we just look We find what we find. Then we think about it. - Lt. Joe Leaphorn, Navajo Tribal Police. Tony Hillerman. A Thief of Time.

Often when people think of baroque works using timpani, a few major oratorios and cantatas come to mind first, followed by mental pictures of trumpeters and a timpanist, all on horseback, playing military music for kings and noblemen. Except for the festive cantatas and the like, church music is usually associated with organ and choir. Chamber music usually means strings and soft woodwinds with harpsichord and viola da gamba on continuo.

While these may have been customary, they by no means represented the total picture, which was far more complex and interesting. Altenburg, in his late eighteenth century treatise on military music, writes in the chapter on timpani that they normally played from written music in processional fanfares, “symphonies” (instrumental interludes in church music), chamber music and opera. Playing extemporaneously without music or improvising, he writes, could be done in interesting ways by a competent player. Altenburg further notes that the Germans were exceptionally skilled at this.[1]

Timpani in chamber music are well known to lovers of modern music from such works as Bartok’s *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* and *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion*, Chavez’ *Toccata for Percussion*, etc.

There are small baroque chamber works by Gottfried Finger (fl. 1685) and James Paisible (c. 1660-1721) in which timpani are thoroughly proper. The thought of timpani in baroque chamber music may leave some aghast, but we need to remember that not only were baroque timpani much smaller and shallower than modern ones, but most baroque orchestras were considerably smaller. In other words, the English baroque orchestra was almost a chamber ensemble by today’s size standards,[2] and the timpani of the period suited it. Elsewhere we have noted the variability in size of baroque—and later—European timpani, which were not standardized as closely as modern sets.

To think about baroque timpani usage intelligently, we must think about what baroque people meant by the term “orchestra.” In truth a “large” orchestra in the modern sense was quite rare in the period. Occasionally groups of 120 and more instrumentalists, combined with large choruses, are recorded for the period, but these were organized for large music festivals presented for charitable fundraising.[3]

Bach's orchestras were usually quite small. In Muhlhausen, according to the surviving documentation, the orchestra for the performance of Cantata No. 71, *Gott ist mein Konig*, February 4, 1708, used three trumpets and timpani, two flutes and cello, two oboes and bassoon, two violins, viola and violone, a total of fourteen players.[4] For Weimar, of which three lists survive, Bach had available three violinists, one violonist, a bassoon, six trumpeters and a timpanist. The chapel was a poor concert venue, and during his tenure at Weimar Bach only used timpani once, in Cantata No. 59. Brass was rare in Weimar works as were flutes and oboes.[5] At the Calvinist court of Cothen, there were eight chamber musicians (violin, cello, flute, viola da gamba and oboe). Four part time musicians were occasionally available as were three trumpeters and a timpanist. These totaled sixteen.[6]

At Leipzig Bach's forces were normally not over twelve musicians, but for festive occasions, which included trumpets and timpani, the orchestra had a maximum of 24 players.[7] Even in the D major orchestral suites, which used a stronger orchestra than customary for Bach, similar numbers were used.[8] Even during Haydn and Beethoven's periods, "large" orchestras (apparently around 60!) experienced ensemble problems according to extant records.[9]

The words "timpani" and "orchestra" did not refer to the same things 200-300 years ago that they do now! Neither were concert venues the same; they were smaller and more acoustically alive. According to Zaslaw the principal factors in determining orchestral size for baroque and early classical music were clarity, flexibility, balance, performance venue and sometimes economics.[10]

Trumpet authority Don Smithers had some interesting thoughts on the Finger and Paisible music. In a 1967 article in *MUSIC & LETTERS* Smithers writes of British Museum Add. MS. 49599, containing works for trumpet by Barratt, Eccles, Finger, Paisible and Daniel Purcell.[11] He notes that timpani parts are missing from these works, although timpani are normally used in German trumpet works and might have been expected in the Finger and Paisible as well as a Purcell trumpet sonata.[12]

A few years later, in his major work on the baroque trumpet, another version (Brit. Mus. Hirsch MS. II. 749) of Sonata 18 from Add. MS.49599 is mentioned as the Overture by Daniel Purcell to Congreve's masque, *The Judgement of Paris*. This contains a timpani part.[13]

Does this mean that a timpani part would have been normal in the trumpet collection? That it was not written in the other manuscript but that a skilled improviser was available who used the available music as a guide? We cannot be entirely sure, given the lackadaisical approach to orchestration normal for the period. But on examining modern editions of the other works, we can observe that there were indeed sections in which small historic timpani, properly played with regard for environmental acoustics and baroque performance practice, would have been thoroughly appropriate.

Writers on early timpani agree that the lowest trumpet part was used as a guide for the timpanist. Baroque timpani parts period characteristically reinforced the trumpet parts and provided a darker timbre to set off the bright trumpet sound. It would be a mistake to assume that one can mechanically pick the tonic and dominant notes out of the bottom trumpet part and simply play them. One needs to carefully consider what is musically fitting.



A modern baroque trumpet specialist, Crispian Steele-Perkins, has pointed out something very important about times when assuming that trumpets *must* have timpani is incorrect. Steele-Perkins writes that the English "flat trumpet," which was not geometrically flat but rather was able to play chromatically with the aid of a slide, was a rather soft, mournful instrument. Henry Purcell used the flat trumpet in his funeral music for Queen Mary in 1695. Although the Lord Chamberlain's records indicate that a pair of timpani and twenty-five drums were used during the actual outdoor funeral procession, Steele-Perkins does not believe that they were used with the flat trumpet music. His reason, very logically, is based on the fact that truly first-class modern reproductions of these instruments produce a soft, funereal sound which would be totally overwhelmed by loud percussion forces.[14]

Although there are many modern editions of various works by Purcell which employ timpani, Steele-Perkins observes that no actual autograph scores for Purcell timpani parts are available for works after 1692. The "Welcome Song" for James II's birthday (1687) also had a part added later by someone other than Purcell. In general, slow, legato, rather pensive music in minor keys—even if played by trumpets—should indicate that timpani are not appropriate during the Purcell period.

One point at which the author diverges from Steele-Perkins' thoroughly plausible observations is his statement that Purcell's extant autograph music "...does not entitle us to assume that musically illiterate drummers were habitually let loose ... to improvise parts ... drum improvisation was not the province of art music, but of equestrian ballet and the country dance." [15] This requires some qualifying. Given the comparatively late development of orchestration, parts for many instruments—strings, woodwinds, brass—were not necessarily written out in detailed fashion. It is more likely, the author feels, that when there was a timpanist available who was musically sophisticated enough to improvise in keeping with the composer's musical intentions, he was probably allowed to do so. When less creative timpanists were available, writing out a timpani part would be more logical. It is also unlikely that first-class London musicians, which the King's Musick and London waits apparently were, were musically illiterate. The provincial Norwich waits received money in 1533-1534 to help them learn to read written music, and according to a respected modern authority, the London musicians could hardly have lagged behind their country cousins.[16]

There are times when antiphonal effects between trumpet and timpani are almost mandatory. One case concerns rests which create longer than normal phrase endings such as in the Modena trumpet piece provided in the examples. In such a place an answer or echo works very well. Sometimes the timpani answer to the trumpet statement should be soft rather than loud.

A controversy currently exists regarding whether it is permissible to completely rewrite the timpani parts to some early music such as Beethoven and add other pitches that would have been available to Beethoven if modern pedal timpani had been available. If done simply as an attempt to have timpani playing more notes, it is probably a stupid idea. Should they be? Were all historic timpani parts dictated solely by relatively slow tensioning? Unlikely! More likely because of the auditory boredom caused by the over-use of a given instrumental timbre.

Things were not that simple historically. In the Pfundt era, machine tuning apparently encouraged

composers to write more passages involving changes for timpani, but the process had actually begun earlier. There was evidently composer-timpanist interaction. Pfundt himself changed tunings if he felt the composer had erred, and Gollmick, the respected Frankfurt timpanist of the same period, simply omitted undesirable notes. It is worth mentioning that Pfundt was also a well trained musician as well as the best timpanist of his day.[17]

Gollmick, in fact, objected to what he deemed overuse of timpani by some composers and especially disliked contemporary Italian timpani writing. He omitted entire passages which he considered musically illogical or wrong and was apparently supported in his judgments by the conductor, Guhr.[18]

One should keep in mind that the musical world did not pounce joyfully on machine-tuned timpani and immediately begin composing music which used their capabilities properly. The situation was far more muddled and complex. Machine timpani had in fact been around for nearly a generation before they began substantially affecting composition practices.

One possible factor behind this was that by the late nineteenth century composers were specialists who composed rather than also being conductors as was more common earlier. The lack of direct orchestral contact may have tended to put them out of touch with technical developments; machine tuning may also have spread slowly enough that composers felt they simply could not count on their presence.[19]

In the Paisible and Finger works, along with many other early works including trumpets for which no timpani part *per se* was included, stylistic devices like iterative figures in the harmonic series which revolve around tonic and dominant sonorities, cadential climaxes, etc., can be used as tests for appropriateness. There are also works extant by Lully and others which can be used as stylistic models.

By Beethoven`s time, orchestrative conventions and specifications were becoming sufficiently exact that it is possible to say with more confidence that the timpani parts as written were probably what he wanted. It may go too far to say that anything committed to paper by a musical immortal is sacrosanct. Even immortals make mistakes and have bad days and inept copyists! On the other hand the author has read of attempts by some editors and conductors to actually introduce diatonic melodies for more than two timpani into certain Beethoven symphonies which I consider bizarre and totally alien to Beethoven`s timpani style.[20]

There are, I feel, several tests for rightness if you get the editing urge. Does it conform to the composer`s timpani style and/or that of the period? Does it add or detract from the composition? Is it musically logical? Does what is currently in the score actually seem inappropriate or erroneous on harmonic or structural grounds? Are you employing more timpani notes just to have something to do with your feet? (It`s more fun to slip off your shoes and quietly dance in your socks.)

One example of logical editing was provided by Pfundt from Rossini`s overture to *La Cenerentola*, in which there is a timpani passage of iterated Ebs while the orchestra plays Bb and F chords. Pfundt felt that it warranted correction because of its harmonic inconsistency and in fact recommended against editing simply to satisfy timpanist`s taste as long as a note was within a chord.[21]



Another good example is Mozart`s reorchestration of Handel`s *Messiah*. Handel only used timpani in the “Hallelujah” chorus, “Worthy is the Lamb,” and the final Amen chorus, providing a rather bare part. Although Mozart`s part is more explicit, he still adheres strictly to Handel`s musical style and creates something thoroughly fitting.[22]

One of the best techniques for examining and/or editing timpani parts for authenticity and/or suitability is to consult an autograph score if available. This is not, as we have pointed out, an infallible test of authenticity. For example, consider the Haydn symphony cited earlier for which the timpani part was obviously added later. What does this mean?

One explanation may be that the first timpanist to actually execute the part may have been a gifted improviser and subsequent ones less so. Another may be that Haydn so liked the original timpanist`s realization of the part that he asked the person to make it the permanent version.

If no autograph score or microfilm of it is available, the *Grove Dictionary* can furnish valuable lists of sources. Also valuable are respected authorities` commentaries on the composers and their works, or on the history and literature of the instruments involved—and not just about percussion instruments. For example, timpanists can learn much by reading material on the historic trumpet, linked with timpani from very early.

And never hesitate to rewrite a part which, although it may not be technically incorrect or unfeasible, or even when there is no autograph timpani part for guidance, seems so alien to the music that it sets one`s teeth on edge. One modern extant arrangement of Handel`s *Royal Fireworks* for a small brass group with organ, which will mercifully remain nameless, has a timpani part which not only reduces the timpanist to a virtual Energizer bunny equivalent but fails to reinforce and provide a characteristic and musically interesting support for the trumpets. In the case of the *Royal Fireworks*, no percussion part was provided in the original score, although “drums” were mentioned. If no autograph is available or time is short, one can use a good later version. Of the *Fireworks* there is a Handel Gesellschaft edition in an inexpensive Dover version.

One modern authority provides some good basic guidelines for general performance practice. First, it is recommended that one play closer to the center of the drum than is now customary for music before 1750, and in the normal position for later works. Improvisation should be planned carefully, and the subject will be covered more thoroughly in a later chapter. Remember that cadences were traditionally improvised and that final notes were rolled ending with an accent, and repeated sections of a work may provide opportunities for improvisation.[23]

Concern for historic authenticity should not totally drain away the verve and joy of music, and anyone who has heard the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra will realize that it need not. Truly, I would rather listen to the Swingle Singers or the Jacques Loussier Trio`s jazzlike Bach than some of the dessicated, abysmally dull “scholarly” versions to which we are occasionally subjected. (Sometimes one wonders whether, if enough people at a prestigious academic early music conference drank enough champagne, some of them would admit that their earliest interest was piqued by the outrageously joyful electronic



baroque sounds of Walter Carlos. Carlos was obviously not historically informed, but it's equally obvious that he found something in this music which is regularly missed by the more historically meticulous!)

The discography, if any items are still available despite the current move to CDs, contains some great things for listening and playing along with. But what is even more fun is playing with other live musicians. The conventional "early music" group can be an acute disappointment to timpanists and percussionists along with brass and double reed players, who do not always care to sing or become instant recorderists. (Recently a trumpet player said to me, rather wistfully, "I haven't had a chance to play Gabrieli since college.")

Finding frustrated brass players may be easier and far more rewarding than being stuck on an incompatible instrument. Ideally, some trumpet players interested in learning natural trumpet would be perfect, but if this is not possible, C, D or piccolo trumpet may be substituted.

Learning from each other, exchanging ideas and getting mutual feedback from each other can only improve the music and the musicians. As brass, double reed and percussion players grow and learn together, we can bring enjoyment to audiences and someday, one would hope, "early music" may include all kinds.



1. Altenburg, op. cit., p. 124.
 2. Donald L. Smithers, "Seventeenth-Century English Trumpet Music," *MUSIC & LETTERS* 48:4(Oct., 1967), 360.
 3. Neal Zaslaw, "Three Notes on the Early History of the Orchestra," *HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE*, 1:2 (Fall, 1988), 63-67.
 4. Terry, op. cit., pp. 2-3.
 5. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.
 6. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.
 7. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-22; Spitta, op. cit., II, 247-248.
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8. Spitta, *ibid.*, II, 143; Carse, *op. cit.*, Appendix A.
 9. Frederick Neumann. Review. A. Peter Brown, *Performing Haydn`s 'Creation` : Reconstructing the Earliest Renditions*, HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE, 1:1(Spring, 1988), 30-32; Zaslav, *op. cit.*, 64-65.
 10. Zaslav, *ibid.*, 65.
 11. Smithers, 1967, *op. cit.*, 358-365.
 12. *Ibid.*, 364-365.
 13. Smithers, 1973, *op. cit.*, Note 4-195.
 14. Crispian Steele-Perkins, "Dart`s Dated Drums Dropped." HISTORIC BRASS SOCIETY JOURNAL, 6(1994), 338-342.
 15. *Ibid.*, 338
 16. Woodfill, *op. cit.*, pp. 17ff., 119 ff.
 17. Benvenga, 1979, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
 18. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
 19. *Ibid.*, p. 70.
 20. Blades, 1984, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-276.
 21. Benvenga, 1979, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
 22. Bowles, 1991, *op. cit.*, 430.
 23. *Ibid.*, 429-430.
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EXAMPLES OF EARLY WORKS WITH SUGGESTED TIMPANI PARTS



The first work shown, *Tuba Henrici*, may be the earliest known natural trumpet work, a rather abrasive piece containing enough nonharmonic tones to sound really primitive. The short *Aufzug* by Magnus Thomsen (d. 1612), a German trumpeter in Danish royal service, is more characteristically baroque and recognizably military in style. Both these examples are based on Anthony Baines' transcriptions.[1]

Timpani parts for some of the longer works have not been written out completely since part of learning baroque timpani style consists of planning one's own parts. Short examples and basic stylistic suggestions are provided as aids and examples. The reader may think of other interpretations and improvisations which are also valid.

The anonymous Modena trumpet works after the Ewald edition from seventeenth century Italy illustrate some of the possibilities of works for two trumpets with timpani.

The Finger *Sonata for Trumpet, Oboe & Continuo*, after Robert L. Minter's edition, is shown with the first movement timpani part beginning with m. 12 and continuing with only a short break until the end. There is a steady tonic-dominant alternation with imitation between oboe and trumpet which presents an ideal timpani situation. Almost all of the third movement, a very military trumpet solo section, could be accompanied by timpani with the exception of a very few measures in the middle. This is followed by a Grave for oboe in the parallel minor. The final 6/8 frolic is a dialogue between the trumpet, which could well be accompanied by timpani, and oboe, culminating in a final tutti for all players.

James Paisible's *Sonata for two trumpets or oboes, strings and continuo*, after Richard Platt's edition, should have the timpani saved for the fourth measure of the first movement when the winds enter. After playing where harmonically appropriate, the timpani should drop out after the first beat of m. 12, when the accompaniment becomes softer, re-entering in m. 17 with the trumpet motifs in the long antiphonal section between winds and strings. A good break would be from m. 31 through m. 51, a string passage which begins to build dynamically in m. 50 for a wind re-entrance in m. 52. A timpani re-entry could occur on the dominant upbeat to m. 52 and continue to the cadence.

The final allegro has the wind entrance in m. 6, at which point the timpani could enter, playing a fairly



simple set of occasional harmonic accents, and drop out along with the trumpets in m. 13, returning for a triumphant finale in m. 32, stylistically heralding the Haydn style in announcing the return to the tonic.[2] Improvisation in this style would relate to other known examples such as the seventeenth century Kromeriz collection from Bohemia and Lully's carousel music.



1. Baines, 1980, op. cit., pp. 84, 132.
 2. Eric Halfpenny. Review. *The Music and History of the Baroque Trumpet before 1721*. By Don L. Smithers. *MUSIC & LETTERS*, 60:2 (April, 1974), 227.
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Tuba Henrici

Strasbourg MS_15
after Coussemaker/Baines

Trumpet 1

Timpani

Trumpet 1

Timpani

Trumpet 1

Timpani

Aufzug

Magnus Thomsen/Baines

Trumpet 1

Timpani

Trumpet 1

Timpani



Finger Sonata I

m. 12

Trumpet
Oboe

Ob.

Tr.

f *p*

Timpani

m. 27-28

Trumpet
Oboe

etc. . . . Simile

Timpani

III

m. 73-76

Trumpet
Oboe

Oboe

Timpani

Trumpet
Oboe

Timpani

Simile . . .

m. 115-118

IV

Trumpet
Oboe

Oboe

Timpani



m. 160-162

Trumpet
Oboe

Timpani

... Simile





Paisible Sonata I

... m. 4-5

Trumpet
Oboe

Timpani

etc. ...

Trumpet
Oboe

Timpani

etc. ...

Trumpet
Oboe

Timpani

III

... m. 32 - end

Trumpet
Oboe

Timpani



Trumpet
Oboe

Timpani

[tr]

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Trumpet/Oboe, Timpani, and a section labeled [tr]. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The Trumpet/Oboe part is in the treble clef and consists of a sequence of eighth and quarter notes. The Timpani part is in the bass clef and consists of a sequence of quarter notes. The [tr] section is a trill in the bass clef.



Modena Trumpet Piece

(Anon. 17th Century)

Trumpet A

Timpani

1. *cresc.* *trill*

2. *cresc.* *trill*

B

1. *trill*

2. *trill*

variation methods: 1. Subdividing long note values; 2. Rearranging accents; 3. Changing the position of note groups.[4]

The first method—filling long note values with shorter ones—is very old, and Ganassi and Arbeau are replete with such examples. (See facsimile.) For example a set of two eighth notes or four sixteenth notes can be substituted for a quarter note. Or the flip side: a dense group of sixteenth notes can be simplified by playing only structural beats.

Another is by the rearrangement of accents. In actual military music such as marches, signals and camp duty, this should not be used.

Dance music is another matter. Rearrangement of note groups was shown in detail by Arbeau with his shifting of sixteenth-note groups to different places in the measure. Hemiola rhythms, consisting of 6/8 and 3/4 time played at the same time, are a good example of historic accent shifting; if the dancers are sufficiently experienced not to be flustered by it, the principal accents of a piece can be rearranged if it works musically. This should be saved for things like galliards to avoid confusing the troops and infuriating the sergeant major. See example this page.

Another caution involves actual military signals. Except for certain parts of the camp duty such as the Tattoo in which favorite tunes are permitted, all signals should be played in the prescribed manner since people's lives literally depended on it.

There is an aura of mystique about improvisation. Indeed, really great improvisers seem to get ideas in almost supernatural fashion. But they had to start somewhere! So how do you start if you've never done it before?

Like anything else, you start with something simple. For example, move a group of sixteenth notes through a measure of 4/4.



Now add a pair of eighths.



THOINOT ARBEAU

Tan tan fre tere tan

Tan fre tere tan tan

Tan fre tan tere tan

Tere fre tan tan tan

Fre tere tan tan tan

Fre tan tere tan tan

Fre tan tan tere tan



Try something similar in 3/4.



One of the most basic references available on improvising for military musicians is the *Haskell Harr Drum Method*, second book, pp. 100-101 (see bibliography). This shows the exact effect the addition of drum rudiments has on simple rhythmic patterns. Obviously rolls prolong notes; flams create accents; ruffs both create accents and add a lilt.

Historical factors should be considered when planning military drum parts. Older ones were probably simpler. Arbeau's onomatopoeic syllables—*fre*, *tere*—accompanying the written music show the possibility of things like flams, ruffs or short rolls. Other music including vocal music from this period shows similar onomatopoeia in military texts.

Although the counterhoop, which probably assisted the development of rudiments, appeared in the early sixteenth century, we do not know how long it had existed before actually being recorded in pictures. Still, it would probably be most logical to plan parts before 1600 based on single stroke patterns with occasional flams, ruffs and rolls for emphasis. From verbal descriptions we believe that long rolls were apparently known in Arbeau's time.

In the seventeenth century, those rudiments mentioned by Holme such as the "dragg" and "diddle" can be added. Flam paradiddles, ratamacues and double and triple paradiddles, along with the flam accents, probably developed during the eighteenth century.

For the reasons discussed already, the flamacue would probably be inappropriate in most music before 1850. Still, one cannot help but wonder what Alvan Robinson meant by "fancy beats!" To walk a line between violating military procedure and spoiling everyone's fun, the best solution may be to save almost any archaic jazz drumming equivalents for the more musically lenient parts of the Camp Duty and for dancing.

Using a percussion introduction sets the tempo, rhythm and mood of a piece. One of the worst ways a percussionist can introduce a dance, march or other processional piece is to play only the first beats of several empty measures to establish tempo. To deal with this the other musicians must mentally measure the clock-space between the first and second sounds, which have already occurred, thus possibly missing subsequent beats needed for a checkpoint or even worse, missing their entrances. Such a mental process is perilously close to trying to remember the future! Introductory patterns should be clearly subdivided

so that both tempo and meter are immediately established.

A note of caution should probably be sounded regarding anapestic (short-short-long) rhythm. Carl Parrish states that although it is considered a classical poetic meter, it is almost theoretical because of its rarity. Furthermore, rhythmic modes were principally a tool for synchronizing polyphonic music rather than a set of blueprints for monophonic rhythm.[5]

It is also interesting that Arbeau, although he included anapestic rhythm among the ways rhythm could be varied, did not actually employ it as a basic rhythm when he notated rhythm to fit with a melody in 4/4 time.[6] Heavy metal music and aerobic dancing may provide a clue to the pesky anapest. According to the Reebok Aerobic Information Bureau, a short-short-long beat disrupts movement and makes people tense during dance classes.[7] There appears to be some quality about it which the moving human being has trouble coping with.

There should be a careful balance between simplicity and complexity. If the melodic instruments are all engaged in a rapid contrapuntal passage, an elaborate percussion part might make the entire piece sound chaotic. Early writers like Ganassi and Quantz gave examples of beginning with a straightforward melody and then ornamenting it in different ways. A percussion analogy would be playing a basic rhythm then filling the clock-space between principal beats with different combinations of short notes. Arbeau's list of drum variations is an excellent example of this method.

At first the improvisation process will feel as rigid and mechanical as doing a paint-by-numbers kit. But keep doing it a bit every practice session; it will gradually loosen up. (If you see a twinkling light before you and a tiny voice whispers, "Hello! I'm the Renaissance Jazz Fairy!" you'll know you've arrived.)

Perhaps the best thing ever written about group improvisation was written by Francisco Guerrero in 1586 when he wrote his "Order which must be observed by the instrumentalists in playing" as a guide for musicians in the Spanish cathedral where he was choirmaster.

They must carefully observe some order when they improvise glosses [improvised ornamentation], both as to places and to times. When one player adds glosses to his part, the other must yield to him ... when both gloss at the same time, they produce absurdities As for Juan de Medina, he shall ordinarily play the contralto part, not obscuring the trebles nor disturbing them by exceeding the glosses that belong to a contralto. When on the other hand his part becomes the top ... he is left an open field At Salves, one of the three verses ... shall be on shawms, one on cornetts, and the other on recorders; because always hearing the same instrument annoys the listener.[8]

To avoid boredom new rhythmic material should be introduced. The rate at which it is introduced should be regular and also match the musical structure. This may in fact be a critical factor in the way music makes—or does not make—cerebral sense. [9] For example, if the piece is organized in eight measure blocks, introducing a new rhythmic idea every three or five measures will not make auditory sense, will confuse the singers, instrumentalists or dancers and make the entire piece feel askew.



Reinforcing the rhythmic organization of the music is the basic task of percussion instruments. It can be a useful rule of thumb to begin with simplicity and gradually move to more complex patterns. There are, nevertheless, exceptions such as the obvious need to keep one's own part simple if an instrument in the same general register (pitch level) is playing complex ornamentations. Then it is best to revert to simple background. Respect for one another's musical space, sensitivity to what the music being played requires, and professional courtesy should govern the basic plan for your improvisations.

In this regard, a modern British historic percussionist, Nicholas Ormrod, has written an excellent article pointing out some of the problems in playing Turkish style percussion parts in classical compositions. Some editions of such works are erroneous or unclear about when bass drum stick notes are intended and when the ruthe or switch near the edge of the head should be played. In general, stick notes for the strongest beats are probably stylistically best with the ruthe following the cymbal part. But this rule of thumb should not be considered a substitute for carefully considering what musical effect would be stylistically best![7]

One idea which might be exceptionally interesting is a performance of a large section of William Byrd's *My Ladye Nevells Booke*, a collection of virginal pieces which includes a group of military pieces beginning with "The Marche Before the Battell," and culminating with "The Galliarde for the Victorie." An unusual program could be built around performing some of these on the harpsichord, then contrasting renditions by flutes, "trompetts," and "droome." An inexpensive modern edition is edited by Hilda Andrews and published by Dover. On these, strictly following the rhythm of the harpsichord part and gradually adding small embellishments as each piece builds up momentum would probably be appropriate. But if you decide to attempt such a program, remember that any rudiment not specifically mentioned by Holme or easily deduced from Arbeau would be inappropriate.

The principal obligation of the percussionist should be to the music, not to some particular theory about a Politically Correct Historic Percussion style. You do not have to constantly play elaborate solos. This is not musically appropriate. Neither is an Energizer bunny imitation on every piece of music! Always ask yourself what kind of percussion part, if any, the music seems to ask for. (Sometimes it will make unexpected but interesting requests. Listen and experiment.)



1. Robinson, op. cit., p. 8.

2. Ibid.

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3. Donald E. Knuth, *The Art of Computer Programming* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1973), III, 23.
 4. Mary Ellen Donald, *Doumbec Delight: A Thirty Lesson Course in Middle Eastern Drumming ...* (San Francisco: Mary Ellen Books, 1981), p. 19.
 5. Carl Parrish, *The Notation of Medieval Music* (New York: Pendragon, 1959), pp. 75-76.
 6. Arbeau, op. cit., pp. 23 ff., 60-64.
 7. "Disruptive Music," Austin AMERICAN-STATESMAN (May 30, 1988), C2.
 8. Quoted in Robert Murrell Stevenson, *Spanish Cathedral Music in the Golden Age* (Berkeley: University of California, 1961), pp. 166-167.
 9. Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*, The MIT Press Series on Cognitive Theory and Mental Representation (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1983), p. 13.
 10. Nicholas Ormrod, "The Ruthe in Authentic Performance," PERCUSSIVE NOTES, 33:3 (June, 1995), 65-67.
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FUN & GAMES FOR FIFE AND DRUM



Here are provided a set of the optional tunes (after Rumrille) which early military musicians could choose to play in certain parts of the Camp Duty. Also provided are some blank staves for the reader's experiments. This will be more fun if there is a friendly fifer (or less authentically, a piccolo-playing friend) or oboist available.

Rumrille and Holton wrote a pretty neat book. Alvan Robinson's is almost an encyclopedia of early nineteenth-century top-of-the-charts material along with Hazeltine's (see Venerable Reads and the Bibliography). Ashworth and Potter, being in extensive official military use, contain less recreational music, as does Strube, officially adopted in 1869. (Wouldn't it be a better world if governments learned to have more fun!)

There are various games you can play with the music. Try the pieces in several historic styles: Renaissance, early baroque, late baroque, early classical. Remember, you'll need different rudiment sets for each.

Now for some *real* fun. Have your friend articulate the groups of four sixteenth notes so that notes 1 and 3 are slightly lengthened and notes 2 and 4 slightly shortened. In the baroque period this was called *notes inegales*. Then play them a tiny bit more like a set of 6/8 triplets filled with a quarter and an eighth note—but not exactly! For the uninitiated, this is known as *swinging*.

Next play an occasional flamacue on phrase endings. Phrase endings have lots of possibilities. Half and whole notes are full of clock-space just waiting to be filled with interesting things. (Is any jazz happening yet?)

ENJOY!



When Wars Alarms

Musical score for 'When Wars Alarms' in G major and common time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff is the melody, the second is the accompaniment, and the third is a drum part. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Charming Molly

Musical score for 'Charming Molly' in G major and 2/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff is the melody, the second is the accompaniment, and the third is a drum part. The piece includes first and second endings, indicated by '1.' and '2.' above the notes.

Tobacco Box

Musical score for 'Tobacco Box' in G major and 2/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff is the melody, the second is the accompaniment, and the third is a drum part. The piece includes first and second endings, indicated by '1.' and '2.' above the notes.



Dog and Gun

Musical score for "Dog and Gun" in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the main melody with a repeat sign. The second and third staves provide two alternative endings, labeled "1." and "2.", each with its own repeat sign.

Phillis and Damon

Musical score for "Phillis and Damon" in G major, 3/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the main melody with a repeat sign and a first ending. The second staff contains a second ending with a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff contains a first ending and a second ending, both with repeat signs.

Lass of Ochram

Musical score for "Lass of Ochram" in G major, 3/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the main melody with a repeat sign. The second and third staves provide two alternative endings, labeled "1." and "2.", each with its own repeat sign.



Polly Oliver

Musical score for Polly Oliver, featuring three staves of music in 3/4 time with treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and first/second endings.

Pretty Maid

Musical score for Pretty Maid, featuring four staves of music in 3/4 time with treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and first/second endings.

Rogue's March

Musical score for Rogue's March, featuring three staves of music in 2/4 time with treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and trills.

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