

# Percussion on the World Wide Web

BY DAVID WHITMAN

For many of us, the computer has become an essential tool in our daily lives, acting as a primary means of staying connected with the world around us. We send e-mails, read the news, pay our bills, make purchases, watch television and movies, listen to radio broadcasts, and order pizza all with the click of a mouse. It has become such a powerful tool that few professionals can afford to live without it.

As percussionists, we cannot deny the value in this tool. The World Wide Web provides us with a medium for information exchange and the opportunity to develop and explore our global percussion community. There are many Websites devoted to percussion or of particular interest to percussionists. This article introduces eight Websites that percussionists should be aware of, and offers some advice on using the Web for percussion exploration.

## PERCUSSION INFORMATION

A Website by Marc Zoutendijk

[\*\*www.xs4all.nl/~marcz/\*\*](http://www.xs4all.nl/~marcz/)

[\*\*percussioninformation/index.html\*\*](http://www.xs4all.nl/~marcz/percussioninformation/index.html)

Marc Zoutendijk teaches percussion at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague in the Netherlands, and his Website is as far from a self-marketing tool as possible. It does a wonderful job of covering a variety of percussion information (as the title suggests) without sacrificing a desirable level of depth.

According to Zoutendijk, the Website began in 1994 "because there was a lack of serious and reliable information on the Web for percussion players *and* drummers." A navigation bar divides the Website into seven categories of information (drums, timpani, sticks, composers, general site info, miscellaneous percussion topics, and percussion links), and is always conveniently located on the right-hand side of the page. The site, which Zoutendijk has been keeping current for over 13 years, is free of advertisements, banners, and pop-ups.

Drumset players will appreciate ideas

of movement, stickings, and rhythmic manipulation. The information is presented such that creativity and experimentation is encouraged. Zoutendijk also makes available five interesting timpani solos free of charge, provided they are not used commercially and, if performed, due credit is given. Timpanists can also learn how to make their own mallets and take a peek at some 19th-century and baroque timpani models (Figure 1). All percussionists will appreciate the section of the Website devoted to the anatomy of drumsticks and their sound-altering characteristics, which is complemented by a thorough and mathematical analysis of stroke efficiency.

To discover all the site has to offer you need to check it out yourself. In doing so, you will find that Zoutendijk, where appropriate, publishes content-centered visitor comments (Zoutendijk is selective and comments seem to heighten the sense

of integrity). At first glance the site may seem small, but do not be fooled.

## PERCUSSION MUSIC ONLINE

[\*\*www.percussionmusiconline.com\*\*](http://www.percussionmusiconline.com)

This Website, established in 2006, seeks to provide an online database of percussion literature. The design is sleek and easy to navigate. In order to view the database you need to register, but basic registration is instantaneous and free of charge. Upon selecting a composition, you are transported to a page presenting a slew of information, including composer biography, number of players required, instrumentation, program notes, duration, and publisher details. The database is organized alphabetically by title, but can be filtered to show compositions of a specific type (e.g., mixed chamber ensemble). As of this writing, there were 1,000 registered members of the site and 144 compositions

Figure 1



in the database, although a note from the creators indicates future growth.

#### **MARIMBA.ORG**

**[www.marimba.org](http://www.marimba.org)**

The title says it all. Marimba.org is dedicated to the marimba community. Here you can find information on upcoming events, new recordings and publications, and reviews of specific instruments. Additionally, you can find a repertory list and small database of compact discs, which includes record label, disc number, and the titles of each performed work. If you have questions, comments, or announcements concerning marimba, the site provides an online message board as well. The site has been in existence since 1996.

#### **DRUMMERWORLD.COM**

**[www.drummerworld.com](http://www.drummerworld.com)**

This is one of the most popular sites for drummers currently available, and for good reason. If you play drumset and have not visited Drummerworld.com you are missing out! Choosing from a list of literally hundreds of top-notch drummers, you can gain instant access to biographical information, pictures, audio clips, and video clips. If you visit the Grooves section of the Website you will find a timeline of drumset grooves and styles from "Big" Sid Catlett to Mike Portnoy, ?uestlove, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Aaron Spears. This is definitely the type of Website that one can spend all of today checking out and still come back for more tomorrow. It is also regularly updated and extremely reliable, and includes an online drummer forum with over 9,000 registered members. The site is free, but donations are encouraged due to the fact that the high volume of traffic to the site incurs significant costs. If you are a student of drumming, go to Drummerworld.com and learn from the best!

#### **HANDIDRUMMED.COM**

**[www.handidrummed.com](http://www.handidrummed.com)**

Handidrummed.com is for drummers with disabilities by drummers with disabilities. The Website is maintained by Rob Richard, a drummer who was born with cerebral palsy. As Rob states on the Website, "Handidrummed.com is designed to be a resource for all drummers who face some sort of a challenge, whether it's a permanent disability or even something temporary that they've had to work to overcome in order to play the instrument

they love." This Website is filled with inspiration, and all teachers of percussion should be familiar with it.

#### **THEVIBE.NET**

**[www.thevibe.net/vn](http://www.thevibe.net/vn)**

TheVibe.net is a Website dedicated to the vibraphone created by vibist Gerry Grosz. This is one of the few sites on the Web that devotes itself to the vibraphone community without trying to sell someone or something. It may not have a slick design, but it does have an active message board, a list of vibraphonists, and tips on making mallets. Young vibraphonists can learn a lot from the information on this Website.

#### **METRONOMEONLINE.COM**

**[www.metronomeonline.com](http://www.metronomeonline.com)**

Without question, this is my favorite site on the list. Metronomeonline.com is a fully functional online metronome. It even has the look and feel of the real-world counterpart (Figure 2), and visitors can select from three exciting color schemes (classic, cool, and fire). Although I own more than one metronome (of course!), I have used this Website repeatedly since I discovered it months ago. Whether you left your metronome in the studio or you just want to save batteries, Metronomeonline.com can help you work out the kinks wherever you have a computer and a connection.

Metronomeonline.com is run by EMusicInstitute.com (EMusic Institute, Inc.), which provides Website design services catering to musically or artistically inclined companies and individuals. Metronomeonline.com was developed when the people at EMusicInstitute.com noticed a need for a simple and usable metronome that required no software download or installation process. It is accurate and reliable no matter how fast (or slow) your computer or connection may be. The online metronome is offered free of charge.

#### **H.E.A.R.**

**Hearing Education and Awareness for Rockers**

**[www.hearnet.com](http://www.hearnet.com)**

This Website contains information all musicians, especially percussionists, should be aware of. Hearing loss is not our favorite topic to discuss, but it affects us all. H.E.A.R. was founded in 1988 by bassist Kathy Peck and physician Flash Gordon after attending a loud rock concert, and is

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**VIC FIRTH**  
WHEN IT MATTERS, ASK FOR VIC FIRTH

Figure 2



dedicated to educating the public about hearing loss and offering solutions. The Website provides information on tinnitus, types of ear plugs, saving your hearing, warning signs of damage, categories of hearing loss, and much more.

Many of us have experienced hearing loss ourselves as a result of our profession, and those of us who have not are probably acquainted with someone who has (whether we know it or not). Hearing loss can be painful and affect the overall quality of life, and what you learn from H.E.A.R. could turn out to be a gift of immeasurable worth.

#### OTHER RESOURCES

The Websites presented in this article are only a taste of what can be found online. In fact, the PAS Website ([www.pas.org](http://www.pas.org)) is, in my opinion, the single most valuable Website for percussionists and percussion educators in existence. The Online Research Journal, discussion forum (with over 7,500 registered users), publications archive, composition database, and other components of the site provide members with more percussion information than can be found in one place anywhere in the world (short of visiting the real-world PAS archives). It is simply outstanding.

There are also three classifications

of Websites that have, thus far, gone unmentioned. The first is the manufacturer Website. Many manufacturers provide volumes of resources online, featuring educational articles written by endorsing musicians, videos, and (of course) products. The second is the college percussion studio Website. These Websites frequently provide their curriculum online, which eager percussion students may use to direct their own independent studies or prepare for college. The third is the individual performer or ensemble Website, which is often heavily geared towards percussion education.

As to be expected, many Websites out there should be avoided. When browsing for percussion information, ask yourself some questions:

1. Is this information fact, or is it opinion?
2. Who published the site?
3. Is the person or organization that published it reputable?
4. Is the presented information verifiable?
5. What is the motivation behind the Website?
6. Is the content readily available, or are you struggling to find it?
7. Is the site bogged down by advertisements and promotions?

8. When was the site last updated? Is the information current?

9. If the information is old, is it still accurate?

10. If you are considering giving this site your credit card info, do you know *exactly* what you are purchasing and from whom?

If the answer to *all* of these questions is satisfactory, then continue. If the answers raise more questions, it is probably wise to move on. You will be able to find what you seek elsewhere. When you do find sites that aren't worth your time (and there are many), do not get discouraged. Keep looking for that gem.

**David Whitman** is a graduate student at Kansas State University, where he is completing his M.M. in Percussion Performance and Pedagogy. He holds a B.A. in Music from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Whitman teaches percussion techniques and methods, arranges drum line music and instructs the drum line for the Pride of the Wildcats Marching Band, assists in teaching applied percussion, and assists in conducting and coaching the percussion ensemble at Kansas State. His professional background includes marching percussion, orchestral, and jazz performance, and he has directed jazz ensembles at the University of Wisconsin-Stout and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. **PN**

### SUBMITTING PROGRAMS

**PAS members are invited to submit formal printed percussion solo and ensemble programs for inclusion in program listings.**

**Please include:**

- Venue (i.e., the name of the school)
- Date of Performance
- State
- Country
- Name of Performer or Ensemble (including director & any guest artists)
- Composition Title
- Composer's First and Last Name
- Arranger Name

**Send hardcopy programs to:**

Wilber England  
3813 Laura Way, Bloomington, IN 47401  
E-mail: [englandw@indiana.edu](mailto:englandw@indiana.edu)

**Submit programs online:**

[www.pas.org/publications/programs](http://www.pas.org/publications/programs)



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Mac Users: OS X 10.2 or greater, Minimum G3 700 MHz or greater, 512 MB RAM, 10 GB free hard disk space, DVD drive.