



# *Advanced Percussion/Keyboard Pedagogy*

*Clinician:*  
*Robert Crutchfield*

*Sponsor: Custom Music*

*Texas Bandmasters Association*  
*60<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention/Clinic*

*July 20-23, 2007*

*Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center*  
*San Antonio, Texas*

# “Raising the Bar for Mallet Percussion”

By Robert Crutchfield  
Texas Bandmasters Association

July 22, 2007

Sponsored by Custom Music Company/Kori Percussion

1930 Hilton

Toll-free number 800-521-6380

Ferndale, MI 48220

248-546-4135 fax 248-546-8296

[www.custommusiccorp.com](http://www.custommusiccorp.com)

[cmctuba@aol.com](mailto:cmctuba@aol.com)

The University of Texas at Tyler and Trinity Valley Community College

**Performer Objectives:** The advanced player flows through the notes playing expressively, musically and with a good sound quality. The advanced player has an understanding of the composer, history, style through recordings and research of a particular composition. If the composition is a transcription, the advanced player will listen to a recording with the original instrumentation. In order to “Raise the Bar” in percussion we need to help students become more aware of their sound quality, technique and musicianship. Technique is not about just playing the notes, it allows the player to perform with expression and flow through the music with ease. Through tools and exercises we can guide students to develop into better musicians.

**Technique:** The foundation of the advanced performer. Good technique makes the compositions more accessible and will allow the player to concentrate on the sound quality, dynamics, phrasing, etc. Below are some examples of some technical exercises that help a student move to that “next level.”

## Kinesthetic Exercises

- Movement and motion
- Develops a “feel” the size of the interval
- Improves sight-reading

These exercises can begin on any note. Practice exercise to the range of an octave and back. Practice very slowly at first, looking at the music (not the hands) to develop a “feel” of the distance.

## Triplet Exercise

Keep hands and mallets low. Repeat each interval for accuracy. STAY RELAXED!



### One handed exercise

Practice also with the left hand moving down.

r l r l r l r l etc.

### 4 mallet kinesthetic exercise

2 4 1 3 etc.

### 4- Mallet Exercises

- Movement and Motion – position to the instrument – allows more freedom  
Students need to feel comfortable holding 4 mallets and doing the motion of moving each mallet independently.
- Interval Changes

### Single Mallet Movement

Left Hand down 8va. Then practice 2 hands together.

4 3----- 4 3----- etc.

Play with right hand. Then with left.

### Tools for Expression:

Here are some elements that the performer should consider in the compositions they are performing. They are necessary for a good quality performance and applying these will help the student play at a higher level.

- Mallet Choice
- Sticking
- Phrasing
- Dynamics
- Sound Color
- Rolls – a variety of rolls are necessary for expression and phrasing.
  1. Speed of rolls as a means of expression and shaping the music.
  2. Attack the roll as a pianist or a violinist. (both hands together)



This also works with 4 mallets.

Here are some important questions that will help the student perform at a higher level.

- Who is the composer?
- History of the composition... When was it written? Is it a transcription or written for the marimba?
- Taking into account the year of composition, what are some stylistic considerations?

### Recommended Method Books

<i>Instruction Course for Xylophone</i>	George Hamilton Green (2 mallet)
Meredith Music Publications (1984)	meredithmusic.com
<i>Ideo-Kinetics</i>	Gordon Stout (2 and 4 mallet)
Keyboard Percussion Publications (2001)	mostlymarimba.com
<i>Method Of Movement</i>	Leigh Howard Stevens (4 mallet)
Keyboard Percussion Publications (2005 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition)	mostlymarimba.com
<i>4 Mallet Democracy for Marimba</i>	Jack Van Geem (4 mallet)
Belwin Mills Publishing Corp. (1992)	alfred.com
<i>Marimba: Technique Through Music</i>	Mark Ford (4 mallet)
Innovative Percussion Publications (2005)	innovativepercussion.com

\*All of these books can be purchased through [steveweissmusic.com](http://steveweissmusic.com) or [lonestarpercussion.com](http://lonestarpercussion.com)

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like me to do a clinic at your school.

robert\_crutchfield@sbcglobal.net  
Phone: 903-258-6188