

MASSACHUSETTS PERCUSSION NEWS

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Massachusetts Percussion News is published three times annually.

- September
- January
- May



www.pas.org

Percussive Arts Society Mission Statement:

The Percussive Arts Society is a music service organization promoting percussion education, research, performance, and appreciation throughout the world.

A CONVERSATION WITH SHE-E WU

She-e Wu is Assistant Professor at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ. Wu was a featured artist at the Journées de la Percussion (PAS European Convention) in Paris, France and performed the marimba concerto of Eric Ewazen with Orchestre de la Garde Republicaine. This concerto was written for her and commissioned by her and the Moment Musical Orchestra in Taiwan. She-e has appeared as a solo artist at PASIC 2000 in Dallas; the 4th National Percussion Convention of Spain in Seville; International Percussion Festival in San Juan, Puerto Rico; radio broadcast at the World Marimba Competition in Stuttgart, Germany; Festival Internacional de Percusion Ritmo Vital 2001 in Madrid, Spain; PercuPassion Festival in Lyon, France; Marimba Seminar in Fukui, Japan; and Tapei International Percussion Convention in Taipei; Taiwan. She-e is a member of the Bob Becker Ensemble and her solo marimba CD will be released this fall on Resonator Records.



MPN: How did you get started playing the marimba?

SW: I started on piano when I was 3 and a half years old, then timpani at 6, orchestral snare drum at 9, xylophone at 10, 2-mallet marimba at 12, and 4-mallet marimba when I was 17. I saw people play marimba with 4 mallets before and asked my teacher at the time to see if I could start playing with 4 mallets. The lesson was very short and I basically learned how to hold mallets and that was the extent of my lesson. I decided to go to the University of North Texas to study percussion under Dr.

Robert Schietroma. It was there that I began playing with Stevens technique and really learned how to play. I was not really serious about marimba at the time because I was really into drumline, steel drum, and jazz vibes. It was not until my junior year that I realized that I had to play a junior recital and had to start practicing marimba seriously. Then, I went to the Leigh Howard Stevens Summer Marimba Seminar and from that point on, I was totally excited about marimba and wanted to learn everything about the marimba.

MPN: Which musicians inspire you?

SW: As for composers, I will have to say Bach, Bartok, Mahler, and Barber. When I get "burned out" or want to get inspired, I listen to their music in the dark. Every time I listen to their music, I end up with tears in my eyes because I get so moved. I still can't believe this music was written by human beings. It is just so incredible.

MPN: What music do you like listening to that has nothing to do with marimba?

SW: I NEVER listen to marimba music unless someone (cont. pg. 2)

VISIT US ON THE WEB

Our Massachusetts Chapter of PAS has its own web site.

<http://www.pas.org/chapters/massachusetts>

VIEW THIS NEWS-LETTER ONLINE

Massachusetts Percussion News is now available online in PDF format. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader in order to view the publication from our web site. All past issues are available.

AREAS OF INTEREST

This newsletter needs your input on such subjects as:

- world percussion
- drum circles
- timpani
- mallet keyboards
- marching percussion
- performing
- practicing
- interviews with pros
- helpful repertoire
- listening recommendations

If you have more ideas please contact us via the chapter web site address printed below.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Reach the Editor at scottsnow123@aol.com

sends me a CD and wants me to listen to it or if I am checking out a new piece. I listen to all styles of music from Jazz to Classical but NEVER marimba music. This goes back to the question I answered earlier about music that inspires me.

MPN: What are some of the greatest musical challenges a marimba player faces?

SW: I think having the ability to phrase and sustain are the two most important and difficult issues. Because the nature of the decay (ring time) on the marimba, making a phrase well is extremely difficult. The volume of each note has to change slightly in order to match the ring time from the previous note thus making a phrase. Being able to sustain on the marimba is also difficult because we have to get away from the "percussive approach" which is rolling fast and metered. As a marimbist or percussionist, we don't often think about how to sustain like a singer, string players, woodwind players or brass players. We try to roll too fast and mechanically producing a "roll" that doesn't sustain musically. The third thing is that we forget how to use "tone colors" to enhance our music-making. Often, marimbists are unaware of the sound and tone that we produce. Over-playing the instrument is also a huge issue because we forget that we don't have to hack in order to prove that we are strong. Nor do we have to compete who plays louder. When was the last time you heard violinists comparing who plays louder let alone breaking their strings like marimbists break bars!!!

MPN: Who are your favorite composers for marimba music?

SW: I will say that I don't have a particular favorite composer for marimba music but I do think there are pieces in our repertoire that represent great marimba writing. For example, Eric Ewazen's Northern Lights, Eric Sammut's improvisations (Rotations, Cameleon..), Mike Burrit's new marimba quartet, John Serry's Night Rhapsody and West Side Suite, Gordon Stout's Sedimental Structure, Joe Schwantner's Velocities just to name a few.

MPN: What have you learned from your students?

SW: I have been teaching for 8 years now plus traveling around the world working with students. I have learned a tremendous amount from students from all aspects of music-making. I have learned to explain any concept from technique to musical issues in many different ways and looking at things from various

angles because everyone responds differently. I have also learned to realize how important fundamental technique is to playing on any instrument because without proper technique, one can not be free to make music. Also, I have learned it's very important to keep each other both as musicians and human beings motivated and inspired. As a teacher, the responsibility is not only to offer the knowledge and expand a students' horizons but also to mentor students in all aspects in life.

MPN: What makes a quality solo marimba piece?

SW: To me, good marimba writing will have to make the marimba sound "big and full." That means a single line in the high register will not qualify. Use of the full range of the marimba is important. Also, it will have to feel somewhat idiomatic to players. Composers must consider how the piece falls in the hands. Otherwise, it would often result in awkward movements, angles, shifts, and sound.

MPN: Do audiences differ from country to country?

SW: Yes, but it's not just country to country, it's from place to place. I have given concerts for very small towns with general audiences, big cities, and PASIC and you never know what the reaction would be. I have learned to be myself and share the way I hear the music through the way I play to connect with any audience. After all, music is another way to communicate without the need for words. If audiences don't respond that means we as musicians failed to communicate and to me that is crucial. 🎵

Interview by Ed Choi

Ed Choi is currently pursuing his doctorate at Rutgers University where he studies with Shee Wu and Alan Abel. He also holds a masters degree from Northwestern where he studied with Michael Burritt and a bachelor of music from the University of Toronto under Russell Hartenberger. As a performer, Ed has concertized in Korea as a soloist and with his percussion group "exit 9" from New Jersey.

Ed can be emailed at ed_choi@yahoo.com

DRUMMER'S HERITAGE CONCERT A HUGE SUCCESS AT PASIC 2002 IN COLUMBUS

Here is what people had to say about the concert:

This was truly an evening to remember! Considering the wide range of performers who represented various periods and styles in our rudimental development, this concert offered a perspective on our rudimental heritage that will be felt for years. For PAS to consider this a showcase event, speaks volumes about the importance of rudimental drumming as an art form. A heartfelt thank you to those who worked so hard to make this concert a reality.

Thom Hannum
Associate Director / Percussion
Umass Minuteman Band
BLAST! Arranger

I am particularly pleased that our audience could experience a "realization" of a rudimental "timeline" inclusive of so many elements. It is this sort of presentation that makes PAS and, in particular PASIC, so vital to our percussion "world." I am especially pleased, considering that in 1993 we presented the first Marching Percussion Timeline, that included such notables as Wm. F. Ludwig, Jr. and the late Fred Sanford in a unique panel discussion. This year's concert was the culmination of tremendous work and dedication of many, in particular, Robin Engelman.

Bob Breithaupt
Director of Percussion, Capital University
PAS-Immediate Past President

The Percussive Arts Society has the ability to create outstanding percussion events that would not occur in any other venue. The Drummer's Heritage Concert at PASIC 2002 was one of these exceptional events that brought the world of drumming together for one special evening. From the grand entrance of the Colonial Williamsburg Fife and Drum Corps to the outstanding soloists to the mass drum line grand finale, everyone in attendance knew this was a unique presentation of the history of our art form. Congratulations to all of the performers and organizer Robin Engelman. Bravo!

Mark Ford
Percussion Coordinator Univ. of North Texas
PAS—President Elect

What an event! No other word would describe this concert appropriately in my mind but to say it was an event. The range and diversity of talent displayed throughout the evening was breathtaking. No matter what style of rudimental drumming you preferred, you got your taste and presented with excellent quality. I watched as performer after performer came out on stage more inspired by the person who played just before them. The audience was huge---standing room only all night long! My hats off to those who worked so hard to make such a major event take place. Way too many people to list all, but principally, I would like to commend Robin Engelman and Dennis DeLucia for their vision and commitment to making it all happen.

Neil Larrivee
Director of Education for Vic Firth Inc.
Cadets' Pit Director and Arranger

(comments continued on page 4)

ARTICLES WANTED!

Much of the material in this issue was submitted by our members. If you have something you'd like to see published in Massachusetts Percussion News, you are encouraged to submit it to our editorial staff for consideration.

MASSACHUSETTS PERCUSSION NEWS ARTICLE DEADLINES

Submissions for publication in Massachusetts Percussion News must be in the hands of the editorial staff no later than one month before publication.

<u>DEADLINE</u>	<u>PUBLICATION</u>
August 1	September 1
December 1	January 1
April 1	May 1

Submissions via email are preferred. Please send articles and event information to scottsnow123@aol.com and attach images / files individually. Hard copies can be sent to Scott Snow, PO Box 269, Charlton, MA 01507.

ANY SUGGESTIONS?

The intent of this newsletter is to bring together people in Massachusetts that teach and or perform percussion. Email the editor with ideas so we can continue to develop this newsletter.

The Drummer's Heritage was both a showcase of the many styles of rudimental drumming as well as a musical celebration of performers from around the world. The evening enabled a diverse group of eclectic performers to share their common bond and provided an opportunity for the audience and performers to connect in a way that can only happen at PASIC.

James Campbell
Professor of Music
University of Kentucky
PAS-President

I attended the Drummers Heritage Concert at PASIC 2002, and thoroughly enjoyed it. I think it was wonderful to see such a historical perspective on the different styles of rudimental drumming. I particularly enjoyed the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums, the way their technique flowed, and the sound of their drums. For any rudimental drummers who refer to DCI style drumming as the only rudimental way, I really hope this was eye-opening. It would be great if every young rudimental drummer could experience this history to possibly gain a better understanding of our roots.

Jim Casella
Percussion Arranger
Santa Clara Vanguard

One of the most powerful moments for me was when the snare drummers, representing all of the different styles and historical time periods important in the development of rudimental drumming, were all on stage together. As a rudimentalist, it was pure magic. There was a certain ambiance that surrounded the demonstration of each of the different rudimental styles. Whether, early American, Swiss, Scottish, Old-Style Drum Corps, or today's explosive precision on kevlar, all of the players treated what they were sharing with the audience with great respect and dignity.

Daveed Korup
Hand Drum Performer, Author, and Educator
Drumfest

The Drummer's Heritage Concert at PASIC 2002 was one of the most memorable—and historic—concerts that I have attended during the past 25 years. It was a “once-in-a-lifetime” opportunity to see this many rudimental percussionists on stage at one time! It was both educational and entertaining to see how the styles have evolved from the fife and drum corps of the Revolutionary War to the contemporary drumlines of today's colleges and universities. One of my favorite parts of the concert was hearing (and seeing) Nick Attansio, John Pratt, Marty Hurley, Jim Kilpatrick, Alfons Grieder, and Jeff Queen play “The Downfall of Paris.” And I'll never forget seeing literally hundreds of drummers perform “Three Camps.” Thanks Robin!

Lauren Vogel Weiss
Percussion Events Registry Company
PAS- President of Texas Chapter



Nick Attansio



Alfons Grieder



Jeff Queen

Rudimental drumming technique was an early part of my training as a percussionist, but I did not pursue the study of it beyond high school; devoting myself instead to symphonic music and the pursuit of more abstract or contemporary percussion music derived from the classical Western Art Music tradition.

In 1976, I purchased a rope tensioned field drum from Patrick Cooperman and was advised by him to investigate more thoroughly the history of rudimental drumming and its traditions. Thus began a hobby that is now almost a compulsion. I have a library of old methods, historic melodies, drums, diaries of soldiers long deceased, books on campaigns, tactics, weapons, camp life and the evolution of the field drum itself.

This interest in history was the reason I suggested The Drummer's Heritage Concert. In brief, the event was a selfish enterprise: I wanted to hear all these people play. It was realized with the help and support of the Percussive Arts Society, its executive committee, the P.A.S. Marching Percussion Committee chaired by Julie Davila, the Columbus, Ohio host committee chaired by Susan Powell, and the 230 solo artists and ensembles who donated their musical art to an audience of 2,400 students, performers, educators and manufacturers.

It is important to note that the vast majority of the performers came to the PASIC without the financial assistance usually provided by manufacturers. They probably came for the opportunity to hear some of the worlds greatest practitioners of field drum music, to play for the most appreciative audience imaginable and to put their music and style in an historical perspective.

From the music of the 18th century performed by the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums, to the modern indoor marching percussion and stage band style of today, the concert offered the unique opportunity of hearing a history of field drumming. Other traditions were represented as well. Alfons Grieder from Switzerland joined with Americlique from Connecticut, to artfully display the Swiss Basel drum and fife heritage and Jim Kilpatrick the Scottish pipe band style.

I cannot think of another instance when so much talent, representing such an historical span of drumming, appeared together on the same stage in the same night. Nick Attanasio the 80 year old bass drummer from Lake Katrine, New York drew a standing ovation at the beginning of the concert and set the level of emotion and expertise for the entire evening.

Robin Engelman
Artistic Director for Drummer's Heritage Concert
Founding Member of Nexus
PAS Hall of Fame Member



Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums

EVENTS CALENDAR

- **UMASS Day of Percussion—UMASS Amherst February 15, 2003 For info call 413-545-2227**
- **Berklee Day of Percussion—Berklee College, Boston April, 2003 For info call 617-747-2049**
- Percussion Clinic—Western District MMEA Festival January 4, 2003 at Westfield State College —”Let’s Make Snare Drum Warm-ups Fun by Using Play-Alongs” by Scott Snow
- Indoor Percussion Clinic Presented by Tom Aungst and Neil Larrivee—Dedham High School, January 8, 2003 for info visit <http://www.nesba.org>
- Skullers Jazz Club (617-562-4111) Web: www.scullersjazz.com/coming.htm
 - * Legends of the Band Stand (Louis Hayes—dr, Cedar Walton—pno) Jan. 22-23
 - * Gary Burton and Makoto Ozone Feb 7-8
 - * Thelonious Monk Jr. (drums) March 21-22
 - * Poncho Sanchez (congas) March 27-28
- Regattabar (617-876-7777) Web: www.concertix.com/schedule.html
 - * Elvin Jones Jazz Machine Jan. 29-Feb. 2
 - * Laszlo Gardony Trio (Jamey Haddad, dr) Feb. 11
 - * Wayne Shorter Quartet (Brian Blade, dr) April 6 (Berklee Performance Center)
 - * Sonny Rollins April 6 (Berklee Performance Center)
- UMASS, Amherst (413-545-2511)
 - * UMASS Percussion Ensemble & Marimba Ensemble Concert—December 13, 2002
Directors Eduardo Leandro & Thom Hannum
- NESBA Indoor Percussion Competitions—Web: www.nesba.org/schedule.htm
 - * Peabody 3/2; Wrentham 3/8; Dennis Yarmouth 3/9; Everett 3/15; Mansfield 3/16; Swansea 3/22; Abington 3/23; Dartmouth 3/29; Dover, NH 3/30; Salem Championships 4/5

IN MEMORIAM

Armand Zildjian, President and Chairman of the Zildjian Company, died December 26, 2002. Mr. Zildjian was 81 and will be sorely missed by the percussion community.



Armand Zildjian

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

Berklee College of Music - www.berklee.edu

Drum Workshop - www.dwdrums.com

Evans - www.evansdrumheads.com

GroverPro - www.groverpro.com

Innovative Percussion - www.innovativepercussion.com

Mapex - www.mapexdrums.com

Pearl Corporation - www.pearldrums.com

Percussive Arts Society - www.pas.org

Remo - www.remo.com

Silver Fox Percussion - www.silverfoxpercussion.com

University of Massachusetts Music Dept. - www.umass.edu/music/

Vic Firth Inc. - www.vicfirth.com

Yamaha - www.yamahadrums.com

Zildjian - www.zildjian.com