

Getting A Teaching Gig Going Beyond Being a Great Player

By Paul Buyer

Over the past few years at PASIC, the PAS Education Committee has made a commitment to offer stimulating panel discussions that have proven meaningful, engaging, and timely for the PAS membership. From “The Drumline Experience: How Much is Too Much?” to “Mental Training in Percussion” to last year’s panel, “Teaching the Teachers: The Percussion Methods Class,” these topics have ignited passionate discussions and revealed some of the real issues in percussion education today. At PASIC 2010 in Indianapolis, the PAS Education Committee continues this tradition, presenting a topic that could be one of the most relevant sessions ever.

THE PANEL

On Friday, November 12 at 4:00 P.M., the PAS Education Committee will host a panel discussion titled “Getting a Teaching Gig: Going Beyond Being a Great Player.” Our distinguished panelists encompass a collaboration of esteemed percussion educators, seasoned administrators, and incomparable leaders in percussion and performing arts education. Panelists include Rich Holly, Professor of Percussion and Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts at Northern Illinois University; Mark Ford, Coordinator of Percussion at the University of North Texas; Jim Campbell, Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at the University of Kentucky; Kennan Wylie, Percussion Instructor at Marcus High School (Texas); and Linda Davis, Principal at Broad Ripple Magnet High School for Arts and Humanities in Indianapolis.

The purpose of the panel discussion is to learn about the leadership qualities high school administrators and college search committees look for when hiring percussion instructors. With so many qualified applicants today and great players a dime a dozen, the panel will address essential qualities and skills that go beyond musical talent that often determine who makes the short list, ends up a finalist, and eventually gets the job. The panel will also address the current job market and offer advice on how to best advise students who are interested in a future career teaching at the high school or college/university level.

LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

Playing ability and musicianship have always been—and always will be—highly valued when hiring a percussion teacher. But what happens when all of the finalists are truly outstanding players?

Our discussion will begin with opening remarks from the panelists describing qualities beyond being a great player that they feel are necessary to “getting a teaching gig.” One topic the panel will discuss is the importance of becoming an exceptional leader. Since great players are not always great teachers, talent alone is not enough. According to leadership expert and author John Maxwell in his book *Talent is Never Enough*, “As long as there are people in the world, there will be plenty of talent. If that were enough, everyone would reach their potential. What’s missing are things people need in addition to their talent.” Some of these “things” are leadership essentials that include character, competence, confidence, commitment, communication, consistency, collaboration, and collegiality, along with enthusiasm, initiative, a positive attitude, and being a team player.

THE MORE YOU CAN DO, THE MORE YOU CAN DO

New England Patriots Head Coach Bill Belichick used this quote with his players to emphasize the expectation and importance of playing multiple positions at a high level en route to winning three Super Bowls. Interestingly, it can also be followed up with, “The less you can do, the less you can do.” Becoming well-rounded and versatile is another critical quality of success the panel will discuss. According to Oregon State University Percussion Professor and Education Committee member Bob Brudvig, “I think, especially early on, the willingness to take on duties and assignments that are outside your immediate area of expertise [is important]. For most of the gigs/jobs out there, you are going to have to do multiple tasks and assignments.”

SEARCH COMMITTEE 101

The panel will also take you behind the scenes of a search committee meeting and detail what they are looking for, from the initial cover letter and vita stage to the short-list DVD submission, to interviews with the finalists. According to Eric Willie, Assistant Professor of Percussion at Tennessee Tech University and Education Committee member, “The panel will discuss specific areas that committees—both at the university and primary/secondary schools—are desiring. In addition, the panel will discuss how to focus your professional activities while you are a student.”

Many years ago while I was chairing a search committee, my university president said something I will never forget: “Don’t just consider the applicants that have sent you their materials; go out and *search* for the best candidate. You are a search committee, so search!”

THE JOB MARKET

One of the most profound changes percussionists are facing today is the uncertainty of the current job market. According to Michael Schutz, Assistant Professor of Music at McMaster University and chair of the PAS Music Technology Committee, there is an “apparent disconnect between the increasing number of doctoral percussion students and decreasing number of full-time university level teaching positions. How can we ensure that university-level training best prepares students for the challenges inherent in their future musical careers?” The panel will offer advice on how to put yourself in a position to succeed in this tough economy.

CONCLUSION

What will make *you* stand out? What will separate you from the pack? What will cause the committee to put you in the A pile rather than the B pile? For answers to these questions, join us for “Getting a Teaching Gig: Going Beyond Being a Great Player.” If you choose to attend, you will be armed with an edge over the competition!

Education Committee Panel

Friday 4:00 P.M.

Paul Buyer is Director of Percussion, Director of Music, and Associate Professor of Music at Clemson University. He is the author of *Marching Bands and Drumlines: Secrets of Success from the Best of the Best*, published by Meredith Music. Dr. Buyer is a member of the PAS Marching Percussion and College Pedagogy Committees and is chair of the PAS Education Committee. PN

PASIC 2011 Focus Day Proposal "Five Decades of New Music for Percussion: 1961-2011"

The New Music/Research Committee of the Percussive Arts Society is pleased to announce a call for proposals for presentation/performance at the 2011 PASIC Focus Day, November 9, in Indianapolis, Indiana. PASIC 2011 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Percussive Arts Society, and to celebrate the occasion, the theme for Focus Day 2011 will be "Five Decades of New Music for Percussion: 1961-2011." Soloists, ensembles, composers, and scholars are invited to send in proposals for performances and presentations.

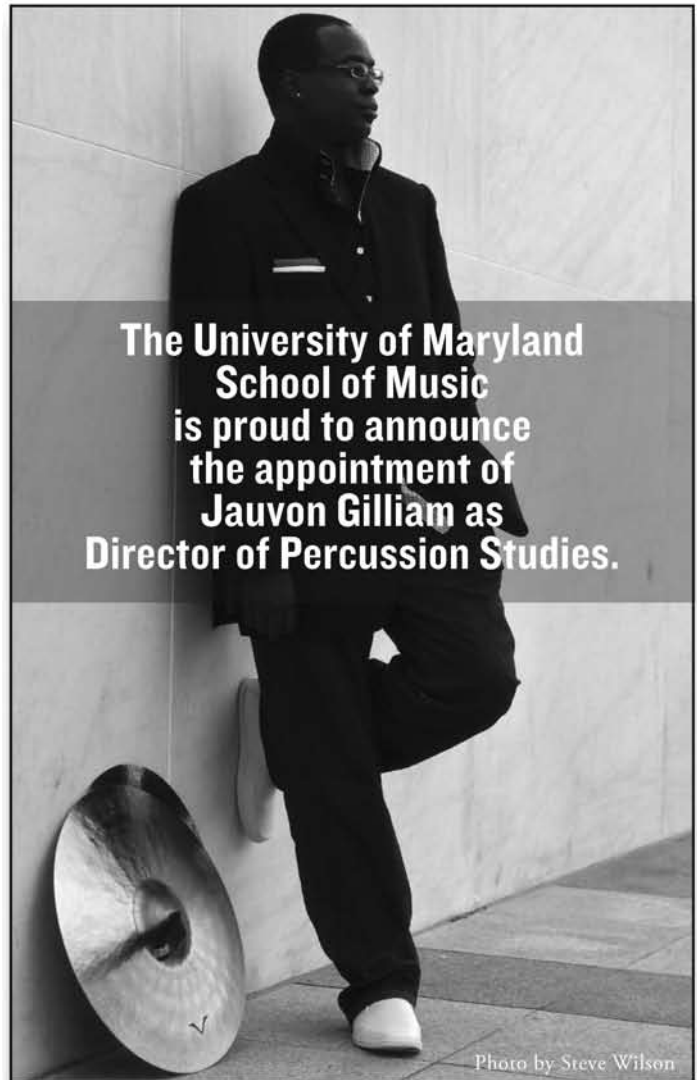
The committee calls for a wide and representative variety of percussion music to be presented, with specific focus on percussion solo and ensemble literature composed between 1961-2011, representing the birth of PAS through the first 50 years of its existence and development. It is the intention of the committee that the major masterworks and the significant composers of our field from this time period will be well represented in the proposals submitted from the membership at large. It is also the intention of the New Music/Research Committee that music for all percussion solo instrumentation be represented, as well as music drawing from the full spectrum of the solo and percussion ensemble repertoire of the past 50 years, including new and previously unknown works.

The only stipulations in preparing an application are that the music must have been composed between the years of 1961-2011, and that the piece be for percussion instruments only. It is not the desire of the committee to receive proposals that include the use of electronics and/or the inclusion of any non-percussionists or non-percussion instruments (with the exception of the piano). Suggested topics for presentation include: masterworks for solo instruments, masterworks for percussion ensemble, experiments with tradition, experiments with organized sound, experiments with non-western influences, experiments with the interpretation of graphic notation, experiments with timbre & texture fields, experiments with minimalism, experiments with complexity, experiments with extended techniques, etc. With the intent of including as many and as wide a variety of performers and performances as possible, the committee requests that applicants submit proposals for the performance and/or presentation of a specific piece of literature rather than for a collection of pieces or an entire session. The day will be organized around five mixed concerts from the five decades of PAS, with a culminating evening showcase performances representative of the entire 50-year time period.

As always, the committee is interested in the participation of both emerging and established artists. Applications from performers, composers, scholars, and ensembles featured in past New Music Research and/or Focus Days are expected and are encouraged. All proposals that meet the criteria and qualify for inclusion on the 2011 PASIC Focus Day will be given complete and careful consideration. Please note: expenses and the securing of instruments and funding sources will be the sole responsibility of the artist(s) themselves. This includes all logistical and financial considerations associated with the performance. Please prepare and submit your proposal with this consideration in mind.

For additional information, please contact:

Dr. Eugene D. Novotney
New Music/ Research Committee
novotney@humboldt.edu



The University of Maryland
School of Music
is proud to announce
the appointment of
Jauvon Gilliam as
Director of Percussion Studies.

Photo by Steve Wilson

"With world-class facilities and a world-class faculty, I am proud to usher in this new era at the University of Maryland. Offering the complete percussion experience, we have everything you need to prepare you for whatever your musical future holds."

JAUVON GILLIAM

Director of Percussion Studies;
Principal Timpani, National Symphony Orchestra

FACULTY:

TONY AMES
Principal Percussion,
National Symphony Orchestra

LEE HINKLE
Director of Percussion Ensemble

JAUVON GILLIAM
Director of Percussion Studies;
Principal Timpani,
National Symphony Orchestra

CHUCK REDD
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