

2017

AUDITION & MEMBERSHIP PACKET

Front Ensemble Audition Information

(General information comes in a separate document)



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Dear Prospective Member,

Thank you for your interest in the 2017 Phantom Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps Percussion Program.

The exercises in this packet are designed to help you develop a solid foundation in marching percussion, as well as push the physical and mental abilities necessary to meet the demands of performing at a DCI World Class level. The packet serves as a reference tool for all levels of players, from beginner to expert.

In addition, these exercises will help us teach you how to become a stronger player and more expressive musician. It will allow us to evaluate you on the following:

Sound Quality
Rhythmic Accuracy
Timing
Touch/Flow
Preparation
Presentation
Overall Musicianship

These skill sets are very important, but perhaps what is more important than *what you know* or *what you can do* is ***how you think and act***. Some descriptors of successful students include:

Confident	Adaptive	Creative
Attentive	Persistent	Insightful
Diligent	Patient	Consistent
Skillful	Thoughtful	Accountable
Observant	Meticulous	Receptive
Discriminating	Amiable	Committed

These types of qualities will show us you have the executive functions necessary to be a strong, contributing member to the Phantom Regiment Percussion Ensemble.

Lastly, we absolutely want to see you play your best, so relax, keep an open mind, and be confident in the hard work you've put in up to this point - we're rooting for you.

Prepare to impress, and we look forward to seeing you soon.

2017 Percussion Staff

LOOK STRONG - FEEL CONFIDENT - PLAY CLEAN



Congratulations on taking the first step to becoming a member of the Phantom Regiment Front Ensemble. Within this packet you will find a detailed description of technical approach, musical concepts, and overall philosophy of sound production and our learning process. Possibly the best part of this entire experience is the opportunity to learn new things, embrace new concepts, and continue your ongoing development as a musician, performer, and young adult! We are extremely excited to get the season underway and begin the next chapter of an iconic ensemble within the DCI community. Welcome and best wishes!!

Foreword:

Within this technique packet you will find all of the components that we focus on in Phantom Regiment Front Ensemble. The major musical concepts within this book are not specific to a given instrument, but rather are musical concepts that are used throughout the entire percussion ensemble. It is important to understand that we focus on sound, technique, and music skill from a mental understanding first and a technical application second. That is to say, you must first have a deep understanding of the concept you are attempting to achieve before you can technically or physically achieve it. Please take the time to address each concept in this packet in terms of musical understanding. Do not begin by trying to figure out “what the hands look like”, but rather how is this supposed to sound, and progress from there. With that approach, you will gain a much greater level of detail as you learn. Lastly, with all of this in mind, work through each component addressed in this book on each basic stroke before you begin to learn the exercises included. The foundation of consistent sound begins with control of each sound component within each basic stroke type. The exercises are meant to be a culmination of this work rather than a point of departure. In this book you will find both full concept “Warm Up” exercises, as well as shorter, “Basic Exercises” as well. We encourage you to work from the “Basic Exercises” We hope this book provides new insight within your musical development and an opportunity for continued technical and musical growth.

Focus on Sound:

As percussionist we spend a great deal of time honing our technical skills, our physical dexterity, and our rhythmic control. It is important to always remember that all of those components are merely means by which to create and control sound and music. Because of this, we must constantly not only be aware of the sound we produce, but must also work to refine our ability to identify nuances within this sound. Training our ears will in turn be our greatest tool in training our hands. As a percussionist we have a number of components of sound that we must consider:

- *Duration* - Is the sound we produce “dry”...a short sound, or “wet”...a longer sustained sound? As a percussionist, much of this is affected by how open or closed we are in our

grip. The tighter we grip the stick into the palm of our hand the drier the sound becomes. As the implement is allowed to resonate, the duration of our sound will increase.

- *Timbre* - What is the tone color of the sound we produce? Is the sound “bright”, or “dark”. In most cases we are looking for a dark timbre to our sound, however it is important to know how to create both. Much of this can be controlled by how we transfer weight to the instrument and the velocity the implement is traveling. The faster the implement travels to the surface, the brighter and more articulate the sound becomes. Inversely, as we use more weight and less velocity, the sound will become proportionately darker. Within our playing we must be able to use different combinations of weight and velocity in order to control timbre and articulation.
- *Tone* - Tone should be one of our highest considerations regardless of playing a pitched or non-pitched instrument. In general, strive to produce a sound that is characteristic of the instrument we are playing, with the fullest tone possible. As we discussed earlier, our ear is the key. We must first be aware of what a great characteristic sound on our instrument is work to produce that at all times. The best way for us to be aware of this is do a great deal of listening to other professional level musicians and listen with a great deal of detail to the sound they produce...not just “how” they are producing it.
- *Consistency* - Strive to maintain an unchanging sound, note to note...or hand to hand. This incorporates all of the components above. Any change in duration, timbre, or tone should be a conscious decision and should be used as a expressive musical tool. This may be the single largest challenge a player faces. This also requires the most detailed listening. It is very important to not rely on “does it feel the same?” but really evaluate “does it sound the same?”.

As you practice and perform, you must bring a constant awareness to these multiple components of the sound you produce. One of the strongest elements of a mature performer is the ability to control slight nuances within their sound, and use those nuances as expressive tools within their playing.

Articulation:

One of the biggest factors in the ability for the front ensemble to speak clearly within the ensemble is our ability to create a consistent articulation and more specifically the correct defined articulation for the given musical style. The idea of articulation refers primarily to the space (or lack of space) between each note. As a keyboard percussionist (aside from pedaling) we generally control the length of a notes sound by changing how we approach the beginning of the note. If we want to create a “shorter/ more spaced” articulation we will add additional energy to the stroke. This will give the attack of the note a bit more “bite” and therefore reduce the sounding length of the note slightly. Inversely, if we use less stroke energy and more weight behind the stroke, we can create a more legato style of articulation by

creating less attack and therefore more resonance behind each note. The other factor that physically contributes to this is how “firm” we are in our grip and within the hand...more specifically what we feel within the palm of the hand. The firmer you become within your palm, the shorter the articulation will become. The more relaxed you become within your palm and fingers the more open the sound will become. It is important to be able to control the complete spectrum of articulation from very staccato to very legato all while maintaining consistent tone and good mechanical skills. Spend time playing each exercises in multiple articulation styles, as each skill will be used in various styles depending on the given musical need.

Balance and Blend:

Much of the time devoted to ensemble playing in a marching environment is focused primarily on rhythmic clarity. While that is a necessity, clarity alone is not the end goal. You must also be able to both Balance other players in your section in terms of sound quality/volume, as well as Blend your tone and sound quality with other players as well. While we often hear these two terms used together or interchangeably, they are two separate concepts.

Balance directly references multiple players playing at the exact same dynamic level and producing the exact same quantity of sound. Blend is the more difficult of these two concepts to achieve. Blend depends solely on producing an identical sound between two or more players. It is important to remember that just because two players LOOK the same, they may not SOUND the same! Components that factor into this are stroke energy, articulation, and most importantly the ability to control the response of the instrument. Blend requires development through very detailed listening and comparison of each player playing individually.

While we can not wait to be completely “clean” to being to work toward balance and blend, it is important to understand that balance is impossible without clarity and blend is impossible without balance. Once all three of these components are achieved (clarity, balance, and blend), the end result is a sense of “higher clarity” within the ensemble unachievable by clarity alone.

Preparation:

As you prepare the information in this packet we encourage you to focus on the micro first and build that to the macro. Isolate stroke types and focus on the details of that specific stroke type before working through the entire exercise. As you encounter unfamiliar material, isolate the specific issue and work that issue until you feel completely comfortable with it. Once that is the case, begin to put it in context of a few measure to see if you can retain the detail within a larger passage of music. Understand that your development of this packet and your development as a player is a marathon, not a sprint. It is about detailed preparation and isolation of each piece in order to gain complete comfort over the whole. All elements: rhythm/

pulse, dynamic levels, consistency of sound, consistency of grip, flow of the stroke, and mental focus, must be accounted for in each portion of each exercise, and in each exercise as a whole. The majority of late season clarity or balance issues always are a result of flaws in basic approach to stroke, articulation, or timing. All of these problems can be avoided with slow, calculated preparation of the basics!

We encourage you to prepare on a instrument as much as possible. Drum pads are a great practice tool, however in order to prepare to perform, you must play as much as possible on an actual instrument. This also will allow you to truly focus on sound and feel, and build consistency on the instrument on which you will ultimately perform. Lastly, while the metronome is a huge element in preparation, we do not use a metronome in performance, so you must use it as a tool rather than building dependence on it to feel comfortable. Ultimately it must be your goal to prepare not to audition, but rather to perform. In today's technological world, use every resource available to you in order to be as detailed as possible in your preparation. This includes digital recorders, video recorders, and most importantly, other players around you that can listen and comment on your sound and performance. The best way to prepare to perform is to perform as often as possible.

Metronome Usage:

A metronome is an integral tool in both individual practice as well as rehearsal. We recommend purchasing a metronome that has subdivision capabilities as well as the ability to program tempo and meter changes. The Boss: Dr. Beat, Tama: Rhythm Watch, are excellent metronomes with full capabilities. It is important to understand that a metronome is a tool in your preparation versus a constant tempo crutch. As you are practicing a passage, start with the metronome on the primary pulse. Once you feel comfortable with the passage, in terms of how everything rhythmically relates to the pulse, you can begin to use the metronome differently to increase your individual pulse responsibility. Work to be able to have the metronome click the half note, and then eventually the whole note while playing the same passage. This will train you to control you own pulse while still having a checkpoint every few beats to check your accuracy. We will use these same techniques in rehearsal to build ensemble pulse without constantly "completely" relying on the metronome. Even as you become totally comfortable with pulse within a musical passage, it is important to check tempo on a metronome periodically as you practice so as not to begin to waver even slightly in your starting tempo.

Dynamic Interpretation:

While we do refer to stroke size (heights) as a dynamic template and a point of departure to create uniformity, it is imperative that we constantly think of dynamics in terms of volume and sound quantity. That is to say that *mp* can be played at a variety of stroke heights as long as

the quantity of sound is consistent. In general, work from the definitions below to gain consistent control over stroke height and thereby dynamics.

Wrist Based Stroke:

p = 1 inch stroke
mp = 3 inch stroke
mf = 6 inch stroke
f = 9 inch stroke
ff = 12 inch stroke

Arm Based Stroke:

fff = Stroke hinged from elbow (still contains wrist bend in addition to arm)

It is important that as you move between dynamic levels that you focus to maintain a consistent sound at all levels. In addition to correct heights, it is important to constantly listen and make sure that the dynamics are accurate in sound, not just accurate in height. That is, a *f* dynamic level should produce twice as much sound as a *mp* dynamic level. By focusing on the amount of sound being produced at each level (within the given height) we can make slight adjustments in stick velocity to produce the accurate dynamic and begin to build muscle memory within each of these dynamic levels.

When you see dynamic levels separated by a “ / ”, this refers to the accent dynamic level and the tap level. For instance, if you see *f/mp*, that indicates a *f* accent level and a *mp* tap level.

Keyboard Technique Guidelines

Posture

Great percussion performance begins with great posture. Before you play a note, members of your audience make conscious and unconscious judgments of you based on the way you look behind your instrument. Our goal is to convey a sense of maturity and utmost professionalism. Performers should make a noticeable impression on the viewer/listener by projecting confidence, poise, and dignity.

- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart.
- Stand as tall as possible, imagining a string pulling you up from the top of your head.
- Imagine a straight line extending from your ears to your shoulders to your hips to your heels.

- Your upper body should be upright, rather than hunched over the instrument.
- Shoulders should be slightly back (although not tense) opening up the chest and creating a “big look” to your stance and body carriage.
- Keep your head up and look down at the keyboard through your nose.
- Upper arms should stay relaxed and “hang” down from the shoulders without tension.
- Although the distance between your body and the keyboard will vary based on the musical passage, in general you should stand in such a way that moving between upper and lower manuals is easy and fluid. We will move our body into the best position to play the passage versus leaning or reaching unnecessarily. This especially applies to 4 mallet passages.
- As you shift to various body positions while moving around the instrument, it is often helpful to place one foot slightly in front of the other and shift your weight as needed.

A word on instrument height ...

It is important to set your instrument at a height that is appropriate for you. Keyboard performers in the front ensemble generally perform on one keyboard throughout the season and Instrument height is personalized for each individual. We eliminate the need to compromise on instrument height between players who would otherwise be sharing or trading instruments. Your instrument should be set at a height so that your forearms are angled slightly down. The closer your forearms are to parallel to the ground, the more flexibility you will have in your wrist. If your instrument is too low, your forearm angle will be too steep, and you will likely find yourself unable to play at a strong outdoor volume without using arm. If your arms are angled up, you need to lower your instrument. Find the instrument height that gives you maximum range of motion in your wrist, where the mallet head will strike the bar flat rather than at an angle.

“Concert” Approach versus “Marching” Approach

We are all concert percussionist first and foremost and with that in mind we will approach all of the instruments in the front ensemble in a way that is useful in both outdoor and indoor situations. From a grip/ stroke standpoint, we do not “alter” anything in order to transfer to an outdoor application. From a keyboard standpoint we will often end up using a slightly

amplified articulation style compared to general solo marimba or vibraphone playing, however not at a level that will distort sound or damage an instrument. We will use a great deal of weight to produce sound in general which will create a dark sound and improve projection. It is important to us that everyone understand that there is a specific sound for every specific situation and one of our jobs as well rounded percussionists is to be able to manipulate the instruments we play to provide the needed sound for the situation at hand. We also will focus on the acoustic sound we are producing regardless of miking and amplification. Our goal is to produce the tone and articulation necessary for the musical passage and then amplify that sound in the interest of projection in large performance venues. With all of this in mind, we hope to provide you with an understanding of instrument control that will lend itself not specifically to the marching idiom, but rather give you the tools to produce ANY needed sound in ANY musical environment.

Vibraphone considerations

To memorize the feel of body positions, vibraphone (and pedal glock) players should always stand with their right toe on the pedal. Do this even on exercises where the pedal is not being used. Balance your weight between the left foot and right heel. When pedaling, only move the toe (rather than lifting the entire foot). Set the height of the pedal relatively low, so that minimal foot motion is needed for the foot to clear the bars. Often players will set the pedal too high, requiring their foot to be at a steep angle when the pedal is not in use. This causes tension in the foot and leg which can extend through the entire body.

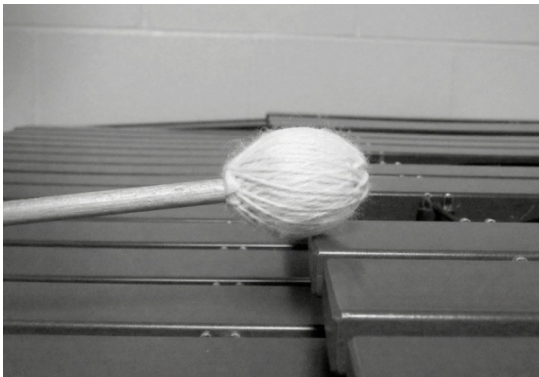
Familiarize yourself with the specific demands of playing the vibraphone. Body positioning, bar placement, and pedaling all present unique challenges that are quite different than marimba. We encourage all auditionees to devote some time to practicing vibes. Less than half of our front ensemble will perform on marimba, yet most keyboard auditionees spend all of their time practicing this one instrument. In preparation for the audition camps, spend time on all keyboard instruments. Aim to be a competent and comfortable performer on marimba, vibes, xylophone, and glock.

Bar Placement

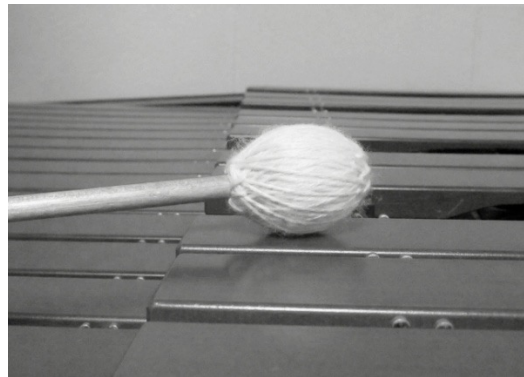
In most cases, we strive to play in the “center” of the bars as much as possible. Whether we choose to play in the exact dead center, slightly off center, or over the resonator rail depends on a number of factors. In the low end of the marimbas and vibes, we play about one to two inches off the exact center. This is to avoid the nodal point that is in the dead center of the bar, and in the case of our rosewood marimbas, to avoid cracking bars. Large marimba bars are thinnest (and therefore most prone to crack) in the very center. Throughout the majority of the instrument we play just the slightest bit off-center (about half an inch). Visualize playing about halfway between the exact center of the resonator tube and the resonator rail that is closest to the middle of the instrument. The picture below shows what this should look like from your perspective. At the very top of the marimbas (upper octave) we aim for the exact dead center.

In the end, use your own musical judgment. Experiment: how does the sound of the bar change when you move slightly off center as compared to the exact center? Where is the bar loudest? How hard are the mallets, at what dynamic are you playing, and what is the tessitura of the musical passage? In general, we strive to find the spot on the bar with the strongest, fullest sound that is open, round, and not “dead.”

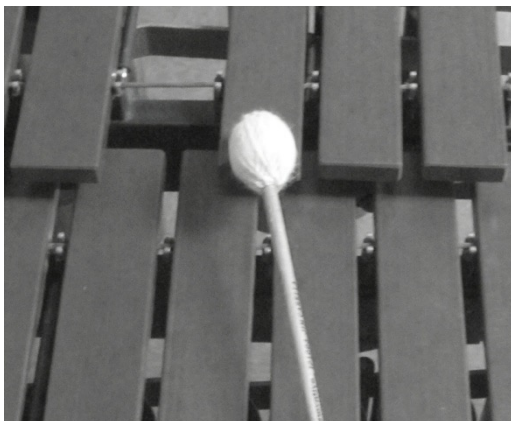
At fast tempos, we must strike notes on the upper manual at the edge of the bars. We have found that on an exercise like “Green,” about 140 BPM is the best tempo to make the shift from playing in the centers to playing on the edges of the black notes. Watch for the center marimba player to make this switch as tempos are increased. When the center player moves to the edge of the bar, the rest of the marimba players should follow suit. With the exception of 4 mallet chordal work on the vibes, vibe and glock players should always play in the center of the bars. When striking the edge of the bar, strike the very edge of the bar. Imagine splitting the mallet head in half with the sharp corners of the bars. Half of the mallet head should be on the bar while the other half is off. Many players strike too close to the string, or worse, on the string. There is a huge difference in sound, both in tone color and sheer volume.



Correct: VERY edge of the bar



Incorrect: too close to the string



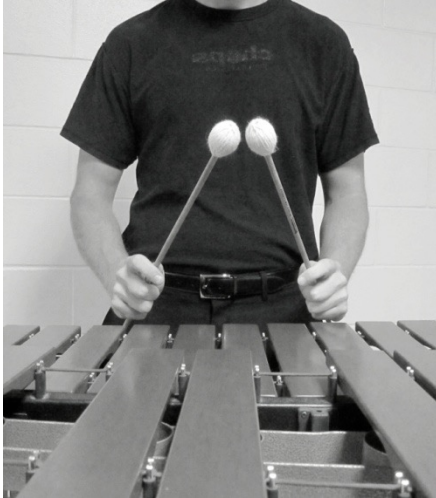
Use your ears and match the sound of the edge of the bar to the sound of the white notes. You may find yourself needing to adjust how much off the exact center you play the white notes. We have found that sound produced by playing slightly off center matches the edges of the bars better than the sound produced by playing dead center.

Two Mallet Technique

An emphasis on two mallet playing is a large portion of our technique program at the Phantom Regiment. While we will do a good deal of 4 mallet playing we always begin our warm-up sequence with two mallet exercises and use this as the foundation of our technique and sound development. It is here that we establish solid fundamentals and focus on the following concepts and values:

Our two mallet grip adheres to the following guidelines:

- The mallet is supported throughout the fingers. Do not “squeeze” in the front or back of the hand.
- The back of the mallet must be able to move slightly between the back fingers and the palm of the hand. That is not to say that we should be “loose” in our back fingers, but it is important to not choke off the mallet motion in the back fingers/ center of the hand. At slower tempos, the back of the hand will become slightly “firmer” to facilitate good articulation of every note. At faster tempos, the mallet should be allowed to move a bit more between the back fingers and palm of the hand.
- Every stroke is generated from the WRIST...not the FINGERS.
- About two inches of mallet shaft should stick out behind the hand. Find the best fulcrum spot for the mallet and avoid choking up too much or too far back.
- This firmness in the back of the hand should enable you to feel like you are “transferring weight” into the bar. Think of a heaviness in the hands that enables you to produce a big, full, dark sound.



- Wrists are positioned very low to the instrument and the mallet heads are high.
- Hands should angle in slightly. Make sure your hands are neither completely flat with your palms facing down (as in German grip), nor turned completely in with your thumbs facing up (as in French grip). You will find that the first knuckle (the largest knuckle) on your index finger will be “on top” in this position.
- For the purposes of our technical exercises, it may help to think of the stroke as being generated exclusively by the wrist. In actuality, our ideal stroke does include the *addition* of a minimal amount of arm. This additional 10% or so of arm is added to help produce the volume levels needed for projection in this type of performing arena. For now, we suggest focusing on using 100% wrist while practicing the exercises before adding the additional 10% of arm. Throughout all of our “wrist based strokes” it is important to remember to never restrain the forearm, but to allow it to respond naturally to the motion of the wrist.
- In the case of fast two mallet passages, the fulcrum switches to a traditional “front of the hand” fulcrum. This allows for the back of the mallet to breathe a little within the hand and provides space for the fingers to aid the stroke. At fast tempos, lower your mallet heights and eliminate the arm from the stroke.
- Each stroke begins and ends from a high set position. The first motion is down. The motion of each stroke should be *down-up*. Do not begin with a lift or “prep” stroke, as in *up-down-up*. The mallets should begin in the high set position, fire straight down, and return to the high set position.



When the first two notes of a phrase are on different manuals (a white note in one hand and a black note in the other), set up appropriately.

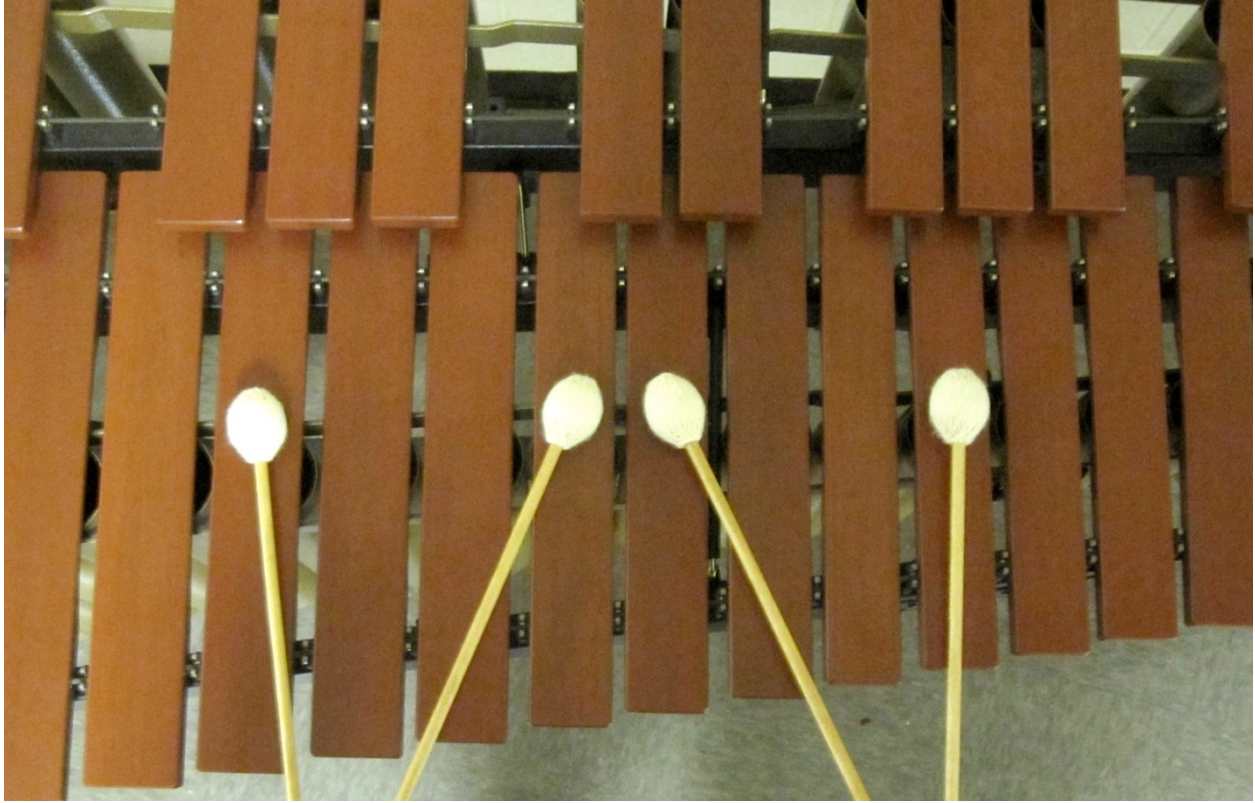
Setting up the mallets and “looking in”

While our ears will always be our most valuable tool as musicians, in this environment it will often be necessary to use sight for timing. This is usually due to the distance between players at times, and the amount of volume often present within the drum corps environment. With that in mind we must train ourselves to “look in” toward the center of the ensemble to solidify tempo and attack points.

Even when practicing alone by yourself, practice “looking in.” Turn your head right or left and get comfortable with what this feels like. Successful execution of this technique involves frequently looking in for timing and mallet height, while also checking back at your own keyboard periodically to insure note accuracy.

Four Mallet Technique

At the Phantom Regiment, we approach four mallet technique with the same values as two mallet technique. When working through four mallet exercises and music, remember to focus on the following solid fundamentals and producing the same sound we created using two mallets:



Grip

In the Phantom Regiment Front Ensemble, we use the grip portion of Stevens Technique on both marimba and vibes. For specific detailed reading on Stevens Technique, refer to:

Leigh Howard Stevens' "Method of Movement," published by Keyboard Percussion Publications. It is THE most in-depth examination and explanation of Stevens' technique. Prepare yourself for heavy intellectual reading with bits of dry humor. Includes 590 exercises. A "must own" book for any serious college percussion major.



Gifford Howarth's "Simply Four," published by TapSpace. This book provides much of the essential information in Stevens' book, with simple explanations that are accessible students of all ages. This book is great for new four mallet students, as well as teachers of new four mallet students. Also included in this book is an explanation of the Burton grip.

A word on Burton grip and the vibraphone

Typically, we use Stevens grip on both marimba and vibes. However, there are instances where we could use Burton grip on vibraphone or xylophone/pedal glock phrases where mallets of different hardnesses are used and a fast switch is needed. Vibraphone players with a glock mounted over top of their vibe sometimes find that phrases requiring a glock mallet / vibe mallet combination are easier performed with Burton grip. The same is true for keyboard players or rack percussionists that have found themselves needing to hold a keyboard mallet and a stick in the same hand. In cases where an individual performer would like to use Burton grip for something that is specific to their part, they certainly have the freedom to do so.

In this particular application, much of the vibraphone orchestration will take on a more "marimba style" at times and double marimba material from time to time as well. With that in mind the Stevens grip is currently our primary grip on the vibraphone, and everyone will be evaluated with the Stevens grip. Feel free, however, to perform your individual audition solo piece with the grip you feel most comfortable using.

Setting Up the Stevens Grip - The Phantom Regiment Approach

Inside Mallet:

- The hand is in a "handshaking" position, with the thumb pointed up
- The base of the inside mallet rests on the "lifeline" under the meaty base of the thumb
- The index finger creates a "table top," where the inside mallet rests on the first knuckle

- The inside mallet is balanced between the base of the thumb (towards the center of the palm) and the curled-in index finger. This cantilever effect holds the mallet in place without tension.
- With minimal tension, the middle finger secures the base of the inside mallet in the palm. The middle finger should not dig the mallet forcefully into the palm. The middle finger will generally connect with the mallet slightly above the tip of the mallet shaft...this will minimize tension. Much of this depends on hand size and finger length of the performer. Remember that the inside mallet “hangs” in the hand and is steered by the middle finger but not held in place by the middle finger.
- The thumb rests lightly on top, keeping the mallet from rolling side to side

Outside Mallet:

- The outside mallet is gripped with the ring finger and pinky – these fingers curl back into the palm of the hand
- The back two fingers are kept firm enough so that the outside mallet does not droop down
- No more than a half-inch of the outside mallet extends beyond the back of the pinky



*Back fingers are held firm enough so that the outside mallet does not droop.
Apply no more tension than is necessary*

The pad of the thumb lays flat on the mallet
The tip of the index finger stays relaxed
Middle finger rests on the base of the inside mallet
Ring and pinky fingers curve back into the hand



*Mallets “hang” in the hand,
with minimal tension*



The outside mallet rests next to the knuckle of
the middle finger, rather than back in the
webbing

Mallet heads are held level in the hand



- The index finger has a relaxed, natural curve to it.
- Tips of the index fingers always point across the body, rather than back at the body.
- The thumb is relaxed and “lying” on top of the inside mallet.
- Only in certain situations (the hands are spread far apart or B-flat major chords) do the hands turn inward. In almost all other cases, the hand stays straight up and down. The thumb stays pointed up at the sky/ceiling.
- The ring finger and pinky finger rest under the other fingers, as in a relaxed fist. From a birdseye view, you should not see the ring and pinky fingers stretched to the outside.
- The hand remains below the mallet heads.

Capital T vs. lowercase t

- The inside mallet rests on top of the first knuckle of the index finger.
- The connection between the thumb and index finger should form a capital letter “T” where the thumbnail is right over the first knuckle of the index finger. If you are forming a lowercase letter “t”, this is typically because you are pulling your index finger back in towards the body. Relax your index finger.
- The exact relationship of the thumb and index finger will vary slightly from player to player depending on hand size, but it is important to make sure the index finger is never curled back into the palm of the hand.



Four Mallet Stroke Approach

Double Vertical

- Wrist/arm mechanics are largely identical to the two-mallet stroke: front/middle of the hand relaxed, snap at the bottom of the stroke from the wrist, mallets thrown forward from the center of the hand.

Single Independent

- We will put emphasis on the mindset that this stroke type is a “turn” from the wrist rather than a “rotation.” The stroke will should turn from the wrist in the up position rather than rotate around the opposite mallet head.
- Specifically with prolonged inside mallet passages, the mallet heads should create a trapezoid when at the top of the stroke.
- The outside mallets should sit relatively halfway up to the inside mallet height.

- Wrist turn focused to the muscular base of the thumb inside the hand which generates the torque needed for a Marcato articulation.
- “Torque: a twisting force that tends to cause rotation.”

Single Alternating

- “Alternating Single Independents.” This stroke type is treated identically to the Single Independent stroke. However, the performer is required to execute independent strokes alternating from one another.

Double Lateral

- Mallets begin in up position
- The first mallet stroke (beginning with inside or outside mallet) is initiated similarly to the single independent: thrown from the center of the hand, with arm assist, turning the entire hand.
- As the first mallets strikes, the second mallet is “flicked” to create torque
- Note: the second mallet “flick” happens *before* the first mallet has recycled back to the top - this is what differentiates a double lateral from two single independent strokes.
- Both Mallets recycle to the top of the stroke together

Timpani

The Phantom Regiment timpani position is the only “solo” percussion position in the corps. Therefore, a wide range of techniques and styles are acceptable for this position. Here are the basic categories of things you must do very well:

- Intonation
- Rhythmic Accuracy
- Tone Production
- Technical Facility
- Pedaling
- Instrument Maintenance
- Music Theory Knowledge

Intonation

As the timpanist, you are asked to function as a member of both the front ensemble and of the brass ensemble. You must be flexible with pitch depending on the role you serve at any given time. You will also need to be aware of environmental issues (heat, humidity, etc.) and the effects those issues have on the ensemble intonation. Gauges are a useful tool in aiding towards this goal. They should be used as a reference, NOT a replacement for the use of our ears. The gauges on the timpani will need to be checked/corrected during rehearsal and before performances.

Rhythmic Accuracy

The ability to be 100% rhythmically accurate is of the utmost importance in the marching activity. Constant practice with a metronome on different subdivisions (quarter note, half note, whole note) will assist in assuring accuracy.

Tone Production

We should always strive to produce a clear, strong, big and confident quality of sound at all times. In the drum corps idiom, you will be asked to play a good deal louder than you would in a concert hall. This will require an adjustment period and some experimentation on your part to achieve the desired dynamic range with a great quality of sound. When possible, place pitches on lower drums to use the top 1/3 of the range of each drum. This will assist in the clarity of pitch and articulation, especially at higher volumes.

Technical Facility

Playing timpani requires the use of both your hands and feet. Efficient motion around the drums with all limbs will assist in maintaining rhythmic and tonal accuracy. Being able to move around the drums while leading with either hand will help keep your motions more efficient.

Pedaling

Feet should be kept low and in contact with the pedals at all times. This will help to keep you stable on the throne while making your motions quick and efficient. Moving the pedal up applies tension to the drum head and raises the pitch, while moving the pedal down have the exact opposite effect. When possible we want to move the pedal up to a pitch instead of down to a pitch. This will help to avoid the head dipping below the desired pitch.

Instrument Maintenance

Due to all the moving, loading, and unloading that takes place during a day, the condition of the drums and heads must be constantly maintained. This will require patience and care when we move to not accidentally knock the drums into themselves when setting up. Heads must also be checked and cleared (each drum made to be in tune with itself) daily, and often multiple times a day. The timpanist will also be in charge of changing heads during the summer. Individual knowledge of tuning, head and drum maintenance, and changing heads is a must!

Music Theory Knowledge

A majority of music is based around key centers. The ability to identify intervals and scale degrees, as well as chords and chord inversions, will aid in your understanding of how you fit into the brass ensemble parts with regards to intonation and phrasing.

Timpani Auditions

In addition to preparing the exercises in the packet, be prepared to play a short solo that demonstrates your capabilities as a timpanist. For exercises where no timpani part included, be somewhat familiar with the keyboard part and prepared to learn a timpani part at camp.

Synthesizer

Please prepare each of the keyboard exercises, and be prepared to play the 2 mallet exercises in both hands simultaneously (in octaves) wherever possible. Also please prepare solo piano excerpt(s) as a large part of the synthesizer audition. If possible, prepare two excerpts: one showcasing technical ability and one showcasing lyrical ability. It is not necessary to perform more than an excerpt of each solo work.

The qualities we look for in our synthesizer performer include:

- A good sense of rhythm and time
- Strong piano skills
- Knowledge (or a strong desire to learn) about the technical operation of their instruments – including sound selection and tweaking, patch changes, and layering of multiple sounds
- Self-sufficiency

Audition Checklist

- 1) Prepare a short solo on the instrument of your choice (marimba, vibraphone, or timpani). Pick a solo that highlights your strengths and shows off your musicality.
- 2) Prepare an orchestral snare drum etude or solo showcasing your orchestral drumming abilities. (Firth, Delecluse, Macarez, Aleo, Cirone, or similar).
- 3) Prepare all exercises in the packet at varying tempos and dynamic levels. Below are target tempos ranges for each exercise:
 - a) Phantom 7/8 - 90-180 bpm
 - b) Green Scales - 90-180 bpm
 - c) 2 Mallet Broken Chords - 90-196 bpm
 - d) Chromatic Up/Major Down - 90-188 bpm
 - e) 7-7-5-5-8 (all 3 stroke types) - 80-120 bpm
 - f) 4 Mallet Broken Chords - 56-88 bpm
 - g) Double Latte - 90-128 bpm

- h) Block Chords (with all sticking variations) - 76-140 bpm
- i) 16th Note Timing - 100-190 bpm
- j) 4/3/2 Accent Tap - 108-172 bpm

4) We suggest bringing concert snare sticks and a drum pad with you to the audition. We have a limited number of instruments available and it is important that you are able to play constantly, even if you are not currently on a keyboard or timpani.

Final tips...

- The majority of your time should be spent practicing to a metronome or quantized music.
- Know the exercises thoroughly and come to camp prepared. This includes memorization of all exercises. Be comfortable with all 12 major and minor keys.
- Spend some time playing on other instruments. Less than half of our front ensemble will perform on marimba, yet most keyboard auditionees spend all of their time practicing this one instrument. Spend some time on vibraphone or xylophone so that you are able to play comfortably on all keyboard instruments.
- Practice in front of a mirror, when possible. This is especially important when working on four-mallet technique. It is also helpful to place a mirror at the END of the keyboard in order to focus on your platform heights, wrist rotation and looking inward while you play.
- Not having access to a keyboard percussion instrument for practice can be a major obstacle for some. Realize, however, that you don't need to be on an instrument all of the time. In terms of two-mallet timing and hand speed, much can be developed on a drum pad with sticks and a metronome. In terms of mastering the four-mallet stroke types, spend time on playing on the floor. This allows you to focus on strictly technique without worrying about notes. When learning exercises or music, play on a piano or synthesizer keyboard if you need to. Two mallet performance can be simulated with the index fingers, and four mallet performance can be simulated with the pinkies and thumbs.
- Don't forget to prepare an excerpt of a solo piece that showcases your talents. Choose something that allows you to demonstrate musicality and performance ability.
- Remember that while you will be attending an audition, you also have the chance to play with other musicians that have the same goals you have. That in itself should create a tremendously exciting and inspirational environment. As you prepare, prepare yourself to have a great experience with other highly driven people!

Basic 2 Mallet Exercises

Phantom 7/8

Keyboards

Timpani

Kybds.

Timp.

Green Scales

Check Pattern Measure

Kybds.

Timp.

Kybds.

Timp.

2 Mallet Broken Chords - version A

Kybds.

Timp.

2 Mallet Broken Chords - version B

Kybds.

Timp.

All of these exercises should be prepared in all 12 Major and 12 Natural Minor Keys

We will also play each of these exercises carrying 4 mallets using only the inside mallets.

Chromatic Up – Major Down

Kybd. **C Major** **C# Major**

Kybd. **D Major** **Eb Major**

Kybd. **E Major** **F Major**

Kybd. **F# Major** **G Major**

Kybd. **Ab major** **A Major**

Kybd. **Bb Major** **B Major**

Kybd. **C Major**

Be prepared to play this with descending Natural Minor and Harmonic Minor Scales in place of the Major Scales.

Basic 4 Mallet Exercises

7-7-5-5-8

Double Verticals, Inside Motion Single Alt. Strokes,
Outside Motion Single Alt. Strokes

Keyboards

Timpani

Kybds.

Timp.

Kybds.

Timp.

Kybds.

Timp.

4 Mallet Broken Chords – Marimbas

Play in all Major and Natural Minor Arpeggios

Marimba Inversions

Kybds.

4 Mallet Broken Chords – Vibes

Play in all Major and Natural Minor Arpeggios

Vibraphone Inversions

Kybds.

Phantom Regiment 2016

♩ = 96

Rufus Wainwright
arr. Jerrod Douglas

Vibraphone

Marimba

Piano

4

8

Measures 8-11 of a musical score in 4/4 time, featuring a piano accompaniment. The key signature has five flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, D-flat, G-flat). The score consists of four staves: two grand staves (treble and bass clef) and two single staves (treble and bass clef). Measures 8 and 9 feature a complex texture with many beamed sixteenth notes in the upper staves and a steady eighth-note bass line in the lower staves. Measures 10 and 11 show a shift in texture, with the upper staves playing chords and the lower staves continuing the eighth-note bass line. A fermata is placed over the first bass staff in measure 10.

12

Measures 12-15 of the musical score. Measure 12 begins with a new texture, featuring chords in the upper staves and a bass line in the lower staves. Measures 13 and 14 continue this texture. Measure 15 is the final measure of this section, marked with a double bar line. A fermata is placed over the first bass staff in measure 15, and a curved line connects it to a fermata in the second bass staff.

Double Latte

Eric Carraway/ Rob Ferguson

♩ = 90-128

Keyboards

4 3 2 4 3 2 4 3 1 2

Timpani

mf *p* *mf*

8

Kybds.

Timpani

p *mf* *f* *mp* *mf*

15

A

Kybds.

4 3 1 2 4 3 1 2 4

1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 4 3

Timpani

p *mf* *p* *mf*

22

Kybds.

Timpani

p *f*

29

B

Kybds.

1 2 4 3 1 2 4 3 1

3 4 2 3 4 2 3 4 2 1

Timpani

mp *mf* *p* *mf*

36

Kybds.

Timpani

43 C

Kybd.

Timp.

50

Kybd.

Timp.

57

Kybd.

Timp.

62

Kybd.

Timp.

Rhythm/ Hand Skill Exercises

16th Note Timing Comparison

Four staves of music, each containing four measures of 16th note patterns. The patterns are as follows:

- Staff 1: R L R L R L R L | R L R R L R R L R R L R | R L R L R L R L | R L R L R L R L R L R L
- Staff 2: R L R L R L R L | R R L R R L R R L R R L | R L R L R L R L | R L R L R L R L R L R L
- Staff 3: R L R L R L R L | R L L R L L R L L R L L | R L R L R L R L | R L R L R L R L R L R L
- Staff 4: R L R L R L R L | L R L L R L L R L L R L R L | R L R L R L R L | R L R L R L R L R L R L

4/3/2 Accent Tap

Three staves of music, each containing four measures of 4/3/2 Accent Tap patterns. The patterns are as follows:

- Staff 1: R | L | L | L
- Staff 2: R | L | L | L
- Staff 3: R | L | L | L

Reminder

If you have any questions regarding anything in this packet
please contact the front ensemble staff at frontensemble@regiment.org,
or Rob Ferguson directly at fergusonrob@me.com

Thank You for your interest in the Phantom Regiment. We look forward to seeing you at auditions.
Best wishes in your preparation!

This musical score is for a piece titled "The Sound of Silence". It is written for four instruments: Vibe 2, Marimba 3, Timpani, and Synthesizer. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into four systems, each corresponding to one of the instruments.

- Vibe 2:** The first system shows a melodic line starting with a "Sus" (sustained) marking. The dynamics range from *mf* (mezzo-forte) to *f* (forte) and then *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* again.
- Marimba 3:** The second system shows a rhythmic accompaniment consisting of eighth-note chords. The dynamics are *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).
- Timpani:** The third system shows a melodic line with a "Sus" marking. The dynamics range from *mf* (mezzo-forte) to *pp* (pianissimo) and then *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mp* again.
- Synthesizer:** The fourth system shows a melodic line with a "Choral Patch/ Samples" marking. The dynamics are *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).

9 **A** ♩ = 90

Vibez

mp

3 1 2 3 2 3 1 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 R

mp f mp

1/4 2/3 etc... p

Mar.3

p

mf

p

3 1 2 3 2 3 1 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2 3 2

mp f

3 2 4 3 2 R 2 R 2 R 2 R L R L etc...

mp mf p

Timp.

mp

mf

pp

mp

mf

5

mp

Synth.

14 **A1**

Vibe2 *mf ff mp f mp mf*

Mar.3 *mf f mp*

Timp. *mf p mp mf mp*

Synth. *mp*

Light Strings

Double Bass

18 **B** $\text{♩} = 84$

Vibe2 *mp mf mp mf*

Mar.3 *mp p mp+ mf*

Timp. *f pp mp*

Synth.

Double Lat

Ind

Combo

2 Mallets

26 **C** $\text{♩} = 90$

Vibe2 *mf* *f* *mp* *ff* *Sus*

Mar.3 *mp* *f* *mp* *ff*

Timp. *f*

Synth. *ff* STELLA/ CHORAL Warm Pad

molto rit.