

# ***Fun with Accessories!***

with Dr. Brad Meyer

\* “X” from *Complementary Percussion* by Keith Aleo

**TAMBOURINE** (paper plates, leg in chair)

Equipment:

- Two rows of jingles, wood shell, synthetic head
- Chair

Playing Position:

- Held in non-dominant hand
- Non-dominant leg on chair (for support and in case of on-leg playing)
- Held at eye level (in line with conductor’s hands and music stand)
- 45° –degree angle for general playing, vertical for rolls, NEVER FLAT!

Striking Variations:

- Softest: palm on head, w/ middle finger only, on edge
- Medium-soft: palm on head, w/ middle-two fingers, on edge
- General: palm off head, w/ “rock and roll” fingers, brace w/ thumb, 1” from rim
- Loud: flat part of fist, off-center
- Super loud (VERY RARELY USED): high-five the head, w/ flat hand, get a “pop” sound

Special Techniques:

- Fast-Soft Playing: two hands on the tamb., resting w/ inside of head on kneecap, play on edge w/ middle finger or middle two fingers, tamb. tilt down at 45° –degree angle forward
- Gut-Position (transitioning b/n soft and loud with rhythmic passages);
- Knee-Fist: tamb. in non-dominant hand, tilted down at 45° –degree angle (NOT UPSIDE-DOWN!), start rhythms with 2-knuckle hand position, strike inner notes with kneecap on underside of tamb.’s head

Thumb Rolls:

- Need bees wax, surfer wax, etc. (NOT CANDLE WAX!)
- Thumb should be in “hitch hiker” position, relax thumb and hand
- Thumbnail should follow the circle around, 1” from the edge (like a NASCAR car)
- Release done w/ back of palm
- Speed determines volume, (NOT PRESSURE)

Finger Rolls:

- Middle Finger braced by thumb, relax fingers and hand
- Follow the circle around, 1” from the edge
- Release done w/ either thumb, 1<sup>st</sup> finger, or back of palm

Shake Rolls:

- Vertical Position, relaxed arm, head facing your face
- Wrist should droop a little
- Shake your “bingo wings” (DON’T ROTATE TAMB.!)
- Start and end w/ an attack
- Attack-less endings/beginning, transition from finger to arm to finger shake rolls

Pandero-Styles (never/rarely used in concert music):

- Hold w/ non-dominant hand, sometime middle finger is used to dampen/raise pitch
- Struck with thumb (sometimes pressed into head to dampen/raise pitch)
- Heel-Toe technique: relaxed curved hand, front of fingers, back of palm

*EXTRA TIP: Play snare drum solos to help you practice all your tambourine techniques!! (Don’t play the solos at the written tempos if the written tempo is too fast)*

## CRASH CYMBALS (hand clapping, leg in chair)

### Equipment:

- Sizes: general – 18", Loud – 20", Soft – 16"
- Straps: leather w/ square knot, no pads or wooden handles
- Padded Chair

### Grip:

- Hold strap perpendicular to cymbal
- Fold the strap over second segment of fingers with 1<sup>st</sup> finger as touching the bell
- Wrap fingers around strap into a fist, with only the first two fingers touching the bell
- Thumb should wrap around the strap, pointing straight forward

### Cymbal position:

- Several different techniques, I prefer both plates at a 45°-degree angle w/ non-dominant hand on the lower plate
- Non-dominant foot on a chair

### Offset:

- Refers to how far apart the cymbals are when they are being struck (a.k.a. "crescent")
- Offset can be anywhere, I prefer on the top so you can see it, also reduces risk of air-pocket crashes
- Larger offset (~1") for loud crashes; smaller offset (almost even) for softer crashes
- Very soft crashes – hold at eye level and have the cymbals between you and the conductor (conductors LOVE this!)

### Flam:

- Refers to one edge of the cymbal striking before the other
- I prefer the bottom edge to strike first – no benefit to doing it either way
- Larger flam for louder crashes; smaller flam for softer crashes
- Try getting a good flam by practicing on the floor with one cymbal

### Striking:

- Left hand stays relaxed and still (maybe a little lift as you breath before crashing)
- Right hand lifts and should be prepared with a breath (bass drum and crash cymbal players use this breath to line up their parts since they usually play the same thing)
- Relax shoulders/arms/wrists as much as possible, while still maintaining control
- At point of impact, barely lift the right hand so the cymbals don't stay together, don't jerk them apart

### Sizzle Factor:

- The cymbals should stay together momentarily by naturally relaxing after striking.
- The longer they stay together, the more sizzle they have
- Sizzle is a personal preference, but many players are guilty of having not sizzle
- Generally, the louder the crash, the more sizzle you will want

### Dampening:

- Cymbals are dampened with the stomach (NOT CHEST)
- Keep cymbals close to stomach so dampening requires as little movement as possible
- Cymbals should have a chance to blossom before dampening; don't dampening immediately after playing

### Preparing Cymbals:

- Only done for loud crashes where the cymbals have not been played within the last few moments (NOT NEEDED FOR EVERY LOUD CRASH!)
- Lightly tap one, or both, cymbals VERY lightly on your knee; it helps create an initial sizzle that can help prevent slight air pockets and provide a rounder beginning to the crash
- The point of this is to help you; it's not meant to be heard!

### Fast, Rhythmic passages:

- Let the bottom edge of the cymbals stay together so you are only moving half the amount of cymbal

## TRIANGLE

### Equipment:

- Sizes: general – 6", Loud – 8-9", Soft – 3-4"
- Beaters: teardrop, Stossel, tube-style; NO ROD BEATERS!
- Clip: something with "isolation rubber" between the clip and string

### Grip:

- Hold triangle at eye level so it's in between you, your music, and the conductor
- Clip should rest on a "C" made between your thumb and second finger
- Your first finger goes around the clip to hold it in place
- Hold triangle with thumb and first two fingers in non-dominant hand

### Striking:

- Triangle opening should be facing your non-dominant side
- Beater at a 45° –degree angle to the bottom side (CLASHING TONES = GOOD)
- Always use a larger beater than you think you should
- Flat on bottom side for bell-like tone, or rarely for very articulate passages
- Use corner for faster, one-handed rhythms

### Rolls:

- In the bottom corner, at a 45° –degree angle
- Closer to the corner for soft rolls; further from the corner for loud rolls

### Flams:

- Swipe corner to hit upper side as grace note; lower side as primary note
- Swipe over the corner for louder grace notes; hard to get consistency

### Dampening:

- Bottom two fingers are for dampening when necessary
- Full dampen when necessary, remember to let every strike have a presence before you dampen it (just like crash cymbal dampening)
- Use one or two of the back fingers to help create rhythmic clarity in faster, more articulate passages

### Mounting Triangle

- Two clips: both w/ "isolation rubber"
- Play with two hands at a 45° –degree angle
- Just like playing a snare drum – great TRANSFERABILITY for all levels of players
- Always use two matched beaters when playing mounted triangle

### Special technique:

- World Music Technique: hold triangle in non-dominant hand (without a triangle clip) resting on first finger, back fingers for dampening

\* "V" from *Complementary Percussion* by Keith Aleo



Dr. Brad Meyer ([www.Brad-Meyer.com](http://www.Brad-Meyer.com)) is a percussion educator, artist, and composer with an extensive and diverse background. Currently, Brad is the Director of Percussion Studies at Stephen F. Austin State University (Nacogdoches, TX) where he directs the percussion ensemble and steel band ("Jacks of Steel"), teaches private percussion lessons and the percussion methods course, and is the coordinator/arranger for the SFA Lumberjack Marching Band's percussion sections. Dr. Meyer frequently tours to universities and high schools both nationally and internationally to present recitals, workshops, masterclasses, and clinics on various topics, including: electro-acoustic

percussion, contemporary marimba, concert snare drum, marching percussion, percussion ensemble, steel band, and world music. His international performances and clinics have taken him to Austria, Taiwan, France, South Africa, and Slovenia. Brad is a composer with several compositions for snare drum, multi-percussion, and percussion ensemble published through Bachovich Publications. Dr. Meyer is a proud endorsee of Yamaha Instruments, Zildjian Cymbals, Vic Firth Stick and Mallets, Evans Drumheads, and Tycoon Percussion.

# IX

(for Chris M.)

Keith Aleo

Presto con fuoco ♩ = 158-168  
palm fingers

The musical score is written on a single staff with a 4/4 time signature. It includes various percussion techniques and dynamic markings:

- Measures 1-4:** Starts with a double bar line. Techniques include "shake", "palm", "fingers", "FKFK", and "slap". Dynamics range from *fp* to *f*.
- Measure 4:** Marked with a "4" and a double bar line. Techniques include "palm", "fingers", "shake", and "thumb roll". Dynamics include *f* and *ff*.
- Measure 7:** Marked with a "7" and a double bar line. Techniques include "shake", "roll", "fist ->", and "thumb roll". Dynamics include *f* and *ff*.
- Measure 10:** Marked with a "10" and a double bar line. Techniques include "shake", "roll", "fist ->", and "thumb roll". Dynamics include *f* and *ff*.
- Measure 13:** Marked with a "13" and a double bar line. Technique: "on leg; two hands". Dynamics include *pp*.
- Measure 16:** Marked with a "16" and a double bar line. Techniques include "all r.h.; l.h. to grab", "slap", "on leg; two hand", and "fist". Dynamics include *ff* and *p*.
- Measure 19:** Marked with a "19" and a double bar line. Techniques include "(l.h. grab)", "fingers: 2 1 2 1 2", "shake", "roll", and "fist". Dynamics include *ff*.
- Measure 22:** Marked with a "22" and a double bar line. Techniques include "FK FK FK" and "Slap". Dynamics include *ff*.

Allegro assai  $\text{♩} = 132$

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LD = lightly dampen w/ finger(s)

## Keith Aleo

29

26

mute I.v. mute I.v. mute I.v. mute

29

I.v. mute I.v. I.v. LD -> ff

32

I.v. (turn over beater; play with shaft of beater) LD pp niente

## 17"-18" Crash Cymbals

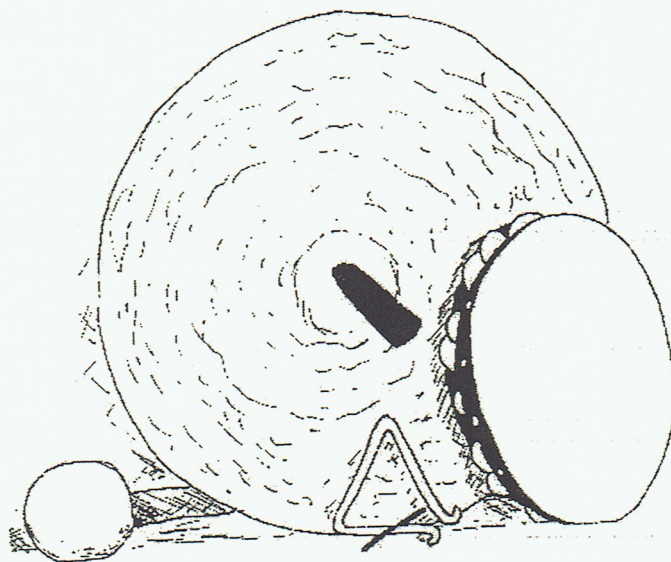
(for N. Percy)

**Vivace**  = 144

44

# *Complementary Percussion*

*A handbook for developing  
Tambourine, Triangle, Cymbals and Bass Drum  
Performance*



*KEITH ALEO*

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