An Introductory Guide to Vibraphone: Four Idiomatic Practices and a Survey of Pedagogical Material and Solo Literature

Brian Scott Cheesman

University of Southern Mississippi

Follow this and additional works at: https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations

Part of the Music Pedagogy Commons, and the Music Performance Commons

Recommended Citation
https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations/539

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by The Aquila Digital Community. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of The Aquila Digital Community. For more information, please contact Joshua.Cromwell@usm.edu.
The University of Southern Mississippi

AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE TO VIBRAPHONE: FOUR IDIOMATIC PRACTICES
AND A SURVEY OF PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL AND SOLO LITERATURE

by

Brian Scott Cheesman

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

May 2012
ABSTRACT

AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE TO VIBRAPHONE: FOUR IDIOMATIC PRACTICES
AND A SURVEY OF PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL AND SOLO LITERATURE

by Brian Scott Cheesman

May 2012

The Vibraphone is the most recent addition to the mallet percussion family. In the last sixty to seventy years, the vibraphone has emerged as a legitimate jazz, concert, and solo percussion instrument. The wealth of literature, both solo and pedagogical, is a testament to the instrument’s gain in popularity whether in a solo or ensemble setting. Since its creation in the early 1920s, composers, performers, and pedagogues within the jazz, classical, and percussion genres have contributed to the instrument’s rapid gain in popularity.

The physical characteristics unique to the vibraphone require the performer to use techniques often not applicable to other mallet percussion instruments. A certain level of proficiency with four-mallet chord voicings, mallet dampening, pedaling, and extended techniques is essential for success on the instrument. However, these techniques have certainly contributed to the vibraphones limited accessibility to high school students, band directors, young undergraduate students, and even some college professors.

The purpose of this study is to introduce four idiomatic practices of vibraphone performance, provide an adequate sampling of the wealth of solo literature and a review of selected, current pedagogical material, and finally to present information about other miscellaneous aspects associated with the instrument to students and teachers alike with little or no experience on vibraphone. From this study, an individual should gain a
working knowledge of vibraphone techniques, familiarity with solo literature and method books, as well as information on mallets, publishers, artists, etc.

A lecture recital entitled: *Four Idiomatic Practices on Vibraphone as Presented Through Works by Several Prominent Composers*, was presented on the topic on March 27, 2011, with the program as follows: *Nature Boy* by Eden Ahbez; *First Kiss* by J. C. Combs; *Concerto for Vibraphone*, mvt. II by Ney Rosauro; *Mourning Dove Sonnet* by Christopher Deane. Each selection contains a thorough representation of a certain practice idiomatic to the vibraphone. The paper will address each of these idiomatic practices through three contrasting musical compositions by prominent percussion composers and one popular/jazz tune arranged for the instrument; see program above. This literature was chosen to help the individual with the techniques required to play vibraphone due to the presence of a given technique, as well as to gain familiarity with important composers and literature.
The University of Southern Mississippi

AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE TO VIBRAPHONE: FOUR IDIOMATIC PRACTICES
AND A SURVEY OF PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL AND SOLO LITERATURE

by

Brian Scott Cheesman

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved:

______________________
John Wooton
Director

______________________
Ed Hafer

______________________
Joe Brumbeloe

______________________
Danny Beard

______________________
Richard Perry

______________________
Susan A. Siltanen
Dean of the Graduate School

May 2012
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend an enormous amount of gratitude to Dr. John Wooton, dissertation director and faculty advisor, for his continuous guidance throughout this project and degree program, as well as the other committee members, Dr. Danny Beard, Dr. Joe Brumbeloe, Dr. Ed Hafer, and Dr. Richard Perry. I am also grateful for the insight and guidance from Bud Berthold, Andy Sanders, Ricky Burkhead, Dr. J.C. Combs, Gerald Scholl, Harrell Bosarge, and Freddie Santiago Campos. Thanks to Mom and Dad for being so supportive throughout my musical career. Finally, none of this would be possible without God’s wonderful gift of music with which He so graciously blessed me.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................. ii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ......................................................................................... iv

LIST OF EXAMPLES ............................................................................................. vi

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................... 1

II. FOUR-MALLET VOICINGS AND ARRANGEMENT ........................................ 8

III. MALLET DAMPENING .................................................................................. 22

IV. PEDALING ...................................................................................................... 28

V. EXTENDED TECHNIQUES ............................................................................. 35

VI. PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL ........................................................................... 44

VII. SOLO LITERATURE ...................................................................................... 56

APPENDIXES ....................................................................................................... 77

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................................................................... 93
LIST OF EXAMPLES

Example

1. A section from Nature Boy.................................................................10
2. Closed voicing with root......................................................................12
3. Closed voicing with 9ths......................................................................13
4. Open voicing with root......................................................................14
5. Open voicing with color notes..............................................................15
6. Ballad variation of Nature Boy.............................................................18
7. Medium Salsa variation of Nature Boy..................................................20
8. MM. 1-3 from First Kiss......................................................................23
9. M. 8 from First Kiss............................................................................25
10. M. 3 from First Kiss...........................................................................25
11. Final measure of First Kiss.................................................................26
12. MM. 17-18 from Max.........................................................................27
13. Rehearsal A from Concerto for Vibraphone, II..................................30
14. Rehearsal B from Concerto for Vibraphone, II..................................32
15. Melody at rehearsal B with pedal markings..........................................32
16. MM. 25-30 from Concerto for Vibraphone, II..................................34
17. M. 38 from Mourning Dove Sonnet....................................................35
18. Placement of bow on Vibraphone bar..................................................36
19. MM. 1-3 from Mourning Dove Sonnet.................................................37
20. Ideal angle of pitch-bending mallet......................................................39
21. Shaft bend of pitch-bending mallet......................................................39
22. M. 38 from *Mourning Dove Sonnet* .......................................................... 39
23. MM. 18-19 from *Mourning Dove Sonnet* ................................................... 40
24. M. 11 from *Mourning Dove Sonnet* .......................................................... 41
25. M. 35 from *Mourning Dove Sonnet* .......................................................... 41
26. Figure at Rehearsal A of *Concerto for Vibraphone, II* ............................ 42
27. Figure at Rehearsal E of *Concerto for Vibraphone, II* ............................ 43
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the early twentieth century, vaudeville was one of the most popular entertainment genres in the United States. The desire for the abnormal or extraordinary within these productions most likely encouraged the invention of the vibraphone; at the time described as a metal marimba. The need for constant experimentation seemed to birth the new instrument, the most recent addition to the mallet percussion family, ultimately joining the xylophone, marimba, and other novelty percussion instruments commonly found in these variety shows.1

In 1916, Herman Winterhoff of the Leedy Manufacturing Company began experimenting with a variety of motor-mechanics in an attempt to create a tremolo effect from the bars of a 3 octave steel marimba.2 By 1922 he had successfully mounted a motor on the small end of the instrument that turned two shafts, which contained small metal discs. These discs were located just beneath each bar at the top of the resonator tubes. This new vibrato capability gave birth to the term “vibraphone” in 1924.3

By spring of 1927, J.C. Deagan Inc. and chief engineer, Henry Schutler had introduced an instrument, which now had many more significant design improvements that would ultimately become the vibraphone recognized today. Deagan’s instrument from 1927 included chord-suspended, half inch thick, graduated width, tempered

---


3Ibid.
aluminum bars with harmonic tuning, a pedal operated damper bar, and adjustable speed vibrato. The three-octave, Model 145 (f-f3), established the Deagan “vibraharp” as a significant new instrument, which became the basic design for the future of the Vibraphone.

In the following three decades, jazz musicians were responsible for the new found popularity of the vibraphone. In the early 1930s, the instrument gained the attention of percussionists and bandleaders alike. Lionel Hampton’s performance in 1931 with Louis Armstrong’s Sebastian New Cotton Club Orchestra became the first documented jazz vibraphone recording. Other jazz vibraphonists that helped the instrument gain its initial popularity in the following years were: Red Norvo with the Woody Herman band, Terry Gibbs with the Benny Goodman sextet, and Milt Jackson with the Dizzy Gillespie band and the Modern jazz quartet. Years later, in the 1960s and 70s, artists like Gary Burton, David Freidman, Dave Samuels, Bill Molenhof, and many others were responsible for new four-mallet techniques, new genres such as mallet duos, classical vibraphone literature, and perhaps most importantly, pedagogical vibraphone material. It’s no doubt that the vibraphone has its place in music today in large part due to the efforts and talents of the artists mentioned above and many others.

The vibraphone of today is virtually unchanged since the late 1920s, but as composers and performers began to unlock the potential of the instrument, the techniques required to play the vibraphone have evolved slightly over the last fifty to sixty years.

---

4Trommer, 340.
5Ibid., 342.
6Ibid.
Thanks to the efforts of today’s leading performers and pedagogues, there is a growing amount of pedagogical material addressing vibraphone technique. The focus of this paper is to address four technical disciplines by giving an introduction, explanation and practical application of each through the jazz idiom and other literature composed specifically for the vibraphone. The constantly expanding wealth of solo literature and pedagogical material now available for the instrument will also be discussed.

Music Theory (four-mallet chord voicings and arrangement), mallet dampening, pedaling, and extended techniques are the pillars of vibraphone technique. The knowledge of music theory and extended techniques is essential for any given instrument, but mallet dampening, pedaling, and specific extended techniques are unique to the vibraphone itself. Gaining the facility of these disciplines is imperative for success on the instrument. Perhaps the most widely accepted treatise on vibraphone technique, *Vibraphone Technique: Dampening and Pedaling,* by David Friedman, addresses the two disciplines most crucial to proficiency on the instrument. In the foreword, Gary Burton states that

> The newly-discovered possibilities of dampening and pedal techniques are certainly the most important additions to vibraphone skills. With these techniques, the flexibility of the instrument, both in phrasing and multi-line playing is greatly improved and, most importantly, the expressive freedom of the player is increased tremendously.  

*Vibraphone Technique: Dampening and Pedaling* addresses these techniques with a small bit of prose followed by musical etudes. In the Introduction, Friedman states, “The

---


2. Ibid., With a foreword by Gary Burton.
exercises in this book are in etude form. They are complete musical thoughts and each one concentrates on one or two problem areas. Friedman discusses dampening and pedaling in a musical context and mentions variations of each technique, however, a beginner may or may not understand the terminology involved, therefore a large portion of the text would be left to interpretation.

Jon Metzger briefly addresses techniques and strategies like posture, grip, sticking, articulation (pedaling, dampening, pitch bending, etc.), and various other technical aspects in Part One of *The Art and Language of Jazz Vibes*. Metzger’s prose about extended techniques, pedaling, and dampening introduces the disciplines and provides a few visual examples but detailed discussion on various types of each technique is omitted. As the title suggests, this book primarily addresses aspects associated with jazz vibes, therefore the discussion about technical issues is confined to Chapter Four and kept to a minimum. Headings from Chapter Four include:

Stance/Position at the instrument, Placement of the music stand, Striking the bar, Sticking, Articulation: Using the pedal and stick dampering, Mallet selection, Motor, Jazz eighth notes, etc. Chapters Five through Thirty-one are dedicated to jazz techniques. These chapters discuss topics such as different types of scales, chords, ii-V-I riffs, progressions, transcriptions, etc. Clearly, this method is focused on a comprehensive approach to jazz vibraphone. It is a very good reference for beginner jazz players and a book all vibraphone students and performers should own.

---

9Ibid., Introduction.

An Introductory Guide to Vibraphone: Four Idiomatic Practices and a Survey of Solo Literature and Pedagogical Material is intended to consolidate a brief introduction and explanation of all four disciplines into one document. Since these four topics are not specifically addressed together in vibraphone pedagogical material, it is the intention of the author for this document to serve as a comprehensive reference for students, teachers, and composers who have little to no experience on the vibraphone. Musical examples selected for performance and analysis in a related lecture recital as well as this paper are Eden Ahbez’s Nature Boy, J.C. Combs’ First Kiss and Max, Ney Rosauro’s Concerto for Vibraphone, mvt. II, and Christopher Deane’s Mourning Dove Sonnet. Each was selected due to the prominence of a given specific discipline.

The vibraphone’s immense gain in popularity over the last fifty to sixty years has led to an acceptance in the classical music genre and contributed to the wealth of solo literature and pedagogical material now available. There is no doubt that vaudeville and jazz are responsible for the initial popularity of the instrument, but it now has equal footing in the orchestra, wind ensemble, percussion ensemble, and perhaps most abundantly, the recital hall. In 1947 Darius Milhaud composed the Concerto for Marimba, Vibraphone and Orchestra, which is regarded as the first concerto written for the instrument. This was followed twelve years later by the first concert solo for vibraphone, Three Pieces for Vibraphone, Opus 27, composed by James Beale in 1959. Aside from these two groundbreaking compositions, as of October 2011, The Percussive Arts Society Siwe Guide to Solo and Ensemble Percussion Literature lists 740

compositions for solo vibraphone. This study will attempt to shed light on a core group of pieces, beginner through advanced, written by prominent composers, which should make a valuable contribution to the individual’s library and repertoire.

Along with concert solo literature and concerti, leading performers and teachers have made valuable contributions to vibraphone pedagogical material. As of today, there are approximately thirty published method books that specifically address vibraphone technique. Most deal with musical and technical aspects associated specifically with jazz, but recently it has become commonplace to learn and associate vibraphone techniques in both the jazz and concert idioms. This study will list a few of these treatises, give a brief description of the material, and explain the contents contained in each book. Ultimately, this should enable the individual to choose a method book based on a particular skill level or technical need.

This study is somewhat limited. It is not a method on advanced techniques nor is it an all-encompassing technical manual for the vibraphone. However, this is a general introduction of the above-mentioned disciplines, solo literature, pedagogical material, and other aspects of the vibraphone from which my students have greatly benefited. A less experienced student can use the information to develop technically sound fundamentals and a general knowledge of repertoire and method books for the vibraphone, while an inexperienced teacher can use this as a reference for themselves or their students. Composers too will benefit from this study. Having access to diagrams and fragments of music written specifically for the instrument should allow the less experienced composer to convey the proper message to the performer without the presence of ambiguity or confusion.
In conclusion, this paper should serve as a reference to students and teachers who need a comprehensive introduction to the vibraphone. Information on techniques, solo repertoire, pedagogical manuals, mallets, instruments, publishers, and artists will be available through this document. Individuals who reference this document should gain the necessary, introductory knowledge of the vibraphone and combined with proper instruction, this study should provide the necessary tools for success on the vibraphone given the technical demands of today’s literature.
CHAPTER II

FOUR-MALLET VOICINGS AND ARRANGEMENT

This chapter is solely intended to provide an introduction to the basic skills necessary to understand jazz harmony, four-mallet chord voicings, improvisation, and arrangement of a pre-existing tune for solo vibraphone. Of course, there are multiple music theory texts that deal with a considerable amount of this information in a more concise pedagogical manner, and every serious music student will most likely proceed through proper music theory courses. The purpose of the following text is simply to introduce these theoretical concepts within the context of a beginning vibraphone student. This chapter will answer frequently asked questions by young vibraphonists when faced with the task of adapting a jazz or popular tune to the vibraphone. A vibraphonist with little to no experience with this skill may have questions about what to play besides the written melody, how to play melody and harmony at the same time, how to accompany other musicians with four mallets, and how to create an arrangement for solo vibraphone? Without a working knowledge of music theory and chord voicings, within a four-mallet structure, how could a percussionist solve these issues on a vibraphone? This section will explain basic theoretical concepts, chord voicings, and tips on improvisation and arrangement based on an introductory level of ability. The following chapter is aimed at the individual who has little prior experience and needs an introduction in order to gain a certain level of capability on the vibraphone.

Arranging an existing jazz or popular tune for the vibraphone is a skill becoming more frequently required of percussionists in the 21st century. Melody/accompaniment, and four mallet voicings are the focal skills required of a vibraphonist when performing
or arranging a pre-existing jazz tune on the vibraphone. These skills will be discussed through a demonstration and analysis of Eden Ahbez’s *Nature Boy*.

*Nature Boy* is basically a one-part form with first and second endings containing subtle harmonic differences. This tune was chosen due to its fairly simple harmonic structure, which includes the common ii-V-I progression. The ii-V-I progression is the most common progression in jazz and is essential to the development of this language for any jazz or vibraphone student. Since *Nature Boy* is in a minor key, the progression is altered slightly and poses a few voicing problems to be discussed later.

*Chord Symbols and Modes*

Most Western music is based on a series of chords called a “progression.” Throughout the 20th century it has become commonplace in jazz and popular music to notate the chord progression directly above the corresponding measure or beat with the chord symbol. The purpose of the chord symbol is to inform the musician of the harmonic structure of a particular tune in relationship with the melody. It is up the vibraphonist to interpret the chord symbols or “changes.” The following example is the A section of *Nature Boy* (Example 1). This portion of the tune will be the basis for the discussion on four-mallet voicings and solo arrangement.
Example 1. A section from *Nature Boy*\(^{12}\)

A vibraphonist must be able to interpret the chord symbols like these above.

Without that knowledge, they simply cannot properly orchestrate or voice the chords on
the instrument. Most college vibraphone students have the benefit of learning this
material in a well-structured music theory class. If this instruction is not available, Jamey
Aebersold’s *Gettin’ it Together*\(^ {13}\) is an excellent introduction to chord symbols, scales,
modes, etc., aimed at beginning jazz students. This material is structured in such a way
that it is easily applied to any instrument.

Once an appropriate level of knowledge on chords and scales is obtained, a
vibraphonist can then begin to apply it in a musical context. This often entails
accompanying other musicians in a group setting or themselves on a solo arrangement.


Knowledge of chords becomes the foundation for successfully accompanying, improvising, and arranging. The term “comping” refers to the act of accompanying other musicians or playing the chords along with the melody in a solo setting. Learning the chords of the tune first will ensure that the chord changes are not only implied but also heard in the improvisation or arrangement. In a group setting, comping requires the vibraphonist to voice the chords properly and creatively on the instrument, and in a solo setting it often refers to playing chord tones in one hand while playing the melody in the other. Or it may simply refer to using both hands to embellish a given melody.

The next portion of this chapter will focus on four-mallet chord voicings, as well as an arrangement of a tune for a solo vibraphone performance. Although these are two separate tasks, learning to play and properly voice chords on the vibraphone is certainly a pre-requisite for arranging that tune for solo vibraphone performance.

Chord Voicings

Aside from the chord tones, the chord voicing is the most important element of accompaniment. The chord voicing refers to the particular spacing and vertical arrangement of notes. Vibraphone voicings are unique and somewhat limited due to the number of mallets that can be held and used in a functional manner. The following discussion will focus on two common four-mallet voicings for the vibraphone.

Closed voicing is perhaps the most important voicing for a beginner vibraphonist. This implies that the chord be played in its smallest vertical range, consisting of intervals of a second or third. It is an easier voicing to visualize due to its small range of an octave or less. Closed voicing does not directly imply that the root is included in the chord. However, for pedagogical reasons, it is often best for vibraphone students to learn chords
in closed position with the root then expand the chord vocabulary by replacing the root with chord extensions like the 9\textsuperscript{th}, 11\textsuperscript{th}, or the 13\textsuperscript{th} if applicable. Due to its small vertical range, closed position voicings do not always provide enough space for chord extensions and may cause dissonant sonorities. A particular ensemble or momentary texture may also dictate a vibraphonist’s choice of notes. The following is an example of the A section of *Nature Boy* voiced in closed position. All of the chords in Example 2 contain the root and fit in the confines of one octave.

*Example 2. Closed voicing with roots*

Substituting the ninth for the root in some cases can often give any voicing a more interesting color. This technique could potentially pose problems for someone who is new to vibraphone voicings and should be addressed as a student’s knowledge of chords and closed voicings progresses. Initially, there is often a visual hurdle to overcome when playing chords without the root. However, eliminating the root from the voicing often provides new possibilities in color and range, and is preferred when the bassist or pianist are supplying the root. Example 3 is closed voicing with a 9\textsuperscript{th} replacing the root when
applicable. Each chord with an extension has been renamed in order to reflect the added notes.

Example 3. Closed voicing with 9ths

Suitable for slightly more experienced students, open voicing is a second, equally important voicing for vibraphonists. Open voicing can simply be defined by larger intervals in each hand with no restrictions of range beyond the actual size of the instrument. This voicing is commonly used to provide more space for the guide tones, or color notes, to be heard. Guide tones refer to the notes of a chord that define the chords quality and are most commonly the thirds and sevenths but can include the ninth. These chord tones can be altered by semitone in order to change a chords quality.

In the following two open voicing examples, the aforementioned guide tones will be moved down to the left hand. The thirds and sevenths of these chords will now be placed in the left hand and the right hand will play either the root, fifth, or the ninth of the chord. An exception to this rule will be the second line of each open voicing example.
this chromaticism, the chords are voiced accordingly. Example 4 is the A section of *Nature Boy* in open position with the root of the chords included. Notice with open voicing, each hand usually plays intervals of some type of $4^{th}$ or $5^{th}$, and the total range of the voicing is greater than an octave.

*Example 4. Open voicing with roots*

Open voicing is widely considered a more colorful voicing due to the range of the instrument that is used as well as the space between each mallet. Initially, open voicing is a much more difficult voicing to visualize, because when using an open voicing, it no longer looks like a traditional chord and also ceases to appear as an easily recognizable stack of thirds. Instead, it appears to be a series of open fourths and fifths that make the chord tones more difficult to recognize. Example 5 is that of another open voicing, this time utilizing the ninth instead of the root in most cases and adding other extensions when applicable. The open spacing and the use of extensions allows for the most color, but is likely the most difficult voicing to grasp and should be addressed after the previous three have been learned.
Example 5. Open voicing with color notes

The previous voicing examples are simply one variation of each type. They present a logical pedagogical sequence of four-mallet vibraphone voicings. When learning chord voicings, it is important for students to explore multiple registers of the instrument and multiple combinations of notes. The specific notes in the previous voicing examples were chosen because of a number of factors. Musical aspects such as, register, chord tones and substitutions, voice leading, progressions, etc. all factor in the choice of notes. A certain level of proficiency with multiple registers and note combinations will help ensure good, practical choices within a musical setting.

These examples are intended to address accompaniment voicings only. Rhythms were not discussed due to the enormity of rhythms and variations available within a musical context. The examples were written with half notes and whole notes in order to display the harmonic rhythm with as much clarity as possible and were not intended to show ideal accompaniment rhythms. Rhythm options will be addressed in the next section.
Arranging a Tune for Solo Vibraphone Performance

Arranging a pre-existing tune, melody and chords from a lead sheet, for a solo vibraphone performance is a skill that every vibraphonist should possess. These tunes present a wealth of literature that make great additions to recitals, auditions, or one’s personal repertoire. The following section will address this process by giving two examples of an arrangement. Once again, the A section of *Nature Boy* will be used to demonstrate this process.

The first step in this process is to identify the information on the lead sheet. This helps the vibraphonist understand the original intentions of the composer. Musical aspects such as form, tempo, dynamics, and style chosen by the composer can all be good starting points for a solo arrangement on any instrument.

Secondly, unless a vibraphonist possesses a very high level of sight reading ability, the melody and chord changes should be memorized. This helps ensure that the vibraphonist will achieve the highest level of technical and musical freedom. Concerning the melody, memorization can simply be a matter of repetition but with the chord changes, there are a few steps to take that will ensure memorization and improve the overall outcome of the arrangement.

- Learn the chords in closed position in multiple registers
- Learn the chords in open position in multiple registers
- Learn the chords in open position with color tones in multiple registers
- Arpeggiate the chords up and down the full length of the keyboard and connect each chord without breaks
• Play all scales or modes associated with each chord up and down the full length of the keyboard.

This process should eliminate the uncertainty of what notes to use for the basis of the arrangement and when complete, the vibraphonist should have the appropriate knowledge and skill to arrange the tune for solo performance.

The creative process begins in step three. Now the student must take the information from steps one and two and begin arranging the tune for solo performance. The following section will discuss two particular ways in which Nature Boy could be arranged on the vibraphone. This is an example of one particular arrangement. There are many ways this could be done. It all depends on the particular performer.

Beginning the arrangement can be the most difficult part in the creative process. It can begin in the style that it was originally composed or a variety of other styles or feels. Nature Boy was originally composed as a ballad with a very flowing, lyrical melody. So, for the sake of this paper, I will begin the arrangement in a ballad style. In this case, the form can dictate how long to play a particular style or texture. Each section of Nature Boy is sixteen measures in length and can be treated as a different stylistic option for the arrangement.

Once the decision has been made to begin the arrangement as a ballad, there are a few musical aspects that now become more stylistically correct than others. The tempo should be slow, rubato, or a combination of the two. This extra time and space, due to the slow tempo, allows the vibraphonist more freedom to explore voicing and rhythm possibilities. Care should be taken to maintain a certain amount of variety with the execution of the chords or in this case, notes that aren’t perceived as melody. The chords
can be played a number of ways: ascending or descending arpeggios, four voices at a time, or just two voices at once. Varying the accompaniment patterns will keep the listener’s attention.

The following is an example of a ballad interpretation of *Nature Boy*. This example contains an assortment of chord tone executions, melodic embellishments, and dynamic contrast, all of which make the music interesting. Appendix C contains a list of vibraphonists of whom many have made solo recordings of ballads. These recordings are an excellent resource for vibraphonists of all levels. A note to remember, ballads offer the ideal opportunity for musical freedom. Often rhythms and melodic lines can be created at the discretion of the performer. The following is just one realization. The possibilities are endless.

![Example 6. Ballad section of *Nature Boy*](image)

Once the ballad section is complete, a change of musical style would be a logical choice. A style containing contrasting tempi and feel is most likely the best option. This
could be samba, funk, bossa-nova, medium swing, salsa, Afro-Cuban 6/8, etc. All present very different feels from the ballad. When deciding on a particular style, it is best to choose a style with which there is a certain level of familiarity. Listening to recordings of these particular styles should prove to be a valuable tool and should help tremendously when creating stylistically correct rhythms and interpretations.

The following excerpt is the A section of *Nature Boy* as a medium-slow salsa or cha-cha. Instead of an abrupt change of style at the beginning of the section, a vamp is an ideal way to ease the transition to the new style and tempo. This example contains a short two-measure vamp, followed by a variation, that emulates a piano montuno. Since the minor ii-V-i is a prominent harmonic feature of this tune, the vamp can also follow this progression.

After the new style and tempo has been established through the vamp, the montuno remains a rhythmic feature of the entire section and follows the chord changes accordingly. Mixing the melody with the montuno will give this particular section a well established and stylistically correct groove. In order to accomplish a seamless integration of melody and harmony, a certain amount of syncopation can be applied to the written melody. Remember, this is originally a ballad, so in this arrangement there must be flexibility with the interpretation of the melody in order to produce a stylistically correct integration of melody and harmony. Due to the accompaniment rhythm, and particular style choice, this interpretation often involves chords changing on the eighth note preceding the downbeat.
Example 7. Medium Salsa variation of *Nature Boy*

The example above looks considerably different than the original tune. In this case, the melody was altered slightly and the chords were voiced accordingly. These decisions were made in order to preserve the original melody and harmony as much as possible while maintaining a sense of creativity within a given style. As students progress with their knowledge of chords, some may discover alternate chord possibilities, which could give an arrangement even more variety.

This discussion of four-mallet voicings and arrangement on the vibraphone is meant to introduce beginning vibraphone students to the challenges and skills required of them in order to gain a certain level of proficiency on the instrument. This particular set of skills should be addressed from the beginning. It is more practical to use knowledge of theory, scales, four-mallet voicings, and improvisation as a building block to later more advanced music and techniques rather than address these skills later in one’s development. A basic understanding of the previously mentioned material will provide a
vibraphone student with valuable tools that will aid them in all other types of music and disciplines on the instrument.
CHAPTER III
MALLET DAMPENING

Mallet dampening is a useful technique, greatly increasing the musical potential of the vibraphone. Ed Saindon states in his article entitled “Dampening on the Vibraphone” that

There are a number of reasons why dampening becomes a musical necessity: 1.) To execute a moving line against accompaniment, 2.) To differentiate between different types of articulation, 3.) To project certain harmonies with a melodic line, and 4.) To play multi lines with clarity.¹⁴

These dampening scenarios hold true whether in classical vibraphone literature or jazz. The important point to note is that the music, specifically melodic sonorities, harmonies, and phrases, dictates any need for dampening.

Mallet dampening is simply accomplished by pressing the head of the mallet against the bar in order to stop the vibration. This motion is performed while the pedal is still depressed stopping the sound of certain bars while allowing others to ring. In order to achieve the smoothest articulation possible, a bar is usually dampened at the same time the next note is struck or immediately after.

Since this paper is focused on the beginning vibraphonist with little to no experience with mallet dampening, the following discussion will be simplified to two basic categories (same hand dampening and opposite hand dampening), each having two particular sub-types. These are perhaps the most important and practical for beginners. There are more advanced dampening techniques but they should not be addressed until a student has control of these basic dampening concepts. This discussion will introduce

these two categories and describe the way each function on the instrument. Selected for analysis are examples from First Kiss and Max in J.C. Combs’ Three Pieces for Vibraphone. Also, refer to Appendix A for basic dampening exercises.

**Opposite Hand Dampening**

Opposite hand dampening occurs simply when a mallet strikes a bar, then a mallet from the opposite hand dampens the same bar. This technique is most commonly used when a passage moves in either strict ascending or descending direction on the keyboard. Example 8 is the opening three measures of J.C. Combs’ First Kiss. These three measures contain typical examples of opposite hand dampening. As is common with vibraphone notation, an “X” is placed after the note which is to be dampened and will usually appear just before the following note. However, this indication is not always present and doesn’t specify what type of dampening technique is required. The music will always dictate the type of dampening needed. It is then up to the performer to have the necessary dampening skills to execute the passage.

---

*Example 8. Opening three measures of First Kiss*

In the example above, measure one contains two instances of opposite hand dampening. The first occurs on the second beat when the outside mallet in the right hand executes the ascending triplet melody (A, Bb, C) while the left hand dampens the A and Bb. In this case, the dampening mallet may remain on the keyboard and follow the
playing mallet, or be gently pressed on the bar while the next note is struck. The second instance occurs on the fourth beat when the left hand plays the G and F in the descending sixteenth note figure and the right hand dampens these notes.

Due to the shape of the melodic line, perhaps the most visually obvious examples of opposite hand dampening can be found in the second and third measures. In the second measure, the left hand plays the descending melody (C#, A, E) while the right hand dampens the C# and A. Here, it is necessary for the dampening mallet to leave the keyboard before dampening the following note. In the third measure, the right hand plays the entire ascending triplet melody on beats three and four while the left hand dampens each note.

As briefly introduced with the previous example, a sub-category of opposite hand dampening is often referred to as trail dampening. This type occurs when a passage moves in a particular direction and consists primarily of stepwise motion. This ascending or descending stepwise motion allows for the dampening mallet to slide up or down the keyboard and trail the mallet that is playing the notes without leaving the keyboard. In the eighth measure of *First Kiss*, the left hand plays the descending F diminished scale while the right hand trail dampens these notes (Example 9). This diminished scale is an alternation of tones and semitones and presents the ideal scenario for trail dampening. If the instrument is in proper working condition, there should be no problem alternating between the upper and lower manuals on the keyboard.
Example 9. M. 8 of *First Kiss*

*Same Hand Dampening*

Same hand dampening occurs basically when the same mallet strikes and dampens the bar. This is the ideal technique when a particular passage consists of leaps and changes in direction and occurs because the opposite hand is more likely to play the following note leaving the same hand to dampen.

Measure three in *First Kiss* is a brief example of same hand dampening. This short fragment of melody contains leaps and changes of direction, providing the ideal scenario for same hand dampening (Example 10). In this example, the right hand plays and dampens the C while the left hand plays and dampens the G. This interval is a leap preceded and followed by a change in direction of the melodic line.

Example 10. M. 3 of *First Kiss*
Perhaps the best scenario for same hand dampening occurs in the final measure of *First Kiss*. This particular fragment consists of a repeated melodic pattern that requires dampening of each note. Since it is an alternation of two pitches, the right hand will play and dampen the higher note on the keyboard and the left hand will play and dampen the lower note on the keyboard. This is the most basic application of same hand dampening. Example 11 is the final measure of *First Kiss*.

![Example 11](image)

*Example 11. Measure 28 of First Kiss*

Slide dampening is a sub-category of same hand dampening. This occurs when the mallet strikes a bar then slides to the previously struck note in one fluid motion. This technique is ideal when the note to be dampened is adjacent to the note that is struck and when the opposite hand is not available to dampen. The following example is mm. 17-18 of *Max*. In both measures, the D in the left hand must be dampened in order to prevent it from ringing together with the following note (E), but the right hand is not available to dampen because it is playing the melody. This scenario presents a classic situation in which to use slide dampening. In one motion, the inside mallet of the left hand strikes the E then immediately slides to the adjacent D. Special care must be taken when executing this technique. The tendency will be to over hit the E in anticipation of sliding the mallet to the adjacent pitch. In order to execute this passage properly, the mallet strikes the E
with normal velocity and then slides over with enough pressure to dampen the D.

Coordination can be a bit of a problem with this technique. It will take time to get comfortable with the act of playing two notes and dampening another note at the same time.

![Musical notation]

**Example 12. MM. 17-18 of Max**

Mallet dampening is a difficult skill to master. A great deal of touch and ease of movement is required in order to properly execute any type of mallet dampening. The previous four examples are provided to introduce a musical application of basic mallet dampening to the beginning vibraphonist. Of course, there are many exercises which address mallet dampening in pedagogical literature. A list of this vibraphone pedagogical literature can be found in Chapter Six. Also, Appendix A is provided to give students a basic exercise for a specific type of dampening. As mentioned earlier, perhaps the most important treatise on dampening, David Friedman’s *Vibraphone Technique: Dampening and Pedaling*, is a tremendous resource, and should be used once a student has a basic understanding of dampening.
CHAPTER IV

PEDALING

Most percussionists begin their mallet percussion studies on the marimba or xylophone, therefore the pedal often intimidates beginner vibraphonists. Jon Metzger states:

For many mallet players, dealing with the use of the vibes pedal is cause for alarm. Some even panic as if their marimba suddenly and mysteriously grew an appendage overnight while they were away from the practice room. The pedal needn’t be thought of as a strange growth. In fact, when using the pedal, you can use many of the same thoughts that guide you in deciding whether to sustain a note on marimba. On the vibes, it’s easy. You don’t have to roll as you do on a marimba to sustain a note. Just depress the pedal and a struck note will ring.\(^{15}\)

It is basically that simple. Depress the pedal and the note will ring. However there are different ways to manipulate the pedal in order to articulate a particular musical phrase, chord, melodic line, etc. In *The Vibes Real Book*, Arthur Lipner simplifies the explanation of pedaling types by stating, “Basically, the pedal can be down, up, or in-between (‘half-pedaling’), and it can be released before, during or after the stroke.”\(^{16}\)

This paper will discuss three ways to manipulate the pedal, as well as a musical application for each from the second movement of Ney Rosauro’s *Concerto for Vibraphone*. Since this particular movement does not contain pedal markings, the decision of when and how to pedal are left up to the performer. This often causes confusion and difficulty for an inexperienced student. The following chapter will address three basic pedaling techniques while answering the questions of when, why, and how to pedal a particular phrase.

\(^{15}\)Metzger, 18-19.

A predecessor to proper pedaling technique is good posture behind the instrument. The vibraphonist should stand with their feet about shoulder width apart with only the toe of either foot on the pedal and the other foot placed slightly behind the body’s center. For a right-footed player, the weight should be evenly distributed on the floor throughout the left foot. Contrarily, the heel of the right foot should bare the majority of the weight. This should allow the toes to manipulate the pedal freely without a loss of balance.

**Basic Pedaling**

The most obvious way to manipulate the pedal is to depress the pedal and then release it when the desired note length is over. This technique can be thought of as an “on-off” or “up-down” approach. From this point forward, “on-off” pedaling will be called basic pedaling. Basic pedaling does not imply that the pedal be depressed all the way to the floor. The pedal should only be depressed far enough to separate the damper bar from the keyboard. Depressing the pedal farther than necessary creates wasted motion and time as the pedal is released and more than likely will create unwanted noise as the pedal hits the floor. Basic pedaling is best suited for longer note values and longer specific harmonies or chord durations and should be used whenever there is time to properly depress and release the pedal without negatively affecting the music. Most importantly, a player should likely default to this technique unless the music suggests otherwise. There is never a need to overcomplicate pedaling on a vibraphone, therefore the two more advanced techniques discussed later in this paper should be explored when basic pedaling does not express the music properly.

A prime example of basic pedaling can be found at rehearsal A, mm. 19-24 (Example 13). In this section, the pedal can be depressed for an entire measure or group
of measures due to a number of factors. First, the notes of the melody in each measure are members of the same chord so there is no need to pedal due to a melodic reason. Secondly, the harmony in the left hand remains the same throughout the first four measures then changes for each of the next two measures. The slow harmonic rhythm and melodies composed totally of chords completely eliminates the need to complicate pedaling in this section. These factors make the pedaling decision here quite obvious.

Example 13. Rehearsal A of Concerto for Vibraphone, II

There is another factor visible in the music that should alert the performer of the desired pedaling technique. As stated above, a harmonic analysis of these measures should tell the performer when to pedal in order to portray the harmony. But, the E natural at the end of the measure marked “with rattan” also tells the performer how and when to pedal in this section. In the first four measures of letter A, The E is allowed to ring with no indication of a rest. However, in measures five and six, there is a rest written for the right hand on beat one, which implies a change of chord. This rest is simply achieved by depressing and releasing the pedal.
Half Pedaling

A second approach to pedaling is called half pedaling. Pedaling on a vibraphone should not be thought of as strictly an up/down issue, which is the case with basic pedaling. Half pedaling involves the repeated depressing and releasing of the pedal in order to accommodate faster moving notes that should not ring together. However, this technique only requires that the pedal be depressed “half” of the normal distance in order to slightly separate the damper bar from the keyboard. If performed correctly, this technique should add a short amount of sustain to each note and prevent a note from bleeding into the next note and creating an unwanted sonority.

At rehearsal B, mm. 31-36 half pedaling proves to be the best option (Example 14). The eighth notes on beat one in mm. 31, 33, 35, and 37 are too dissonant if allowed to ring together. Basic pedaling can be used on the long notes, half notes and whole notes, but half pedaling should be used for the eighth notes. Due to the adjacent half steps and whole steps in the melody, half pedaling allows for the eighth notes to appear as if they are ringing for their entire value while preventing each note from ringing into the next. Basic pedaling this entire section would create unwanted sonorities as the adjacent eighth notes would ring together.
Example 14. Rehearsal B of *Concerto for Vibraphone, II*

This section is a great representation of a scenario in which the melody dictates the particular pedaling technique. An individual could, in essence, play the right hand part only (notes with stems up) and let that determine the pedaling choice. With that in mind, half pedaling the eighth notes in the melody should seem like the logical choice. Example 15 is the melody or right hand only. The harmony has been omitted in order to illustrate how melody dictates the pedaling choice. Pedal markings based on the discussion above are included.

*Example 15. Melody at Rehearsal B with pedal markings*

*After Pedaling*

A third, equally important, although somewhat less used approach, is called after pedaling. This technique is very similar to that which is used on the piano and is just what the name implies. Depressing the pedal just after the note is struck will achieve after pedaling. In essence, when after pedaling consecutive notes, the damper pad hits the bar simultaneously with the mallet. It is important to note that vibraphone bars have a
natural, all be it, short amount of sustain. This natural sustain is key to after pedaling. With this method, by not releasing and depressing the pedal until after the next note is struck, a more legato sound is produced. This legato sound is produced because after pedaling basically eliminates the unwanted sonority of multiple notes ringing together simultaneously while in turn allowing each note to sustain until the next note is struck.\footnote{Metzger, www.malletjazz.com/lessons/vib_ped.html.}

In mm. 25-30 (Example 16), after pedaling proves to be the most effective pedaling technique. A harmonic analysis of this section reveals a harmonic rhythm of one chord per measure. This harmonic scenario initially suggests basic pedaling as the ideal technique, however, the quarter note triplet melody is such that it prevents basic pedaling. By using the after pedaling technique, each melodic note sustains for its entire length without the audible appearance of each note bleeding into the next. In contrast, allowing the adjacent pitches in this melody, no matter whole tone or half tone, to ring together using basic pedaling produces unwanted sonorities. After pedaling also appeared to be a better option than half pedaling because the latter wasn’t able to produce the smoothest, most legato interpretation of the melody. By depressing the pedal just after each of the quarter note triplets are struck, each are allowed to ring for their entire value and the harmony in the left hand is also best preserved by this technique.
Example. 16. MM. 25-30 of *Concerto for Vibraphone, II*

As was the case with example 12, the melody determines the pedaling technique for the majority of this section. However, in measure 30, in order to preserve the half note B natural in the left hand, the harmony dictates the pedal should be depressed for the second half of the measure.

Melody is not always the determining factor when considering ideal pedaling techniques. Many factors such as harmony, dynamics, articulation, and phrasing will also determine the desired pedaling technique. All of these aspects were considered when deciding specific pedaling techniques in Ney Rosauro’s *Concerto for Vibraphone*, mvt. II, taking careful consideration of what I believe were the composer’s intentions.

The aforementioned pedaling techniques are essential to control melodic and harmonic lines on the vibraphone. These three methods are certainly not the only ways to manipulate the pedal on the vibraphone but are perhaps the most important pedaling techniques to master initially. Of course, it is important to remember that the pedaling choice is always dictated by the music. Pedaling should only be as difficult as the music allows, and when choosing a certain technique for a particular passage, always choose the
pedaling technique that best portrays the music. This is often unknown to the performer initially and must be realized through experimentation in the practice room.
CHAPTER V
EXTENDED TECHNIQUES

The physical characteristics unique to the vibraphone make it more capable of non-traditional sounds or extended techniques than almost all other definitely pitched percussion instruments. Characteristics such as aluminum bars, sustain pedal, and vibrato motor all contribute to the instruments capability of non-traditional sounds. The following pages will introduce, explain, and provide examples of the most common extended techniques for the vibraphone using Christopher Dean’s *Mourning Dove Sonnet* and Ney Rosauro’s *Concerto for Vibraphone, II* as the sources of the examples.

**Dead Strokes**

A dead stroke on a vibraphone bar is achieved by allowing the striking mallet to remain on the bar after the initial contact. This motion does not allow the bar to resonate, which in turn creates the “dead” sound. Deane primarily uses the dead stroke to articulate a pitch without duration that often succeeds an altered pitch (Example 17). The dead stroke is notated with a (+) below the note. This stroke can be achieved on any mallet instrument but the sound produced is unique to the particular instrument.

*Example 17. M. 38 of Mourning Dove Sonnet*
Bowing

Bowing on a vibraphone produces a beautiful sustained sound that lacks the normal attack of a traditional vibraphone mallet. Additionally, drawing the bow across the bar produces a long sustained sound, which is much more pronounced than the perceived sound from a traditional mallet strike. Due to the thickness of the bow, a bass or a cello bow is usually the best option.

The technique is fairly simple. The bow should be drawn across the end of the bar and eventually released from the bar in a fluid motion to allow the sound to sustain. Depending on the instrument itself, some bars react better to a stroke directly perpendicular to the normal playing surface and some bars react to a more diagonal stroke. The following example diagrams the ideal bow angle and placement on the bar. From this point, the bow can be drawn vertically, up or down, depending on what occurs next in the music.

Example 18. Placement of bow on the vibraphone bar

\(^{18}\)Smith, p. 17.
James Walker lists on his website, malletjazz.com, a few variables that will affect the success of a bow stroke. They are as follows:

- Tension of the bow hair
- The amount of rosin on the bow
- With how much pressure the bow is placed on the bar
- The speed at which the bow is drawn across the bar
- The instrument itself - Different manufacturers of vibraphones use slight variations in the aluminum or a slightly different coating on the bars giving them a change in color or timbre. All of these variations could possibly make the bars respond differently to a bow stroke.\(^\text{19}\)

Notating a bow stroke in music written specifically for vibraphone has yet to be codified. Composers usually notate a bow stroke however they deem necessary. The following is an example from Mourning Dove Sonnet (Example 19). Deane uses traditional string bow stroke notation for bow strokes. This method works well due to the use of common notation from orchestral string music. In this example, the performer should bow the Ab and Eb and allow them to ring without disruption.

\[\text{Example 19. MM. 1-3 of Mourning Dove Sonnet}\]

*Pitch Bending*

Due to the properties of the aluminum bars, it is possible to alter the pitch of a vibraphone bar by bending it down. For this technique, a regular vibraphone mallet and a hard rubber or plastic rattan shafted mallet are needed. Pitch bending is achieved by placing the hard rubber or plastic mallet on one of the nodal points, striking the center of the bar with the normal mallet, then pulling or pushing the hard mallet toward the center of the bar. It is important to note that the pitch will lower as the pitch bending mallet is drawn towards the center of the bar, but will rise back up to the fundamental as the pitch bending mallet passes the center of the bar and is drawn back towards the nodal point. As is the case with bowing, there are a few variables to consider when bending the pitch of a vibraphone bar. Those variables are as follows:

- Different types of pitch bending mallets
- Different amounts of pressure applied by the pitch bending mallet
- Pulling or pushing the pitch bending mallet away from the nodal point

The following example illustrates the proper angle of attack of the pitch-bending mallet (Example 20). Example 21 illustrates to what degree the shaft should bend on the pitch-bending mallet.

---

20Ibid.
Example 20. Ideal angle of Pitch-bending mallet

Example 21. Shaft bend of pitch-bending mallet

Deane notates pitch bending with an arrow pointing down. This is an obvious indication that the pitch will be lowered. Example 22 is m. 38 from *Mourning Dove Sonnet*. Pitch bending is clearly notated and has to be quickly executed in order to maintain rhythmic accuracy. It is important to note that when executing a passage such as this, the pitch-bending mallet cannot be resting on the note when it is struck but must be placed on the bar immediately after the note is struck. Resting the pitch-bending mallet on the bar while striking it with the normal mallet will produce an unwanted rattling sound.

Example 22. M. 38 of *Mourning Dove Sonnet*

Deane uses a slightly different notation when asking for a delayed pitch bend. This can be found in mm. 18-19 (Example 23). In m.18, the Eb is bowed on beat three but is not altered until the second half of beat one in m. 19. Deane uses the arrow again to

---

21 Smith, 25.

22 Ibid.
indicate the lowered pitch but the arrow falls on the actual beat that the pitch is lowered.

This technique is not quite as audible due to sound decay by the time the pitch is lowered.

Example 23. MM. 18-19 of Mourning Dove Sonnet

Harmonics (Bowing Harmonics)

A vibraphone bar not only possesses the fundamental pitch but also the harmonics of that particular note. The fundamental is the “written” pitch and the harmonic of a vibraphone bar is two octaves above. Normally, a given note’s first harmonic is one octave above the written pitch but since a vibraphone bar has two nodal points, the first harmonic is two octaves above the written pitch. This paper will discuss harmonics achieved with a bow but it is important to note that the same harmonic can be achieved by striking the bar with a normal mallet.

Bowing harmonics are achieved by bowing the bar as usual, which produces the fundamental, then lightly placing a fingertip in the center of the bar. Continuing the bow stroke with the finger on the bar will produce the harmonic two octaves above the written pitch. This technique can produce two separate effects. Placing the fingertip on the bar before bowing the note will only produce the harmonic. But also, as stated above, placing the fingertip on the bar after the bow stroke will produce the fundamental then the harmonic. Once the harmonic is sounding, it is not necessary to keep the fingertip on the bar.
Deane asks for both sounds in *Mourning Dove Sonnet*. He differentiates between the two by slightly altering the notation. In Example 24, the note should be bowed as normal on beat one then the harmonic is indicated on beat two. Bowing the G on beat one, then placing the fingertip in the center of the bar on beat two while continuing the bow stroke, will produce the desired sound. Deane chooses to notate this by indicating the bow stroke on beat one followed by the harmonic with a diamond shaped note head in parenthesis two octaves above the sounding note on beat two.

![Example 24. M.11 of Mourning Dove Sonnet](image)

In m. 35, the harmonic is indicated from the initial bowing of the note (Example 25). This technique should produce the harmonic as the note begins to sound as to imply the absence of the fundamental. Deane notates this by the indicating the bow stroke and the harmonic all on the same beat.

![Example 25. M. 35 of Mourning Dove Sonnet](image)

**Alternate Sounds**

It is possible to get multiple sounds from the vibraphone by using the mallet in non-conventional ways. Each mallet is comprised of the head, shaft, and butt. All three
parts of a mallet could be used to produce various sounds. Ney Rosauro calls for this type of technique in the second movement of his *Concerto for Vibraphone*. During this movement, the shaft and the butt end of the normal rattan-shafted vibraphone mallet create a sound similar to that of a glockenspiel.

For this particular piece, this technique is used strictly for programmatic reasons. The second movement is entitled *Lullaby*. The striking of the bar with the rattan shaft of the mallet is intended to represent a music box lulling a child to sleep (Example 26). As shown in the diagram below, this affect is achieved by hitting the shaft of the mallet, just below the mallet head, on the outside edge of the bar. The position of the mallet may need to be altered from what is shown in the example due to differences in particular instrument design.

*Example 26. Mallet shaft on bar at rehearsal A of *Concerto for Vibraphone*, II*

At rehearsal E, Rosauro suggests that the performer use the butt end of the rattan shafted mallet, with a vertically descending blow, in order to achieve a sound similar to that of a glockenspiel. As displayed in the diagram below, this is achieved by dropping the mallet vertically on the bar with the butt end of the mallet then immediately bringing the mallet of the bar. This technique in the right hand melody against the left hand counter melody with a regular vibraphone mallet produces a multi-instrument timbre with contrasting melodic lines (Example 27). The sound produced by a vertical strike with the
butt of the mallet is determined by many factors: the velocity of the stroke, hardness of
the rattan, area of the bar that is struck, how long the mallet remains on the bar, and by
the type of instrument. Experimenting with those factors is necessary in order to produce
the sound required by the music.

Example 27. Butt end of mallet at rehearsal E of *Concerto for Vibraphone, II*

Extended techniques are often intimidating to inexperienced students. They
usually require the student to strike the instrument in an unconventional way or get
inconceivable sounds from the instrument. But once the techniques have been introduced
and the awkwardness of the new technique is overcome, they often present the student
with ideas and capabilities on the instrument that were previously unconceivable. These
techniques can add many colors to a vibraphonist’s timbre vocabulary.
CHAPTER VI
PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL

As stated earlier in this document, there are approximately thirty treatises devoted solely to vibraphone. Some are technical manuals that address certain techniques idiomatic to the vibraphone and some primarily deal with jazz (comping and improvisation). The following chapter will discuss eight methods written by well-respected pedagogues and performers. These books are commonly found in the libraries of today’s seasoned performers and professors and should be in the libraries of any serious percussion or vibraphone student. The following text will inform students and teachers of these books and their content, which ultimately will enable the intended audience to use a particular book or set of books to suit an individual’s needs. The books are listed in the format of a bibliographical entry to provide the necessary information in order to locate a particular treatise.


Perhaps one of the first treatises on vibraphone, the purpose of this method is to familiarize the student vibraphonist with the techniques of jazz and improvisation with a specific notion to be void of any “rehearsed licks” which will ultimately be an inhibitor of the advanced improvisor. In the introduction, Burton states that this book should help resolve technical and musical difficulties that students commonly encounter. A general knowledge of music theory, chords and scales, is needed before attempting the material in this book. With that in mind, this text is probably more suited for the intermediate college mallet student and is not recommended for a beginner vibraphonist.
In this book, Burton approaches the instruction from both a technical and musical standpoint. He states in the preface that the text portions of this book are the most important because one of the biggest problems a student will face is the failure to understand what he/she is practicing. Exercises do not serve their full potential if the material is not clearly understood. Based on this information, he begins each new section with a sizeable amount of text, which should help the student understand the reason for the following exercises. The remainder of the preface explains a totally relaxed approach to technique as well as the proper way to strike a vibraphone bar to which he calls the attack.

A great deal of the technical instruction in this method is dedicated to dexterity and sticking. Burton considers these two aspects the most important in order to gain technical proficiency of the entire instrument. Although countless exercises are presented, he is careful to stress more than once that the student should devise their own exercises in order to rehearse the mind as well as the hands. The musical discussion deals primarily with jazz phrasing which includes topics such as basic pedal mechanics, finger dampening, grace notes, improvisation, tune construction, and melodic analysis. Before addressing the final point in this book, extended solos, Burton briefly discusses a topic which he claims should have an entire book devoted to it, chord voicings. He describes voicings as either a cluster or a spread. A Cluster is a closed voicing with less than an octave between the bottom and top note and a spread is an open voicing with intervals of a 4th or 5th in each hand. These two voicing classifications do not imply the presence or lack of root but instead are intended to create a variety of sounds within the confines of a
given chord. The book is concluded with two tunes which display a culmination of all the topics discussed in the book.

*Introduction to Jazz Vibes* is clearly not for the beginner vibraphonist nor is it for the mallet percussionist not interested in pursuing a career as a performing artist on the vibraphone. This book offers advanced concepts intended to give the intermediate to advanced players the ultimate facility within the jazz idiom.


Thomas Davis’ book is intended to assist vibraphonists of all levels in the art of accompaniment. It offers a great introduction for students who have little to no experience with chords as well as new voicing possibilities for the gigging jazz player. Since vibraphonists are restricted to four mallets, the chord member possibilities are quite different than that of pianists and guitarists. This book deals with some of the most common four-mallet accompaniment situations. Davis states in the introduction,

Since a vibist has only four mallets with which to perform, there are vastly different performance considerations than those of a guitarist or pianist. This book deals with voicing selection, chord-member selection, use of extensions and alterations, as well as voice leading and inversion selection. While most of the guidelines, examples and exercises are standard practice in jazz usage, there will be situations in which these techniques are not applicable.²³

This book is comprised of five chapters and six play-along tracks of different commonly found jazz styles. Chapter I, entitled “Chord Symbols,” lists and illustrates the most commonly found chords and gives the chord symbol possibilities. Chapter II, “Voicings,” deals with open voicing, closed voicing, a combination of the two, chord

---

member selection including extensions and alterations, and voice leading. Chapter III, “Comping,” discusses different interpretations of chord symbols, which includes rhythms and arrangement of notes. The ii-V-I progression is the subject of Chapter IV. All major and minor keys are illustrated with open and closed voicings, with and without common extensions. Chapter V is entitled “Standard Chord Progressions.” As stated above, this chapter contains six charts with chord progressions typical of standard jazz literature. Each tune is two separate tracks on the play-along CD. The first of each contains the written accompanying part and the second, drums and bass only, is intended for the vibraphonist to be creative and supply their own accompanying voicings and rhythms.

This book is a wonderful resource for beginners and gigging musicians. After working through this book, a student will have gained a well-rounded proficiency of four-mallet jazz accompanying.


As the title suggests, Friedman’s book has been the most popular source for instruction on dampening and pedaling for almost forty years. In the introduction, Friedman states

Although there is an abundance of study books for the mallet instruments, there is a conspicuous lack of material dealing with phrasing and a general approach to four mallet playing. This is especially true for the vibraphone, as this instrument, of all the mallet instruments, possesses the greatest potential for realizing interesting and exciting textural and phrasing possibilities. It is with these possibilities that this book will primarily deal.²⁴

---

²⁴Friedman, Introduction.
He goes on to discuss that this book, first does not contain strict scale exercises because of their dull and tedious nature. Therefore this would produce a musician of the same qualities. Second, these rigid scale patterns also produce rigid improvisations. Scales should be practiced in random order and for example, should be thought of as playing in the tonal area of F major instead of playing the F major scale.\textsuperscript{25}

This book is a collection of etudes that are complete musical ideas addressing specific problems with dampening or pedaling. As stated above, void of any strict scalar patterns, these etudes are very musical in nature and each has preceding text describing the musical and technical intent of the etude. Specific types of dampening and pedaling are not addressed by name, instead, they are approached musically by introducing functional problems that a vibraphonist may typically encounter.

Friedman’s book is a must for every vibraphonist’s library. The etudes in this book are great for musical training, recitals, and auditions. However, they are intermediate-advanced and would be too difficult for the beginner vibraphone student. It is best to have a general knowledge of dampening and pedaling techniques previously mentioned in this document before attempting some of the more difficult etudes in this book.


\textit{Jazz Mallets: In Session} is a unique blend of exercises, discussions, tunes, transcriptions, and much more, designed to educate vibraphone students in the art of reading and improvising from lead sheets. Primarily from a musical and theoretical \footnote{Ibid.}
standpoint, this method does not discuss technical issues such as dampening, pedaling, sticking, etc. in a pedagogical manner. However, pedaling and dampening are addressed briefly in order to provide a short introduction of the two topics within a musical setting.

*Jazz Mallets: In Session* opens with a very informative section entitled, “How to Use This Book.” Here, Lipner discusses the topics covered in the book and then provides a guide on how to use this book for musicians of all levels of ability and experience. He explains how anyone, from beginner to college professor, can use this book in a very effective manner.

Written with a progressive approach, this book features sixteen tunes that cover a variety of styles and keys. For each tune, a lead sheet of the melody, a solo transcription, and a discussion with chord analysis and solo ideas are provided. Every time a new key is introduced, there are exercises for scales and chords in that key, and for each new tune, there is a section entitled, “Take Five,” which introduces a musical element necessary to a student’s development. These include topics such as ear training, groove, pedaling and dampening, chords, voicings, comping, progressions, transcribing, etc., and are often one to two page discussions with exercises and musical examples. This approach often helps the student troubleshoot problems when learning a tune.

This book is an excellent training guide for the aspiring gigging mallet player. After playing through this book, the vibraphonist should have a much better grasp on reading lead sheets, comping, and improvising. These three skills will prove to be the most valuable for the vibraphonist in the small group or combo setting.

In Arthur Lipner’s own words,

Between these two covers is a concise, comprehensive work addressing the needs of all students of the vibraphone. Wonderful repertoire, a bit of history, theory, technique and some great solos: it’s all here. In your hands lies the key to learning to perform jazz standards on vibraphone: a step-by-step approach to playing through a tune. Any lead sheet of any style of music – from Beatles to Belafonte – can be performed using this approach.\(^\text{26}\)

Lipner categorizes this book into four parts: Method, Theory, Improvisation, and Repertoire. Since this is Lipner’s comprehensive approach to vibraphone, a brief discussion of each is necessary. Section 1, “Method,” deals with a basic introduction to the vibraphone itself, pedaling, dampening, and dead strokes. After a brief discussion about the make up of the instrument, he takes a simple approach to pedaling. Lipner simply states, “Basically, the pedal can be down, up, or in-between (half-pedaling), and it can be released before, during, or after the stroke.”\(^\text{27}\) A few exercises follow this brief discussion on pedaling. Dampening is grouped into three main categories: slide dampening, hand to hand dampening, and finger dampening. Each is thoroughly discussed and supplemented with exercises. Dead strokes are the last topic covered in this section and are thoroughly discussed and supplemented with good musical exercises that integrate dead strokes into typical melodic and harmonic lines.

Section 2, “Theory,” is intended to give a broad introduction to theoretical concepts applicable to the vibraphone. The major topic headings include primary sound colors, modes, general chord function, secondary sound colors, and voicings. In this section, Lipner discusses theoretical aspects such as chord possibilities along with

\(^{26}\) Lipner, preface.

\(^{27}\) Ibid.
voicings, chord symbols, modes and scales, and open and closed voicings, all the while establishing a fundamental vocabulary that helps the student understand the material.

Section 3 deals directly with improvisation and covers topics like concepts, how to create lines, application of chord scales, common chord progressions, and comping. Rightfully so, a significant portion of the discussion here is about scales such as the major modes, blues scale, pentatonic scale, and the altered dominant scale. He also discusses common chord progression like the ii-V-I, blues, and frequently found turn-around progressions.

Section 4, “Repertoire,” contains seven jazz standards with a nine-step learning process. This step-by-step learning process takes the beginner vibraphone soloist from a basic sketch of the melody with two mallets to a solo arrangement of the tune with four mallets that would be suitable for a recital performance. This approach is ideal for learning a tune properly whether it is for the recital hall, bandstand, or one’s own personal satisfaction.

The *Vibes Real Book* is a must have for any student’s or teacher’s library. Lipner’s text and examples are very easy to understand and it is evident that he has taken the time and effort to simplify what could ultimately be very complicated. The Jazz standards in Section 4 are a very good representation of the literature and the learning process outlined for those tunes will help any student gain proficiency of solo repertoire along with jazz standards.
Jon Metzger’s book is intended to introduce basic jazz concepts to the
vibraphonist who already possesses a basic knowledge of mallet percussion technique
and theory. In the foreword, he states, “This book offers an organized approach to getting
started on jazz vibes,” and, “Its goal is first to provide countless answers to the nagging
question that invariably faces first-time improvisors, ‘What do I play?’ Second, it takes
the mystery and intimidation out of the subject.” Metzger’s primary goal with this book
is to provide a well-rounded introduction to jazz vibes.

Divided into three large sections, this book covers everything from placement of
the music stand to chord voicings and re-harmonizations. Part 1 is entitled “Getting
Started” and covers topics such as: stance/position at the instrument, grip, touch, sticking,
mallet selection, jazz eighth notes, etc. Perhaps the two most detailed sections of this part
are the chapters entitled “Articulation: Using the pedal and stick dampening” and
“Seventh Chords” where he briefly discusses and diagrams mallet dampening and
pedaling with musical examples and ascending/descending scale patterns that illustrate
the techniques, and “Symbols/Understanding what they mean” which contains a detailed
chart of commonly found chord symbols, a sentence or two about what they mean, and a
musical diagram of each.

Part 2 is entitled “Two Mallet Exercises” and focuses primarily on different types
of scales. This section covers topics such as the blues progression, riffs, ii-V-I
progressions, and various scale types such as the bebop, whole-tone, blues, diminished,
melodic minor scales and modes. They are discussed thoroughly with prose and then
illustrated with exercises or musical examples. Each chapter in this section includes a recommended list of tunes to learn and suggested listening.

Part 3, “Four-Mallet Exercises,” discusses aspects of four-mallet jazz vibraphone like grip technique, intervals, triads and seventh chords (in root position and inversions), altered chords, guide tones, voicings, and re-harmonizations. The chapters on chords are well presented with thorough descriptions, sticking and harmonization exercises, and visual aids.

This text is another must-have for any vibraphonist’s library. Whether a beginner or seasoned gigging jazz vibraphonist, this book offers an excellent introduction and a fresh perspective on practical jazz concepts.


Dave Samuels’ *Contemporary Vibraphone Technique: A Musical Approach* is a two-volume set. Book 1 addresses technique from a beginner’s standpoint. Samuels himself states that the only prerequisite is a basic understanding of music theory dealing with scales and chord structure and recommends that the student reference a beginner music theory text for that information. Divided into four main sections, Book 1 specifically addresses technique. Section 1 entitled, “Holding the Mallets,” diagrams how to properly hold four mallets and discusses different ways of striking the instrument with individual or multiple mallets. There are plenty of useful exercises that deal with grip and striking the instrument as well as useful discussion about his approach to moving the mallets. Section 2, “Sticking and Pedaling,” first introduces the idea of playing scales
with a musical sticking instead of strictly alternating. This sticking entails a more practical combination of strokes that better suits a particular scalar pattern. There are numerous exercises that will help the student ingrain a sense of musical sticking for certain passages. The following eight pages discuss pedaling with a significant portion dealing with after pedaling. Section 3 addresses multiple types of mallet dampening. It contains discussions and exercises on basic dampening, scalar dampening, slide dampening, hand dampening and combinations of the above techniques. Section 4 is entitled “Ghosting Notes,” which Samuels describes as another type of dampening or dead stroke. Most of the exercises for dead strokes deal with neighbor tones and chromatic grace notes.

Book two focuses on the basic construction and execution of scales and chord voicings. He begins this volume by listing new ways to practice scales including how to use the entire instrument as well as how to approach scales by way of a particular shape. All of this is intended to help the student expand their creativity and knowledge of scales beyond the typical two-octave up and down execution. Throughout this volume, Samuels makes a conscious effort to always associate a particular scale with a corresponding chord symbol. The remaining parts of this book deal with specific modes or scales. Each contains visual diagram as discussed at the beginning of this volume, as well as exercises that contain an accompaniment part (chords and chord symbols) and scalar passages associated with each chord. A chapter is dedicated to each of the modes and their corresponding pentatonic scale. Samuels concludes this volume with a short discussion on discovering the harmonic quality of a scale. Determining whether a scale has a major,
minor, dominant, or diminished quality is vital to the students understanding of scales and chords.

Throughout these two volumes, Samuels stresses a musical and creative approach. He is extremely careful to make each exercise very practical and I believe each student will realize this as they progress through the books. These two volumes certainly represent a thorough discussion of technique and the language of scales and chords.

Of the limited amount of pedagogical material written for the vibraphone, these aforementioned entries that have stood the test of time and proven to be invaluable for a vibraphone student’s development. The authors of these treatises are well-known and respected in the music community and their contributions to performance and/or pedagogy warrant the inclusion of their treatises in this document. Each treatise provides instruction and insight on specific vibraphone techniques. The information from this chapter should eliminate uncertainties surrounding these pedagogical manuals.
CHAPTER VII

SOLO LITERATURE

As mentioned in chapter one, there are approximately 800 solo vibraphone pieces or collections. The following selections are legitimate concert pieces or technical/developmental etudes written for vibraphonists of various levels, by composers or performers who have made a considerable contribution to the field of vibraphone performance or pedagogy. This is a small group of pieces of varying difficulty levels which are recommended for inclusion in any vibraphonist’s repertoire and would often serve as excellent recital, audition, or jury material. Please refer to appendix E for a concise listing of this solo literature.

For each piece, the following information will be given: Composer, publisher (with date if possible), level of difficulty, number of mallets, short description about the piece, whether or not it contains pedaling and dampening indications and potential level of difficulty of each, and whether or not it contains chord symbols. Level-of-difficulty classifications are divided into three primary categories. Below is a basic definition of each category.

A “beginner” classification defines a piece or etude was written to facilitate a particular technical demand on the instrument at an introductory level. These selections are often intended to improve a vibraphonist’s control of melody/accompaniment, improvisation, dampening, pedaling, phrasing, etc., and are aimed at a student who has no prior experience of those particular skills on the vibraphone.

An “Intermediate” classification defines a piece will contain multiple vibraphone techniques and often require the performer to make musical decisions based on a certain
level of skill and experience. It is common for a particular piece of this level to contain short excerpts of advanced material. These will be classified as “Intermediate/Advanced.”

An “Advanced” classification is reserved for pieces employing all technical and musical aspects of vibraphone playing. Composers of these pieces often write this music as a showcase of their own ability and there is little regard as to the level of difficulty. An advanced piece would be a challenge to any vibraphonist and should not be attempted until a certain level of technical and musical skill has been established.

Literature

Gary Burton

_Six Unaccompanied Solos for Vibe_, Creative Music, 1966, is a collection of extremely advanced solos for 4 mallets employing multiple meters and tempi. Chord symbols are included throughout, and pedaling and dampening are clearly marked. The pedal can also move with chord changes or is sometimes marked “pedal freely.” These pieces are a few of the most difficult in the repertoire and should not be attempted until a player gains a great deal of facility.

J.C. Combs

_One for Paquito_, C. Alan Pub., 1998, is an intermediate four-mallet piece featuring very syncopated rhythmic themes. There are no pedal markings so pedaling decisions are left up to performer. However, chord symbols are included throughout and can often dictate the pedaling. No dampening is indicated. This piece will challenge the performer musically and technically.
Reflections, C. Alan Pub., 1992, is a four-mallet, intermediate/advanced piece employing a variety of styles and tempi (ballad, swing, samba). Dynamics are up to the performer. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked with quite a bit of intricate dampening. Chord symbols are included opening up possibilities of new harmonies or improvisation.

Three Brothers, C. Alan Pub., 1997, is a four-mallet, intermediate/advanced, three-piece set, with a movement dedicated to each of his three sons. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout each selection. Chi-Town Monk is loosely based on the music of Thelonius Monk as well as a whole-tone scale. Goldengate Park is a jazz ballad with chord symbols in case the performer chooses to provide their own harmonizations or embellishments. Nashville Vibe is intended to emulate country music, particularly the fiddle.

Three Pieces for Vibraphone, C. Alan Pub., 1991, is a four-mallet, intermediate/advanced collection of three short pieces with contrasting styles and tempi. Max is a syncopated, medium funk/latin tune. First Kiss is a ballad that gives the performer some expressive, musical freedoms. Whitewash is a slow, bouncy ragtime number, which tests the performer’s coordination. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but technical facility with both is needed. Chord symbols are not included in this set.

Thomas Davis

Recital for Vibrapharp, Barnhouse, 1975, is an advanced collection of 12 four-mallet pieces written or transcribed/arranged for vibraphone at a time when very little of
this type of literature existed. Transcriptions and arrangements of Bach, Chopin, Debussy, Schubert, two English folk songs, and four original compositions by Davis make up a nice variety in style and tempi. There are no pedal markings and very few dampening markings so the performer can interpret the music as necessary. Chord symbols are not provided.

Christopher Dean

*Mourning Dove Sonnet*, Innovative, 1983, is an advanced, programmatic work requiring four regular vibraphone mallets, 2 bass bows, and a pitch-bending mallet. This piece employs multiple extended techniques in order to replicate the sounds of a mourning dove. It may require a physically mature player to handle two mallets and two bows simultaneously. All extended techniques are described in a very informative page of performance notes that should clear up any confusion a performer may have at first glance. Pedaling and Dampening are clearly marked throughout and no chord symbols are provided.

*The Apocryphal Still Life*, Innovative, 1996, is an advanced, four-mallet work using extended techniques such as one-handed rolls (mandolin style), dead strokes, and one-handed harmonics, as well as the preparation of a D and E allowing them to sustain no matter what the position of the damper bar. This effect allows for the alternation of various rhythmic patterns and long sustained sonorities. Dampening and pedaling are clearly marked throughout and no chord symbols are provided.
David Friedman

*Mirror from Another*, CPP/Belwin, 1987, is an advanced, four-mallet collection of six pieces that are complete musical ideas of limited technical difficulty for mallet players of various abilities.\(^{29}\) These pieces display a variety of styles, tempi, and textures, and each selection concludes with a vamp/fade encouraging a smooth transition to and from another piece in the set. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but a great deal of technical facility with each is needed. Chord symbols are not included in this set.

*Texas Hoe-Down*, Norsk-percussion, 2005, is an advanced, four-mallet work with a seemingly constant driving groove. This medium-tempo piece will present challenges with coordination and texture. Melody and harmony are separated by staves, which should help the performer distinguish between the two. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout. Chord symbols are provided in the solo section.

*Five Tonal Haikus for Solo Vibraphone*, Norsk-percussion, 2010, is a new collection of five advanced, four-mallet pieces for solo vibraphone. Selections include *Ancient Parchment, Dance of the Sylphs, Rainy Sunday, Childhood,* and *Walking on Eggs*.

Gary Gibson

*Wallflower, Snowbird, Carillon*, Studio 4, 1985, is a set of three, advanced four-mallet pieces, with contrasting styles and tempi. They are very accessible yet challenging for the general vibraphone player. *Wallflower* and *Snowbird* are slower selections, \(^{29}\)Friedman, introduction.
displaying the lyrical and technical capabilities of the vibraphone. *Carillon* is a lively piece in five with a left hand ostinato that will challenge the coordination of almost any vibraphonist. No chord symbols are provided, but pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout the set.

Lynn Glassock

*Reflections*, Studio 4, 1992, is an advanced, four-mallet, multi-movement work with very challenging and complex sticking, dampening, and pedaling. These elements are clearly marked throughout the piece. *Reflections* requires an advanced level of technique and attention to detail and is only suitable for the more experienced vibraphonist. Chord symbols are not provided.

Mark Glentworth

*Blues for Gilbert*, Zimmerman Frankfurt, 1980, is an advanced, four-mallet work with contrasting ballad and medium swing themes, allowing the performer to discover the nuances of the instrument all within the confines of blues harmonies and progressions. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but the more experienced player could add subtle touches of both. Chord symbols not provided but an analysis would allow the performer to improvise on the medium swing section.

*Gilberts Got a New Blues*, Zimmermann Frankfurt, 2008, is an advanced, four-mallet solo written as a second installment on *Blues for Gilbert*. The music was not available during the completion of this paper but should be available soon.
Vibraphone Suite No. 1, Keyboard Percussion Publications, is an advanced four-mallet suite. Each piece is sold separately and can be played as solo or part of suite.

Broken Silence, 2002, a melody/accompaniment work beginning and ending with a freely/ballad style section allowing musical freedom to the performer. The main body of the tune is medium swing, and the work as a whole is similar in form to Blues for Gilbert. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout.

Ilmo, 2004, is a challenging mixture of melody/accompaniment and contrapuntal textures that keep both hands equally busy. This work is slow to moderate in tempo with compound meter. Chord symbols, pedaling, and dampening are not indicated giving the performer the choice to do so as they please.

Sunbell, 2004, features sections with left hand rolls at beginning and end with an extended middle section, Latin in character. Dampening and pedaling are clearly marked throughout but chord symbols are not.

Murray Houllif

Bop on the Top, Kendor, 2001, is an intermediate/advanced, three-mallet, twelve-bar blues based on the rhythmic jazz of Thelonius Monk and the melodic lines of Milt Jackson. Dampening is not marked or necessary and pedaling is seldomly indicated. A less-experienced player may struggle with pedaling decisions. Chord symbols are indicated on the first chorus only.

Contemplation, Permus, 1977, is an intermediate/advanced, four-mallet, work composed primarily of contemporary jazz harmonies containing frequent tempo and

---

meter changes. Very little dampening is required and pedaling is left to performer except when specifically indicated. No chord symbols are provided.

*Tranquility*, Ludwig, 1979, is an intermediate, four-mallet, ballad style piece composed primarily of chords and long tones with a short burst of rhythmic activity near the middle of the piece. There are some pedal indications but pedaling is predominately left up to the performer. Dampening indications and chord symbols are not provided.

Tim Huesgen

*Trilogy*, Meridith Music, 1990, is an intermediate, four-mallet set featuring three contrasting movements with varying tempi and styles. This variety gives the performer much freedom with tempo and phrasing. Movements one and three are very a nice mixture of melody/accompaniment and contrapuntal textures while movement two is a soft, slow ballad testing the performers musical capabilities. Pedaling and dampening are seldomly marked, leaving all of the decisions to the performer. Chord symbols are not included.

Jeff Hunter

*Fresh Kick*, C. Alan, is an intermediate, short, four-mallet jazz tune with a pleasant melody. Pedaling is indicated yet dampening is not and is completely left up to the performer.\(^{31}\)

*Nibaires*, C. Alan Pub., 1990, is an intermediate/advanced four-mallet work based on the Scriabin six-note scale (F, B, Eb, A, D, G), and its transpositions up a whole step.

\(^{31}\)http://tinyurl.com/c-alanpublications.
A technically difficult piece, *Nibairics* is perfect for an upper-level student or faculty recital. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but chord changes are not provided.

*Paint Me a Sky*, C. Alan Pub., is an intermediate four-mallet solo composed with constant eighth notes and triplets throughout creating a sense of perpetual motion. Pedaling is clearly marked throughout and there is very little, if any, dampening. Chord symbols are not provided.

*Washing Machine Blues*, C. Alan Pub., 1997, is an intermediate four-mallet solo composed in a medium, twelve-bar blues style. Most of the bridge is melody in the right hand against a left hand bass line. This is a good swing solo for the intermediate player, however dampening and pedaling are not indicated. This may pose an added challenge to an inexperienced vibraphonist.

Eckhard Kopetzki

*Six Pieces for Vibraphone*, Gretel Verlag Dinklage, 1991, is a set of six four-mallet pieces that fill a need at the beginner/intermediate level. Each piece introduces different techniques yet is still fun and interesting to play. Selections are entitled: *Small March in Fourths, In the Morning, Simple Melody, Phrygian, Skateboard, and Little Blues*. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but chord changes are not provided.

---


Two Latin Songs for Vibraphone, Sulzbach-Rosenberg, 2001, is an intermediate, four-mallet, two piece set based on latin styles. Pedaling and dampening are marked throughout but some pedaling is implied. Latin Rock Café is a moderate tempo latin rock tune and Summer Beach is an up-tempo bossa nova.

David Kovins

Vibraphone Portfolio, Warner Bros., 1996, is a collection of five pieces for four mallets which are interesting and challenging for the intermediate player. Each is prefaced with performance notes illustrating the techniques and features of the piece. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but chord symbols are not provided.

Igor Lesnick

Midnight Pieces, Zimmerman-Frankfurt, 1994, is an advanced, three movement set for four mallets. First Toy is a ballad giving the performer appropriate time and space to execute some intricate dampening and pedaling while still maintaining expressiveness. The Look of the Year is an up-tempo Latin style with both hands creating montuno-style rhythms with melody and harmony. Waltz for Midnight is a slow waltz containing a nice combination of thick texture with fast moving notes. Very intricate pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout. Chord symbols are included during the written-out solo sections.
Arthur Lipner

*Crystal Mallet*, Malletworks, 1995, is an intermediate, four-mallet work written as an exploration of a soprano, alto, tenor, bass texture for the vibraphone. A constant driving rhythm combined with dead strokes are used throughout to enhance the articulation possibilities of the instrument. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout and no chord symbols are provided.

*Kaleidoscope*, Malletworks, 1995, is a medium/advanced, four-mallet transcription of the composer’s live performance. Very linear in texture, constant running 16\(^{th}\) notes provide the harmonic foundation while a melody is intertwined often in a higher register. A short section is open for solos if the performer chooses to do so. Pedaling is clearly marked throughout and there are a few instances of basic dampening. Chord symbols are provided throughout.

*Places to Visit*, Malletworks, 1995, is a seven-piece collection for two and four mallets designed to encourage ensemble playing. This collection gradually increases in difficulty with the first two installments only requiring two mallets and the following five pieces requiring four mallets. Pedaling is clearly marked throughout the learned sections but omitted on the solo transcriptions. Very little, if any, dampening is marked, however dead strokes are indicated throughout as a form of dampening which is very much a part of Lipner’s style. Chord symbols are provided throughout in order to provide a lead sheet for bass and drums. All pieces are suitable for a recital. *Second Wind* is a two-mallet beginner work beginner in a medium tempo with straight eighth notes as the predominant rhythm. *Bar-B-Que Blues* is a slow blues in F for a beginner and can be played with two or four mallets. *Nightcrawler* is an ethereal, intermediate, four-mallet selection written in
medium tempo. *A January Snowfall* is an intermediate, four mallet work featuring a linear, perpetual motion melody written in triple meter. *Caribe Vibe* is an intermediate, four-mallet, medium salsa highlighting the ii-V-i progression in G minor. This is a nice introduction to salsa style with its constant montuno and short improvisation section. *Soho* is an intermediate, four-mallet medium funk tune. The left hand provides a constant quarter note rhythmic harmony during most of the learned section. *Kayak* is an intermediate/advanced four-mallet tune that explores a variety of textures and voicings.

*Solo Jazz Vibraphone Etudes*, Ludwig Music, 1990, is a collection of twelve, four-mallet, beginner/intermediate etudes focusing on four chord-types common to jazz vocabulary. Each is written in a different key in order to expand the performers reading ability and a variety of styles, tempi, and common rhythmic/melodic riffs expand a student’s knowledge of music in general. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked and Chord symbols are included throughout the collection.

*Jon Metzger*

*Five Pieces for Vibraphone*, C. Alan Pub., 2000, is book three of Metzger’s Step-to-Step series subtitled, “An Approach to Musical Development Through Literature.” These are two and four-mallet, beginner/intermediate pieces arranged in a sequential fashion beginning with the easiest. The first piece experiments with long and short tones with the pedal. The second has dampening at the beginning of every measure. The third piece introduces the dead stroke and various uses of it. The fourth introduces mallet dampening in more detail without a time signature. The final piece uses four mallets and unlike the previous four selections, there are no pedal markings. They are omitted
intentionally so pedaling decisions are left to the performer.\textsuperscript{34} No chord symbols are included throughout the set.

\textit{Imageries}, C. Alan Pub., 2002, is an intermediate, four-mallet, three-piece set with selections entitled: \textit{Minister of Grace, The Sunnier Side of Doubt}, and \textit{A Glorious Secret}. These works contain a nice combination of jazz and classical styles. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but chord symbols are not included.\textsuperscript{35}

\textit{Riversong}, C. Alan Pub., date, is an intermediate/advanced, four-mallet work marked “free and flowing” in a ballad feel. A lead sheet of the melody as well as Metzger’s written out version are provided. This enables the performer to study Metzger’s harmonizations and embellishments and potentially create their own, making \textit{Riversong} a great learning tool for harmonizing ballads. Some pedaling and dampening is indicated.

Bill Molenhof

\textit{Music of the Day}, Kendor, 1977, is a set of six advanced solos for four mallets incorporating a variety of styles, tempi, and meters. \textit{Visual Image, Waltz King, Mayflower, Wave Motion, Music of the Day, and Precision} most often are melody/accompaniment in texture, occasionally requiring one-handed rolls and rhythmic ostinati from the left hand. Dampening is difficult and clearly marked, however pedaling is only indicated when deemed necessary, therefore the performer is required to make many of the pedaling decisions. Chord symbols are not included.

\textsuperscript{34}http://tinyurl.com/c-alanpublications4

\textsuperscript{35}http://tinyurl.com/c-alanpublications5
John Piper

*Seven Songs for Vibraphone*, Studio 4, 1998-2000, is a collection of seven advanced, four-mallet works for solo vibraphone. Each is sold separately and includes a lead sheet for improvisation and rhythm section accompaniment. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout. Chord changes are provided throughout the entire lead sheets. Piper requires an extremely advanced level of dampening and pedaling to properly portray his music.

*Baroque in Swing*, 2000, is an up-tempo, very rhythmic combination of 6/8, latin, and straight-ahead jazz styles. A challenging melody is full of running triplets and sixteenth notes which make dampening and pedaling extremely difficult in this selection.

*Conflicting Goodbyes*, 2000, has a slow, lyrical, beautiful melody, allowing the performer to be very expressive with dynamics and feel. Tremendous control of dampening is required to play the melody properly.

*Just a Step Away*, 1998, is a medium tempo, straight eighth piece written mainly in melody/accompaniment style, Quite a bit of intricate dampening and pedaling is required to play this piece.

*Spot*, 2000, is a bright little tune in C major that is suitable for the intermediate/advanced vibraphonist. Predominately melody/accompaniment in texture, this piece challenges the performer more musically than technically.

*Spring Valley Kids*, 1998, contains a very active left hand ostinato present throughout the majority of the piece. Coordination and pedaling will pose a challenge to any performer but very few instances of dampening appear in the written melody.
*Stigmata*, 1999, is marked rubato, giving the performer slight freedom of phrasing and tempo. The texture is often contrapuntal, with less melody/accompaniment than the other selections from this set. Very intricate dampening and pedaling are required.

*Where do Dreams Go*, 2000, is a medium-tempo, triple meter, written mostly in melody/accompaniment style. Very intricate dampening and pedaling are required.

Ney Rosauro

*Bem-vindo*, Pro Percussao, 1993, is an advanced four-mallet work requiring the performer to use three mallets in the right hand near the conclusion of the piece. It begins with a quiet rubato then builds through variations and rhythmic ostinati to a powerful ending with quotes from Brazilian folk songs. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout but chord symbols are not included.

*Prelude and Blues*, Penn Oaks Press, 1994, is an intermediate/advanced four-mallet, two-movement work that separates melody and harmony by stem direction. This allows the less-experienced player to distinguish between the two. *Prelude* is a slow, rubato ballad giving the performer some expressive freedoms. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked. *Blues* is a medium swing piece with no pedaling or dampening indications requiring the performer to make decisions. Chord symbols are not provided for either movement.

*Two Reflections for Solo Vibraphone*, Ney Rosauro, 2004, is a two-movement, intermediate/advanced, four-mallet work written for low C vibraphone. Alternate notes are provided if a four-octave vibraphone is not available. Dampening is clearly marked but pedal indications and chord symbols are omitted.
Brazilian Landscape is a programmatic fantasy in the baiao rhythmic style with a left hand rhythmic and harmonic ostinato. It begins and ends with a slow lento section which surround a very rhythmically active middle section which highlights the left hand baiao ostinato.

Reflections on the New World is an exploration of three variations on the main theme from the second mvt. of Dvorak’s New World Symphony. It begins with a slow rubato section which is followed by exciting rhythmic variations and concludes with quotes of Dvorak’s other themes from the symphony.

Vibes Etudes and Songs, Malletworks, 2002, is a collection of etudes and songs for the beginning vibraphonist. They are intended to provide the student with material that covers basic concepts of dampening and pedaling, phrasing of melodies, and creation of accompaniment to a melodic line.\(^{36}\) Every etude or song is a piece of music that is fun to play with a pleasing melody and fairly simple harmony written in enjoyable styles such as samba, bossa nova, blues, and ballad. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout. Chord symbols are not provided.

Wolfgang Schutler

Solo Book for Vibes Vol. 1, Simrock, 1979, is a collection of ten, short, four-mallet works ranging in difficulty from beginner/intermediate to advanced. Selections are as follows: Nursery Rhyme, Musical Clock, Nadja’s Dance, The Dreamer, One Minute Please, Menuet for Catherine, Variations, Epilogue, Viridlana 1, and Viridlana 2. These pieces, organized progressively, are relatively short and performance practices are

\(^{36}\)Ney Rosauro, Vibes Etudes and Songs, 1.
described in detail on a page entitled “Directions for Playing.” All articulations, pedaling, and dampening are clearly marked throughout. Chord symbols are only included when the composer deems it necessary.

Solo Book for Vibes Vol. 2, Simrock, 1989, is a second collection of ten, short, four-mallet works ranging in difficulty from beginner/intermediate to advanced.

Selections are as follows: Nursery Rhyme II, Evening Song, Ballad for Vibes, Saint Michel, Children’s Dream, Franki’s Mobile, Three Time Blues, Crazy Cat, Lucienne, and Village-Rhen. The format is identical to Solo Book for Vibes Vol. 1. All articulations, pedaling, and dampening are clearly marked throughout. Chord symbols are provided on every selection except for Nursery Rhyme II.

Sheila Silver

Theme and Variations for Bowed Vibraphone, Studio 4, 1985, is an advanced work for two bows and two mallets. Marked at quarter note = 50, it is slow enough for the manipulation of the bows and some expressive leniency. The piece begins with a bow in each hand then switches to mallets in right hand and bow in left. Clearly this piece is meant to address musical and technical issues involved with bowing the vibraphone. Pedaling is clearly marked throughout. There is no dampening and chord symbols are not provided.

Jerry Tachoir

Solo Vibraphone Collection, Riohcat music, 1992, are six original compositions for piano by Marlene Tachoir adapted for vibraphone by Jerry Tachoir. Each is
intermediate/advanced and written for four mallets. Pedaling and dampening are marked throughout.

Ruud Weiner

*Delphi*, Beurskens, 1993, is an advanced, four-mallet work often employing a left hand ostinato. It begins with an improvisation section alternating between Dorian and Lydian scales. Composed mostly of melody/accompaniment texture, there are brief moments of counterpoint challenging the musical capabilities of the performer. Pedaling and dampening are very clearly marked throughout. No chord symbols are provided.

*Six Solos for Vibraphone. Vol. 1*, Rawi Percussion Publications, 1983, are six, intermediate/advanced, four-mallet solos intended to address a musical or technical issue but at the same time be suitable for recital performance. Dampening and pedaling are clearly marked throughout this and all of Weiner works.

*Skyway* is based on jazz/rock style chords and rhythms, and often has different dynamics in each hand.

*The One-Minute Mallet Solo* is written in a perpetual motion style with eighth note triplets intended to enhance four-mallet independence. It has the appearance of an etude but musicality is at a premium and should not be overlooked.

*Mysterious Nights* develops single mallet independence and dexterity through active rhythms and a motive of repeating notes. Melody/accompaniment texture dominates this work.

*Little Love Song* is a slow, rubato, ballad placing a premium on melody and musical expression.
Amsterdam Avenue is a medium-tempo work combining minimalistic passages with folk music. Striking the edge of bars with the mallet handle is an extended technique explored in this movement.

Ballad for Emily is a medium tempo mixture of melody/accompaniment and polyphonic textures containing a short section of improvisation with indicated scales from which to improvise. Rhythmic interpretation should not be strict.

Six Solos for Vibraphone Vol. 2, Pustjens Percussion Publications, 1981, is a second volume or six-work set of intermediate/advanced, four-mallet pieces. This is a nice variety of pieces stressing multiple technical and musical demands. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout the set.

Home-Made is marked rubato giving the performer some expressive freedoms. The majority this work is melody/accompaniment. Right hand gets plenty of training with wide intervals in this selection.

Brightness develops the independent movement of four mallets through constant 8th note triplet rhythms. This fast, linear quality creates melodic and pedaling challenges.

Reflecting is a medium-tempo selection beginning and concluding with a melody/accompaniment section requiring different dynamics from each hand. This dynamic contrast between hands challenges the performer to capture the true essence of melody and harmony.

Latin Song explores different Latin-like rhythms. Intricate pedaling and difficult coordination make this a challenging selection.
Rainbow is marked rubato and requires intricate pedaling and dead strokes. The performers skill level will be tested through the above techniques.

Audrey is a lively, flirty piece, complicated in character, which often alternates between 8th note and triplet rhythms. Many moments of extreme dynamic contrast are presented throughout this melody/accompaniment texture.

Swiss Village, Beurskens, 1993, is an intermediate/advanced, four-mallet work. Written predominantly in a melody/accompaniment texture, this piece poses challenges with balancing and dampening. It begins with a slow/moderate waltz then moves to a faster section in duple meter. Pedaling and dampening are clearly marked throughout. Chord symbols are not provided.

Nebojsa Zivkovic

Funny Vibrphone Book 1, Gretal Verlag, 1993, is a collection of ten, easy, two and four-mallet vibraphone etudes written for beginning vibraphonists. The first five pieces only require two mallets. This collection of ballads and songs are very short, tonal and classical in nature. Pedaling and dampening markings are indicated but there is very little dampening.
CONCLUSION

Vibraphone pedagogy is a constantly evolving subject. The foremost vibraphone performers and pedagogues are constantly introducing new teaching methods, practices, treatises, and techniques. However, despite the rapid evolution of teaching methods, the vibraphone will always require performers to be capable of the four basic idiomatic disciplines on the instrument: Four-mallet jazz voicings and arrangement, mallet dampening, pedaling, and extended techniques.

The goal of this paper and accompanying lecture recital is to introduce these four techniques and give a basic musical application of each to beginning vibraphone students. It is also the intent of the presenter to introduce literature of some of today’s most prominent composers and pedagogues. This simultaneous introduction of techniques and literature presents a practical application of the material as a whole. After reading this paper, a student should have a basic idea of what is required of them on the vibraphone and a basic knowledge of how to perform a certain technique. It is then up to the teacher to present these techniques in a more detailed fashion, and the student to explore these teachings further in the practice room. Percussionists need to know that certain techniques exist on the vibraphone.

An inexperienced vibraphone student more than likely has little or no knowledge of the available pedagogical material and solo literature. This document should highlight valuable pedagogical material and solo literature by composers and performers who have made a significant contribution to the field. A generous sampling of method books and solo literature of all difficulty levels was discussed in order to introduce this material to the intended audience.
APPENDIX A

BEGINNER DAMPENING EXERCISES

A basic introduction to mallet dampening is necessary before moving on to dampening exercises or etudes found in pedagogical material. The following appendix will provide one/two-measure exercises introducing each type of mallet dampening explained in chapter three. These are designed to be a student’s first attempt at a particular dampening skill and should help provide the student with the knowledge of that skill. These exercises should segue directly to exercises found in pedagogical material or introductory-level literature.

Each exercise will address a specific dampening technique and should be practiced until each note seamlessly blends to the next with no audible space and until there is virtually no contact sound of the mallet dampening the bar. The pedal should remain depressed during each of the exercises.

Opposite Hand Dampening Exercises

The following exercises indicate the sticking underneath the note. Dampen each note with the opposite hand.

Exercise 1. Opposite hand dampening with left hand

\[\text{\footnotesize Exercise 1. Opposite hand dampening with left hand} \]
Exercise 2. Opposite hand dampening with right hand

`\begin{music}\newcommand{\MyMallet}{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{i}}}\xspace\musicinput{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{i}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{1}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{2}}}\end{music}`

Exercise 3. Opposite hand trail dampening with left hand

`\begin{music}\newcommand{\MyMallet}{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{i}}}\xspace\musicinput{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{1}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{2}}}\end{music}`

Exercise 4. Opposite hand trail dampening with right hand

`\begin{music}\newcommand{\MyMallet}{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{i}}}\xspace\musicinput{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{1}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{2}}}\end{music}`

Same Hand Dampening Exercises

In each of the following exercises, strike and dampen each note with the same mallet. If necessary, the number above the note indicates a particular mallet in a given hand.

Exercise 5. Same hand dampening

`\begin{music}\newcommand{\MyMallet}{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{i}}}\xspace\musicinput{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{1}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{2}}}\end{music}`

Exercise 6. Same hand slide dampening

`\begin{music}\newcommand{\MyMallet}{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{i}}}\xspace\musicinput{\textbf{\textit{m}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{1}}\textsuperscript{\textsc{2}}}\end{music}`
APPENDIX B

VARIOUS MALLET TYPES

The following section is intended to introduce many of the mallet choices available by some of the industries leading manufactures. Now more than ever, these companies are designing sticks and mallets for specific musical needs or with the input today’s leading artists and educators. This information should aid students and teachers with the selection of mallets.

Mike Balter Mallets

Joe Locke series is coined, “A new series for the serious vibist.” They are available in chord only with rattan handles.

- 47R, medium-hard, smaller articulate head with quick attack
- 48R, medium, very good all-around mallet
- 49R, medium-soft, full-bodied warm tone across the entire instrument

The wide bar series were specifically developed for two-mallet performance on graduated bar instruments. Their shorter handle is designed to improve speed and accuracy. They are available in yarn only with birch or rattan handles.

- 31, hard
- 32, medium
- 33, soft

Mushroom head series produces a rich tone and provide additional attack when necessary. This series is available in chord and yarn with birch, fiberglass, and rattan handles.

- 61, medium-hard yarn
- 62, medium-hard chord
- 63, medium-soft yarn
- 64, medium-soft chord

The Artist series were designed with the help of Arthur Lipner, John Piper, Julie Spencer, and Tony Miceli. All artist series models are available in chord and rattan only.
The Lipner models offer a full sound with thicker rattan handles.

- 41, medium
- 45, medium-hard

The John Piper models feature a special impact cushion with produces a soft mellow sound.

- 43, medium
- 44, medium-soft

The Tony Miceli model is a mushroom headed, multi-colored chord mallet that offers plenty of contact sound.

- 46R, medium-hard

Perhaps the signature mallet from the Mike Balter line, The Pro Vibe series’ heavier, round, chord mallet head provides the ideal vibe sound. These are great all-around mallets for any situation. The pro vibe series are available in chord only with birch, fiberglass, and rattan handles.

- 21, hard yellow
- 22, medium hard green
- 23, medium blue
- 24, soft red
- 25, jazz (hard) silver

Designed specifically with a large, weighted, mushroom-shaped head, the Super Vibe series gets a full, powerful tone. They are available in synthetic polyester only, with birch and thick rattan handles.

- 121, extra-hard yellow
- 122, hard green
- 123, medium-hard blue
- 124, medium red
- 125, medium-soft aqua
- 126, soft orange

For more information on Mike Balter mallets, please visit their website, www.mikebalter.com.

Innovative Percussion

Innovative Percussion is one of today’s leaders in field series mallets yet still offers a variety of concert and soloist mallets. These mallets represent the design needs of
some of today’s leading marching ensembles and arrangers as well as some of the world’s foremost performers on vibraphone. The following discussion will focus on mallets designed for indoor solo, concert, and jazz performance.

The rattan series for vibraphone are designed for the contemporary mallet player and feature either mushroom or oval shaped heads wrapped with chord or synthetic yarn. This series is only available in rattan and is considered a vibraphone and marimba mallet but is usually preferred on vibraphone.

- RS201, mushroom, soft chord
- RS251, mushroom, medium chord
- RS301, mushroom, hard chord
- RS20, oval, medium synthetic yarn
- RS30, oval, medium-hard synthetic yarn

Designed with the help of mallet specialist and composer, Anders Astrand, These are vibraphone/marimba mallets available in five models for a variety of sound choices. All Anders Astrand mallets feature hard rubber, mushroom shaped cores that create a full, rich tone and are available in their signature orange chord with rattan handles.

- AA15, extra-soft (bass)
- AA20, medium-soft
- AA25, medium
- AA30, hard

The David Friedman series were designed for internationally acclaimed mallet percussionist, composer, and educator, David Friedman. There are two models of vibraphone mallets which offer a distinct sound difference.

- DF30, deep, full tone
- DF30L, Lighter weight, ideal for solo playing and light ballads

Developed with the help of performer, composer, and educator, Dr. Dan Moore, these mallets are ideal for vibraphone and marimba and highlight his signature full-bodied, resonant sound. All of the Dan Moore series feature tightly-wound black chord and rattan handles.

- DM21, medium marimba/vibe
- DM26, medium-hard marimba/vibe
- DM 28, jazz vibe
- DM31, hard vibe
Designed with the help of professional freelance vibraphonist, Jerry Tachoir, this mallet provides a full tone for the combo vibraphonist whether on vibraphone, marimba, or mallet synthesizer. This mallet features a mushroom shaped rubber core, tightly woven maroon chord, and rattan handles.

- JT23, medium vibe

For more information on Innovative Percussion products, please visit their website, www.innovativepercussion.com.

Vic Firth

Vic Firth is one of the oldest and perhaps the most widely known manufacturer of sticks and mallets. They offer plenty of choices for a variety of vibraphonists from ensemble vibraphone/marimba combo mallets to signature series designed with the help of some of today’s leading artists. Their featured vibraphone mallet lines are listed below.

The multi-application vibraphone mallets are designed to cover a broad spectrum of sounds by offering a variety of hardness to accommodate any musical setting. All multi-application vibraphone mallets have a weighted rubber core and rattan shafts.

- M185, soft yarn with almost no attack
- M186, medium chord, full sound with little attack
- M187, medium hard chord, full sound with presence of attack
- M188, hard chord, maximum projection and clarity
- M189, very hard chord, maximum articulation

The Ney Rosauro signature mallets were designed to meet the specifications of award-winning composer and performer Ney Rosauro. All Rosauro series mallets have rubber cores and rattan shafts.

- M225, soft, designed for the low register of extended range instruments
- M226, medium, full sound throughout the entire range
- M227, hard, a heavier mallet that produces more articulation
- M228, general, all purpose hybrid mallet suitable for any keyboard
- M229, very hard, extremely powerful and articulate
The signature keyboard mallets were designed with the assistance of some of the finest keyboard artists today. These mallets reflect what they require in terms of balance, feel, hardness, and tone color. All signature series mallets have rattan handles.

- M23, Victor Mendoza, mushroom head, hard chord produces a brilliant sound
- M25, Gary Burton, medium wound yarn
- M31, Terry Gibbs, medium chord, vibe/marimba
- M32, Terry Gibbs, medium-hard chord, vibe/marimba
- M33, Terry Gibbs, hard chord, vibe/marimba
- M36, Stefon Harris, Oversized head and slightly shorter length make this a good choice for the two-mallet player
- M38, Ed Saindon, weighted core and thin chord produces a full sound with clarity at all dynamics.

For more information of Vic Firth products, please visit their website, www.vicfirth.com.

Malletech

The Malletech Essential Series is designed for beginners looking for a more affordable option in a series of mallets that meets the needs of the student, ensemble vibraphone player. All essential series vibraphone mallets feature heavy rattan and tightly wound nylon yarn.

- ESSV, soft
- ESMV, medium
- ESHV, hard

Formerly known as the David Friedman series, the Jazz Classics series feature the same grey yarn, rattan shafts, and model numbers as the old DF mallets.

- JC12, soft, general vibe and marimba, noise free attack with full tone
- JC16, hard, heavyweight for maximum power, light touch produces full tone

Designed with the help of world-renowned vibraphone artist, Mike Mainieri, these mallets feature bright fuchsia, synthetic yarn and rubber mushroom cores.

- MM13, medium-soft, excellent for smaller ensembles or solo playing
- MM17, hard, designed to be heard over larger ensembles without sacrificing the tone of the instrument
The Dave Samuels series were designed to meet the needs of one of the world’s leading contemporary vibraphone and marimba artist. The DS series feature mushroom shaped rubber cores and rattan shafts and are suitable for vibraphone and marimba.

- DS10H, soft, large-headed heavy mallet that produces a dark tone
- DS11, soft, a dark tone free of attack noise, ideal for recording or chamber use
- DS18, medium, maximum “cutting power” suitable for acoustic or amplified settings
- DS19H, heavyweight oversized mallet for power without sacrificing the fundamental

The new Ed Smith mallet has a complex, multi-layered construction that defines the exact sound of a medium-hard vibe mallet. The ELS mallets feature mushroom shaped heads and rattan shafts.

- ELS16, medium-hard

For more information on Malletech products, please visit their website, www.mostlymarimba.com.

Pro-Mark

The diversity series or “system blue” were designed by the percussion staff of the Concord Blue Devils to be a diverse line of mallets for indoor or outdoor use. Each model features a mushroom shaped rubber core, tightly wound chord, and rattan shafts.

- DV5R, soft
- DV6R, medium
- DV7R, medium-hard
- DV8R, hard

Designed with the assistance of educator and clinician Jeff Moore, this is a diverse series of somewhat lighter mallets that feature mushroom shaped rubber cores and slightly longer rattan shafts. These are intended for outdoor use but are suitable indoors as well.

- JM15R, soft, produces a warm tone without the presence of attack
- JM16R, medium, a nice characteristic vibraphone sound with a little bit of attack
- JM17R, hard, maintains a true vibraphone sound while achieving maximum attack and articulation.

The following artist series were designed with the assistance of some of today’s leading artists and educators as well as two of the all-time great pioneers of the vibraphone.

- PBM, Bill Molenhof
- PDS, Dick Sisto, medium-hard with a significant amount of articulation
• PJM, Jon Metzger, medium-hard, excellent attack suitable for combo, solo, or large ensemble playing.
• PLH, Lionel Hampton
• PMJ, Milt Jackson, oversized head and slightly shorter shaft is ideal for two-mallet performance

For more information on Promark products, please visit their website, www.promark.com.

This is not a complete list of all vibraphone mallets. It is intended to be a significant representation of the abundant selection and variety of vibraphone mallets currently available. Frequently it is not possible to play with a certain mallet before purchasing. The aforementioned descriptions of mallets are intended to help students and educators choose mallets for a variety of applications.
## APPENDIX C

**LIST OF VIBRAPHONE ARTISTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anders Astrand</th>
<th>Tony Miceli</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roy Ayers</td>
<td>Bil Molenhof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Burton</td>
<td>Steve Nelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Friedman</td>
<td>Red Norvo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Gibbs</td>
<td>Ted Piltzecker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lionel Hampton</td>
<td>John Piper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stefon Harris</td>
<td>Ney Rosauro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jay Hoggard</td>
<td>Ed Saindon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobby Hutcherson</td>
<td>Dave Samuels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Lipner</td>
<td>Mark Sherman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Locke</td>
<td>Dick Sisto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milt Jackson</td>
<td>Ed Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Mainieri</td>
<td>Jerry Tachoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Mendoza</td>
<td>Cal Tjader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Metzger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

VARIOUS PUBLISHERS OF VIBRAPHONE LITERATURE

Alfred Publishing Co.
Alphonse Leduc
Bachovic Music Publications
Berklee Press
C. Alan Publications
Drop6
Hal Leonard
HoneyRock
Kendor
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Ludwig Music
Malletworks
Meredith
Per-Mus Publications
Pro Percussao
Rawi Percussion Publications
Schirmer
Southern Music Company
Studio 4
Zimmerman (Frankfurt)
APPENDIX E

SUMMARY OF SOLO LITERATURE

Gary Burton
  *Six Unaccompanied Solos for Vibe*, Advanced

J.C. Combs
  *One for Paquito*, Intermediate
  *Reflections*, Intermediate/Advanced
  *Three Brothers*, Intermediate/Advanced
  *Three Pieces for Vibraphone*, Intermediate/Advanced

Thomas Davis
  *Recital for Vibraharp*, Intermediate/Advanced to Advanced

Christopher Dean
  *The Apocryphal Still Life*, Advanced
  *Mourning Dove Sonnet*, Advanced

David Friedman
  *Mirror from Another*, Advanced
  *Texas Hoe-Down*, Advanced
  *Five Tonal Haikus for Solo Vibraphone*, Advanced

Gary Gibson
  *Wallflower, Snowbird, Carillon*, Advanced

Lynn Glassock
  *Reflections*, Advanced

Mark Glentworth
  *Blues for Gilbert*, Advanced
  *Gilbert’s Got a New Blues*, Advanced
  *Vibraphone Suite No. 1*, Advanced
    *Broken Silence*
    *Ilmo*
    *Sunbell*

Murray Houllif
  *Bop on the Top*, Intermediate/Advanced
  *Contemplation*, Intermediate/Advanced
  *Tranquillity*, Intermediate
Tim Huesgen
   *Trilogy*, Intermediate

Jeff Hunter
   *Fresh Kick*, Intermediate
   *Nibaircs*, Intermediate/Advanced
   *Paint Me a Sky*, Intermediate
   *Washing Machine Blues*, Intermediate

Eckhard Kopetzki
   *Six Pieces for Vibraphone*, Beginner to Intermediate
   *Two Latin Songs for Vibraphone*, Intermediate

David Kovins
   *Vibraphone Portfolio*, Intermediate/Advanced

Igor Lesnick
   *Midnight Pieces*, Advanced

Arthur Lipner
   *Crystal Mallet*, Intermediate
   *Kaleidoscope*, Intermediate/Advanced
   *Places to Visit*, Beginner to Intermediate
   *Solo Jazz Vibraphone Etudes*, Beginner to Intermediate

Jon Metzger
   *Five Pieces for Vibraphone*, Beginner to Intermediate
   *Imageries*, Intermediate
   *Riversong*, Intermediate/Advanced

Bill Molenhof
   *Music of the Day*, Advanced

John Piper
   *Seven Songs for Vibraphone*, Advanced
   *Baroque in Swing*
   *Conflicting Goodbyes*
   *Just a Step Away*
   *Spot*
   *Spring Valley Kids*
   *Stigmata*
   *Where do Dreams Go*
Ney Rosauro

Bem-Vindo, Advanced  
Prelude and Blues, Intermediate/Advanced  
Two Reflections for Solo Vibraphone, Intermediate/Advanced  
Vibes Etudes and Songs, Beginner

Wolfgang Schultler

Solo Book for Vibes Vol. 1, Beginner/Intermediate to Advanced  
Solo Book for Vibes Vol. 2, Beginner/Intermediate to Advanced

Sheila Silver

Theme and Variation for Bowed Vibraphone, Advanced

Jerry Tachoir

Solo Vibraphone Collection, Intermediate/Advanced

Ruud Weiner

Delphi, Advanced  
Six Solos for Vibraphone Vol. 1, Intermediate/Advanced  
Six Solos for Vibraphone Vol. 2, Intermediate/Advanced  
Swiss Village, Intermediate/Advanced

Nebojsa Zivcovic

Funny Vibraphone Bk. 1, Beginner/Intermediate
Mourning Dove Sonnet was composed in 1983 as a concert vibraphone solo in which the material was focused on an integration of traditional and non-traditional performance techniques. It is, in its essence, a wordless art song for vibraphone. The performer is musically free to be flexible with the tempo. However, a sense of pulse and forward motion is necessary for this piece to “sing” as intended. The piece should never feel rushed to the point that the special sounds such as harmonics, pitch bends, and bowed notes are sacrificed. Christopher Deane is Assistant Professor of Percussion at the University of North Texas.
Program

Lecture and Performance

Idiomatic Techniques on the Vibraphone as Demonstrated Through Works of Several Prominent Composers

Greetings and Introduction

Background

Theory


Dampening

First Kiss………………………………………………………… J.C. Combs (b. 1940)

Pedaling

Concerto for Vibraphone, II…………………………………….. Ney Rosauro (b. 1952)

Andy Nance, Piano

Extended Techniques

Mourning Dove Sonnet…………………………………….. Christopher Deane (b. 1957)

Nature Boy is a pop ballad written in 1947 by Eden Ahbez. It tells the story of a strange wanderer that learns of loving and being loved in return. The form of Nature Boy is AB with both sections being harmonically similar until the final four measures. The standard ii-V-i progression in D minor highlights the harmonic structure. Eden Ahbez was an American songwriter and recording artist from the 1940s to 1960s whose lifestyle was very influential on the west coast hippie movement.

First Kiss is the second selection from a trilogy entitled Three Pieces for Vibraphone by J.C. Combs. It is a ballad which catches the listener's ear with contrasting and reoccurring themes, giving the performer a chance to be free with tempo at times while also establishing a nice groove. The harmony and chord progressions of this piece are that of a jazz tune yet it is written in the style of a concert vibraphone solo. Perhaps this blend of jazz and concert styles gives this set its appeal. J.C. Combs has been a well-known percussion educator and performer for over forty years and his work in the jazz and classical mediums on vibraphone is apparent in this composition.

The Concerto for Vibraphone and Orchestra was written in Santa Maria, RS, Brazil in 1995 and 1996 and is dedicated to Evelyn Glennie. The work was originally written for vibraphone and chamber orchestra and was premiered with piano reduction during the 1996 Japan Percussion Festival in Tokyo. The second movement (Acalanto / Lullaby) is based on the Brazilian folk lullaby called Tutu Marumba, and depicts a child's peaceful passage to a dream-filled slumber. The effect of playing the vibraphone with the rattan handle of the mallet recalls the sound of music boxes used to lull children to sleep. Percussive Notes magazine calls the concerto "an excellent showcase for the solo vibraphonist, and, like the Marimba Concerto, another excellent work that audiences will find enjoyable and exciting."
BIBLIOGRAPHY


