

# The ALAPAS Newsletter



**PERCUSSIVE  
ARTS SOCIETY**

*Published by the UAB Department of Music*

## **Electro-Acoustic Concert Program:**

*Discipline*—King Crimson

*Wildwood*—Greg Bissonette

*Musicbox for Danny*—  
Mac Kramer

*Everything is 4*—  
Aaron Branson

85—Aaron Alford

*The Mystic*—  
Gene Fambrough

## **Electro-Acoustic Percussion Ensemble at UAB**

On July 27, the UAB Electro-Acoustic Percussion Ensemble presented its summer concert in the Hulsey Recital Hall on the UAB campus. This ensemble, currently in its third year, meets only during the summer semester and is a separate credit generating course.

Under the direction of Dr. Gene Fambrough, this group utilizes MIDI and electronic percussion instruments to compose and perform works not typically associated with percussion ensembles. Students have access to tools

that make performing this literature possible.

The ensemble consists of two MalletKAT controllers, a DrumKAT controller, a Roland SPD-s sampling pad, a Roland HandSonic controller, and a Zendrum MIDI controller. Sound sources consist of Roland and Kurzweil synthesizers. Several additional trigger pads and amplifiers are used as well as a traditional drum set and bass guitar. All of the electronic percussion equipment was funded through the UAB Faculty Development program from 2002-present.

Although any type of literature is welcome, the group has naturally leaned towards rock and progressive elements in their programming. In addition to the program listed at left, past performances have included selections by Neil Peart, Liquid Tension Experiment (formed by members of Dream Theater), and "Where's My Thing?" by Rush.

For information on future performances, contact Dr. Gene Fambrough in early summer.

## **Message from the President: Neal Flum**

Greetings!

I hope this message finds you all well! PASIC is fast approaching, and we have set a date for our 13th Annual Alabama PAS Day of Percussion. That event will take place on Saturday, March 10, 2007 at Samford University's new building, "*Jane Hollock Brock Hall*." Grant Dalton, Vice President of the Chapter, will serve as host for our event. We are quite fortunate to have as two of our featured clinicians, Iganacio Berroa and Lalo Davila. We are equally fortunate to have Greg Gumina and John Scalici, ALAPAS members, as clinicians. Please stay tuned for more details by checking our website: [www.pas.org/chapters/alabama](http://www.pas.org/chapters/alabama)

Another way in which you can keep up with ALAPAS chapter

"doings" is by becoming a member of PAS. Doing so will offer you many wonderful benefits and place you on our e-mail list managed by PAS in Lawton, Oklahoma. We need your help and support. So, please consider coming to our meetings and becoming an active member in the chapter. If you have agenda items for our meetings, questions, or merely need my assistance, please e-mail me at: [nealflum@mac.com](mailto:nealflum@mac.com)

I am proud to share with you that I was appointed to the Marching Percussion Committee of PAS and am humbled and honored to be serving PAS in that capacity. I am also pleased to share with you that PAS will be moving to Indianapolis, Indiana, which is also soon to become the headquarters of DCI.

There is much work to be done on our website and content is always needed. If you have events, information, anything relevant to our chapter, or if you would like to be added to our ALAPAS e-mail list, please send your information to me.

We have an energetic and outstanding chapter whose accomplishments are the results of a great team effort by our members. Please consider becoming an active member of the Alabama Chapter.

Yours in drumming,  
Respectfully,

Neal Flum

### **Inside this issue:**

Drum Roots in Alabama	2
New marimba concerto by David Gillingham	2
Profile: Laura Noah	4
Event Calendar	5
Drum Corps in Alabama—2006 season in review	5

## Drum Roots in Alabama

*contributed by Chris Moore*

It can be argued that Alabama percussion began its ascent in the 80's. At this time, programs began to spring up around the state, and names began to appear in regional and national competitions. Since the 80's four of our state's high schools have appeared in the Percussive Arts Society International Convention Marching Competition. Vestavia Hills, Grissom, Muscle Shoals, and Hoover high schools have represented our state over the years. If you look at a state map today, you can pinpoint quality percussion programs from every region. There are too many wonderful percussion teachers in this state to name in such a short article.

But if you look at this state's high schools from a historical perspective, before the 80's, two percussion instructors do stand out. You may or may not have heard of them, but they need to be recognized. They are Ron Smith, and Steve Sample. Ron and Steve, ironically, were good friends, and taught respectively at the competing schools of Berry H.S. (now Hoover High) and Vestavia Hills High Schools. Ron began teaching the Vestavia Hills H.S. drumline in 1976. Steve began working Berry H.S. shortly after.

The schools quickly developed a percussive rivalry, that while always good natured, helped develop the skills of each individual player. Both Ron and Steve received their percussion education at the University of Alabama in the early 70's. Ron also marched with the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps. Steve marched with a newly founded Alabama DCI Corps: The Charioteers (which beat another upstart corps all year named The Phantom Regiment).

As this rivalry strengthened, Ron and Steve began to collaborate on projects, music, and instruction. Each would come and critique the other's line, and the two even would write an occasional cadence together, for the two groups to play. One short "tick beat" was written for the two groups from an idea of Steve's. It was entitled "Mr. Clean" and was played by the combined lines at the conclusion of the Berry vs. Vestavia game for years. This is the genesis for the naming of the drum contest at Hoover High School today: The Mr. Klean Classic.

Steve is still around Birmingham, and an active performer around the southeast. He is a



*Vestavia Hills Percussion Section, 2005*

wonderful drumset player, and very active in his church music ministry. He is still an avid DCI follower, and you can find him each year as a spectator at our PAS Day of Percussion.

Ron passed away in 1988. He should be credited for bringing the first drum clinics to Alabama. With the help of Nuncios Music Company, he brought in the DCI legend Fred Samford for a clinic in 1981, and Dennis DeLucia shortly afterward. He was instrumental in bringing the first Sounds of Summer workshops to Alabama.

When you look at the wonderful drumlines in the state this year, and the impressive players in them, take time to remember two of the founders of percussion in the state of Alabama. They contributed to the development of percussion more than we will ever know, and much of the success of our state can be traced back to them.

Thank you Ron, and Steve... Alabama PAS salutes you.



## Fambrough to premiere new Gillingham marimba concerto

Dr. Gene Fambrough and the UAB Wind Symphony are part of a national consortium that has commissioned composer David Gillingham (Central Michigan University) to write a new concerto for solo marimba and wind ensemble. The project has been in the works for nearly two years, and will be a major addition to new marimba repertoire.

The new concerto will be programmed sometime during the

2007 calendar year, during which the UAB Wind Symphony will have exclusive performance rights. The concert will take place in the Jemison Concert Hall of the Alys Stephens Center on the UAB campus.

The commissioning project was spearheaded by Dr. Marc Wooldridge of Northern Iowa University, and consists of twenty-nine different marimbists and university performing

ensembles around the country.

The solo marimba part of the three-movement concerto was completed this past summer, and the complete, edited band parts for the "Concerto for Marimba and Wind Ensemble" should arrive in December following the World Premier by Wooldridge and the Northern Iowa University Wind Ensemble.

The ALAPAS Newsletter is made possible through the generous efforts of:



Dr. Jeff W. Reynolds, Chairman  
231 Hulsey Center  
950 13<sup>th</sup> Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35294-1260  
uabmusic@uab.edu  
www.music.uab.edu

### **UAB Bands:**

Sue Samuels, Director of Bands  
Gene Fambrough, Assistant Director of Bands

Kornelious Gardner, administrative assistant  
Janetta Lockhart, student assistant  
Lisa Gale, student assistant  
Elisha Gentle, student assistant

---

#### *Percussive Notes—PASIC Preview*



#### *Modern Drummer*



## Profile: Laura Noah



**Laura M. Noah** is currently Principal Percussionist for the Mobile Symphony and Mobile Opera in Mobile, AL. She is also Co-Principal Percussionist with the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra in Biloxi, MS and is an active freelance artist performing with the Huntsville, Pensacola, Tuscaloosa, and Alabama Symphonies as well as the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. She received her BM in Performance from the University of Alabama and MM in Performance from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. She continues to teach privately and is the Front Ensemble instructor for the UAB Marching Blazers.

- How did you to start playing percussion?

I began in 7th grade and in a way percussion chose me. When it came time for instrument testing I was good with rhythm and pitch, but I couldn't get a sound out of any of the wind and brass instruments so percussion was my choice.

- How did you know you wanted to become an orchestral player?

It was the summer of 2000 at the Aspen Music Festival. The nine weeks spent at the festival were life changing. I learned what it would be like and the

preparation that took to be an orchestral musician. This was also where I met Jonathan Haas who would become my primary teacher at Peabody. I discovered that I really had a talent for timpani and percussion and all the teachers, Ben Herman, Doug Howard, Tom Stubbs and Jon were very supportive in seeing that talent flourish.

- What was one of your fondest memories of drum corps?

One is definitely Finals night in 1999, performing with the Santa Clara Vanguard. The performance was fantastic and the crowd loved every minute of it. As the scores were being announced the crowd began chanting "SCV! SCV!". It was so surreal to be on that field for the first and last time and to hear the crowd shouting for your corps. I could fill pages and pages of memories from my time at both Southwind and Santa Clara. It truly was a wonderful experience.

- What would you say to students that want to march?

For students who want to march drum corps, I say go for it. There is an age limit so start early, don't wait till your last year to get involved. Drum Corps isn't for everyone. You have to be willing to give it your all and commit yourself to becoming a better player and performer. There are many reasons why people do drum corps and I believe there are right reasons and wrong reasons. Drum corps is competitive, yet if you focus on making music and as a corps performing as one then whatever the outcome you will be satisfied.

- What led you to study with Jonathan Haas, and what did you gain from that experience?

## Interview by Gene Fambrough

I started studying with Jonathan Haas at the Aspen Music Festival and while there he encouraged me to come to Peabody to study. After graduating from the University of Alabama I decided to further my education at Peabody. I learned from Jon how to be a professional percussionist and how to live and work in the orchestral world. Through Peabody and Jonathan Haas, I was given many opportunities to grow as a performer including the opportunity to study with Robert Van Sice.

- You are involved in two seemingly opposite styles of performing (orchestral and marching) - what do you gain personally from keeping a foot in both doors?

The orchestral world is my life. It is what I have been working towards since my summer in Aspen. So that side is easy to explain, I enjoy performing and the pursuit of perfection. Working with Front Ensembles is something I enjoy and is a way for me to share my knowledge gained from experiences in drum corps and marching band. I enjoy seeing percussion students succeed and it is very rewarding to watch them perform. The unifying element in both styles is performing music so really on a basic level the two styles really aren't that different.

- Where do you want to be in 10 years? 20 years?

In 10 years I would like to be a member of a salaried symphony and by 20 years I hope to be a principal timpanist and teaching percussion at a college.

---

*"I enjoy seeing percussion students succeed and it is very rewarding to watch them perform."*

# Event Calendar— Fall 2006



October 15—UAB Wind Symphony, 3:00 PM, ASC.

October 19—North Alabama Fall Day of Marching Percussion, University of North Alabama.

October 21—Hoover Invitational Marching Festival.

November 2—Auburn University Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 PM.

November 2—Samford University Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 PM.

November 4—Mr. Klean Indoor Drumline Show, Hoover HS.

November 8-11, Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC), Austin, TX.

November 9—UAB Percussion Ensemble, 8:00 PM, ASC.

November 18—Cahaba Thunder Indoor Drumline Show.

November 30—JSU Percussion Ensemble, 7:00 PM.

November 30-December 2—UAB Middle School Honor Band.

December 3—Laura Oleska, JSU Junior Recital, 7:30 PM.

December 4—University of South Alabama Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 PM.

December 7-9—UAB High School Honor Band.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS!!!!

**Chick Corea and Bela Fleck**, February 24, 2007, 8:00 PM at the Alys Stephens Center at UAB.

**KODO Japanese Drummers**, March 3, 2007, 8:00 PM at the Alys Stephens Center at UAB.

**JANUARY 15**—Deadline for submission of events to be included in the spring newsletter. Please send any and all information to [gfambro@uab.edu](mailto:gfambro@uab.edu)

## ALAPAS Chapter Officers:

President—Neal Flum

Vice President—Grant Dalton

Secretary—Anne Rose

Treasurer—Clif Payne

DOP Host—Grant Dalton

## Drum Corps in Alabama

The 2006 Drum Corps season was a huge success for all involved from the state of Alabama. Our very own corps, **Spirit from JSU**, continues to hold form by placing 12th in World Championships with a score of 84.825. The percussion section finished in 11th place with a score of 17.25 (out of 20). Congratulations to **Clint Gillespie** and all members and staff on another fine season!

The two other drum corps

with state ties in percussion also did extremely well this year. **Iain Moyer** (UNA) serves as front ensemble instructor for the **Madison Scouts**, who placed 9th overall (87.7) and 8th in percussion with a score of 18.3.

**Brad Palmer**, co-owner of DoubleStop Percussion, has just completed his third year of front ensemble instruction with the **Bluecoats** from Canton, Ohio. The corps completed 2006 with their best placement ever of 4th place

overall (93.175) and 3rd place in percussion with a score of 19.25, behind only Phantom Regiment and the Blue Devils.

Congratulations to all involved, and best of luck for the 2007 season. Be sure to audition if you are interested in performing with one of these great organizations!



Spirit from JSU

## AUDITION DATES:

Bluecoats: 11/18-19, 25-26

Madison: 11/19, 11/25-26

Spirit: 11/24-26



*Alabama Chapter newsletter*

*Published by the UAB Department of Music*

The University of Alabama at Birmingham  
203 Hulse Center  
950 13th Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35294-1260

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

<http://www.pas.org/Chapters/Alabama/>

## ***UAB Electro-Acoustic Percussion Ensemble***

**July 27, 2006**

***Selections included:***

- King Crimson, *Discipline*
- Gregg Bissonette, *Wildwood*
- Gene Fambrough, *The Mystic*

