

Volume 3, Issue 2

Fall 2008

Gene Fambrough, editor

The ALAPAS Newsletter

PERCUSSIVE
ARTS SOCIETY



*Published by the UAB
Department of Music*

From the President

Dear ALAPAS Members,

Greetings! I hope this letter finds you well. Hard to believe football season is half over and PASIC is but three weeks away. Hopefully, many of you will be attending PASIC 2008 in Austin, Texas. Our state continues to develop in the areas of percussion education and performance. We are blessed with great educators and great performers. New to the state are Mike Sammons who has been hired to teach at The University of South Alabama and Adam Blackstock who has been hired at Troy University. Greg Jackson enters his second year at Alabama State. Gene Fambrough continues to produce the best newsletter of any chapter in PAS. Ryan Nix is now teaching at Spain Park. Iain Moyer now directs the front ensemble at The Cadets and Bradley Palmer is Front Ensemble Coordinator for The Bluecoats Drum and Bugle Corps. Sean Womack now serves as co-caption head for Spirit Drum and Bugle Corps. Keith Anderson does great things with his WGI Indoor Ensemble at Bob Jones High School as do David Waters at Muscle Shoals and Mike Keeton at Brookwood Middle School - High School respectively. As you can see, there are many outstanding educators in our state.

While we have many new faces to add to the schools of music and high schools here in Alabama, we also wish a "Happy retirement!" to one of our most distinguished percussionists, Dr. John Papastefan. After a lengthy and successful career at The University of South Alabama, John retired this past summer. We wish him well in his future endeavors. So many students can be thankful that they had the opportunity to study with Dr. Papastefan.

Our 15th Annual Day of Percussion is scheduled for Saturday, February 28 at Hoover High School. Jeff Fondren will be the host and we have an impressive line-up of artists: Scott Johnson (Blue Devils), Steve Houghton (president-elect of PAS), Todd Sucherman (Styx), Joseph Gramley (University of Michigan), Clint Gillespie (Jacksonville State University), Mike Keeton and the Brookwood Middle School-High School indoor ensemble, and Jeff Fondren and Hoover High School. It's \$15 for non-PAS members and \$10 for members. Info is already posted on our website and we'll continue to update that info in the coming months.

The only area where we are failing as a state chapter is in membership. Our enrollment number has been almost static these past five years. I encourage all of our high school and college educators to make your students aware of the benefits of becoming a member of PAS. Having a larger membership benefits both PAS and Alabama PAS. E-memberships are available for \$28.00/year. Join at https://www.pas.org/Join/Ind_benefits.cfm

Please note that on November 10, 2008, Grant Dalton will take over as a president of the Alabama Chapter of PAS. Grant will do a first-rate job as our new president and I wish him well in that new position. An election for vice president (president-elect) will be held shortly. Please stay tuned for further details via email. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve you and hope that I have done that well and to your satisfaction. Please give Grant all the support you can. He'll serve you well!

Yours in drumming,
Neal Flum
Chair, PAS Marching Percussion Committee
President, Alabama PAS

FALL 2008 DATES!!!

Sept. 27—Parking Lot
Showcase, Shades Valley

Oct. 17, 18—Evelyn
Glennie with Mobile
Symphony

Oct. 18—Hoover HS Band
Invitational Contest

Nov. 5-8—PASIC, Austin
Texas

February 28—ALAPAS
Day of Percussion

Inside this issue:

New College Faculty	2
Percussive Shadows	3
UAB Happenings	4
College Comparison	4
Evelyn Glennie	5, 7
South Alabama Premieres	6
2008 DCI Recap; Changes	8
Event Calendar	9
PAS Health and Wellness	9

Troy University hires new percussion faculty

Nationally and Internationally recognized soloist, recitalist, and clinician, Dr. T. Adam Blackstock currently serves as Assistant Professor of Percussion Studies and Assistant Director of Bands at Troy University. His duties include: teaching private lessons and percussion methods courses, conducting the percussion ensemble, and is the instructor/arranger for The Sound of the South percussion section. He earned a Doctoral of Musical Arts degree from the University of Kansas, a Master of Arts degree from Tennessee Technological University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Newberry College. Blackstock has studied percussion with Joseph Rasmussen and Kevin Bobo, and has studied conducting with Joseph Hermann.



In addition to performing recitals and administering clinics nationwide, Blackstock has performed as a soloist at the 13th Annual Festival of Percussion in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 2006 and in Vilnius, Lithuania in 2007. While in Vilnius, Dr. Blackstock presented recitals and clinics, as well as performed as a featured soloist with the Trimitis Wind Ensemble. In November 2008, Dr. Blackstock will be featured as a marimba soloist at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Austin, TX where he will perform the US premiere of Laszlo Sary's Pebble Playing in a Pot.

Blackstock's research interests include West African Drumming and Dance, performance related injuries, twentieth century music theory, and the music of Steve Reich.

Dr. Blackstock is an artist/clinician for **Innovative Percussion, Inc.**



University of South Alabama hires new percussion faculty

Michael Sammons currently serves as the Director of Percussion Studies at the University of South Alabama and performs with the Mobile Symphony. He is a founding member of Zumbumba, an active percussion trio specializing in music from around the world. Most recently, Zumbumba presented an original composition, Foforo Twene, for timpani and African percussion as part of the 2007 Percussive Arts Society International Convention's "Focus Day" in Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Sammons has performed with orchestras in Arizona, Florida, and Alabama. He appeared as a guest soloist for the Music Educator's National Convention, Southern Division Conference in January of 2005 and in 2004, served as a guest performer for the Crested Butte Summer Music Festival in Crested Butte, Colorado.

An active educator and clinician, Mike Sammons served as Lecturer in Music at Clemson University in 2007-2008. He currently serves as the co-founder and director of the Treasure Coast Percussion Camp held in Vero Beach, Florida since 2005. He is a member of the Percussive Arts Society and is a contributing author to Percussive Notes. He has been an adjudicator for the Arizona Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society and Arizona Band and Orchestra Directors Association marching band festivals. In 2006 Mr. Sammons presented a session entitled "New Music for Steel Band" at PASIC in Austin, Texas with the University of Arizona and UT Austin Steel Bands and released the third CD, Panstraction, by the UA Steel Band.

Mike Sammons is a doctoral candidate at the University of Arizona, where he served as Graduate Teaching Assistant and Director of the UA Steel Band Program from 2003-2007. He received the 2007 Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant award for the UA College of Fine Arts. Mr. Sammons earned the Master of Music degree in Percussion Performance from the University of Arizona in 2005

(Continued on page 3)

Percussive Shadows

contributed by Sean Noah

Give a man fish and he can eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he can eat for a lifetime.... give a student a stick and the director is guaranteed to be annoyed.

The relationship between band director and percussion student can become misunderstood by both parties. During marching season directors are able to accommodate numerous percussionists, however in Concert Band, the question arises on how to keep all the marching percussionists active in a smaller ensemble? What do we do with the two tenor players, three snare drummers, five bass drummers, three cymbal players, and six front ensemble members while performing a traditional march?

We take our cue from the theatre in the form of an understudy. The concert band director can employ the same idea in the form of “shadow players.” The concept is to double or even triple the number of players on a part. First, assign a principal player to each part, followed by one or more “shadow” performers. It is the responsibility of the principal player and the shadow player to learn, practice, and rehearse their part with the ensemble. This technique can be implemented with every piece performed in concert band and will keep all the percussionists engaged in rehearsals. The director can switch the shadows in and out at his or her liberty during rehearsals. The added “shadow” also serves as a substitute when the principal player is absent or pulled out of class.

This system can help bolster confidence among the percussionists in an ensemble. In the wind sections of an ensemble the players are often paired with another playing the same exact part. Wind players rely upon each other while learning and playing a piece of music. The cymbal player holding two shiny plates of metal has no one to lean on for support. The shadow players can assist the principal player and vice versa when the shadow player is in the hot seat.

During rehearsals all players have sticks or mallets and a practice pad. The shadow players are responsible for their own parts to mark. The shadow performs the part on the pad while the principal player performs the part on the actual instrument. This works very well with battery percussion; however, a slight inconvenience occurs with the mallet instruments and timpani. This setback can be remedied by the director scheduling time for each of the players to practice on the mallet instruments and/or timpani.

A majority of the band directors in the area do not and may never have an assistant who can aid in teaching the percussion section. With current budget cuts, micromanaging from administrators, national education acts, and state graduation exams music directors need to use the limited rehearsal time in the most efficient way possible. The “shadow system” will keep the percussion student involved in the rehearsal and improve classroom management for the ensemble director.

-Sean Noah is Band Director at Bibb County High School and assists with the percussion section at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

(Continued from page 2)

and the Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education, with a Performer's Certificate, from the University of Florida in 2002. His travels abroad include Trinidad and Ghana, where he conducted research on the traditional music and dance of these cultures.

Michael Sammons is endorsed by **Pro-Mark**, **Remo**, and **Sabian** percussion companies.

UAB Happenings

by Gene Fambrough

A sure sign of growth is the addition of new ensembles, new faculty, and new events. The UAB Percussion Area was proud to present its first Graduate Percussion recital last spring by David Verin on April 20. David is currently student teaching and will be entering the job market shortly.

We will be hosting several events during the next calendar year that you should be aware of: our Second Annual "Marimba Madness" concert will take place January 11, 2009 at 4:00 PM in the Hulsey Recital Hall. This event is being held as a fund-raiser to help with the purchase of a new 5-octave marimba. Anyone interested in attending, advertising, or donating, please contact us!

Gene Fambrough, Grant Dalton, and Laura Noah will present a joint faculty recital at UAB on February 3 in Hulsey Recital Hall, performing literature for percussion trio.

UAB will also host a "Total Percussion" Camp for High School students as well as beginners next summer. The camp will provide instruction in ensemble, steel drum, drumline, MIDI percussion, drum set, timpani, and mallet percussion. The dates for the camp are June 22-26. Be on the lookout for more information!



UAB Graduate Student David Verin

University Percussion Program Comparison, Fall 2008

Student enrollment at all Alabama Colleges and Universities is continually very strong, and so are all of the various percussion programs. Below is a comparison of percussion areas in the major schools in the state. "Majors" indicates those Music Majors that are percussionists, with the first number being undergraduate and the second graduate students. Drumline breakdown is listed as: snare / tenor / bass / cymbals / front ensemble.

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>MAJORS</u>	<u># IN DRUMLINE</u>	<u># IN PERC. ENS.</u>
Auburn	11/2	39 (8/4/5/8/14)	16
Jacksonville State	44	52 (9/5/7/12/19)	44 (all groups)
Samford University	6	15 (3/2/5//0/5)	7
Troy University	30	49 (7/4/7/13/18)	20
University of Alabama	17	40 (11/4/6/8/11)	21
University of Alabama at Birmingham	18/1	28 (7/3/5/3/11)	17
University of North Alabama	18	35 (9/4/5/5/12)	20
University of South Alabama*	7	TBA!	10

*USA Jag' Drumline (Inaugural Season Fall 2009): USA has over 80 applicants so far for the 2009 season and is expecting to fill out a complete marching percussion section of 8 snares, 4 tenors, 5 bass drums, and 8 cymbals as well as a Front Ensemble of 12-15 players.

Evelyn Glennie with Mobile Symphony Orchestra, October 17-18

Evelyn Glennie, one of the most famous percussionists in the world, joins the Mobile Symphony in a concert unlike any the MSO has presented before. Scottish percussionist Evelyn Glennie's rhythmic virtuosity is as much a joy to watch as it is to hear. Dame Evelyn's program includes Kevin Puts' challenging *Percussion Concerto*, written especially for her, as well as Áskell Másson's *Concertpiece for Snare Drum and Orchestra*.

PROGRAM NOTES:

Percussionists are like veterinarians. While regular MDs study only the human body – for which they get more credit and more money – vets must be conversant with the anatomy and ills of dozens of species from cats to cattle and dogs to ducklings. All the more reason why we should be in awe of our percussionists who can take on everything from snare drums to marimbas. And to master the whole battery at the soloist level is truly extraordinary.

In recent decades, works for percussion soloists have proliferated, in large part resulting from the commissions from Scottish percussionist Evelyn Glennie. Glennie's remarkable gifts – and glamour – raised the bar for mastery of the instruments, as well as drawing young players and audiences into the world of classical music.

“From a purely musical point of view, I have always focused more on melody and harmony than with rhythm,” writes composer Kevin Puts in notes about his *Percussion Concerto*. “So I decided my contribution to the repertory of percussion concertos – a body of works which owes much to Evelyn Glennie's tireless devotion to its creation, I might add – should be concerned with the elements I know. It is for this reason that I chose to write only for “pitched” percussion, that is mallet instruments. I also decided to avoid the soloist's rapid and sometimes seemingly random movement from one instrument to the next, so when the soloist plays the vibraphone, for example, she stays put for quite awhile before moving on to another instrument. This is because I like to create for the listener a broad sense of both phrasing and form, a deliberate and logical journey through the various episodes of a piece, and the idea of the soloist moving frantically from instrument to instrument, while impressive to watch, felt counterproductive to this end. Like many of my pieces, *Percussion Concerto* consists of a seamless narrative from beginning to end, one unbroken movement.”

So how do you listen to a concerto for an instrument that is all rhythm and no melody? It requires what in today's business jargon is called a “paradigm shift,” listening for subtleties in dynamics, timbre and rhythm. A good pair of opera glasses can be quite an education into how the player produces these sounds, the manner in which the sticks are held in each hand and the fact that the timbre and sound quality varies considerably depending on how and where on the head the sticks strike.

In *Concert Piece for Snare Drum and Orchestra*, Áskell Másson balances the “limitations” of the solo instrument with the orchestra, which takes on the melodic voice of the piece. He explains about the work: “The two main organizational elements that form the basis of this work are a rhythmic motive (which spans over the meters 2/4 3/4 3/4 2/4 3/4) and a tone row that mirrors around its middle (A,C,D,Eb,F,Ab). This tone row is never transposed throughout the work.” It was composed in 1982 and premiered by the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra in the same year; it has been performed widely around the world since.

- program notes taken from www.mobilesymphony.org

University of South Alabama to Premier Two New Percussion Ensembles

I would like to first say how excited I am to be joining the Alabama "Percussion Family". I have been an active member of PAS as well as state chapters including Florida, Arizona, and most recently South Carolina (Clemson University) and look forward to serving the Alabama chapter.

There are many **new** and **exciting** percussion "happenings" planned at the University of South Alabama throughout the upcoming academic year. The **USA Percussion Ensemble** will premier two new performing ensembles at its fall concert, entitled **DIRECTIONS**: the USA World Music Ensemble and the USA Marimba Band. The program will feature works by such composers as Steve Reich, John Cage, Emanuel Sejourne, and Nathan Daughtrey. Please see the **USA Music Department Calendar** for further information.

The **USA World Music Ensemble** is a newly formed ensemble, operating within the USA Percussion Ensemble, and focuses its repertoire on traditional music and dance from other cultures, particularly the various cultural groups that constitute the West African country of Ghana. The ensemble will begin meeting as a separate entity in the spring of 2009. Participation is open to all interested students regardless of experience. The ensemble is taught entirely

through oral tradition and is based on studies with Bernard Woma, master drummer and xylophonist with the National Theatre of Ghana, at the Dagara Music Center outside of Accra, Ghana. Credit is granted through the Percussion Ensemble.

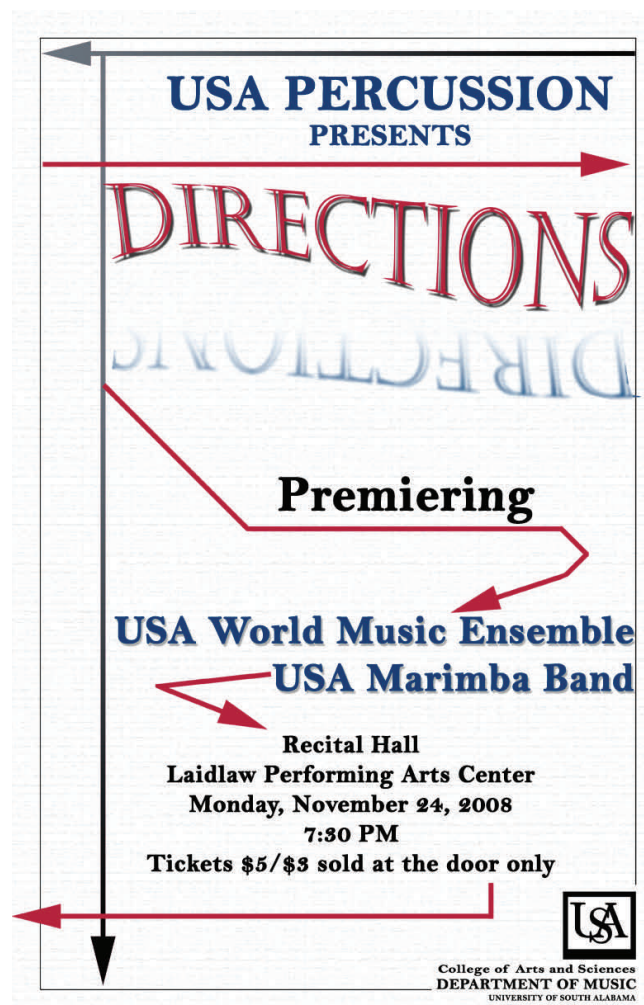
The **USA Marimba Band** is a group of students within the Percussion Ensemble who perform select repertoire written entirely for keyboard percussion. Membership is determined through competitive auditions, and credit is granted through the Percussion Ensemble course.

With the creation of the new **USA Marching Band** program in Fall of 2009, percussionists on the South Alabama campus will have a new performance opportunity with the **Jag' Drumline**. A full line of battery and front ensemble percussion is being purchased and auditions will be held in late Spring semester of 2009.

For more information on the University of South Alabama Percussion Department, including ticket purchases, events, and audition information, please visit: <http://www.southalabama.edu/music/PercussionHome.html>.

Hope to see you soon!!!

Mike Sammons, Director of Percussion, University of South Alabama



Evelyn Glennie Master Class at USA, October 17



Evelyn Glennie University of South Alabama Percussion Department

Dame Evelyn Glennie presented a master-class at the University of South Alabama in Mobile on Friday, Oct. 17. Mike Sammons, Director of Percussion Studies, hosted the event with over 125 in attendance from the Gulf Coast Region; many coming from Florida and Mississippi. Dame Glennie's appearance was in conjunction with her performance with the Mobile Symphony featuring Kevin Puts' Concerto for Percussion and Concert Piece for Snare Drum and Orchestra by Àskell Másson. Thanks to the University of South Alabama Department of Music, Percussive Arts Society, Mobile Symphony, Black Swamp, Evans, Pro-Mark, Sabian, and Yamaha for their support in making this event possible.

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



Dr. Jeff W. Reynolds, Chairman
231 Hulsey Center
950 13th 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

Rachel Howard, administrative assistant

Lori Ayler, Dustin Gilmore, Kelsey Hoggatt, and Margie Webb, student assistants

2008 DCI Recap; Changes for '09

Another summer of Drum Corps is behind us. A wonderful show at Spain Park High School featured the eventual 2008 World Champions **Phantom Regiment**, presenting their show "Spartacus." **Shane Gwaltney** had a successful first season with **Spirit** as the percussion section placed well throughout the summer.

Fittingly, all of our Alabama connections in the DCI community were promoted to new positions for the 2009 season. **Brad Palmer** (DoubleStop Percussion) has been named Front Ensemble Coordinator for the **Bluecoats** from Canton, Ohio in his seventh season working with the corps. **Iain Moyer** (University of North Alabama) has been named Front Ensemble Coordinator of the **Cadets** percussion section, and will also serve as Front Ensemble arranger. **Sean Womack** (DoubleStop Percussion)



has been named Co-Caption Head of **Spirit** (from Jacksonville, AL) and will be in charge of the Front Ensemble.

Congratulations to all of these talented musicians on their new positions, and thanks for representing the state of Alabama so well in their DCI adventures. Best of luck for a great season in 2009!



Event Calendar - Fall 2008

October 14—Adam Blackstock (Troy) premiers Karl Volrath's *Tango Tastes* for marimba and clarinet.

October 17—Evelyn Glennie Masterclass, 11:15 AM, Laidlaw

October 17, 18—Evelyn Glennie performs with the Mobile Symphony

October 18—Hoover HS Invitational Marching Band Competition.

October 21—Doug Rosener, AU Faculty Recital, 7:30 PM, Goodwin.

October 28—Adam Blackstock, Troy University Faculty Recital, 7:00 PM, Crosby.

October 28—Emily Maddox, AU Senior Recital, 7:30 PM, Goodwin.

October 30—Samford Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 PM, Brock.

November 3—AU Percussion Ensemble/Steel Band, 7:30 PM, Goodwin.

November 5-8—PASIC, Austin, Texas.

November 8—Adam Blackstock (Troy) performance at PASIC.

November 11—UAB Percussion Ensemble, 7:00 PM, Jemison Concert Hall.

November 13—“Sounds of Auburn” concert, 7:30 PM, Beard-Eaves Coliseum.

November 16—Holly Mason / John Benton, Joint Junior Recital, Samford, 2:30 PM, Brock.

November 19—JSU Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 PM, Mason.

November 24—USA Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 PM. Laidlaw.

December 4—Caleb Doster, AU Senior Recital, 7:30 PM, Goodwin.

December 4,5,6—UAB Middle School Honor Band Festival.

December 11,12,13—UAB High School Honor Band Festival.

January 11—Marimba Madness at UAB, 4:00 PM, Hulsey.

February 3—Grant Dalton, Gene Fambrough, Laura Noah, Joint Faculty Recital, 7:30 PM, Hulsey.

March 12—Mike Sammons, USA Faculty Recital, 7:30 PM, Laidlaw.

April 9—USA Percussion Ensemble, 7:30 PM, Laidlaw.

April 13—USA World Music Ensemble, 7:30 PM, Laidlaw.

January 15—Deadline for submission of events to be included in the spring newsletter. Please send any and all information to: gfabro@uab.edu

PAS Recreational Drumming Health and Wellness Week

by John Scalici

Greeting friends!

A few months ago I was contacted by John Fitzgerald, Director of Recreational Music programs at Remo, Inc. And Steve Houghton, PAS 2009 President Elect about exploring programming possibilities of recreational drum circles. I was honored to have been chosen as one of the facilitators around the country to help carry out this project.

Initially we were looking at having facilitators contact local Children's Hospitals and coordinating drum circles there. But, as someone who is currently presenting drumming and rhythm programs at hospitals, I am very aware about all the red tape involved in doing so.

In light of this, we decided to make Oct. 13-17 the PAS National Drumming and Wellness week. During this week, chosen facilitators would promote the health benefits of recreational drumming at events that they already have scheduled, or they could promote a one-time event to carry this message. One of my programs during this promotion was an elementary school in Tuscaloosa. I will report on that program and what we did in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.



Alabama Chapter newsletter

Published by the UAB Department of Music

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

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

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

***Dame Evelyn Glennie performs with the
Mobile Symphony Orchestra, gives
Masterclass at University of South Alabama***

