**Guide for Preparing Ensemble Percussion Parts**

***Materials needed for study:***

**Score**

**Part**

**Multiple recordings (from various geographic regions)**

**Pencil(s)**

1. **Score Study**
   1. **Who do I play with?**
      1. Solo or full section?
      2. Dynamics
      3. Articulation
      4. Peculiarities of particular instruments/instrumentalists
      5. Rhythmic issues
   2. **How does my part fit into the larger melodic/harmonic picture**?
      1. **Form**
         1. implications for your part?
         2. Any repeated sections
      2. **Harmony**
         1. Tonal centers?
         2. Atonal?
         3. Modal?
         4. Serial?
      3. **History**
         1. of the piece
         2. of the composer
         3. performance practice
   3. **Instrument/implement selection**
      1. Information gained through score study should inform your preliminary instrument/implement study
      2. May change depending on a variety of reasons (have options with you at rehearsal!)
         1. Size of ensemble
         2. Strength of particular sections of the ensemble
         3. Hall type
         4. Type of instruments (larger)
2. **Practicing the part**
   1. Practice begins with multiple hearings of the recordings
      1. You should never have to count rests!
      2. Visualize the score
   2. Have two copies of the part
      1. Practice-with notes
      2. Clean-performance copy
   3. Have all setup/implement changes worked out in advance
      1. Most efficient setup possible
         1. Instruments as close as they can be to limit stage movement
         2. Implement/trap tables easily accessible
      2. How many towels?
      3. How many stands?
      4. How many copies of the music?
         1. Never travel with music in your hand!
   4. work out any difficult passages first
      1. Rhythmically difficult passages
      2. Melodically difficult passages
      3. Alignment passages
         1. Passages that may be difficult to line up with other sections
         2. Must work out with several recordings
            1. Simulates real-time work environment
      4. Quick implement changes
      5. Quick instrument changes
   5. For all passages, keep the following in mind:
      1. Tone quality is of the upmost importance
      2. Be rhythmically accurate and stable
      3. Keep your ears open so you can react to your environment
         1. Easier to do when you have studied!
         2. React to the ensemble
         3. React to the conductor
      4. You will never get everything you need from the podium!
         1. Everything you need is in the score
      5. Don’t get called out from the podium!
3. **Miscellaneous**
   1. When to sit/stand?
      1. Ok to sit in performance for elongated passages/tacet movements
      2. Choose times to sit based on what will provide the *least amount of distraction to the audience*
   2. Be still!
      1. Quick movements and excessive motion detracts from the listening experience
      2. Only musical sounds/motions should come from you while on stage (especially in orchestral situations)
   3. Don’t be afraid to take musical risks!