



ToroQ
percussion quartet

TorQ Percussion Quartet Resource Guide

Dear Educators,

Welcome to the TorQ Percussion Quartet Resource Guide! We are excited that you've chosen to have us share our music with you and open up to your students the incredibly diverse world of percussion instruments. The goal of our school concerts is not only to entertain but also to encourage creative thinking among your students and provide opportunities for discussion and enrichment.

In order to help you connect this performance to your classroom curriculum, we have included related teaching activities with this guide. Please pick and choose activities that best meet the objectives of your classroom and the learning needs of your students. We also enjoy receiving feedback and answering any further questions that might arise before or after a performance; please don't hesitate to get in touch with us at info@torqpercussion.ca with any questions you (or your students) might have.

Enjoy the show!

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Introducing... TorQ Percussion Quartet

Awarded a MARTY for "Best Emerging Performing Arts Group - 2009" by the Mississauga (ON) Arts Council, TorQ was formed in 2004 by four young, enthusiastic Toronto-area percussionists looking to add new energy to percussion repertoire and performance. As well as competing as the sole Canadian representative at the Luxembourg International Percussion Quartet Competition, TorQ has performed to much acclaim and standing ovations across Canada, including feature performances at MusicFest Canada Nationals, the Open Ears Contemporary Music Festival, the Four Seasons Centre for the Arts, Stratford Music Festival and with the Mississauga Symphony Orchestra for the world premiere of David Gillingham's Concertino for Four Percussion and Orchestra. TorQ's repertoire ranges from sweetly lyrical mallet quartets to no-holds-barred, high energy percussive show pieces. In addition to performing classic percussion ensemble repertoire, TorQ is committed both to commissioning works from emerging Canadian composers, and to promoting music education in schools, through school concerts and clinics aimed at elementary and high school students.

Members Richard Burrows, Jamie Drake and Daniel Morphy all met while studying music at the University of Toronto with Russell Hartenberger, Beverley Johnston and John Rudolph, while Adam Campbell hails from PEI and studied at Acadia University before completing further studies at UofT. The members of TorQ are each accomplished musicians in their own right; together they form an incredibly dynamic chamber group. Under the initial guidance of Robin Engelman (NEXUS), they have honed their craft to form an ensemble that is as exciting as it is musical.

TorQ solo concerts generally consist of a balance of new and established works for percussion quartet; each performance features at least one recent Canadian work. TorQ has commissioned approximately 40 works from contemporary Canadian composers, as well as from members within the ensemble. In Fall 2008 TorQ served as the in-class ensemble at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto for classes taught by renowned Canadian composer Christos Hatzis, which resulted in many new works, including a new version of "In the Fire of Conflict" by Hatzis. Other upcoming commissions in the works include compositions by Toronto composers Kevin Lau and Alice Ho, and a multi-media theatre collaboration with the Hamilton Children's Choir and award-winning composer Eric Robertson.

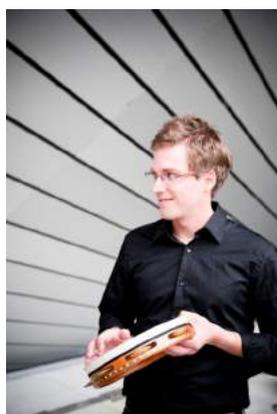
Meet the ensemble...



Richard Burrows received both a Masters of Arts in Music Education and a Masters of Music in Performance Percussion from the University of Toronto, and an Honours BMus degree in Performance Percussion from Wilfrid Laurier University. As a former principal cast member of ScrapArtsMusic, Richard has performed throughout North America, Europe, Mexico, Asia and Australia. He has also shared the stage with Nebosja Jovan Zivkovic, Evelyn Glennie, Synergy Percussion and Nexus. Closer to home, he plays with the Kitchener/Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra London, in the improvisation ensemble "Digital Prowess", in a duet series through the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and as a member of the Toronto Raptors drumline "TR Beat". An avid

educator, Richard gives masterclasses on concert percussion and drumline throughout Ontario and across Canada.

Adam Campbell completed his Masters of Music degree at the University of Toronto, studying with John Rudolph, Beverley Johnston and Russell Hartenberger, and completed his Bachelor of Music degree at Acadia University, studying with renowned percussionist and drummer Ken Shorley. He has been a member of the National Concert Band and a percussionist for the Scotia Festival of Music, and has performed in Haliburton as part of R. Murray Schafer's production Princess of the Stars. He has also performed with Evelyn Glennie, the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra and Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan. In addition to freelance work around Toronto, Adam currently performs with Ladom chamber ensemble.



Jamie Drake is currently a Doctorate of Musical Arts candidate at the University of Toronto, where he is completing his dissertation on the history and current usage of the cajón. He completed his Masters degree at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying with Jack Van Geem, and his Bachelors at U of T with Russell Hartenberger, Beverley Johnston and John Rudolph. Musical highlights include twice winning the U of T Concerto Competition, performing Steve Reich's *Drumming* with Nexus, performing with Evelyn Glennie and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, serving as percussionist for the Scotia Festival of Music, and performing live on CBC Radio 2. Jamie is in demand as both a percussionist and drummer, and performs professionally with orchestras, world music ensembles, musical theatre productions, big

bands, choirs, singer/songwriters and the experimental/jazz group MuskoX.

Meet the ensemble...

Daniel Morphy graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Music in Performance and from the Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory of Music with an Artist Diploma. He has also been a member of the National Youth Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra, and Ceremonial Guard Band on Parliament Hill. Mostly recently Daniel was a participant in the Aspen Summer Music Festival and School (2008) and Steve Schick's "Roots and Rhizomes" percussion workshop at the Banff Centre for the Arts. Daniel plays frequently as a professional musician around Toronto, including performances in the percussion sections of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Canadian Opera Company Orchestra.



TorQ Percussion Quartet Goals for Educational Performances

- To share the incredible variety and vitality of percussion with teachers and students
- To encourage young percussionists (and other musicians) to become more engaged in music
- To encourage students to seek out and appreciate different types of musical experiences
- To encourage creativity in students by having them “think outside the box”
- To help them find their passion – for music or other activities
- To support appreciation of musical structure in terms of the elements of rhythm, pitch and melody

What should I expect of a TorQ concert?

A TorQ school concert is approximately 55 minutes long with no intermission. The show features pieces of music written for or by the members of TorQ, using a variety of different instruments from around the world. Most instruments are introduced before they are featured in a piece. Depending on the specific grade levels and audience size, the concert may have one work that features audience participation. Near the end of the performance there will also typically be a question and answer session. Any information given during the show is tailored to the grade and interest level of the audience.



Pre-Concert Discussion

1. *What types of musical events have you attended?*
2. *Discuss behavioural expectations for attending a musical concert.*
3. *What instruments do you think TorQ will have on stage?*
4. *Music exists in all cultures and is an important part of social occasions. How is music incorporated into our lives?*

Watch and listen!!

Attending a music performance is a chance for students to look, listen, think and feel. Ask students to:

Look...

- *What did you notice about the performers body language as they play?*
- *What are some of the different ways they get sound out of the instruments?*
- *What are different tools they used to create sounds? (i.e. hands/sticks/mallets)*

Listen...

- *Listen to different sounds. Where are the sounds coming from?*
- *Do the instrument sounds remind you of something?*
- *Do the instruments sound like a type of material? (i.e. wood, metal or plastic)*
- *Which instrument is the loudest? Softest? Highest pitch? Lowest pitch?*

Think...

- *What skills must musicians possess in order to successfully contribute to the group?*
- *What emotions do you feel when you listen to music?*

Some of TorQ's instruments

Mallet percussion

- Marimba:** This originated in Africa hundreds of years ago and were imported to Central America in the sixteenth century. It was also very popular in Japan in the early twentieth century. The keys (or bars), which are usually made of rosewood, are organized like a piano with “black keys” (accidentals) on top and “white keys” (naturals) below. The resonators underneath help to project the sound. Marimbas are most easily distinguished from xylophones by their size: xylophones typically have a range of three to four octaves with fairly skinny bars
- Vibraphone:** It is similar in appearance to the xylophone, but the vibraphone uses metal bars. The vibraphone also has a sustain pedal similar to that used on a piano: When the pedal is up, the bars are all damped and the sound of each bar is quite short; with the pedal down, they will sustain for several seconds.



Membrane percussion

- Snare drum:** This drum has strands of snares made of curled metal wire, metal cable, or plastic cable stretched across the bottom drumhead to give it a “snappy” sound.
- Bass drum:** This is a relatively large drum that produces a low, “rumbly” sound. On a drum set it is often known as a kick drum.
- Hand drum (i.e. djembe, darbuka, frame drum) :** any drum that is played with your hands. The shapes are often goblet, cylindrical, or in the case of a frame drum, round.



”Accessory” Percussion

- **Shakers:** a basket or hollowed container that has beads inside
- **Gankogui:** African double bell (i.e. a bell that has two separate pitches), typically made of iron
- **Cajón:** a box drum that originated in Peru and Cuba. Guitar strings are strung on the inside of the box against the front playing surface. The back face has a resonating hole, similar to an acoustic guitar body, which helps amplify the sound
- **Cymbals:** consist of thin, normally round plates of various alloy (usually bronze) which are shaped and hammered to produce different sounds. They can be played singularly (mounted on a stand, played with a stick or mallet) or in pairs (with one held in each hand and then brought together)



Vocabulary

The following terms connect with this musical experience. Use these words in discussion of the group.

Bow: usually used with stringed instruments like violins and cellos, and made of stretched horsehair and wood. The friction from drawing a bow across a metal object like a vibraphone bar or a cymbal can make that object vibrate and sound in unusual ways.

Compose: to write a piece of music

Conductor: one that controls the tempo of an ensemble,

Dynamics: how soft or loud one plays

Ensemble: a group that performs together

Forte: an Italian word which has become the musical term for “loud”

Mallet: the beater we use on percussion instruments. Often covered in yarn or cord.

Mezzo forte (or mezzo piano): Italian for “medium loud” (or “medium soft”)

Note: any single sound made on a musical instrument

Piano: a keyboard instrument, but also Italian for “soft”

Pitch: any various standards that establish a frequency for each musical tone, used in tuning an instrument; in other words, the “highness” or “lowness” of a note

Resonator: any part of an acoustic instrument that amplifies the sound

Rhythm: the division of time in music

Roll: to make a continuous, relatively smooth sound on a drum or other percussion instrument. Often produced by making a series of strokes in quick succession

Timbre: The characteristic quality of a sound that distinguishes it from other sounds of the same pitch and volume

Tone: The sound of a particular instrument or voice; a general term that encompasses dynamics, pitch and timbre

Post-Concert Discussion Questions

- *How does TorQ play without a conductor?*
- *Is there anything that surprised you about the instruments on stage?*
- *Which was your favourite/least favourite piece? Favourite/least favourite instrument? Why?*
- *Did this concert have any affect on what you consider music?*
- *Can you think of any “non-musical instruments” that could create some interesting sounds?*
- *Did you notice any specific cultural influences in the music TorQ played? What other types of music did TorQ’s pieces remind you of?*

Exercises focusing on Rhythm, Creativity and Improvisation

Time Signature Exercise

Have the students count different time signatures such as 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, etc while stomping their feet or clapping on the first beat. (They could also clap each beat but stomp only on the first beat.) Try mixing up the time signatures splitting the class into more than one group and playing different time signatures at the same time. You could also have each group come up with a different rhythm for each time signature and combine them to create a “mini-composition”.

Junk percussion

Have the students create a junk orchestra in class. Each student is encouraged to bring in a piece of junk or some sort of “found” material that makes a sound. Have the students name their instruments and show the class how the instrument works. Put the students in groups and have them come up with a groove using the instruments which they have “created”.

Improvisation in the music room

Encourage your students to explore different sounds than what is required on the page of music. Have each student come up with five different sounds other than what one would traditionally sing or play on their respective instrument. Use these sounds in combination with a spoken narrative to create a sonic journey where the students will play the sounds a certain moments with the story line.

Resources

Books

Cook, G. (1997). *Teaching Percussion*. Belmont, CA: Shirmer Books.

Kalani. (2004). *Together in Rhythm: Book & DVD*. Los Angeles: Alfred Publishing Inc.

_____. (2005). *The Amazing Jamnasium: Book & DVD*. Los Angeles: Alfred Publishing Inc.

Recordings

NEXUS. (2002). *Drumtalker*. Toronto: Nexus Records.

TorQ Percussion Quartet. (2009). *TorQ*. Toronto: Bedoint Records.

Online Resources

Dream Cymbals: official supplier of all of TorQ's cymbals and gongs
www.dreamcymbals.com

Innovative Percussion: official supplier of TorQ's sticks and mallets
www.innovativepercussion.com

NEXUS Percussion Ensemble: An look at our mentors and teachers
www.nexuspercussion.com

Oddmusic: a source for unique, unusual, ethnic, or experimental music and instruments.
www.oddmusic.com

Percussion Arts Society. An extensive website devoted to all aspects of percussion, which includes many other helpful links
www.pas.org

TorQ Percussion Quartet
www.torqpercussion.ca

Yamaha Canada Music Inc: TorQ's main instrument partner. Suppliers of keyboard instruments and concert percussion
www.yamaha.ca