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The Steel Times

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The Steel Times

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Eugene Novotney

I am very excited to welcome you to the second edition of the NSSBE newsletter, *The Steel Times*. Thank you for the overwhelmingly positive response to our first edition. It is the goal of the NSSBE to create a newsletter that is both interesting and informative, but also, practical and useful. I think that you will find this second edition all of the above, and more.

This issue begins with another installment of Andy Narell's column, *We Kinda Pan*. Andy's column is right on point with an insightful discussion focusing on laying out a steelband score, and the choices behind assigning appropriate ranges for steelpan voices when creating a full band arrangement. As the leader of a steelband with instruments from various makers and of a variety of ranges, I have often struggled with how to best reconcile those range issues when creating a new arrangement. In this column, Andy offers his views on the topic in a practical, methodical, and understandable way.

Additionally, the issue includes a very useful article by Tom Miller that focuses on technique and practice tips specifically for the double seconds. Tom brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his teaching, and this article provides the double seconds player with a solid approach to improving their technique and developing a fluid motion.

Also in this edition is a brief interview with Trinidadian steelpan legend, Ray Holman. Ray has a long history of working with steelbands throughout the United States and offers his unique views on the development and the future of steelband education. There is also the second installment of Dave Gerhart's column, *Tips from Dr. Dave*, where Dave shares basic warm-up exercises that he uses regularly in practice with his full steelband.

Very appropriately, the feature article in this edition of *The Steel Times* is a tribute to Murray Narell, who was a true pioneer in the advancement of steelband education in the United States. Ray Funk and Andrew Martin's article is loaded with interesting details, and I would like to extend



Photo: Kelly Jo Brown.

a special thanks to both Andy and Jeff Narell for helping with the proofreading and providing all of the excellent historic photos. This article is a must read for any serious steelpan enthusiast.

In the time since the publication of our inaugural newsletter, NSSBE held its first annual Conference in Oxford, Ohio, and it was a great success. It was nice to see many of you there, and to meet new friends and make new connections. Much gratitude and appreciation to all of our presenters at the conference, and especially to our headliner, Victor Provost, whose words and artistry brought the conference to life. Plans are already underway for our second conference, scheduled to take place in Spring 2019, again in Oxford, Ohio. Please check the NSSBE website for updates and start making your plans to attend now.

It is certainly an honor for me to be entrusted to be the editor of the NSSBE journal, and you have my promise that I will strive to bring you something new and something vital with each issue. Have a wonderful summer, and please enjoy this second edition of *The Steel Times*.

EUGENE NOVOTNEY is a percussionist, composer, and scholar who has been involved in the steelpan movement in the United States since 1982. He is Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Chris Tanner

Welcome to this second edition of our NSSBE newsletter, *The Steel Times*. As I mentioned in my opening remarks to our inaugural conference in March 2018, NSSBE began as a mere idea several years ago. Yet in recent months, organization has transitioned from the abstract to the concrete, due to the establishment of recognizable, tangible products. These include our website, the conference, and of course this very publication. Through these means, we communicate with each other, share ideas and best practices, and contribute to our mission: the advancement of steel band education in the United States.

The NSSBE 2018 Professional Conference was a tremendous success, with over fifty people in attendance, from twenty different states. Each of the sessions was enlightening and informative, and generated much discussion among the attendees in the hallways, meeting rooms and vendor area. The energy that day was palpable. The conference was a gathering of people from different walks of life and representing a number of diverse teaching and performance situations, yet firmly committed to a shared purpose.

Special thanks and recognition belong to our conference co-chairs, Mike Greer and Mike Wendeln, who together oversaw the planning and execution of this inaugural event. They will return in 2019 in the same capacity, and our Board of Directors is working closely with them to make next year's event even better. The 2019 Professional Conference will be held on March 9, 2019, once again on the campus of Miami University. Specifics on dates, registration, and hotel information will be posted on our website in the Fall.

One of our goals is to be as responsive as possible to the needs of our members in programming the conference sessions. To that end, you may have thoughts on session types



or topics that you'd like to see covered. If so, please reach out to us via email. We would enjoy hearing from you, and we will certainly consider your ideas and feedback as we prepare for next year.

Beyond this, there are other opportunities for you to become involved in the organization. For instance, there may be a particular question you have regarding steel band pedagogy, that is currently not addressed on our website. If so, let us know. By suggesting issues that need attention, you can help drive the creation of new content for the organization. Or, perhaps you are interested in authoring an article yourself, for inclusion on our site. If so, we're happy to receive your proposal. Of course, we also hope you will assist in the growth of our organization, and our discipline, by simply spreading the word that NSSBE is here.

Thank you once again for your interest in and your support of NSSBE. I hope you will enjoy what our contributors herein have to offer, and that you will find the features in this second edition of *The Steel Times* informative and enlightening.

CHRIS TANNER is the founder and Director of the Miami University Steel Band in Oxford, Ohio, and the Chair of the Miami University Music Department. He is the author of *The Steel Band Game Plan*, and serves as President and is a founding member of the National Society of Steel Band Educators (NSSBE).

WE KINDA PAN

Andy Narell

Hey everybody. Welcome back. Most of you are using written scores and parts with your bands, so I thought that would be a good place to start – to talk about various questions that come up when we're scoring or interpreting an arrangement for steel band.

The first thing to consider is that no two steel bands are the same – everybody has a different combination of instruments and a different balance of pans. So when you're writing an arrangement, you have to consider not only what kind of band you're writing for in the immediate future, but also how other bands will be able to adapt the arrangement to the pans they have. If you're writing for a large orchestra

playing at Trinidad Panorama, you're apt to have tenors, double tenors, double seconds, double guitars, triple guitars, 4-cellos, quadrophonics, tenor bass, 6-bass, and 9-bass... whereas a typical band at a school in the USA might have half that many different types of instruments. Here are some thoughts about how to lay out the score.

The most common format I use is an 8-line score. Tenor, double tenor, double second 1, double second 2, guitar, cello, bass, drums. Here are some thoughts about each part.

Tenor: Most of the time your whole tenor section will be playing the same thing, but there's no law against splitting them up, so think about what you want to do with them before you format the score. You may want to spread some chords out, or split them into octaves at certain points in the music. But most of the time steel band arrangers are having all the tenors play the same.

Double Tenor: In Trinidad most of the bands are using a version of the Bertie Marshall double tenor, which has almost the same range as a double second, but a completely different pattern. When I do my own recordings of steel band pieces, I use double seconds to play these parts, as do a lot of bands in the US who don't have double tenors, but the part itself is distinct from the double second parts.

Double Second: The most flexible instrument in the orchestra when it comes to playing melody or chords, lines or strumming, etc... it has a large range capable of playing chords all the way down into the guitar range, and all the way up into the high register of the tenors. I normally set up the score to have two different parts (DS1 and DS2). I noticed Ray Holman was doing it when I played his music in the 80's, and it seemed logical. They're not necessarily different all the time, but you can split them when you want, either to spread out chords or to get a specific balance (ex: sometimes I need chords from the double seconds, but want to add more volume to the frontline melody parts, so I'll have the DS1 play melody and the DS2 play chords.

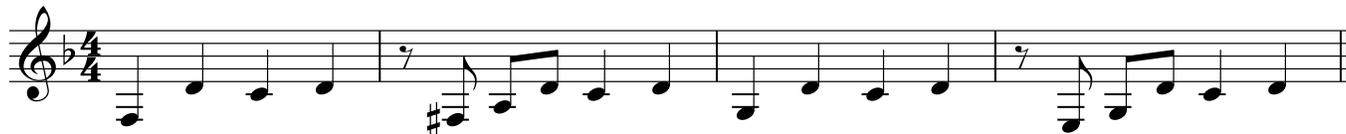
Guitar/Cello: Here again you may just need one part, but it's a good idea to be able to split the section so you can spread out the chords, use different strums, or have some pans playing lines, arpeggios, doubling the bass, etc.. while others are playing chords.

Bass/Tenor Bass: I normally write one part for the whole bass section and tell everybody to 'play low,' except when you see a melodic line that clearly shows the intent of using high notes. More on that subject on page 7 (Exercises 7 and 8).



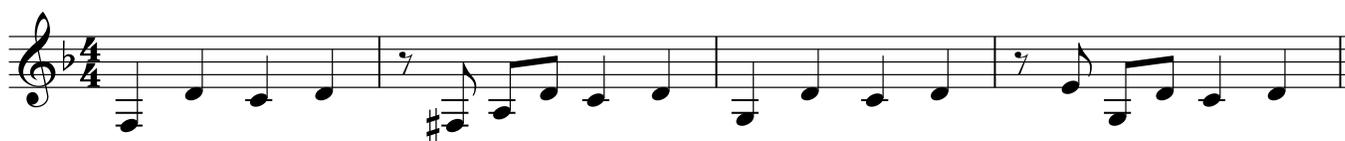
it's not written, since they can hear that the double second part has it. Personally, I've decided that going forward I'm going to write all the double tenor and double second parts as if we have low E, and let people adapt (play the note an octave higher) if they don't have it, like this for example (see Example 3):

Example 3



Instead of writing it like this, which is written for the double tenor range – look at measure four (see example 4):

Example 4



The same thing comes up in the guitar section. When I write for big bands I always consider what the double guitars will play, knowing that their lowest note would be D or C#, whereas the triples start at low B, and the 4-cellos start at low Bb (a ninth below middle C). It seemed logical to write for each range, but what happens when a band is playing the arrangement using only triple guitars (very common in the states)? Why not use the whole range of the instruments? Everything could be written like the following example - as if low B is the lowest note available, or even low Bb, though in the US, there are very few 4-cellos found anywhere outside of Brooklyn. (see Example 5):

Example 5



Instead of writing it like this, which is written for double guitar range (see Example 6):

Example 6



For bass parts I write strictly for low Bb 6-bass, with the highest note Eb an octave and a 4th higher. Tenor bass should play the part as low as possible. 9-bass has more low notes, which the players should use whenever possible. Sometimes I work with bands that don't have a low Bb on their 6-bass (B or C are the lowest), which is annoying, since the Bb and B an octave above are rather small notes that don't have a lot of power or low end.

Here's an example of a bass line which does not compensate for any limited range instruments (see Example 7):

Example 7



I find that if I write out the bass part as it will sound within the range that a limited range tenor bass actually has available, it becomes harder to read. Here's how the same bass line looks when written for the actual tenor bass range (see Example 8):

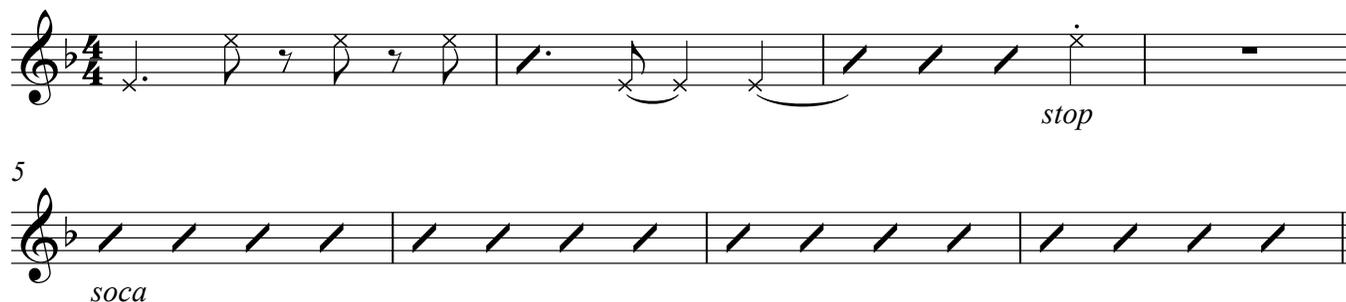
Example 8



Drums – there are so many ways of playing drums in a steel band. A good steel band drummer will know the whole piece and have a good understanding of all of the pan parts. The drummer needs to know the important hits that the whole band is playing - the frontline, the background pans, the bass lines, etc. Writing a part for the drummer raises so many questions, and so much depends upon the nature of the music, and the player. I tend to write out a simple part with the important accents, provide basic information about the appropriate groove (calypso, soca, timba, etc., with or without specific ways to play them), and then let the drummer decide if she/he would rather read a melody or bass part.

Here is an example of a drumset part written for the same 8-bar phrase as was used in Example 1 (see Example 9):

Example 9



I am always interested in your comments and suggestions, and would enjoy opening up a dialogue on this and other topics. If you would like to contact me, please do so through the contact page of my website: www.andynarell.com.

ANDY NARELL is one of the best known and most recorded steelpan artists in the world. He is internationally recognized as a world class performer, composer, arranger, and scholar, and he was recently inducted into the Percussive Arts Society's Hall of Fame for his lifetime of contributions to the steelpan artform.

DOUBLE SECONDS IN PRACTICE

Tom Miller

The double second pan presents its own unique challenges for sticking and for maneuvering comfortably around the instrument. It requires the use of one, two, three and at times, even four strokes from one hand in succession, as the pitch areas are distributed among two separate playing surfaces.

The exercises on the following page are designed to be a guide for developing appropriate sticking techniques, and for developing a comfortable and fluid motion. The exercises are composed of two-note, three-note and four-note groupings which are all based on the major scale. Sticking used in these exercises are grouped into three different methods: double stickings (two notes in succession in each hand), triple stickings (three notes in succession in each hand), and then stickings that call for an alternating pattern of three notes in one hand followed by four notes in the other.

In a perfect musical setting for double second, it would be nice to keep one's left hand always in the left pan, and right hand always in the right pan but at some point, a musical passage may require a crossing over of one hand to the opposite side. The exercises in group 3 address this issue, providing two different sticking options. The top sticking is a combination of alternating three in one hand to four in the other hand, while the bottom sticking requires the two hands to "crossover" (i.e., left hand into the right pan, or right hand into the left pan) at certain moment.

All the exercises move through all of the twelve keys, as I am a firm believer that as musicians, we should attempt to move through all twelve keys when practicing scales, exercises, and even learning jazz, calypso, and pop tunes. Play these exercises as a daily warm up, and just try to get through one per day before moving on to your scheduled practice regime.

PRACTICE TIPS:

- Set a proper, comfortable instrument height. Generally, when standing straight and relaxed in front of the pans the rim of the drum closest to you should fall at a location where the wrist meets the



hand. Then make any fine adjustments according to your own arm length. The shoulders should not lift above the neckline and the neck and upper back should not be too hunched forward when you are playing.

- Stick grip should be relaxed with two fingers and thumb placed along the bottom portion of stick length.
- Feet should be placed stationary between the left and right pan. As you adjust your orientation to the instrument while you play, try to avoid stepping with the feet, and instead, move from the knees and waist from side to side.
- Strive to always hit the "sweet spot" of each note on the pan to produce the fullest tone
- Begin by playing these exercises slowly, always striving for fluid motion.
- Practice at all dynamic levels.
- The examples here are intentionally void of a time signature and barlines, as one should practice patterns not always beginning on a downbeat. Mix it up and start the first pattern off the downbeat at any eighth-note in a measure of time. Or place a rest in between each pattern.

TOM MILLER has vast experience as a performing percussionist, steel drummer, composer, arranger, and educator, and is the founder and president of Pan Ramajay Productions. He is one of the most respected and sought-after steelpan soloists and clinicians of his generation, and has toured extensively with numerous jazz and world music artists in addition to performing worldwide with his own popular steelpan group, Pan Ramajay.

STICKING EXERCISES FOR DBL. SECOND PAN

TOM MILLER

1

ROOT MOVEMENT: UP P4-DOWN P5

"DOUBLE STICKING"

L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L

ROOT MOVEMENT: DOWN M3-UP P4

L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L

2

ROOT MOVEMENT: UP P4-DOWN P5

"TRIPLE STICKING"

L L L R R R L L L R R R ETC. L L R R L L R R L

ROOT MOVEMENT: DOWN M3-UP P4

L L L R R R L L L R R R ETC. L L R R L L R R L

"TRIPLE TO QUADUPLE" /
"CROSSOVER"

3

ROOT MOVEMENT: UP P4-DOWN P5

3-4 STICKING L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L
CROSS OVER R L L R L R R L R L L R R L R L L R L R L R L

L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L L
L R L R R L R L R L R L L R R L R L L R R L R L L

ROOT MOVEMENT: DOWN M3-UP P4

3-4 STICKING L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L
CROSS OVER R L L R L R R L L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L L R R R R L L
L R L R R L R L R L R L L R R L R L L R R L R L L

MURRAY NARELL: PIONEERING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT THROUGH STEELPAN IN THE UNITED STATES

Ray Funk and Andrew Martin

On August 31, 1962, Trinidad and Tobago became an independent and sovereign nation, and on this same day Prime Minister Eric Williams sent a telegram to Murray Narell, thanking him for his efforts as a steelpan pioneer. Why? Because during the early 1960s, perhaps no one in the United States was doing more for the advancement of steelpan than Murray Narell. The Narell family is known the world over for the work of sons Andy and Jeff who for the past fifty years have devoted their lives to the steelpan and the steelband movement. It may, however, come as a surprise for many to learn how the patriarch of the family Murray started the family on their steelpan quest nearly sixty years ago.

Through his work as a social worker in New York in the 1950s and 1960s, Murray Narell was responsible for starting dozens of youth steelbands and organizing performances of these bands all over the city. As the size of Narell's steelband program increased, he became a major contractor for building and tuning steelpans in New York in the 1960s and was responsible for bringing Ellie Mannette to the United States. Murray Narell's pioneering effort to use steelbands as a tool for youth empowerment in the United States serves as a model for the after-school programs strung across America like CAFÉ in Maryland, the Rhythm Project and Mosaic Steel in Virginia and the Steel Magic Northwest program in Washington state. His accomplishments were lauded and reported in the American media in the 1960s, including newspaper articles, academic journals, radio, television, and even in the halls of Congress.

Murray Narell's professional career took a circuitous path to becoming a pioneer in the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago. A graduate of Willimantic State Teachers College (now Eastern Connecticut State

University) in Connecticut, he was working towards a doctorate in education at Columbia Teacher's College in New York when his past affiliations with the American communist party effectively eliminated him from the profession and caused even more problems for his immigrant wife Irena, herself a political asylum seeker from Poland. Narell changed jobs a lot until a friend from his communist party days found him work on a pilot project in Harlem dealing with gang warfare and drug addiction.

By the late 1950s, Murray Narell was working as a social worker for the Education Alliance, a settlement house on the lower east side of Manhattan. The "Edgies" as it was called, was a Jewish organization formed in 1889. Originally, the organization's mission was to assist Jewish and other immigrants in connecting with their communities, finding housing and jobs, giving assistance to get through the transition to life in New York. By the 1950s, the Educational Alliance no longer had an influx of Jewish immigrants to serve and the settlement houses became community centers serving new immigrants to the area, primarily Puerto Ricans and African Americans recently arrived from the South in the Great Migration.



Murray Narell talking with a group of kids at the Edgies.

The influx of such migration resulted in high population density in the housing projects, gang violence, crime, drug addiction, and mental health issues.

Murray Narell worked with “Operation Street Corner,” a groundbreaking program launched in 1956 by the Education Alliance aimed at reducing drug addiction and violence. It featured several programs and opportunities to engage juveniles during the at-risk hours of 3 pm to 8 pm on weekdays. The program included remedial education classes, group counseling, and paid internships as well as courses in the visual arts, theater arts, dance, music, sports, trips to the beach, and a summer camp in upstate New York called Camp Edalia. Narell was a project coordinator and his duties were vast, ranging from coaching the Edgies basketball teams (he himself was a top varsity college basketball player) to organizing program activities to setting up the music program.



Coach Murray Narell teaching the basics to the kids on the Edgies basketball team.

Rupert Sterling, an Antiguan engineering student, had taken a summer job working at Camp Edalia as a counselor. Born in 1938, he had been a teacher before coming to the United States to further his education. Sterling was also an accomplished pianist and had arranged for a local steelband in Antigua called North Stars Steel Orchestra located in

the New Winthropes/Barnes Hill area of the island. Andy Narell recalls, “It wasn’t working out well. Rather than just letting him go, they asked him what else he knew how to do, since he was a foreign university student trying to work his way through school. He said he knew how to make and play steelpans.”

Murray Narell had seen a steel band play once and seized on the idea and hired Sterling to make a set of instruments and teach the basics of playing steelpans at the Edgies in October of 1961. As Andy Narell recalls, Sterling “built one set of instruments and taught one group, and it went through the roof.”

Soon Sterling built a second set of steelpans and it was not long before several different groups of teenagers began cycling in and out of two separate rooms for daily or weekly rehearsals at the Edgies. Murray Narell chronicled his steelband program’s success in *Instructor* magazine in 1963.

They practiced two hours a week and within three months were performing for PTA meetings, hospitals, churches and settlement-house dances. Within six months four new bands were created, and within a year and a half twenty groups were practicing on our two sets of drums. Within two years, six different agencies embarked on similar programs.

Within a few months, steelpan students were able to give small concerts and by 1963, Narell could proudly report that the steelbands had the most enthusiasm of any of the programs at the Educational Alliance. Steelbands ranged in size from six to nearly twenty players and in a few years, over one hundred youths had participated in the program. Their bands were given names like the Dominoes, Islanders, Pelicans, Caribbean Kids, Centurions, Silver Kings, The Caribbean Kings, Eagles, and Marathons. Most of the members were male but there were a few all-female bands including the Avenue D Girls, and Jamaica Queens, perhaps the first all-female steelbands in the United States.



Rupert Sterling teaching an all-girl steelband at the Edgies.

As Andy Narell recalls, “in the beginning my dad had no idea of how pan had developed in Trinidad. He started going there around 1963. That’s when he found out that the pan had been created by young men in “gangs”, the same type of ‘disadvantaged’ youth that he had discovered were attracted to it in New York. And like the kids from the gangs in New York, the Trinidad bands had excluded women and the women had formed their own bands in the 50’s.” Thinking holistically about his social work and the utility of the arts, Narell began a quest to tap the potential of the instrument’s ability to create a sense of community.

As the number of bands in the program increased, the need to work out a complex schedule for the rehearsals became more of an issue—especially considering that many of steelbands were self-selected groups of teenagers based on race, heritage, or neighborhood and did not get along with one another. This interaction with friends and enemies was, however, part of the goal of “Operation Street Corner” and Murray Narell saw this as an opportunity to teach leadership, team building, and conflict resolution. As Andy recalls, “My dad didn’t like doing individual counseling, and believed that group activities were a much more powerful tool to

reach kids, to motivate them and raise their expectations of themselves. Once the steelband program got going, he became obsessed with it. In a matter of months, it had exploded.”

One of the core mission goals of “Operation Street Corner” was community service, and Murray Narell capitalized on the visibility of steelband to perform countless community concerts, benefits, parades and other highly visible events. His Masters thesis (which he later earned at Adelphi College) titled *Steel Bands as a Program Activity in the Social Group Work Process as It Affects Decision Making in Groups* using the ones in the program at the Educational Alliance as a case study.

They practiced diligently and moved forward rapidly in spite of numerous and continuing inter-personal problems. Before long they were asked to play at other community centers, hospitals and children’s homes. They became well known in the community and this proved to be a stimulus to other groups.

For Narell, the goals of the program, despite the focus on musical skills, were always much greater and aimed to fostering well-balanced adults.

Ordinarily these youths don’t hope to achieve anything great. They can’t earn praise as students or athletes. But the drums have changed everything. They have acceptance from adult audiences and adulation from teenage girls. For the first time in their lives they are winning applause for accomplishments.

“Operation Street Corner” and the steelband program initiated by Murray Narell were an effective demonstration of the Educational Alliance’s mission that the organization featured prominently in promotional materials at the time. Moreover, a select group of steelpan students performed a special concert for then Attorney General Robert Kennedy when he toured the facilities of the Educational Alliance in 1962 as a representative for the President’s Committee on Juvenile Delinquency.



Murray Narell (center/back) standing with Robert Kennedy (left) after a performance by the Edgies steelband. Kennedy is holding a copy of the album that Rupert Sterling made with the Edgies steelband, while Murray is looking on from behind.

In the summer of 1962, Murray Narell organized the first steelband competition in America. It was held on August 29 at the FDR Amphitheatre in East River Park in Manhattan and had, Jeff Narell remembers, an amazing attendance of about 2,000. It featured a youth competition with steelbands from the Edgies led by Rupert Sterling and from University Settlement House where Trinidadian Kim Loy Wong had started a similar program as well as a competition for professional bands.

thought that Rupert and Kim Loy were the serious panmen, but the competition was won by Tommy Rey (Tom Reynolds), who had inferior pans but played “Love is a Many Splendored Thing” and mashed up the place with a wild version of ‘C’est si Bon.’”



The Tommy Rey steelband performing ‘C’est si Bon at the competition organized by Murray Narell.

For Murray Narell, an unexpected outcome from his youth steelband program was that his sons formed their own group. The Steel Bandits—who were not yet named the Steel Bandits—were introduced as The Whitestone Drummers and opened the competition as a non-competing steelband. What was started as a “family fun band” in 1962 made up of Murray, his wife, and their two sons Jeff and Andy Narell soon became the Steel Bandits. Murray and his wife soon left the band in favor of other youths joining, though for Murray managing the Steel Bandits became something of a second full-time job. Over the next few years The Steel Bandits enjoyed a steady flow of success.



Kim Loy Wong’s University Settlement House steelband performing at the competition organized by Murray Narell.

One of the judges was Trinidadian dancer, choreographer, artist extraordinaire Geoffrey Holder. Andy Narell recalls, “We all



The Steel Bandits (photo by Martin Cohen).

Andy Narell is quick to give credit to the bands of the Educational Alliance as an initial inspiration for his love of steelpan noting, “I loved the vibe at the place and I loved going to work with my dad.”

As time went on, more teachers and steelpan tuners were needed to service the expansive steelband program at the Educational Alliance. Jonathan Lewis from the Caribbean Kings became one of the teachers, and Murray hired Joe Brown from Kim Loy Wong’s steelband. Vincent Hernandez, Patrick Arnold, Cliff Alexis, and Mikey Enoch were all brought in at various times to build and tune instruments. Rupert Sterling eventually started his own steelband (which included several Edgies players) and recorded the album *Rupert Sterling and His North Star Steel Band*, appeared on TV multiple times, and made appearances performing on the university circuit.



The Rupert North Stars with Rupert Sterling on tenor pan.

Eventually, Sterling returned to Antigua where he later became an entrepreneur and politician. To fill the void, Murray Narell (with an assist from Admiral Dan Gallery of the US Navy Steel Band) arranged for Ellie Mannette to emigrate to the United States with an H1B visa. He arrived in February 1967 to take over the production and tuning of the instruments for the program and has been building and tuning steelpan in the United States ever since.

That year Narell left his post at the Edgies to take an assistant directorship at a YWHA in Hackensack, New Jersey. Like many programs started and driven by a single visionary, the steelband programs at the Edgies shut down a few years after Narell’s departure, though not without having an amazing impact on hundreds of kids in Manhattan. Murray Narell continued his work developing steelbands in New York, most notably with a program called *Bands of Steel* in Harlem in which he worked closely with Daphne Arnstein, one of the founders of Jazzmobile. Narell also wrote and self-published an *Instructional Manual for Steel Bands* (1967).

The Narell family moved to California in 1970 and, as Andy notes, Murray “immediately went to the Oakland Parks and Recreation and proposed starting a steelband program with pans we had brought from New York, with myself and Jeff teaching.” This program continued for several years and started both on life long careers in pan education. Andy Narell wrote a tribute to his father in the liner notes of his 1992 album, *Down the Road*, released one year after Murray Narell passed away:

A radical thinker and a fighter for his beliefs, even though he had no musical background, he saw the enormous potential of the instrument, and he became obsessed with the idea that the pan would become a positive force in our culture.

In a sense, it is the hundreds of both school and after school steelpan programs across the United States that stand tribute to that vision.

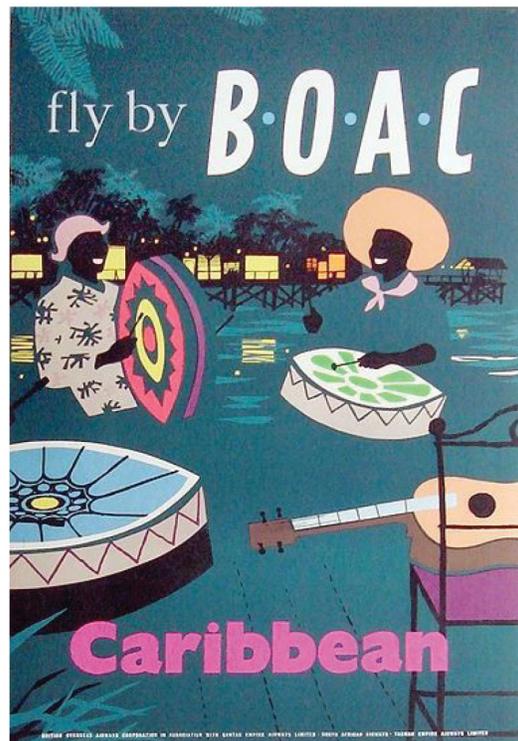
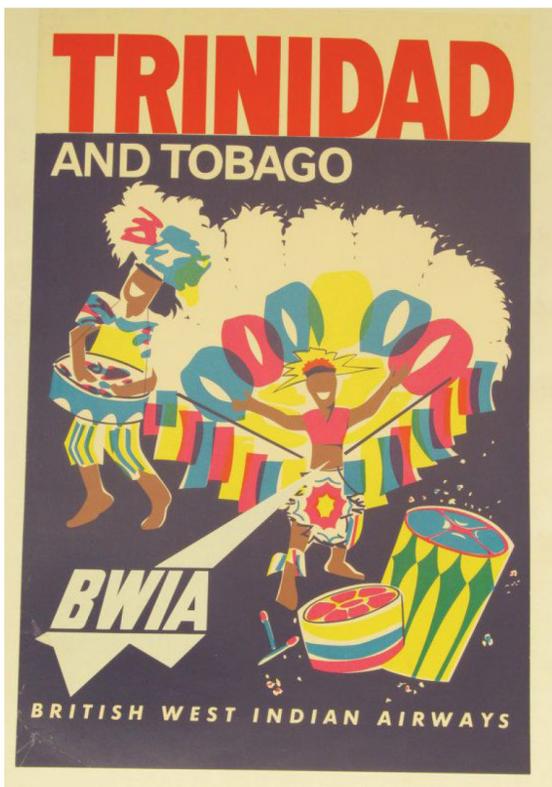
Murray Narell’s pioneer pan thesis, self-published *Instructional Manual*, and telegram from Eric Williams will soon be available in the resource section of the NSSBE website. Co-author Andrew Martin’s doctoral thesis has an extensive section on Murray Narell, the *Steel Bandits*, and his sons Andy and Jeff Narell.



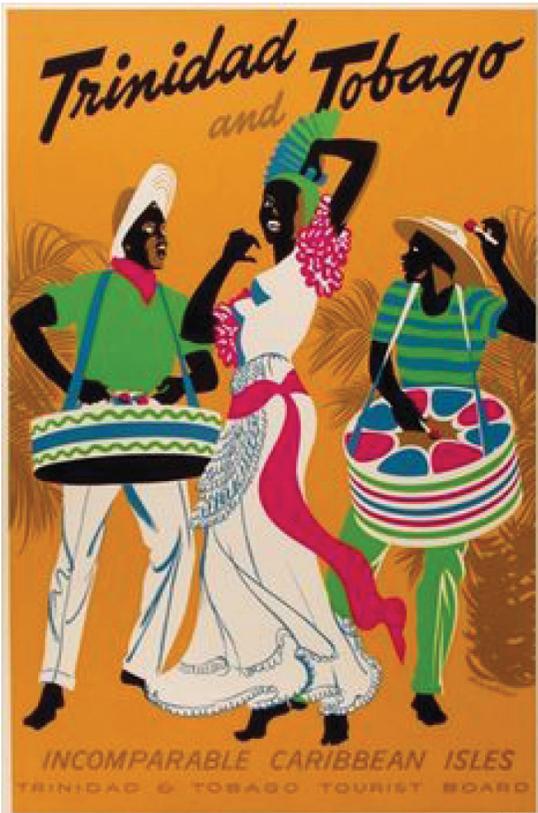
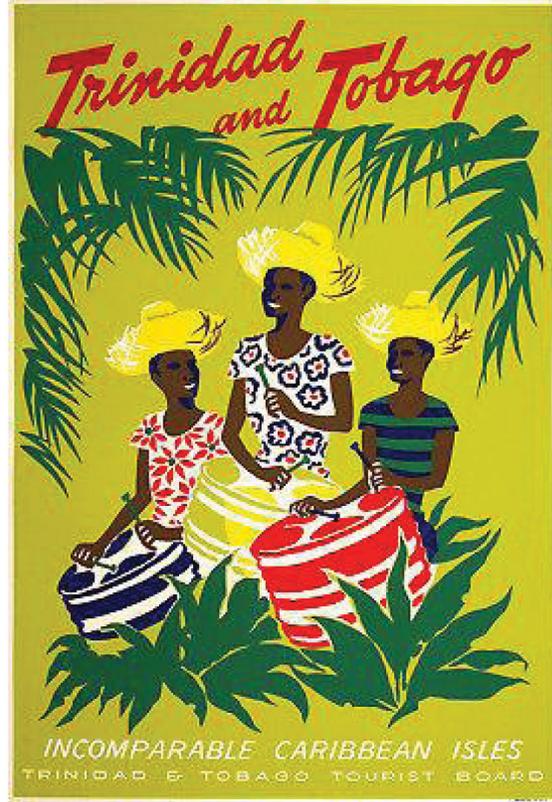
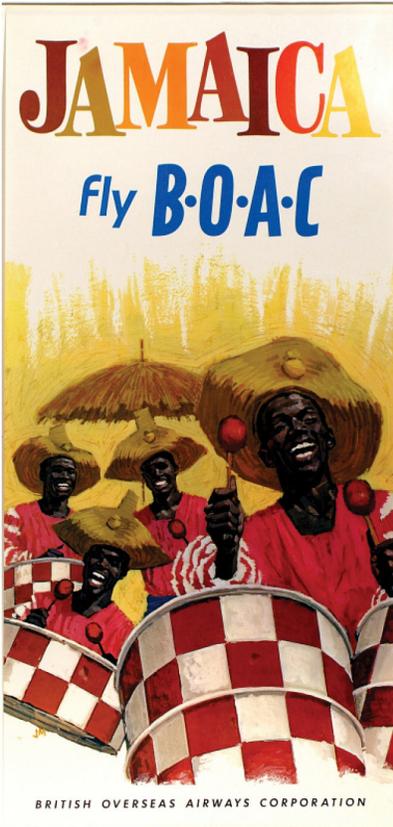
Murray Narell at the Edgies (photo: Martin Cohen).

RAY FUNK is a retired Alaskan judge and a Fulbright scholar who is passionately devoted to calypso, pan, and mas. ANDREW MARTIN is an ethnomusicologist, percussionist, pannist, and Professor of Music at Inver Hills College in St. Paul, Minnesota.

PAN IN ADVERTISING
Compiled by Ray Funk and Eugene Novotney



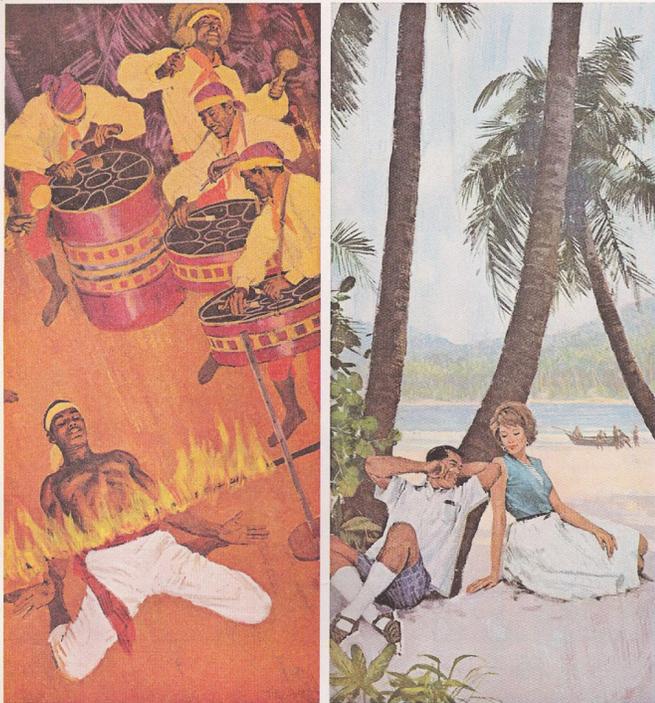
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TIPS FROM DR. DAVE

Dave Gerhart

As an educator, I am always trying to think about new ways to improve my methods for teaching the steelpan. In the recent years, I have been teaching the steelpan to more non-percussionists, and I have found that I needed to create warm-up exercises to help teach and develop better technique. I found that it was difficult to find examples of steel pan exercises for solo or full steel bands available. Some of the best examples that I found were videos posted on the internet, but my goal was to pass out notated exercises to students in my ensemble. After not finding any appropriate written exercises available, I decided to write my own.

Now, the beginning of every steelband rehearsal starts with the full-band playing warm-up exercises together for 10 minutes. I have found that playing warm-up exercises together has value for all players and works well for any level group.

The two primary goals of my warm-up exercises are:

- To become acquainted with the layout of the steelpan.
- To work on tone quality and sense of touch.

I recommend varying the dynamics while playing the exercises, and I stress the importance of maintaining an even and consistent sound throughout the entire range of the steelpan.

During the ensemble exercises, I have the engine room play different grooves, and each week, I will assign the engine room a different groove to use. During the warm-up, the rhythm section players switch instruments to make sure they are familiar with all of the components of the groove.

On the next page are the first two exercises that I introduce at the first rehearsal. I will be sharing some more advanced warm-up exercises in a future column. If you use warm-up exercises in your pan ensemble, and you are willing to share them, please let me know. You can contact me by emailing me at: drdavegerhart@gmail.com.



DAVE GERHART is a nationally recognized percussionist, composer, and educator who is the Percussion Product Manager for the Yamaha Corporation of America and Lecturer of Percussion at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at CSU-Long Beach.

ENSEMBLE EXERCISES

Dave Gerhart

Exercise #1 - 4, 2, 1

Exercise #2 - Chromatic Thirds

Continue exercise up one octave

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FOUR QUESTIONS WITH RAY HOLMAN

Eugene Novotney

QUESTION ONE

Eugene Novotney: When was your first experience with steelpan education in the USA, and what struck you most about that experience?

Ray Holman: My first experience was in De Kalb, at Northern Illinois University in 1990. It was very interesting. Playing with a University Steel Band for the first time opened my eyes to the level of steel band music that was being performed in the USA. I think I was slightly taken aback by both the advanced level of music being performed, and the disciplined approach that I observed from both the directors and the students.

QUESTION TWO

EN: From your perspective, what has changed the most in steelband education in the USA since that first experience to now in the present day?

Ray Holman: The proliferation at University Steel Bands since 1990 has been a revelation. There are now so many more directors who are much more aware of the steelband culture in Trinidad, and who have immersed themselves in it, thereby imparting to their students a more authentic approach to the genre. This fact demonstrates the high level of steelband education in the USA.

QUESTION THREE

EN: What are the most significant differences between steelband education in the USA and steelband education in Trinidad today?

Ray Holman: The major difference is that Steelband education in Trinidad is largely based on learning by rote, whereas in the USA, it is based on reading music. The other difference in Trinidad is that the schools seem to have a steelband education system tailored to competition, whereas in the USA,



the focus is more on concert performance. As a result, in the USA, there is a more sustained approach to the education, and one which is not seasonal, as it is in Trinidad.

QUESTION FOUR

EN: Where do you see steelband education in the USA headed in the future?

Ray Holman: In my opinion, more attention should be paid to the historical development of the steelband. In addition, I would like to see a more detailed study of the works of the steelband composer and arrangers, which could guide students to develop their own skill in composing and arranging for the steel orchestra. I see steelband education in the future exploring more possibilities of collaboration and exchange visits between the two countries, and also, placing more emphasis developing education programs focusing on the “tuning” aspect of the artform.

Ray Holman has an assured place among the all-time greats of Steelband arrangers and composers. He holds the distinction of being the first person to compose and arrange an original tune for Steelband for the Trinidad & Tobago National Panorama, which he completed in 1972 when he was only 28 years old. He has composed for, arranged for, performed, and recorded with bands and musicians on several continents, and has been a featured performer in film and television, and at venues such as Madison Square Garden, the St Lucia Jazz Festival, and the Super Bowl.

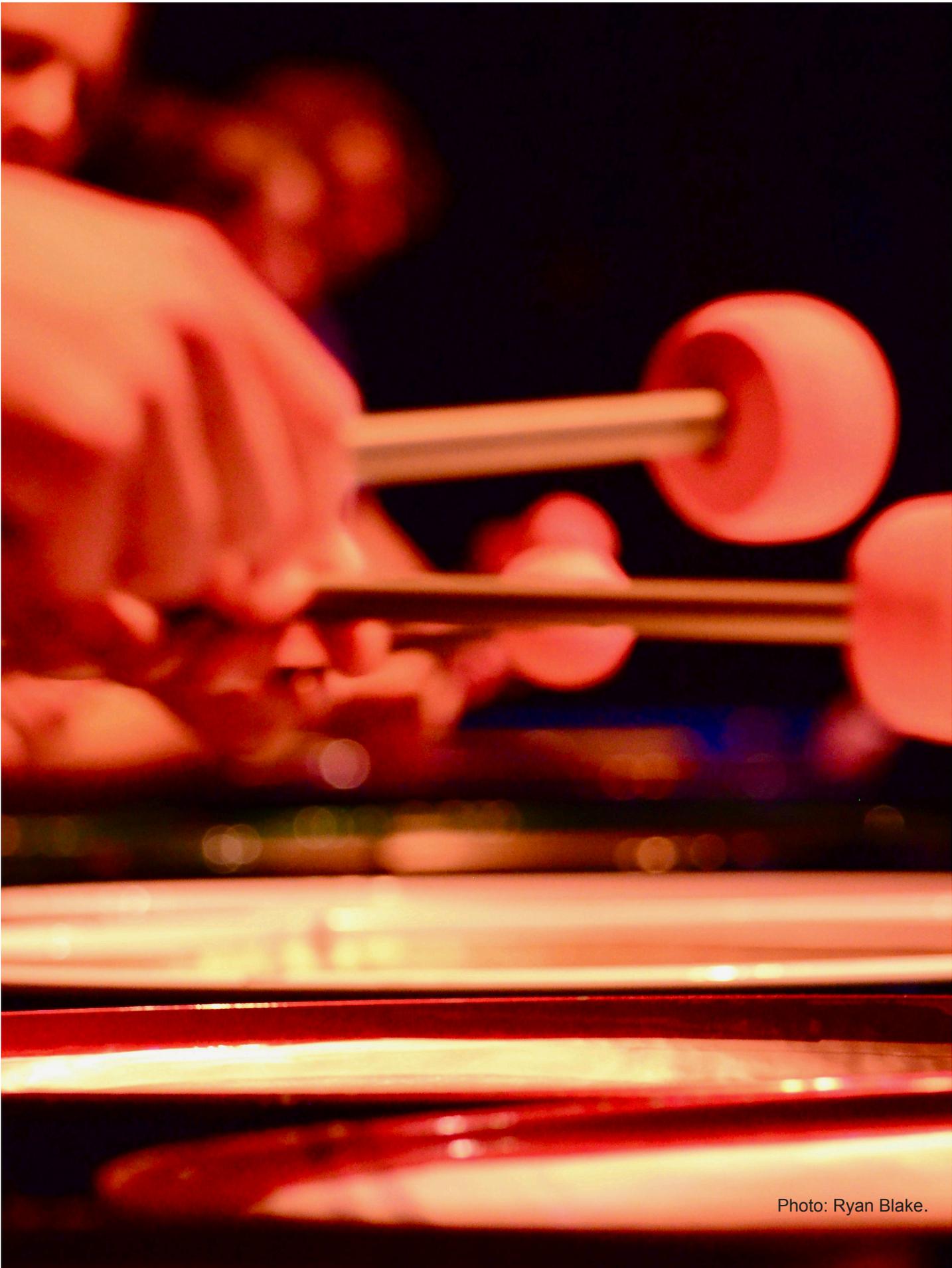


Photo: Ryan Blake.