

The Irish Bodhrán in Context: Celebrating the Evolutions of a Modern Tradition
Kyle Forsthoﬀ and Andy Kruspe with Mike Clem, John Skelton, and Garrett Smith
PASIC 2013, Indianapolis, IN, Saturday, November 16, 3PM

I. Introduction

Jig Set: An Ghaoth Anair Aneas (Connie the Soldier)/McKenna's/Up Leitrim

The few articles in *Percussive Notes* and presentations at previous PASICs have not presented the history, development, and context of this instrument as comprehensively as we hope to today. By the end of this program, you will see how the drum's construction and application have evolved from approximately 1960 to the present.

II. A Brief History of the Bodhrán Prior to 1960

1. 1300's to 1920's: Two theories: Migration vs. Local Development
2. 1920's to 1930's- use in U.S.-produced recordings
3. 1930's to 1960- Mainly in pubs, homes, dance halls

III. Aspects of Drum Construction and Styles of Accompaniment- 1960 to Today

1. 1960's to mid-1970's
 - A. Drums- large and shallow (18-20" x 4" deep), goat skin, cross bars, no tuning systems
 - Notable makers- Charlie Byrne, Sonny Davey
 - B. Straight time, little variation; minimal consideration given to the melody; early part-writing
 - C. Players: Sean Ó'Riada (Ceoltóirí Chualann), Peadar Mercier/Kevin Conneff (The Chieftains)
2. Mid-1970's to mid-1980's
 - A. Drums- sizes about the same; introduction of Lambeg skins; no cross bars; external vs internal tuning systems
 - Notable makers- David Gormlie, Mance Grady, Malachy Kearns, Seamus O'Kane,
 - B. Introduction of tonal/pitch variation; broken rhythms; secondary sounds; introduction of other accomp. instruments; little rhythmic cooperation between accomp. instruments
 - C. Players: Tommy Hayes (Stockton's Wing), Johnny McDonagh/Colm Murphy (De Dannan)
3. Mid-1980's to mid-1990's
 - A. Drums- Introduction of smaller sizes- 14-16", Better skin processing, Mostly internal tuning with tools, addition of tape to the skin to mute overtones
 - Notable makers: Darius Bartlett, Michael Vignoles, Brendan White
 - B. Wider tonal variation in playing; additional implements; tonal runs; introduction of top-end playing, Double Down technique, more cooperation with the guitar/bouzouki
 - C. Players: Junior Davey, Donnchadh Gough (Danú), Mossie Griffin, Mel Mercier, Paul Phillips, Frank Torpey (Nomos)
4. Mid-1990's to today
 - A. Drums- smaller, deeper sizes- 12-14" in diameter, 6+" deep; flexible skins; other animals; alternate shell materials- composites, plied woods; tool-free internal tuning systems
 - Noteable makers: Albert Alfonso, Patrick Cooperman, Norbert Eckermann, Rob Forkner, Christian Hedwitschak, Ben March
 - B. Wide tonal range, use of rods/drumset-like patterns; odd-time signature playing; rhythmic expansion; fusion playing (combined single- and double-ended sticking ideas)
 - C. Notable Players: Cormac Byrne (Uiscedwr), John Joe Kelly (Flook), Eamon Murray (Beoga), Martin O'Neill, Colm Phelan (Goiste)
5. Other Applications of the Bodhran
 - A. Handstriking
Notable Players: Donal Lunny, Christy Moore
 - B. Bass Line Playing
Notable Players: Jim Higgins, Donal Lunny
 - C. Non-Traditional Use of Traditional Drums
 1. Cormac Byrne (with Uiscedwr and The Seth Lakeman Trio)
 2. Martin O'Neill (with Neil Yates and Aidan O'Rourke)
 3. Ronan O'Snodaigh (Kila)
 4. Jim Sutherland (The Easy Club)

IV. Conclusion

Reel Set: Maid Behind the Bar/Music in the Glen

PASIC 2013 Outline

Kyle Forsthoﬀ (kmforst@gmail.com, www.kyleforsthoﬀ.com)

Andy Kruspe (akruspe@me.com, www.andykruspebodhran.com)

Other Notable Players (selected)

Matthew Bell (Celtic Percussion Collective) (USA)
Bruce Carver (USA)
Steve Forman (USA)
Patrick Graham (Canada)
Steafan Hannigan (Canada)
Svend Kjelsen (Ireland)
Kieran Leonard (Ireland)
Paul Marshall (Different Drums of Ireland) (Ireland)
Jackie Moran (Comas) (USA)
Guido Plüschke (Germany)
Amy Richter (Athas/Myserk) (USA)
Kip Ruefle (Callan) (USA)
Mark Stone (USA)
Rolf Wagels (Cara) (Germany)
Robbie Walsh (Perfect Friction) (Ireland)

Notable Makers (selected)

Albert Alfonso (USA)
Darius Bartlett (France) (*retired*)
Charlie Byrne (Ireland) (*deceased*)
Cooperman Drum Company (USA)
Norbert Eckermann (Austria)
David Gormlie (Scotland) (*retired*)
Christian Hedwitschak (Germany)
Roundstone Musical Instruments (Malachy Kearns)
(Ireland)
Ben March (Ireland)
Metloef Drums (Rob Forkner) (USA)
Seamus O’Kane (Ireland)
Mike Quinlan (USA)
Remo Percussion (USA)
Mike Vignoles (Ireland)
Brendan White (Holland)

Tipper Makers (selected)

Brian’s Bodhran Beaters (USA)
Cooperman Drum Company (USA)
Falconwood Tipplers (Holland)
Stevie Moises (Germany)

PASIC Presentations

Steve Forman- *The Irish Bodhran*, 2003
Patrick Graham- *Beyond the Jig: A Cross-Cultural Approach for Irish Bodhran*, 2009
Bruce Carver and Brad Dutz- *Bones and Bodhran: Beyond Tradition*, 2012
Kyle Forsthoff and Andy Kruspe- *The Irish Bodhran in Context: Celebrating the Evolutions of a Modern Tradition*, 2013

Percussive Notes Articles

Carver, Bruce. *Bones and Bodhran: Beyond Tradition*. Percussive Notes, Vol. 50, No. 5: September 2012, 78-80.
Forsthoff, Kyle and Andy Kruspe. *The Irish Bodhran in Context: Celebrating the Evolutions of a Modern Tradition*. Percussive Notes, Vol. 51, No. 5: September 2013, 20-22.
Morrison, Scott. *The History of the Bodhran: Ireland’s “Native Drum”*. Percussive Notes, Vol. 49, No 3: May 2011, 38-41
O’Mahoney, Terry. *The Irish Bodhran*. Percussive Notes, Vol. 37, No. 2: April 1999, 34-40
Roldo. *The History and Style of the Bodhran*. Percussive Notes, Vol. 17, No 3: Spring/Summer 1974, 60.

PASIC 2013 Selected Resources List

Kyle Forsthoff (kmforst@gmail.com, www.kyleforsthoff.com)
Andy Kruspe (akruspe@me.com, www.andykruspebodhran.com)

Recommended Instructional Books and Videos

Matthew Bell- The Contemporary Bodhran
Steafan Hannigan- The Bodhran Book (Book/ CD/DVD- Ossian Press)
Tommy Hayes- Bodhran, Bones, and Spoons (DVD, Mel-Bay/Walton’s)
Mel Mercier- Bodhran and Bones (VHS- Alfred)
Eamon Murray- Bodhran Soup (DVD- Musify Media)
Michael O’Suilleabhain- The Bodhran (Book- Mel-Bay/Walton’s)
Guido Plüschke- Bodhran-Tutorial mit Guido Plüschke: Hit the Goat (DVD, German only)
Lucy Randall- The Goatwhacker’s Guide to Rhythm
Mark Stone- The Bodhran (practice CD- available on amazon.com)
Frank Torpey- Mad for Trad: Bodhran (CD-ROM)
Bill Woods- Bodhran: Beyond the Basics (book/CD- Mel-Bay)

Recommended Listening (players in parentheses)

Altan- The Blue Idol (Jim Higgins)
Arcady- Many Happy Returns (Johnny McDonagh)
Athas- Athas (Amy Richter)
Beoga- Mischief, How to Tune a Fish (Eamon Murray)
Mary Bergin- Feadoga Stain (Johnny McDonagh)
The Chieftains- The Very Best of the Claddagh Years, Vol. 1 and 2 (Peadar Mercier, Kevin Conneff)
Comas-Comas, Charge (Jackie Moran)
The Easy Club- Chance or Design (Jim Sutherland)
Flook- Flatfish, Rubai, Haven (John Joe Kelly)
Declan Folan and Junior Davey- Skin & Bow (Junior Davey)
Garry Shannon- Lose the Head (Mossie Griffin)
Goitse- Transformed (Colm Phelan)
Kasir- Reel Irish, Chilling on a Sunday (Oisín Walsh)
Kila- Tog e Go Bog e (Ronan O’Snodáigh)
Moving Cloud- Sweet Nyaa (Svend Kjelsen, Donal Lunny)
Colm Murphy- An Bodhran (Colm Murphy)
Nomos- Set You Free (Frank Torpey)
Marcas O’Murchu- Turas Cheoil (Seamus O’Kane)
Martin O’Neill- In Session (Martin O’Neill)
Sean O’Riada- Plearaca An Riadaigh (Sean O’Riada)
Colm Phelan- Full Circle (Colm Phelan)
Guido Plüschke and Rolf Wagels- Bodhran Insight (Guido Plüschke and Rolf Wagels)
Stockton’s Wing- Stockton’s Wing: Jigs, Reels, & Songs (Tommy Hayes)
Stockton’s Wing- The Crooked Rose (Mel Mercier)
The Tea Merchants- One Lump or Two? (Rob Forkner)
Uiscédwr- Everywhere, Fish Cat Door (Cormac Byrne)