

Introduction

MATT BRENNAN, JOSEPH MICHAEL PIGNATO, AND DANIEL AKIRA STADNICKI

Welcome to the *Cambridge Companion to the Drum Kit*. We are delighted to share this first of its kind text, an edited volume dedicated solely to scholarly consideration of the drum kit. This brief introduction to the *Companion* provides background on the work's origins, discussion of its potential import, an explanation of the volume's organization, introductions to the individual authors and chapters, and suggestions for how readers might use the text.

The *Cambridge Companion to the Drum Kit* has its origins in a collegial meeting at the 2016 Association for Popular Music Education conference in Boston, Massachusetts. Two of the editors, Daniel Akira Stadnicki and Joseph Michael Pignato, were enjoying a post-conference dinner with one of the contributing authors, Gareth Dylan Smith, all three avid drummers. The trio's discussion inevitably turned to drumming, the drum kit itself, and to the names of other drummers, scholars, and practitioners with similar interests.

Throughout the course of the conversation, a variety of fields, representing a wide swath of scholarship, drumming practices, and perspectives came to the fore. We recognized that the drum kit remains a remarkably underrepresented topic in music research despite growing interests in rhythmic and percussive phenomena across the humanities and social sciences. This interest includes significant studies and networks dedicated to understanding the dynamics of rhythm, groove, micro-timing, and entrainment. It dawned on the three that something was bubbling under the radar of existing conferences, established journals, and widely read texts, an emerging community of scholars concerned with the drum kit, the drummers who play them, and related issues.

This emerging community represents what Pignato has referred to as a 'community of response', or the gathering, intentional or by chance, of subcultural groups in response to a particular phenomenon.¹ According to Pignato, communities of response represent 'requisite first steps' to Lave and Wenger's 'communities of practice' and are worth noting because they often presage emerging movements, endeavours, or fields of activity.² This text then seeks to acknowledge that community of response, essentially to

[1]

say, 'here it is. It is indeed a phenomenon unto itself, worthy of scholarly consideration'. By the time the ideas above reached the stage of a book proposal, Matt Brennan joined to round out the editorial team, and together they curated a collection of chapters that provides background on the drum kit as an historical phenomenon, identifies some nascent scholarship, and considers contemporary issues pertaining to drum kits and the drummers who play them. Authors contributing to this volume represent scholars, practitioners, and historically noted drummers hailing from four continents, North America, South America, Europe, and Australia.

The volume is organized in five discrete but connected parts: Part I, 'Histories of the Drum Kit', Part II: 'Analysing the Drum Kit in Performance', Part III: 'Learning, Teaching, and Leading on the Drum Kit', and Part IV: 'Drumming Bodies, Meaning, and Identity'. Each is highlighted in the subsequent paragraphs.

Part I, 'Histories of the Drum Kit', provides historical grounding for the text. Matt Brennan lays the foundation for Part I, and for the subsequent parts, offering historical and theoretical consideration of the drum kit. Paul Archibald considers how early sound recordings informed drumming practice and drummers' understanding of the instrument and its roles in bands and orchestras. Steven Baur considers the cultural history of the drum kit backbeat in sound recordings from the early twentieth century. Finally, Pedro Ojeda Acosta and Juan David Rubio Restrepo chronicle the drum kit in an historically specific application, that of Colombia's *Música Tropical Sabanera*.

Accordingly, Part II, 'Analysing the Drum Kit in Performance', considers specific and situated applications of the drum kit. Part II begins with an historically and geographically specific consideration, Daniel Gohn's history of the drum kit in Brazilian folkloric, popular, and jazz music. Ben Reimer highlights the ways in which the drum kit has been incorporated in contemporary classical music. Scott Hanenberg considers the increasingly complex approaches to meter and irregular rhythms present in contemporary drum kit performance. Daniel Akira Stadnicki provides a case study of drum kit aesthetics in the musical genre known as *Americana*. Part II ends with Brett Lashua and Paul Thompson's look at drum kits and drumming in contemporary recording contexts.

Part III, 'Learning, Teaching, and Leading on the Drum Kit', focuses on the ways in which drummers learn, teach, mentor, and lead from behind the drum kit. Bryden Stillie examines ways in which his students adapt to and learn from and with technologically augmented and hybrid drum kits. Carlos Xavier Rodriguez and Patrick Hernly examine timekeeping, often considered a perfunctory function of drum kit performance, through the

3 Introduction

lens of aesthetics. Joseph Michael Pignato engages jazz drummers Jack DeJohnette and Terri Lyne Carrington in a discussion of mentorship within jazz drumming tradition and culture. Finally, Bill Bruford considers leading from behind the kit, both the physical spaces behind the battery of drums and cymbals, as part of the backline, and from the conceptual space drummers occupy in music and in popular culture.

The final section, Part IV, 'Drumming Bodies, Meaning, and Identity', provides a capstone of meta-analyses of broad and complex issues posed by the drum kit and for the drummers who play them. Mandy J. Smith considers the example of John Bonham to illustrate how the corporeal experience of drumming reflects embodied experience unique to the drum kit. Adam Patrick Bell and Cornel Hrisca-Munn consider the configurable nature of the drum kit as it relates to accessibility, ability, and notions of disability. Vincent Andrisani and Margaret MacAulay analyse representations of drumming culture on social media using the case study of Instagram, specifically as it pertains to and informs notions of gender and performance on the drum kit. Nat Grant offers an account of activist drum culture using the case study of *Hey Drums*, an Australian initiative, founded by Grant, to offer female and non-binary drummers opportunities to play drums, connect with other drummers, and more fully participate in activities pertaining to the drum kit. Finally, Gareth Dylan Smith provides readers with considerations of drumming and identity, specifically on the deeply personal reason he became a drummer.

Notes

- 1 J. Michael Pignato. 'Situating Technology within and without Music Education' in A. S. Ruthmann and R. Mantie (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Technology and Music Education* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
- 2 J. Lave and E. Wenger. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

