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Musical Instruments And Their Importance

By Nati Roberts

Since times of yore, man has been associated with music. It is the expression of the heart. History tells us that Neanderthal man used bone flute. Evidence also exists that percussive instruments might have been used.

Defining a musical instrument: anything that produces sound can be called a musical instrument. The term usually is reserved for instruments that have a particular function in an orchestra. The academic study of musical instruments is known as organology.

Instruments can be identified by the way they are played and the tone they generate. Wind instruments, using power of the lungs, String instruments where strumming is required and electronic instruments that play automatic by touch of keys. Even the human voice can be termed an instrument as the singer generates the voice through the effort of his lungs and vocal cords acting together.

Wind instruments can be either built of wood or brass. A good example of the former could be the flute while trumpet is an excellent example of the latter. These instruments play when the musician blows into a tube. There are holes which one can open and close with the fingers to produce different kinds of sound.

String instruments are completely opposite. They are played by strumming on the cords. A good example would be the guitar. Some well known guitarist's were the Beatles and Dire straits

Percussion instruments can be played when struck. The sound is determined by the material of which the striking surface is made and the cavity that is left to produce the sound. Drums are excellent examples of such instruments. They are used by rock bands across the world.

We now come to the electronic instruments. This category includes the keyboard and electronic guitar. These instruments often follow other types of instruments. The keyboard for example. It can play virtually any instrument ever discovered. Paddles and other accessories change the sound to match the instrument they are trying to imitate.

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Of all the instruments we have talked about, the human voice is the most complicated. Through tightening of muscles, drawing breath in different ways, singers can generate wide ranging voices that affect us in strange ways. In medieval times, minstrels use to sing stories to the common people making them cry and laugh. They use to have immense power over the masses. Even today if you listen to a good singer, you are moved by his or her rich voice and emotions.

Music has always been and will be a part of us. It is straight from our hearts and the purest form of our emotions. The secret to every tradition is held in its music. Classical raaga in the case of India with its charming and emotional touch and haunting melodies from Ireland give us a taste of the mystery that lies in the fogs there.

Nati Roberts is the editor of About Musical Instruments. Her website deals with all kinds of musical instruments and offers information on the best musical instrument shops online.

<http://www.aboutmusicalinstruments.info>

You Can't Have Good Music Without Percussion

By Lavinia Snider

Percussion instruments are very old and have quite a history. Often used in folk music, these instruments add variety and a rural charm to music. In India for example, two pieces of flat metal are struck to form a bell like sound. This form of instrument is used in temples and prayer places across the country. Other popular percussions instruments include the drum, piano and xylophone.

All percussion instruments can be divided into two major and broad categories. Membranophone, which add tambour to the sound of being struck like drums and idiophones, which sound of themselves like triangles. The division can also be made on tuning basis and other sub groups. For example, some instruments can be tuned while the others can not.

Percussionists are also called upon to play other instruments that may not be percussive in nature. These instruments include police sirens, glass harmonica, lion's roar and wind machines. As percussionists play such a wide variety of instruments generating so many different types of melodies, they are usually the most skilled in the music industry.

Percussive instruments are the heart of a musical performance. It is difficult to name 3 or 4 songs from the classical or pop charts, which do not use percussive instruments. Since the times of the earliest composers like Mozart, all compositions include at least one pair of timpani's playing in the background.

Some instruments like the xylophones are a pleasure to listen to. They sound like tinkling fountains in beautiful gardens. Bringing out the romantic side in us. There is another instrument where you strike at bottles filled with different levels of water that give forth delightful sounds.

If we talk of jazz, the high hats are easily associated in our minds. The ride cymbals are another

Musical Instruments And Their Importance

percussion based instruments we look for in a jazz song. Even in military bands, soldiers can not keep time with out a bass drum.

No rock group today is complete without percussive instruments. All the bands a complete drum kit and several other percussive instruments. Pink Floyd used percussive instruments to great effect in their songs dealing with sci fi worlds and fantasy music.

Various cultures have there own percussive instruments. As I said earlier, the Indian bells are a classical example. In the west, gongs are untuned percussive instruments used in churches and other important occasions. As cultures have evolved, so has this category of instruments.

Through their diversity and wide choice, percussion instruments are the back bone of every musical ensemble. The players are brilliant and multi faceted people who can take up and play different instruments at will. The piano experts like Yanni are percussionists after all. An ensemble with full percussion is a pleasure to watch and a pleasure to hear. Chances are good that you have never heard music with out some sort of percussion accompaniment. They are the finishing touch on a great sound.

Lavinia Snider is the editor of Drums And More. A meeting place for music enthusiasts with forums,

shopping guide, and reviews.

<http://www.drumsandmore.info>



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