

# Table of Contents

About this book .....	vi
Legend .....	1
<b>SECTION 1 (EXERCISES &amp; TECHNIQUE)</b> .....	2
<u>Legato Strokes</u> .....	4
6-8-7 .....	5
Syncobeat .....	6
Stick Control .....	8
Timing Exercise .....	10
<u>Accents &amp; Taps</u> .....	12
Thirteen .....	13
Tap Dance .....	16
<u>Flams</u> .....	18
8th Note Flams .....	19
Dut-digga-dut .....	20
Flam Salad .....	22
Cheezy Poofs .....	24
Flamus Nondragginus .....	26
<u>Paradiddles</u> .....	30
Megadiddle .....	31
Zappadiddles .....	33
<u>Rolls</u> .....	36
9/8 Rolls .....	37

## Table of Contents (cont.)

<b>SECTION 2 (SCV MUSICAL EXCERPTS)</b>	40
---	----

### **SCV 1996**

Excerpt #1 from <i>La Mer</i> , 3rd movement	42
Excerpt #2 from <i>La Mer</i> , 3rd movement	44
Excerpt from <i>La Mer</i> , 1st movement	46
Excerpt from <i>4th Motion</i>	48
Excerpt #1 from <i>Oceans Opener</i>	50
Excerpt #2 from <i>Oceans Opener</i>	54

### **SCV 1997**

Excerpt #1 from <i>Seven Stages</i>	56
Excerpt #1 from <i>The Epilogue</i>	58
Excerpt #2 from <i>The Epilogue</i>	60
Excerpt from <i>The Masque</i>	62
Excerpt #2 from <i>Seven Stages</i>	66
Excerpt #1 from '97 <i>Opener</i>	70
Excerpt #2 from '97 <i>Opener</i>	74

### **SCV 1998**

Excerpt #1 from '98 <i>Opener</i>	78
Excerpt #2 from '98 <i>Opener</i>	82
Excerpt from <i>Chorus Girls' Dance</i>	84
Excerpt #3 from '98 <i>Opener</i>	88

# About This Book

The drum and bugle corps activity is one with a great amount of tradition. While styles may have changed over the years, the determination to achieve the highest goals as a collective unit will always exist. We, the authors, come from a background which encourages balance in musicianship. We believe that marching percussionists should also explore other avenues in the music world. For this reason, the way we approach technique and the way we approach composition should be viewed as not only rudimental but also “real world.”

The book is written in two parts. The first part, written by Murray, supplies unique ensemble exercises with accompanying advice for common technique issues. These are some of the actual exercises used by the Santa Clara Vanguard and may be used not only to develop technique, but to increase understanding of how rhythm works and helps to dictate what the hands do.

The second part, written by Jim, contains excerpts of show music written for the Vanguard for their 1996, '97, and '98 competitive seasons. Along with each excerpt is a brief description of the phrase with any necessary commentary or “points of interest.” These excerpts can act as great musical ensemble exercises and will help the aspiring student or arranger to gain a better understanding of the way music is written for SCV.

Now, this book is obviously geared toward the SCV way of doing things. As instructors/arrangers we have learned certain things about drumming in the activity that we would like to share with you. However, it should be made clear that there are, of course, other methodologies that exist and other trains of thought entirely. It is our hope that the reader will be able to find something within these pages that he/she can benefit from or develop an increased understanding of this art form.

We subtitled the book “for the modern drumline” for a reason – styles have changed. Some examples of this would be: changes in equipment (kevlar heads, for example), increased physical/visual demands, more interest in indoor competitions, and an increasing variety of percussion instruments on the field. These aspects have all contributed to a different stylistic approach in the marching percussion activity than, say, 20 years ago. This evolution is exciting since there are now more opportunities to expose percussion students to a wider array of styles, instruments, techniques, and “real world” potential. It all hinges on a collective approach between instructor and student to aim for higher goals than simply playing combinations of rudiments. We hope you find that approach apparent in our music.

# Section 1

## Exercises & Technique

Before we take an inside look at the core exercises of SCV's percussion program, I feel it is necessary to explain a few things about the program in general. From day one, what drew me to the Vanguard drumline was the writing and the way the drummers realized the music through their playing. Another way to put it would be to say that the drumline's overall technique was merely a vehicle - a means to an end - and the vehicle is what allowed that musical expression to take place. The older I get, the more I realize that when making music is the ultimate goal, the technical aspects of playing are simplified and tend to reveal themselves to you. As an example, let's say that the music your drumline is playing is soft, delicate, and at a moderately slow tempo. In most cases the last thing you'd want to do is play with a staccato approach. On the other hand, if the music is dark, driving, and fast, a more staccato approach may be called for. It's a conscious choice we all should make for the sake of the music if we want to communicate effectively to our audience. This is the foundation of SCV's approach - **to play in such a way as to uniformly convey our musical ideas to the listener.**

I'm going to take a moment to discuss some key words and phrases that we frequently use and that you will encounter as you go through this book.

**Flow** - Flowing while playing is extremely important for a number of reasons. It minimizes mental and physical fatigue. It helps create a sense of phrasing. It especially helps tenor drummers move around the drums. It facilitates more breathing while playing, which is a very overlooked aspect of rudimental drumming, in my opinion. If you watch any great professional - musician, athlete, whatever - they make it look *easy*. Flow is an integral factor.

**Rebound** - In order to flow on a drum, it is necessary to harness the drum's energy. You push, and the drum pushes back. The power of two is greater than the power of one. Of course, the stronger *you* are as a player, the more you'll add to (and receive from) this "relationship." There are people who would think I'm crazy for saying this in a marching context. "You've got to have chops, man. Chops is where it's at. Don't let the stick bounce, dude. The only way to get chops is to hold on to the stick real tight and force everything. Show that drum who's boss!" I'm not suggesting that an aggressive approach is wrong. I think an aggressive approach is helpful, most of the time. But I know that using rebound helps me achieve more with less effort. To me, playing without rebound is sort of like trying to ice skate on concrete...with an ice rink ten feet away.

# Legato Strokes

And so we begin with the concept of legato strokes. This word seems to conjure feelings of wimp-ness in many young marching percussionists. Fear not, for it is simple: There is a right way and a wrong way to hit a drum, marching or otherwise. The right way would be to hit the drum in such a way as to bring out the maximum tone of the drum and of the *stick itself*. Most great professionals exemplify this. The wrong way would be to grip the stick too tightly and try to force the strokes at any particular dynamic level. This may help your chops, but not your sound. The fastest (and even the loudest) players know how to balance the two in order to have an extreme sense of fluidity, utilizing the drum's natural bounce to their advantage. There is something to be learned from this.

**Key Points:**

- Don't grip the stick or mallet any harder than necessary (a function of *what* you are playing).
- Use only the wrist, unless speed dictates the use of fingers.
- Don't squeeze the stick at the moment of contact with the head, for this introduces a "stop" in the motion. Rather, concentrate on keeping the wrists relaxed and *in motion*.

## The Exercises

### 6-8-7

I believe this was originally made up by Mike French in 1990. The eighth notes are all played at the same speed by each section, so that the drumline starts and ends together. The purpose of the different numbers and varying order of those numbers is for the sake of variety. The infamous "8 on a hand" can be a little monotonous. We also utilize different variations (crescendo/decrescendo each hand, two-height patterns, etc.), again for variety's sake.

### Syncobeat

Your standard double-beat-type exercise. I left it in 4/4 but changed the rhythms in such a way as to put more emphasis ON the rhythms, as opposed to just pounding out some doubles that are too closed and don't sound good. If you like, split this exercise between sections (having one section start with triples instead of doubles) to create a nice challenge.

### Stick Control

This is a basic exercise inspired by patterns similar to ones in George Stone's famous Stick Control book. The whole thing is composed of 16th notes with different sticking patterns. The idea is that one should not be able to *hear* the patterns; one should only be able to *see* the patterns. All tenor drummers should master this concept on one drum before applying it around. This has consistently been one of SCV's primary exercises for working on sound and the concepts that apply to flow.

# Accents & Taps

Most of us know that HEREIN lies the area where most errors occur in the activity. Much of the time, it is the *touch* used by the players that causes these errors rather than the *timing*. When you play tap/accents patterns, you don't want the taps to have a choked-off sound. Many players will squeeze the stick as hard as they can after an accent in order to "control" the taps. Well, squeezing the stick as hard as you can is never the right thing to do, especially in this instance. Obviously, we want total control over the taps. Just don't confuse total control with bombastic over-squeezing. Give the poor little taps some room to breathe and, more importantly, bounce. The idea is that you don't let the fact that there are accents interfere with the flow of smooth taps. Now, this is a difficult concept to master, but the resulting sound is worth it. The taps in any tap/accents pattern should carry weight; not the kind of anchored-down dead weight caused by holding on too tight, but the kind of weight that is the result of producing the fullest tone at that dynamic level through letting the stick resonate and bounce.

- Key Points:**
- Don't over-squeeze the stick after an accent. Let it bounce (while still maintaining control).
  - Make sure the upstroke prior to an accent is aggressive enough to produce the accent in time but not too harsh that the accent is forced, causing that nasty sound followed by a nasty out-of-time tap.
  - Check to see whether or not you are breathing during tap/accents exercises. This is an easy and very accurate way to gauge your individual tension factor.

## The Exercises

### **Thirteen**

Originally written by Mr. Curt Moore, long-standing SCV great and personal friend, and modified by yours truly, this has been one of the most frequently played exercises the corps has had. The focus is on good sound and groove. The key part comes from the bass line, which isn't playing strict single-hand patterns, but much more groove-oriented two-hand patterns. Here's how SCV has typically played this exercise:

- After the initial count-off, the exercise never stops until a "cut" is given.
- The whole thing is played out on the right hand first, then the left hand, then back to the right, etc.
- Tempo increases can be given through hand signals during the left hand repetitions, after which the line will gradually speed up together and (hopefully) hold the tempo.
- The variations that follow are also dictated through hand signals during the left-hand repetition.
- Variations are played through one time only, and then the original exercise resumes.

*THE MOST IMPORTANT ENSEMBLE FACTOR DURING ALL OF THIS IS THAT THE  
BASS DRUMMERS ARE GROOVING.*

# Flams

Now we proceed to more of the “meat” of rudimental drumming. Regardless of what stylistic background you may come from, most people can agree on how a flam should be played in a marching context - tight! For the purposes of cleanliness, we like to get those grace notes very close to their targets, without interrupting the flow of what is being played. That’s the key phrase...*without interrupting the flow of what is being played*. When you add diddles and some of today’s hybrid rudiments on top of that, it takes serious control to execute correctly. There’s the challenge...

- Key Points:**
- When playing isolated flams (like the exercise on the opposite page), resist the temptation to use arm for the grace notes. The wrist is a smaller muscle group, so it is instinctive to try to control the grace notes with the arm. However, more control-related benefits are attained by forcing the wrist to isolate and play the grace notes. Just keep thinking *relax*.
  - Keep those grace notes down. At SCV we try to maintain about an inch and a half for isolated grace note height. Whatever your preference, be as consistent as you can.

## The Exercises

### **8th Note Flams**

I believe Glen Crosby introduced this exercise to the Vanguard in the late 80’s. It’s great for working flam sound and heights in an isolated environment (meaning no chagga-da chagga-da). I truly believe that a drummer or drumline will benefit the most from this by practicing it *SLOW*. It forces one to work on control. Remember to use only wrist.

### **Dut-digga-dut**

This is a timing exercise as much as anything else. Basically, it breaks down simple triplet flam patterns to one hand at a time in that hand’s original context. In other words, if you take the first two measures and combine them, you get the third measure and so on. The bass pattern is the exception. We have to have some groove in there somewhere.

### **Flam Salad**

Extra thousand island, please. This is more basic, but it still covers flam accents, patty fla-fla’s, and flam taps. This would be an easy one to which you could add your own special blend of herbs and spices.

### **Cheesy Poofs**

This is my favorite. It makes use of a 2 against 3 pattern that is created through the use of internal dynamics between the hands. It’s also written with flam-fives so you can see where integrated diddles can go.

### **Flamus Nondragginus**

Did you say you want some more? Well, here’s some more. Play at your own risk!  
(with a metronome, hence the title)

# Paradiddles

Paradiddles, to me, are the most graceful of the rudiments. Someone, somewhere, sometime must have thought, “You know, I’d like to be able to play accent patterns really fast without all these veins popping out on my neck.” *VOILA!* I think it takes a while for younger players to truly understand the uniqueness, versatility, and power of mastering the concept of paradiddles. As soon as you get past the “who-invented-this-stupid-rudiment” stage and you don’t have to think so hard to play them, then you begin to understand why they’re used. They also make it much easier to map out traffic patterns on tenor drums. One important rule of thumb to remember is that paradiddles are designed for two-height interpretation and are most useful in that context. It helps to practice them “all up” to get comfortable with the sticking or to increase speed, but as soon as you’re ready to utilize them in a practical context, practice playing the accents up and the diddles down. The internal dynamics are crucial. All those inner notes should flow off the hands (controlled, of course) after each accent. If you’re playing a bunch of single paradiddles repeated (RlrrLrll, etc.), the accents should flow from hand to hand, and the nonaccents should be a continuation of the accent stroke. In other words, try not to stop the stick after the accent so that you have to completely re-attack for the small notes. Now, the two paradiddle exercises I’ve included are not basic exercises. They are rather long but worthwhile in that they will give you some idea of how paradiddles can be utilized on a grander scale to create interesting rhythms between sections.

- Key Points:**
- Paradiddles are flow-oriented by nature.
  - Go for consistent sound quality from both accents and inner notes.
  - It can help your sound quality and speed to practice paradiddles at one height, but that should probably be kept as a practicing technique only.
  - Learn and practice as many paradiddle variations as you can, for they will teach you a lot in terms of playing gracefully.

## The Exercises

### **Megadiddle**

Many paradiddle variations are present in a straight ahead 4/4 context. The flow of sixteenths should start from the get-go and not stop until the last note. Bass drummers, BEWARE!

### **Zappadiddles**

This one will challenge the line a little more in terms of varying time signatures and rhythms. It got its name because the two thirty-second note passages are based off of a certain riff from Frank Zappa’s “Catholic Girls.” During the second 5/8 section (page 34, second measure), the slashes, which would normally indicate diddles, are interpreted as triplets. In other words, the two notes that the diddle consists of are spaced evenly between the two accents that surround them. I couldn’t figure out how to notate this when I was writing it. If someone figures this out, please let me know!



# Rolls

I won't go into too much detail here. Suffice it to say that double-stroke rolls in a marching context should be thought of as rhythms instead of rudiments. If a line is playing a thirty-second note roll, we should hear thirty-second notes *in time*. If a line is playing broken diddle patterns, we should hear those rhythms the way a drum machine would play them...articulated. If every member of the drumline is hearing the rhythms the same way, and can articulate them as such, it's obviously going to be much easier to clean up.

- Key Points:**
- Play rhythms, not rudiments.
  - Articulate roll/diddle passages to create the appropriate rhythms.
  - The wrist is the primary mover of the stick for rolls and diddles.
  - Fingers can and should be used at faster tempos to produce stronger doubles.
  - In order to play smoothly, the arm can be used (once again, at faster tempos) to take some of the workload off the wrists. However, if you're using some arm for rolls, don't take the wrist out of the picture. Instead, try to use a little of everything (wrists, fingers, arm) for efficiency and good sound quality.
  - If you're just getting started with rolls, I suggest practicing them slowly. Don't try to get too fast too quickly, for you're likely to blow right by some of the internal understanding that takes place by being patient.

## The Exercises

### **9/8 Rolls**

One day I was listening to Dave Brubeck's "Blue Rondo A La Turk" and figured that the rhythmic phrasing used would be very fitting for a diddle/roll exercise. So there you go. The meter is grouped in four-bar phrases that go like this: 2-2-2-3, 2-2-2-3, 2-2-2-3, 3-3-3. The length is due to its compositional nature. It runs the gamut of commonly used roll and diddle figures in this style. Remember to practice this the way a drum machine would play it – in time and rhythmically accurate. It should normally be played fairly fast (sort of like cut time 9/8). Don't be fooled by the quarter notes that it starts with. Think of those like eighth notes.



meow

# Section 2

## SCV Musical Excerpts

Through the past 30 years, the competitive repertoires of the Santa Clara Vanguard have been arranged from composers such as Shostakovich, Copland, Bernstein, Khachaturian, Rimsky-Korsakov, and many others, as well as many popular Broadway shows. As a young percussionist, I remember listening to the SCV drumlines playing music written by Ralph Hardimon, amazed at how musical a drumline could be!

It's not surprising that many of the folks who are currently drawn to try out for SCV come for that very same reason. However, upon auditioning and marching during the early season, they often discover they don't quite understand what that "vibe" is all about. The truth is, to be successful in any musical endeavor, there must be a strong connection between the performer, the music they play, and the listener. Without these three elements in place, the music will not be able to complete its circle. This concept is essential to the SCV percussion program and should be apparent when listening to recordings of the corps.

### **This Music**

The musical examples on the following pages are actual battery excerpts from SCV shows from 1996, '97, and '98. You will see many different styles of music – some are very dense, while others appear quite simplistic. One concept that I strongly believe in is that the music should "feel" good to play. There is always some sort of "groove" or "flow" that should be felt when playing these. The stickings are written in such a way to accommodate this, and the density (or transparency) of the parts is a direct result of the ensemble responsibility of the drumline during the given phrase. If the technique is approached correctly (as outlined earlier in this book), the music should accommodate this approach.

### **Notes versus Music**

Here is a touchy subject. This activity is based on competition; competition in which drum corps are judged for displaying their level of skill. In modern drum corps, a majority of this judging relates to the overall music ensemble (all brass voices, battery percussion, and pit percussion) and how well it ties together. The activity has evolved into this "full ensemble" approach, where as several years ago the brass and percussion elements were less *reliant* on each other for creating the overall package. This is not necessarily a bad thing – it's just different than the "modern" approach. With this in mind, the battery arranger must address the challenge level of the players (how much to "cheese it up") and when that stuff may just get in the way. Ultimately, a marching percussionist is going to learn all the fancy rudimental stuff anyway, so you don't necessarily have to smear it throughout the arrangements. Granted, it's important for the drumline to be able to "show off" in the show

# SCV 1996

## Excerpt #1 from *La Mer*, 3rd movement (closing production, first impact)

This is a simplistic example of how broad rhythms can enhance the musical book. The quarter note triplets and accents in the tenor part are reflective of the brass rhythm, while the 8th note to triplet figure mimics an accompanying line that exists under the main theme.

Bass drums and snares are utilized to fill in more of the quarter note triplet feel and supply some impact “answers” (along with cymbals) on the downbeats of measures 2 and 4. The subtle dynamics in each part go a long way toward actually giving shape to the phrase. The difficulty in this phrase does not exist within the physical playing of the parts. The difficulty lies in interpreting the open rhythms accurately with a sense of shape and direction. Oftentimes, the more “open” the rhythms are, the more difficult it is to get a drumline to play them together.

♩ = 120

**Snare**  
f

**Tenor**  
f mp

**Bass**  
f

**Cymbals**  
ff

The musical score is for a drumline and consists of four staves: Snare, Tenor, Bass, and Cymbals. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 120. The Snare part features a complex rhythmic pattern with quarter note triplets and accents, starting with a forte (f) dynamic. The Tenor part also features quarter note triplets and accents, starting with a forte (f) dynamic and transitioning to mezzo-piano (mp) in the second measure. The Bass part features quarter note triplets and accents, starting with a forte (f) dynamic. The Cymbals part features a single hit on the first measure and a double hit on the second measure, marked with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic.

## Excerpt #1 from '97 Opener

(first full ensemble statement after soloist)

This aggressive piece of music requires a good deal of concentration from all individuals. Each section carries its own level of responsibility. There is a rhythmic theme present, and it's easiest to see in the bass drum part (which imitates the theme played by lower brass). The rhythm at number 6 may act as the "theme," and in the following three measures, that theme should still sound like it is existing beneath the surface.

To a more subtle degree, the snare and tenor parts are indicating this rhythmic theme as well. You can see this during the four measures of rehearsal number 6. The accents in the snare and tenor parts exist to help stay connected to the rhythmic theme mentioned. Treat this excerpt in a two-height fashion and pay close attention to the stickings. At times (i.e., snare part measure four after the ping), there are easier alternatives to the sticking, but the particular sticking will result in a different feel to the rhythm. This is intentional to arrive at a different sound than just straight sticking. Once you get used to it, it should feel pretty comfortable.

♩ = 190

6

Snare

*mp* *f*

Tenor

*mp* *ff* *f*

Bass

*mp* *f*

Cymbal

*ff*

The musical score is for rehearsal mark 6, starting at a tempo of 190 beats per minute. It features four parts: Snare, Tenor, Bass, and Cymbal. The Snare part begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and a series of eighth-note patterns with accents, transitioning to a forte (*f*) dynamic in the second measure. The Tenor part also starts at *mp* with similar eighth-note patterns, moving to *ff* in the first measure and *f* in the second. The Bass part plays a steady eighth-note pattern at *mp*, then *f* in the second measure. The Cymbal part is silent in the first measure and enters in the second measure with a *ff* dynamic, playing a series of eighth notes.

## Excerpt #3 from '98 Opener

(middle portion of opening piece)

At letter L, the breaks in the rolls and/or the accents are intended to simulate the brass melody for five measures. The crescendo in the first two bars for snares and tenors is to affect only the accents and not the taps.

Notice that bass #2 is indicated to play at a forte level in the last half of measure two. This is to imitate the snares and tenors. The rest of the bass drums should be dedicated to a two-count crescendo to drive into the letter L phrase. Also, bass drum crushes should be done with both hands.

The last three measures exist to supply an impacting “punch” to a loud brass chord which is tied for two measures. Be careful with the rhythms here since they aren’t quite as natural to feel at first. It must also be noted that not all the unison bass drum notes here will line up exactly with the snare and tenor rhythms. This is OK, and you will not die from it. Breathe deep and play in time.

♩ = 170

**L**

Snare

fp

f

f

Tenor

fp

f

f

Bass

Bass 2 = Forte

Cymbal

ff

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a drum set, specifically for the middle portion of an opening piece. It features four staves: Snare, Tenor, Bass, and Cymbal. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 170. A box labeled 'L' indicates the start of a specific section. The Snare and Tenor parts feature complex rhythmic patterns with many accents, starting at a fortissimo (fp) dynamic and increasing to forte (f). The Bass part includes a section where 'Bass 2 = Forte' and ends with a double fortissimo (ff) crash. The Cymbal part is mostly silent, with a final crash at the end. The score is marked with 'R' for right hand and 'L' for left hand, and includes triplet markings.