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LESSON GUIDE FOR SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

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Group Bio

Squid Precision Drumming was founded in fall 2000 by an award-winning group of snare drummers from the Dartmouth Pipe Band Association. They had been exclusively selected for a musical tribute entitled DRUM! which was to be debuted at the Input 2000 media conference in Halifax, NS. With a complement of 8 dancers, 1 bagpiper, and a house band, the response from the international audience was nothing short of legendary.

With the realization that precision drumming was something that held mass appeal, 7 of the drummers decided to form their own drum-corps. The first official performance for the newly conceived Squid Precision Drumming was on the 25th of November 2000, at the Halifax Drumfest. Word of Squid's unique precision drumming quickly spread and international performances soon followed.

After five years of thrilling audiences everywhere, Squid produced and launched their debut theatre production "The Evolution", a show that is both musically and visually stunning. The Evolution was a giant success and received standing ovations and rave reviews. Squid currently performs all over North America in festivals of all varieties, school assemblies, corporate settings and musical theatre performances. Performance Highlights include: Atlantic Scene Arts Festival 2003; Boston Tree-Lighting Ceremony 2000 and 2004; Halifax International Buskerfest 2004, 2005 and 2006 (where they captured the Aliant People's Choice Award all three years); Toronto Buskerfest 2005; Montreal Just For Laughs Festival 2005; the East Coast Music Awards 2001 and 2006; JUNO Awards 2006; Ottawa Children's Festival 2006; Kingston Buskerfest 2006 (where they were named Musical Performance of the Year); DRUM! Canada/ United States Tour 2005, 2006 and 2007 and The Evolution tour 2007, the first ever fully Squid produced theatre production.

SQUID at a Glance

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Number of artists: 4 (with 2 accompaniment performers)

Based in: Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada



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Instrument Information

Squid Precision Drumming performs with many instruments uncommon to most musical acts. The group is dedicated to blending instruments from many different cultures and also to broadening its audience's perspective about how traditional ethnic instruments can be played. The following is a list of instruments used by Squid in the performance you will soon experience. It is followed by a stage plot, which labels the instruments, so you can identify them during the show.

1) Bagpipes

Origin: Although commonly thought to have originated in Scotland the Bagpipe was more likely developed in the Middle East along with most other pipe instruments. It made its way to the Scottish through military use, who created their own rendition of the instrument called the Great highland Bagpipe, which is what is now commonly thought of when one refers to the bagpipes

Instrument Class: Aerophones (use enclosed reeds and are fed from a constant reservoir of air)

Brief Description: A Bagpipe consist of a blowpipe (where air is blown), a bag (which holds the air), 3 drones (which create a background humming sound) and a chanter (which creates all the melodies. The bagpipes can only play 9 notes

2) Military Marching Snare Drum

Origin: Europe 15th and 16th century

Instrument Class: Drums

Brief Description: A Snare Drum or side drum is a tube shaped drum made out of wood or metal with skins or heads stretched over the top and bottom openings. They also have a set of snares (metal cords) across the bottom head to create the buzz sound. The Snare Drums used by Squid are unique in that they have a second set of snares on the inside of the top head. The drum is sounded by hitting the top head with a drumstick or any other form of beater including brushes for a softer sound.

3) Marching Bass Drum

Origin: Europe

Instrument Class: Drums

Brief Description: A Bass Drum is a large Drum that produces a low pitch. The Marching Bass Drum is also known as a Pitched Bass Drum, which means, unlike other bass drums, it is tuned to a specific pitch

4) Drum kit

Origin: Multiple Countries (1800's)

Instrument Class: Drums/ Percussion

Brief Description: A Drum kit is simply a collection of drums (a snare, a bass, tom-toms, a cowbell and cymbals in our case) that have been arranged together as to make it easy to be played by just one drummer.

5) Djembe

Origin: West Africa

Instrument Class: Drums/ Percussion

Brief Description: A Djembe is a skin covered drum shaped like a large goblet that you play with your hands. According to the Bamana people in Mali, the name of the Djembe is directly derived from the saying "Anke dje, anke be" which means "Everyone gather together"

6) Tom-toms

Origin: Native American and Asian cultures

Instrument Class: Drums

Brief Description: Tom-toms are cylinder shaped drums with no snares. They were traditionally used as a means of communication in Native American and Asian cultures. The tom-tom was first added to the drum kit in the early part of the 20th Century.

7) Cymbals

Origin: Ancient Egypt (Prehistoric Times)

Instrument Class: Percussion

Brief Description: Cymbals consist of thin, normally round plates of various metals. There are three parts of a Cymbal, the bell (the raised section in the middle of the Cymbal), the bow (the slightly down-sloping part of the Cymbal which is played commonly) and the edge or rim of the Cymbal.

8) Tambourines

Origin: Persia

Instrument Class: Percussion

Brief Description: A Tambourine consists of a wooden or plastic frame with pairs of zils (small metal jingles). The Tambourine can be held in the hand or mounted on a stand. It can be played with your hands, a beater, it can be shaken or struck against your legs or hip.

9) Cowbells

Origin: Multiple Countries

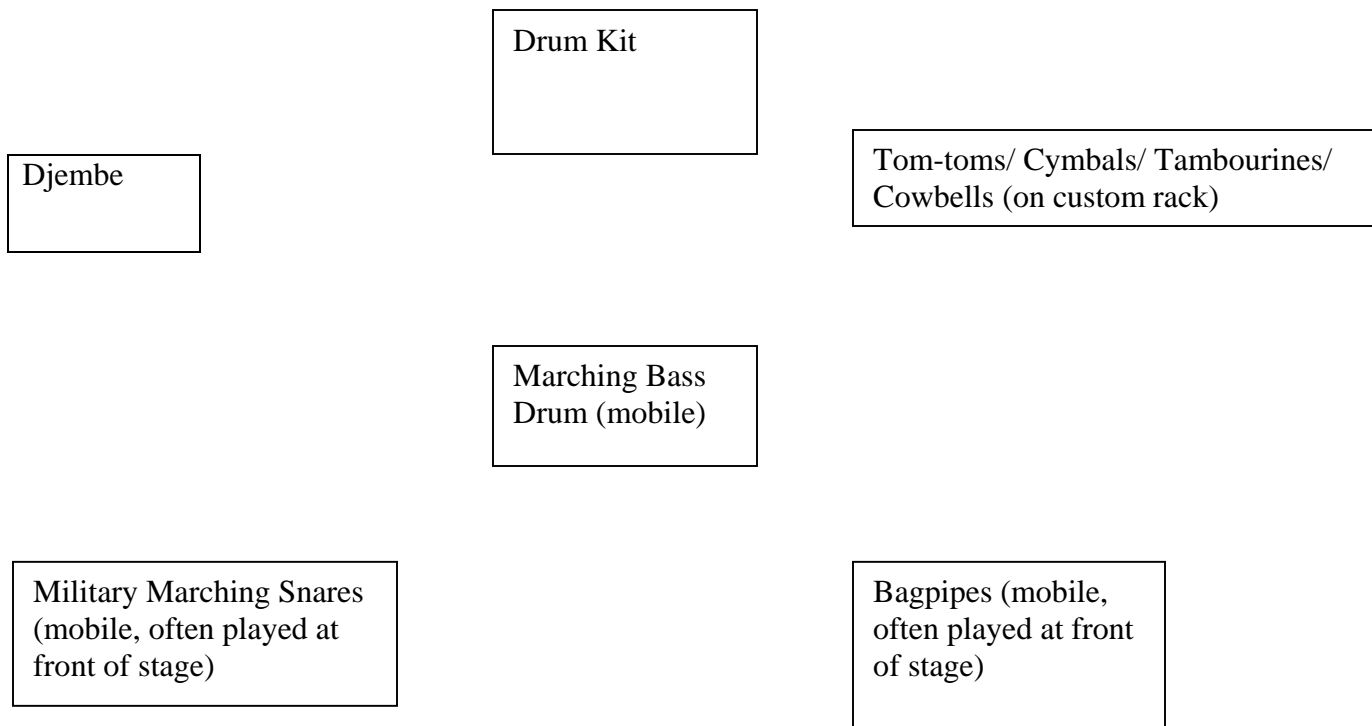
Instrument Class: Percussion

Brief Description: A Cowbell is a cylinder shaped bell that is played with a drumstick. It can be played by hand or mounted on a stand. Traditionally Cowbells were used by herders to track their herds. As the cattle moved the bells sounded and the herder could identify their whereabouts.



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School Show Stage Plot





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Positive Messages to Reinforce

When Squid visits schools they often deliver several positive messages to the students about 1) The Importance of Teamwork 2) Practice and Dedication and 3) Being Proud of Your Talents. At High Schools “The Importance of Teamwork” talk is substituted with a “Following Your Dreams” talk. Here are some key points you can reinforce after the show:

1) The Importance of Teamwork

- The better you are able to work with others and get along with others the more successful you will be and the more fun you will have
- Teamwork will apply to all aspects of life (school, work, music, sports, friendships etc)
- Important to learn good teamwork skills when you’re young. They are expected/ demanded of you when older

2) Practice and Dedication

- Practice only makes you better if you are dedicated to practicing
- Being dedicated involves making sacrifices
- Sometimes you may have to make social sacrifices
- A little bit of practice and dedication now can open up many opportunities for you in the near future

3) Being Proud of Your Talents

- Don’t let people tell you shouldn’t do something because its not cool
- If you enjoy what your doing, keep doing it
- Have fun, work hard and take your talents and skills as far as you possibly can!

4) Following Your Dreams (substitute for Teamwork talk for older grade levels)

- Live your life for yourself
- Don’t limit yourself by what others tell you. Don’t be afraid to think beyond 9 - 5
- Listening to teachers/ parents is important
- If you have a dream, chase it with everything you’ve got



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Basic Scottish Drum Corps Rudiments and Exercises

"There are only two rudiments on a drum. One is a tap, the other is a buzz."

- Alex Duthart, pipe band snare drum maestro

Precision Drummers Squid, use the Swiss Uni-line system for snare drum music notation. This system, devised by the late Dr. Fritz Berger, in Basle, Switzerland, eliminates the need for Rs and Ls to represent which hand should be used. Below is an example of two paradiddles: the first example being classic western notation, and the second example being the Swiss notation. Notes above the line are played by the right hand, and notes below the line are played with the left.

ex. 1

R L R R L R L L

ex. 2

The following exercises are a small sample of what *Precision Drummers Squid*, use for technique development as well as warm-ups. Our rehearsal objectives with these exercises are to improve:

- 1) Note placement and unison
- 2) Concentration
- 3) Speed
- 4) Endurance
- 5) Dynamics
- 6) Control of tempo
- 7) Comfort zone

Each exercise is provided in classic western notation on top and Swiss notation on the bottom.

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

2

The image shows a drum exercise labeled '2' consisting of six systems. Each system has a top staff with rhythmic notation and a bottom staff with R/L notation. The first system has four measures of eighth notes with accents (>) and R/L notation: R R L L, R R L L, R R L L, R R L L. The second system has four measures of eighth notes with accents (>) and R/L notation: R R L L, R R L L, R R L L, R R L L. The third system has four measures of eighth notes with triplet markings (3) and R/L notation: R R R L L L, R R R L L L, R R R R R R, R L L L L L. The fourth system has four measures of eighth notes with triplet markings (3) and R/L notation: R L R R, L R L L, R L R R, L R L L. The fifth system has four measures of eighth notes with accents (>) and R/L notation: R L R R, L R L L, R L R R, L R L L. The sixth system has four measures of eighth notes with accents (>) and R/L notation: R L R R, L R L L, R L R R, L R L L.

For more information regarding Squid Precision Drumming please visit:

www.SquidPrecisionDrumming.com