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Smithiger teaches the magic of percussion

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Smitheger teaches the magic of percussion

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2:00 p.m. Louis, 8:00 p.m. Alton, Sheldon, St. Louis, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Runs through August 18.

Adlermaro Romero
College Talk

[...]

Shan Lu/SIEU

Prof. Dan Smitheger (front) with part of the SIUE steel band.

Regional

Friday, April 20

[...] the present of traditional stories that strike the strings. Others that have a similar configura- tion include the xylophone, marimba, bells, instruments that are struck and shaken. Percussion in the act of striking, and percussion players include all sorts which are shaken and rattled. From drums, from tam-tams to toad pan, to frak drums, rawhide, and a host of others. It could be kept going.

Perhaps you can consider the piano a percussion instrument because of the hammers that strike the strings. Others that have a similar configura- tion include the xylophone, marimba, bells, instruments that are struck and shaken. Percussion players include all sorts which are shaken and rattled. From drums, from tam-tams to toad pan, to frak drums, rawhide, and a host of others.

Speaking of percussion, one can envision an orchestra without others, such as the violin or the trumpet. Percussion is a reflection. "I have thought about this numer- ous times," he said. "Percussion is not just about having a rhythm, it is a fundamental level of rhythm and larger body movements to be able to hit something. Likewise, you can grow and learn more, because you go from larger body movements like arm movements to more refined movements with finger and more versatility. It's not just playing a drum set and it's not just playing one type of thing on a xylophone. It is all of the above. No two people are exactly the same because you go from large body movements to having your own little style in the tin. And they would go on to the drum."

Smitheger explained. "One of the stories is from the mid- to late-1940s after the war, when they had dis- charged men and women who had been in the service. These people could do it better just by beating it and just being able to do it," Smitheger said. "For improving your rhythms it's better to apply and then to decomposed. And it's better to go to the source and just make your own piece of music, to finally understand beyond their ability to improve, just to make your own piece of music."

He said that what I am trying to cul- tivate in our students here at SIUE is a teacher in general is an understanding and an appreciation for all of percussion, Smitheger said. "Not just playing in a march- ing band, playing, playing, playing, not just the big or the other or that the other is all that it is. What it takes to be a percussionist, certainly the hard work, certainly all those things, but I think it is a level of appreciation and understanding of all of percussion, and that's what I am trying to do here.

Smitheger said the main force behind making the playing of steel pans very popular among SIUE music students. These instruments evolved from tins from the 1920s and 1930s in Trinidad, where they would make a Percussion box out of these tins, and then they would go on to play them."

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