



Slammin All-Body Band

School Show Study Guide

Wells Fargo Center for the Arts
April 3, 2009

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Name of Ensemble: CROSSPULSE PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Name of Assembly: Crosspulse Percussion Ensemble

Bio:

"A wonder-producing [quartet] - they drum, they dance, they chant, they slap and pat their torsos and limbs, they make visual music that fills a room with physical excitement."
The San Francisco Bay Guardian

Crosspulse Percussion Ensemble was brought together by Keith Terry in 1992. Percussionists who dance and sing, Crosspulse weaves the oldest musical instrument, the human body, with instrumental webs of hand drums, bells, claves, gongs, shek'er'e, bamboo stamping tubes, banjo, berimbau and more. From body music, jazz, Afro-Cuban and West African drumming -- to Balinese gamelan, South Indian solkatu, and the music of the Middle East, Appalachia and the Caribbean -- Crosspulse embodies a virtual world tour.

Crosspulse performers bend and blend their own deep music and dance traditions in true collaboration, allowing rhythm to forge connections in unexpected ways. A pool of players, each with their own expertise, creates the different programs Crosspulse presents. The ensembles have toured North and Central America, and Indonesia, performing in concert halls, festivals and workshops for all ages. They've played four seasons (1997, 2000, 2002 and 2005) for the San Francisco Symphony's Adventures In Music Program, reaching 15,000 third, fourth and fifth grade students annually. Both Crosspulse Percussion Ensemble (2003-4) and Crosspulse Dance (2005-6) have performed seasons with the Lincoln Center Institute for Aesthetic Education facilitated through the Julia Morgan Center. Crosspulse ensembles work with Young Audiences, The Stanford Jazz Workshop, The Pioneer Center in Reno, NV, and Performances to Grow On in Ojai, CA, and countless individual schools and libraries.

Crosspulse regularly extends its collaborative approach to work with other rhythm-based music and dance groups, including San Jose Taiko, the Ohio based Rhythm In Shoes dance company, Manhattan Tap, Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir, and Gamelan Sekar Jaya.

Crosspulse has recorded five albums: *Keith Terry & Crosspulse, Serpentine, Body Tjak/The Celebration Soundtrack, Professor Terry's Circus Band Extraordinaire* and *SLAMMIN ALL-BODY BAND*. *Body Tjak/The Celebration* is also available as a Performance Video. Crosspulse Records & Videos also carries Instructional Videos in *Body Music* and *Buckdancing*.

About the Program:

The Crosspulse Percussion Ensemble is Keith Terry, Omar Ledezma, Tacuma King, Evie Ladin and Amber Hines. For more information on the group, visit www.crosspulse.com.

Part international drill team, part polycultural rhythm section, Crosspulse delights audiences with synchronized movement, world drumming, lush harmonies and innovative body music. From Jazz, Body Music, Afro-Cuban and West African drumming, to Appalachian Banjo, African-American Spirituals and Found Sound, their high-energy performances are engaging,

educational and encourage active participation. Loud, rowdy, athletic, playful, subtle, delicate and ethereal -- their sounds and movement are fluently integrated, enabling audiences to *see* music and *hear* dance.

In the current program, students will learn in depth how the African diaspora has influenced music and dance throughout the Americas. Students will learn the History, Geography, Math, Science, Language Arts and Social Studies incorporated in the music and dance traditions of Cuba, West Africa and several cultures within the United States. Students are always encouraged to relate the information to their own cultural traditions.

Crosspulse educates the students about the specific instruments involved, including how they are made, the materials used, and their origin. These instruments include banjo, voice, marimbula, trap set, hedgeclippers, and a wide assortment of Afro-Cuban and West African drums. We discuss the languages in which we sing (English, Spanish, Susu, etc.), and both the countries of origin, and the paths of migration.

Finally, the ensemble illustrates some of the elements of music: composer, conductor, musician, audience, improvisation, arrangement.

Students are asked to participate in several ways: Joining in on songs in a variety of languages, clapping particular patterns with the music, volunteering to dance, playing the drum in a call and response fashion, and responding to questions regarding what they have learned about the instruments, music and culture.

As each member brings material from their area of expertise, the specific pieces are subject to change. All sections are intricately woven together to create a fluid, easily-comprehensible show. A typical program may include:

1. Afro-Cuban Orisa Dance
2. Appalachian Banjo with percussion
3. Jazz tune done with Voice and Body Music
4. African-American Spirituals with participation.
5. Afro-Cuban Camparsa, with clave, conga, and dancing, in Spanish.
6. West African singing and dancing – Congolese
7. Questions and Answers
8. Full Company Improv

Objectives:

- To enthrall students with the music, dance and song of the many faces of the African diaspora.
- To demonstrate the connection of cultures influenced by this diaspora, as witnessed in the effortless collaboration between these performers from different cultural traditions.
- To understand the essential link between the music and its dance and song.
- To learn about unusual instruments and new languages.
- To understand how rhythm can connect us in unexpected ways.

Preparation:

Teachers can discuss with their students the African Diaspora, starting with the slave trade. Find the West Coast of Africa on a map and follow the paths of trade to the New World. Emphasize all the places Africans were taken, and the cultures they mingled with (i.e. other settlers or immigrants, and native populations). Discuss how culture changes over time, using some of the activities in the Ideas & Activities section below.

Ideas & Activities:

These activities can be done with students either before or after a **Crosspulse** presentation. They encourage students to incorporate some of the ideas from the show into their own experience.

A. Family Traditions

Curriculum Areas: Science / History & Social Studies / Language Arts / Art & Music

In the program, you can discover the variety of cultures that contribute to the global music and dance traditions Crosspulse performs. Students can uncover the roots of their own family music and dance traditions. Ask each student to research their particular ancestry:

- Interview members of your family (parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles) about where they grew up. Where were they born? Where did your ancestors come from originally? When did they come to this country? What were their occupations? What kind of music or dance traditions did they have? Where did they practice them? At weddings, funerals, social gatherings?
- Discover the path of migration of your family. Where in America did your ancestors arrive? How often has your family moved? What kinds of social dances did your relations do in the different places, in different generations?
- If you have a living relation that was raised in another country, ask them about the music and dance of that place. What music and dance traditions from there continue to be performed in this country? How have they changed? What, if any, music and dance traditions of your ancestors do you practice? How did you learn them? Do you speak or sing in more than one language?
- Go to the library and research the place of your family's origin. If you have more than one ethnic background, compare the different countries and cultures that you came from. Perhaps you can find some audio or video recordings of the arts from those places. How do the music and dance traditions relate to each other? Are they very different or can you see some similarities? Do you combine them in your own life?

Have students learn a step, dance style, or song that comes from their ancestors' place of origin and teach it to the rest of the class. Perhaps they can bring a video or audio tape to share, or information about the expressive cultures of their particular ethnic group(s).

B. Rhythm Awareness

Curriculum Areas: Mathematics / Art & Music / Physical Education

From a heartbeat to a drumbeat, from a handclap to the layers of hands, feet and voices in a classroom symphony, rhythm creates a whole new language for students. Rhythm awareness develops concentration, reinforces thinking and counting skills, and creates harmonic group interaction.

- Start with the downbeat – this is the beat you would normally clap or step on with most music. Add the upbeat – the beats between the downbeats. When we count the beats (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), the upbeat is counted as the “and” (1 and 2 and 3 and 4, etc.). Now only clap the upbeat. Practice clapping, then walking, in tempo, then half-time (exactly half as fast, or on every other beat), then double-time (exactly twice as fast, or on the both the downbeat and the upbeat). Use skipping steps, running steps. Have one person clap the downbeat while their partner claps the upbeat.
- Do a call and response with clapping rhythms. Use any part of your body to produce the rhythms. Divide the group into two and have them pass rhythms to each other. What parts of your body make sound?
- **Crosspulses** are created when two or more different pulses, meters or time signatures are going on simultaneously, in the same amount of time and space. One of the most important crosspulses in African and Latin music is 6 over 4. To try this pattern, place one hand over each knee. One taps in 6, while the other taps in 4. The composite rhythm looks like this:

X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X		X		X		X

- **Clave** is the skeletal rhythmic foundation that underlies much of Afro-Cuban music and other music of the African musical diaspora, including pop and rock music in the United States. There are many patterns of clave, usually based around a cluster of three beats and a cluster of two. How the patterns differ depends on which cluster comes first, and which beats fall on the downbeats and which fall on the upbeats. Below is an example of rumba clave, which is the signature rhythm underlying rumba music. You can see there is a cluster of three beats followed by a cluster of two. In the three, you play the downbeat twice, then an upbeat before the third downbeat. In the cluster of two, you play the upbeat before the fourth downbeat, then also play the fourth downbeat.

downbeat	X		X		X		X
son clave	X		X	X		X	X

The riff known as Bo Diddley is a clave. Do you know that one, or other patterns of clave?

C. Watching a Live Performance

Curriculum : History & Social Studies / Language Arts / Art & Music / Physical Education

Live performances have some very different qualities from what students may see on television or hear on recorded CDs. Discuss live performances of all kinds: dance, sports, speeches, etc. Can a live performance ever be repeated exactly the same? Why or why not? What does it feel like to perform live? What particular skills do you need? What do you experience during a live performance that is different from watching it on TV? How are live performances affected by things such as weather, the concert hall, the size and mood of the audience? What types of performances are your favorite and why?

Vocabulary:

Banjo – Originally from the west coast of Africa, the banjo has a skin head, wooden or metal frame, and steel strings. Four or five string varieties, played most frequently in stringbands, but also heard with Irish music, all early Jazz, Ragtime, etc.

Bongos - A pair of small drums typically held between the knees and played with the fingers. Common throughout Latin music.

Clave – The clave is a percussive musical instrument consisting of two sticks that are struck together. The pattern played on the clave is the skeletal rhythmic foundation that underlies much of Afro-Cuban music and other music of the African musical diaspora, including pop and rock music in the United States.

Crosspulse - Two or more different pulses, meters or time signatures happening simultaneously, in the same amount of time and space.

Conga – Drums used in much of Afro-Cuban music as well as Latin Jazz. Usually played in pairs with differing tones, the congas are originally related to the Ngoma drum from the Congo in Africa. A conga line is a dance done while playing, singing and parading.

Found Sound – That music made from objects not normally considered instruments; things you find around the house or out in the world that offer a variety of sounds when shaken or struck.

Marimbula – Like a bass calimba, mbira or thumb piano, the marimbula was created in the Oriente province in Cuba. The instrument is a big wooden box with metal tongs that come from the winding mechanism inside a Grandfather Clock. Sound is created either by plucking the tongs, which resonate inside the box, or playing the box like a hand-drum.

Nigeria – Country in West Africa from which people of many tribes were taken and sold as slaves throughout North and South America. Tribes include Igbo, Yoruba, Fulani, among others.

Has many rich music and dance traditions that have become a part of other cultures' traditions through the diaspora.

Spirituals – Religious songs associated with African-American Christians of the Southern US, derived from a combination of European Hymns and African musical elements. Developed by slaves in the early days of the United States, spirituals are songs of hope, freedom, struggle, and the strength of an oppressed people.

Water Drum – From the Gambia, typically played by women for ceremonies. Created by putting a gourd upside down in a bucket of water. The water conducts the sound, amplifying the tone of the gourd.

Bibliography/Discography/Videography

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Excursions In World Music, Bruno Nettl. Simon & Schuster, 1992.

How Musical Is Man by John Blacking; University of Washington Press, 1973

Jazz Dance by Jean & Marshall Stearns, DaCapo Press, 1994 (ISBN 0-306-80553-7)

Music of the Whole Earth by David Reck, DaCapo Press, 1997 (ISBN 0 306 80749 1)

Musics of Many Cultures, Elizabeth May. University of California Press, 1983.

Crosspulse Records & Videos has produced five albums and one performance video that exemplify the intercultural collaboration the group performs. The two instructional videos/DVDs are great teaching tools, and appropriate for all ages. Visit www.crosspulse.com to order.

CPCD001 *Keith Terry & Crosspulse* – available on cassette only

CPCD002 *Serpentine*

CPCD003 *Body Tjak/The Celebration* Soundtrack

- Collaboration between Crosspulse and Indonesian artists.

CPCD004 *Professor Terry's Circus Band Extraordinaire* – LIVE – Bay Area all-star band.

CPCD005 *SLAMMIN all-body band* – Percussive A Cappella Jazz

CPVD001 *Body Tjak/The Celebration* Performance Video– Collaboration between Crosspulse and Indonesian artists.

CPVD002 *Buckdancing for Beginners: The Basics of Southern Appalachian Flatfoot Clogging*, taught by Evie Ladin

CPVD003 *Body Music, Part One* – Technique, Rhythm Blocks, Polymeters, Phasing and Polyrythms, taught by Keith Terry