

Here's to the Next 50!

By Lisa Rogers



As we are about to enjoy our biggest and best celebration of 50 years as a society at PASIC 2011, it is honor and privilege for me to serve as Percussive Arts Society President and think about the future while revisiting the past. *Percussive Notes* Editor Rick Matingly asked me to share a “state of the union” address regarding where we’ve come and where I believe we are heading over the next 50 years. The following is really more of a love letter of sorts (past, present, and future), and the journey I’ve taken and continue to look forward to in the future.



My journey with PAS started in 1987 as a PASIC Zildjian Scholarship recipient. I had only been playing percussion for a few short years, as I was a transplanted clarinet player now involved in a new world of instrument sights and sounds. I remember receiving a check in the mail from PAS to cover my travel expenses to PASIC '87 in St. Louis. I eagerly boarded a plane from Texas and made my way to Missouri. Upon arrival, I received my PASIC program at registration and hurriedly headed off to attend anything and everything I had time for in the next few days including drumset clinics, orchestral clinics, keyboard concerts, and exhibits. I bought my first Grover tambourine, which I still use today!

I know that it was there at that convention that I fell in love—in love with PAS. I found a home—a place to gather and be embraced by a group of people passionate about music, where percussion was the vehicle of expression. I could ask any question, try and experience new things, and immerse myself in all types of percussion music. I was hooked. More importantly, I wanted to share in this family dynamic. As time moved forward, I tried to take advantage of opportunities for giving back to the society that so graciously invited me inside.

Flash forward to the 1990s; I was a doctoral student and then visiting assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma (OU) in Norman. At the same time and a short distance away, an hour and 20-minute drive, was the home of PAS in Lawton, Oklahoma. While studying at OU under the guidance of Dr. Richard Gipson, I continued my participation in the society by helping him edit and work on the Focus On Research section of *Percussive Notes*, for which he was the editor. This led to several weekly and many weekend visits to the home office and museum in Lawton, where Executive Directors Steve Beck and later Randy Eyles allowed me to dig through the archives and scour the museum. It was my way of finding out the history of my percussion family, a truly remarkable family.

After finishing graduate study and during my first few years of college teaching at Texas Tech University, I still was involved with PAS. I was given the opportunity by James Lambert, *Percussive Notes* Editor of Selected Reviews at the time, to write reviews on new literature. Also, I was selected to continue my editing work with the Focus On Research section of *Percussive Notes* and serve on the Scholarly Research Committee. I proudly was elected to the PAS Board of Directors, and by 2005 served in the role of Secretary on the PAS Executive Committee. Service to PAS shaped, enhanced, and forged my career as a performer and educator.

Over the next several years, my service on the PAS Executive Committee included terms as Vice-president and President-elect. Now as I am finishing the first year of my term as PAS President, I feel as I did back in 1987 that PAS changed my life, with my devotion and love for the organization unwavering. I believe my story is very similar to other members with a passionate obligation and devotion to the organization. Current PAS Second Vice-president and Board of Directors member John Parks said it best through his video, "I AM PAS." We all proudly proclaim it!

So what is the "state of the union" of PAS and what happens next? It is quite simple to me: We continue our love affair with percussion through our support of the society's mission, "promoting percussion education, research, performance, and appreciation throughout the world." New initiatives for increased and enhanced promotion, and ultimately membership, will roll out during my time as President and after. Some will be quite successful, others not so successful. However, this is yet another hallmark of our organization: the collective wisdom of our leadership to develop and try new initiatives and programs—our determination, our stick-with-it ingenuity.

Our annual conventions will continue to be the biggest and best conferences for percussionists to network, perform, learn, and enjoy. This year is definitely no exception as there will be special events to celebrate our 50 years together. Some of the special events planned for PASIC 2011 in Indianapolis include the PASIC 2011 50-member Marimba Orchestra performance, Focus Day performances featuring a retrospective of 50 years of percussion literature, PASIC 2011 Mass Steel Drum Band performance, and the premiere of the PAS-commissioned "Concerto #2 for Percussion Section, Timpani and Orchestra" by Joseph Schwanter, featuring the Indianapolis Symphony. Our celebration will end with a wonderful concert featuring a performance by Poncho Sanchez and his Latin Jazz Band.

I believe during my tenure as President we will continue to embrace the world's ever-changing technology and social network to reach our current and potential membership. The PAS website is only one avenue to reach our membership and the public globally. We now utilize and will continue cementing our place in the social communication arena through Facebook and Twitter. In 2012, we will be providing membership with a digital reader version of *Percussive Notes*, allowing for our continued wonderful articles with enhanced video and audio clips for referencing and learning.

In terms of our outreach efforts, the story of PAS continues and will continue in our Rhythm! Discovery Center through col-

laborations with NAMM, the Indianapolis Arts Council, and other granting agencies for expanded programming and varied exhibit development to reach beyond our current membership and embrace all. During PASIC 2011, a new exhibit geared towards education with a "How It's Made" instrument exhibit will provide those touring Rhythm! with a glimpse of a varied percussion instruments and the process of instrument manufacturing and sound production.

While trying to promote percussive arts worldwide, our current membership should enjoy enhanced membership benefits without absorbing inflated costs. Therefore, our PAS Past Presidents and Board of Directors started a "Follow Our Lead" campaign, pledging annual monetary support above membership dues to further enhance our offerings and outreach. The "Follow Our Lead" campaign was, I feel, the beginning of several fundraising and sponsorship opportunities. Furthermore, I believe the expansion of our development initiatives will be key to the organization's growth over the next ten to twenty years.

As PAS members, we have always given back through hard work, sweat, and other heroic efforts. Encouraging those who are able to give back more through planned giving, annual contributions, and campaign-specific support such as our 50th Anniversary Sponsorship Campaign initiated during the fall of 2011 will be important to our future sustainability.

Many of us support various organizations through charitable donations and sponsorship annually. Why not PAS? Planned giving can be quite simple. Those of us teaching at colleges and universities may list PAS as a contingent beneficiary on our TIAA-CREF Life Insurance. Also, those involved in estate planning may choose to include support for PAS. With expanded funding sources, I believe membership costs can remain feasible for our younger members with enhanced benefits and efforts to promote the percussive arts to those unfamiliar with our organization.

So the long and the short of it is, I along with the PAS Executive Committee, Board of Directors, staff, and committee and chapter leadership will continue to move forward the mission of PAS in the next 50 years. We hope you'll join us in the journey.

Happy anniversary and much love to you,
PAS!

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