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Chapter 3

Making Music

The Instruments

Below is a brief guide to the instruments that are commonly used in drum circles. Additional instruments, descriptions, and pronunciations can be found in the Instrument Guide on page 85.

Categories of Instruments

- Unpitched Percussion
 - drums
 - wood sounds
 - shakers & scrapers
 - metal sounds
- Pitched Percussion
- Body Percussion
- Vocal Sounds

UNPITCHED PERCUSSION



Drums

Bass Drums (low pitch, played with sticks or mallets)

- dundun
- harmony drums
- surdo

Hand Drums (played with the hands)

- ashiko
- bongos
- conga
- doumbek
- jembe
- Cajón

Frame Drums (played with hands, sticks or mallets)

- various frame drums



Wood Sounds

- clapper sticks
- clave
- two-tone blocks
- slit drum
- temple blocks (tone blocks)
- woodblock



Chapter 6



Presenting a Drum Circle

The following information will help you organize, plan and present a community-style drum circle for your family, friends, business, organization, or the general public. For information about how to present and facilitate rhythm-based events for specific populations such as children or training purposes, see “Specific Populations” on page 66.

Preparation

Find a Location

Choose a venue that is large enough for your expected number of participants to gather in a circle, with some room to spare. It should be open and free of obstacles such as pillars so that everyone can see one another and the facilitator.

Consider the following:

- Are there sufficient chairs and tables available?
- Are there noise restrictions?
- Is there ample parking?
- Are there restrooms nearby?
- Will you be making refreshments available?
- Will people be able to easily find the room?
- Is there easy access for loading gear in and out?
- Is there wheelchair access?

Note: Possible venues include music stores, recreation centers, churches, and schools.

Identify Your Team

The Facilitator (That’s you.)

The Coordinator works with the facilitator and venue to arrange, promote and present the event. (This could be you.)

The Host is someone who represents the venue, or host group. (This could still be you.)

The Crew helps set up chairs and tables, load in gear, etc. (Hopefully not just you.)

The Greeters welcome the participants, make sure everyone knows where to go and what to do when they arrive. (If this is still you, it’s time you learn how to ask for help!)

Set a Date & Time

Decide when to hold your event. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to get the word out and that all the members of your team can be there. Most drums circles run from one to two hours (educational or special-event drum circles may be shorter). If your event is not where your drums are, allow at least one hour before and after your event for setting up and packing up.

Promote Your Event

Get the word out early. If possible, send out e-mails, flyers and postings at least six weeks prior to your event. Follow up with reminders two weeks before and then a few days before your event.

Promote via the Internet, e-mail lists, websites (RecreationalMusic.com, for example) and list-serves. Local papers also run free community event listings. In addition to date, location and time, include some of the following information in your message: