

# BODY PERCUSSIONS IN WIND ORCHESTRAS AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT IN WIND ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCES



**Date: February 6-7, 2026**

**Location: Liszt Academy, Budapest**

The workshop analyzed the integration of body percussion as an innovative expressive, pedagogical, and social tool within the wind orchestra sector, moving beyond traditional performance paradigms to explore new forms of musicality, inclusion, and international collaboration.

The following presentations were delivered:

**Aurél Holló - HU J**

**John Cage - Works for Percussion**

This lecture, held by the renowned Hungarian percussionist and member of the Amadinda Percussion Group, provided a foundational exploration of the expanded sonic possibilities introduced by John Cage.

The session analyzed Cage's complete works for percussion, focusing on the conceptual and technical innovations that liberated percussion from traditional instruments.

This historical and philosophical framework served as a crucial starting point for understanding the body itself as a primary instrument, capable of generating complex rhythmic textures and breaking down the conventional boundaries between performer, instrument, and audience.

**Dariya Sherpa, Letizia Tessicini - ACe20 - IT**

**Research on the Practice of Body Percussion as a Social Unifier**

This presentation examined body percussion not merely as a musical technique but as a powerful tool for social cohesion and community building. The research, conducted by a collective of Italian educators and musicians, demonstrated how body percussion practices can inclusively involve performers and audiences, creating a shared physical and rhythmic experience. It was argued that the accessibility of body percussion requiring no instruments and relying on innate human movement makes it uniquely capable of fostering a sense of belonging and breaking down hierarchical barriers between the stage and the public. The presentation provided concrete examples of workshops and community projects where body percussion served as a catalyst for socialization, particularly in intergenerational and cross-cultural settings.



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**Rosa María Díaz Mayo - Universidad Autonoma de Madrid - ES**

## **Body Percussion as an Educational Tool in the Spanish Wind Band Repertoire:**

This presentation, grounded in the research of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, provided a systematic analysis of the Spanish pedagogical context and its integration of body percussion. Professor Díaz Mayo traced the evolution of this practice within the Spanish wind band tradition, identifying a growing body of contemporary repertoire that explicitly incorporates body percussion. A detailed typology of works was presented, highlighting compositions by Óscar Navarro (Libertadores), José León Alapont (Almería, Fantasía Andaluza), Frank J. Cogollos (Alesia), and others. The session framed body percussion as an accessible, highly effective resource for developing musical, cognitive, and social competencies, demonstrating its particular value in youth bands and formal education as a tool for teaching rhythm, coordination, and ensemble awareness.

**Bánk Sály - HU**

## **Interactive Workshop on Collaborative Composition and Graphic Language**

The Hungarian composer and pedagogue led an interactive workshop exploring collaborative composition techniques centered on body percussion. The session moved beyond traditional notation, introducing participants to the use of graphic scores and non-verbal communication as tools for real-time composition and improvisation. Through practical exercises, participants engaged in the creation of collective rhythmic structures, learning to listen, respond, and co-create without relying on conventional written music. The primary aim was to develop a common linguistic framework for integrating body percussion into ensemble performance, fostering a more democratic and intuitive approach to music-making that empowers all participants, regardless of their formal training.

**Vicenta Gisbert - Universidad Autonoma de Madrid - ES**

## **Educational Use of the Wind Band Repertoire with Body Percussion**

This session focused on the practical application of body percussion within the existing wind band repertoire. Professor Gisbert demonstrated how rhythmic patterns and choreographic elements can be seamlessly integrated into traditional wind band works, enhancing the overall performance experience and creating a distinct expressive language.

Drawing on her extensive experience in music education and ensemble direction, she provided concrete strategies for conductors and educators to introduce body percussion into rehearsals and performances. The session emphasized the dual role of body percussion as both a pedagogical tool for improving rhythmic precision and internal pulse and as a performance element that adds a compelling visual and auditory dimension to the concert experience.



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The concluding session brought together all participants, presenters, and project partners for a collective analysis and practical demonstrations. The discussion focused on synthesizing the techniques and methodologies explored throughout the workshop from Cagean concepts to Spanish repertoire to Hungarian graphic practices with the objective of defining a shared methodological and notational framework.

This framework is intended to facilitate the wider adoption of body percussion across European wind orchestras by providing clear guidelines for composers, conductors, and educators. The session also served as a platform for exchanging feedback on the former artistic residency in Rome, ensuring continuity between the project's various activities and reinforcing the collaborative network.

## **Antonio Pelizza, Gianfilippo Pocerobba - Conservatorio "Santa Cecilia" di Roma - IT Analysis and Demonstrations on the Use of Body Percussion**

This presentation provides an in-depth analysis of the integration of body percussion within wind band repertoire, categorizing its role into three primary functions: musical (rhythmic and textural), educational (pedagogical skill development), and choreographic (visual performance). By examining specific case studies—Roland Barrett's *Arabian Dances* (Grade 2) and Libby Larsen's *Hambone* (Grade 3)—the study demonstrates how the human body is utilized as a versatile percussive instrument to enhance both programmatic narratives and ensemble precision.

The discussion highlights the transition from basic rhythmic reinforcement, such as hand claps used to evoke atmospheric soundscapes, to the complex "Body Music" found in *Hambone*, which incorporates a sophisticated notation system for chest pats, thigh slaps, and vocal gestures. Through these demonstrations, the presentation illustrates how body percussion serves as a bridge between traditional instrumentation and physical expression, offering conductors and educators a multifaceted tool for enhancing both the musicality and the engagement of student ensembles.



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