Orchestral Snare Drum Production

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Orchestral Snare Drum Production

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Peter Fullmer and Dr. Matthew Coleman, Music

Introduction

The purpose of this project was to disseminate to a wide audience of percussionists the process of building an orchestral snare drum in order to equip them with the knowledge needed to make one themselves. This included highlighting in video the materials, tools, and skills required for the procedure, which would be posted in the public domain for all to view.

Methodology

The first step was to purchase the needed materials. This included a drum shell, hardware, snare wires, drum heads, and tension rods, all of which were purchase through an online drum parts vendor called “Drum Factory Direct.” Additional supplies were needed for finishing the wooden shell, including an oil-based polyurethane finish, sponge brushes, and sandpaper, which were secured from a local hardware store. The needed tools, including a router table, hand drill, circle drawing tool, half-round file, and machinist’s square, were supplied personally by Dr. Coleman. Filming began as we measured and marked the shell, after which the wood was sanded and finished. Next, using the router table, the bearing edges were cut along both sides of the shell, and the snare bed was also cut away and filed down. Finally, holes were drilled, hardware was mounted, and the drum heads and snare wires were seated in place. Once the actual construction was finished, the raw footage was edited and assembled into a detailed video showing the different aspects of the drum production process. Voice overs were also recorded in a BYU student sound booth, explaining each part of the procedure.

Results

The construction produced a fabulous, high-caliber instrument which would serve well any percussionist. The filming also documented in detail every step in the process, yielding an excellent video which was then posted in a variety of areas for many people to use and learn from. The video was posted on YouTube, and can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UL-2XmOM3Rl&feature=youtu.be

Discussion

The construction process is detailed and complex, with many chances for pitfalls and mistakes. The guidance of an expert was essential in making this project a success. Likewise, all those who may later view this video will hopefully receive that same guidance to successfully produce a drum of their own. The information contained can also be adjusted to accommodate the specific needs and resources available to each individual.

Conclusion

This project was extremely successful. The high-quality video footage accurately and clearly displays how to build a snare drum. Before the project was begun, it was noted that existed a high level of interest among percussionists in learning how to construct a drum. That need has been met by providing easy access to information regarding snare drum production.