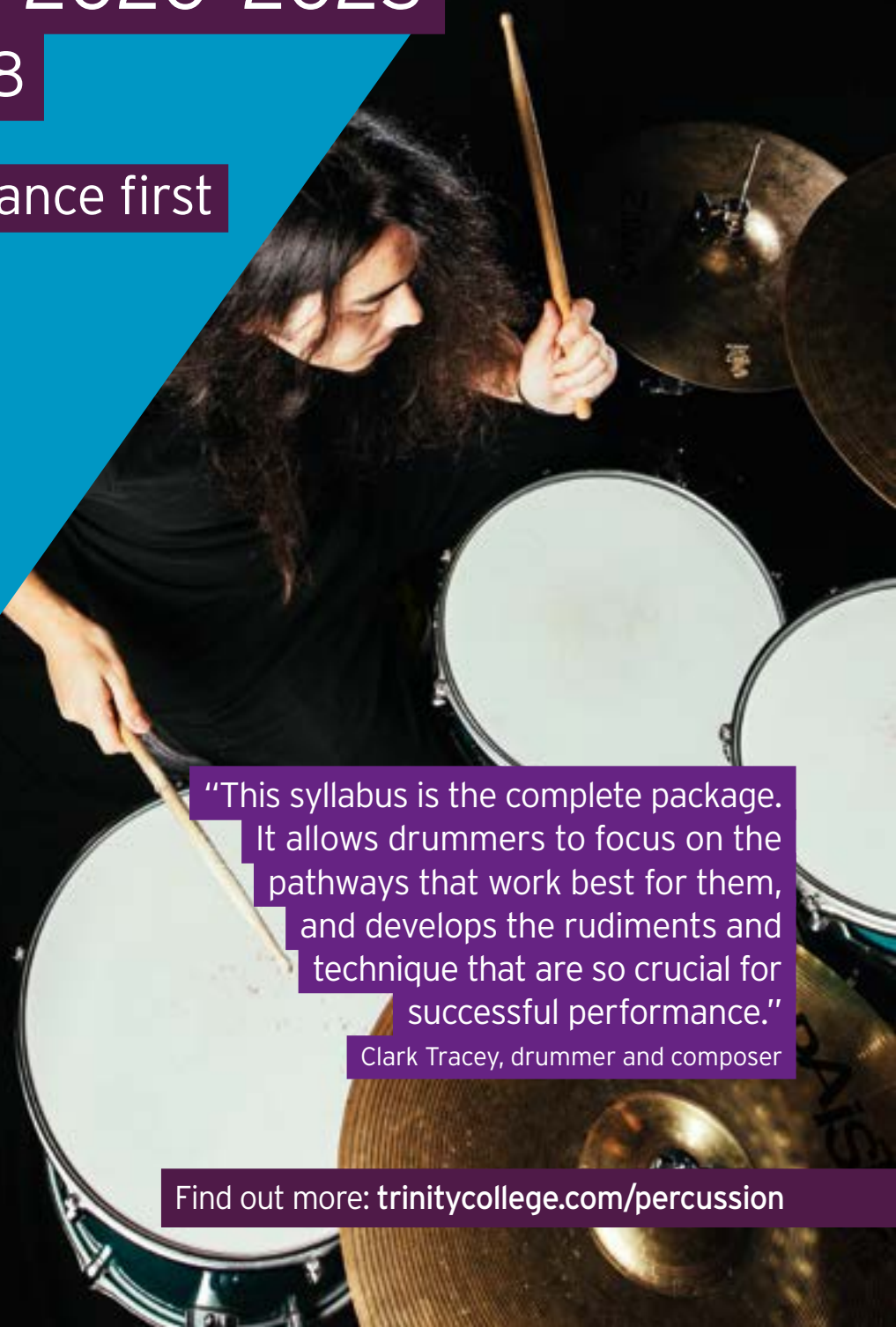


# DRUM KIT & PERCUSSION SYLLABUS 2020-2023

Initial-Grade 8

Putting performance first

A high-angle photograph of a drummer with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing a black t-shirt, playing a drum kit. The drummer is captured in a dynamic pose, leaning forward with their right hand raised holding a drumstick, ready to strike a cymbal. The drum kit includes a snare drum, a tom, and several cymbals. The background is dark, making the metallic surfaces of the drums and cymbals stand out. The overall aesthetic is professional and focused on performance.

"This syllabus is the complete package. It allows drummers to focus on the pathways that work best for them, and develops the rudiments and technique that are so crucial for successful performance."

Clark Tracey, drummer and composer

Find out more: [trinitycollege.com/percussion](https://trinitycollege.com/percussion)

# The Drum Kit & Percussion Syllabus 2020-2023

## Styles

This syllabus gives drummers a range of authentic styles to master, including jazz, funk, show tunes, film, TV, Latin, reggae and swing. Percussion exams cover the full range of orchestral instruments with refreshed repertoire for tuned percussion, snare drum and timpani.

## Pro-skills

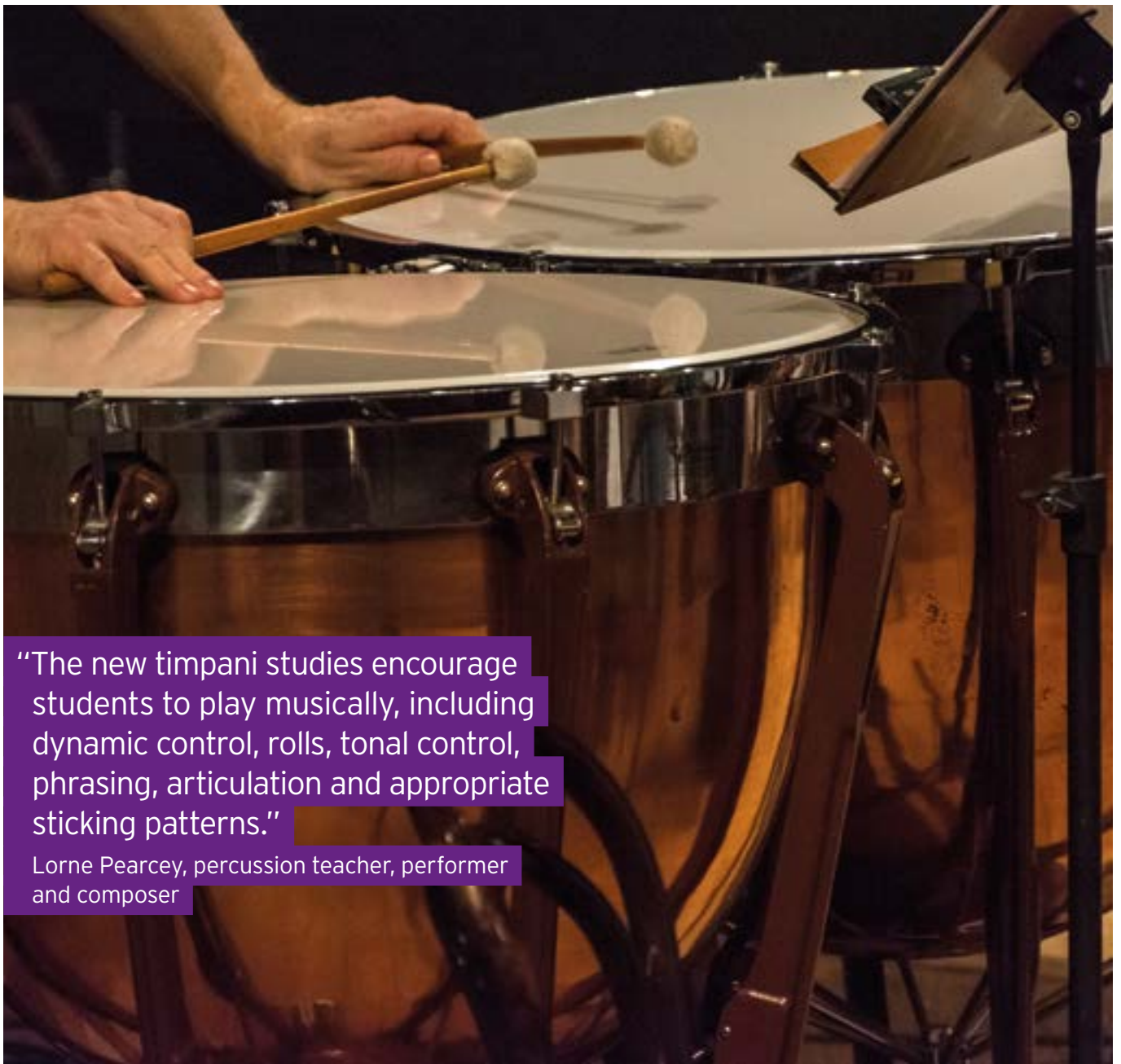
Developed with professional drummers and percussionists, our online support videos show you what an exam is like, demonstrate drum kit exercises on split-screen, explore professional technique and look at where our exams can take you: [trinitycollege.com/percussion-resources](http://trinitycollege.com/percussion-resources)

## Techniques

Our syllabus develops instrument-specific technique, with bespoke rudiment exercises for drum kit and enhanced technical work for orchestral percussion.

## Books and backing tracks

Three drum kit repertoire books from Initial to Grade 8 are available, with professional backing tracks and demos to download or stream. The syllabus also gives the option to choose additional repertoire from *Introducing Drum Kit* or *Raise the Bar Drum Kit* at all grades. Percussion repertoire features a wide range of newly added pieces, including options from *Introducing Percussion*.



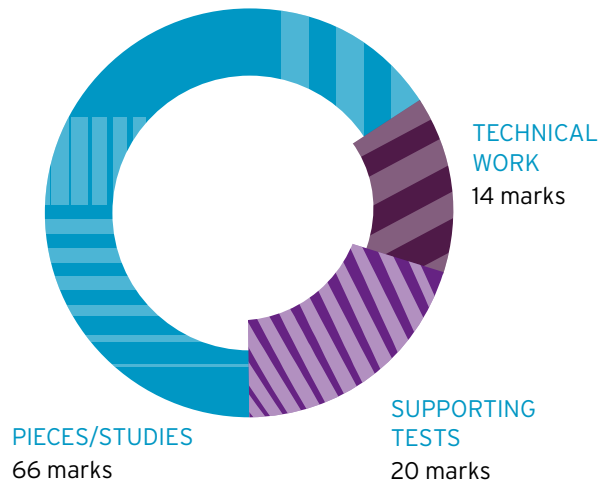
“The new timpani studies encourage students to play musically, including dynamic control, rolls, tonal control, phrasing, articulation and appropriate sticking patterns.”

Lorne Pearcey, percussion teacher, performer and composer

# The exam at a glance

## About the exam

Each exam has three sections: pieces/studies, technical work and supporting tests. There are slightly different requirements depending on the instrument and exam level.



## Exam structure and mark scheme

Initial-Grade 5	Maximum marks	Grades 6-8	Maximum marks
<b>PIECE 1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>PIECE 1</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PIECE 2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>PIECE 2</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PIECE 3/STUDY</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>PIECE 3/STUDY</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>TECHNICAL WORK</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>TECHNICAL WORK</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>SUPPORTING TESTS</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>SUPPORTING TEST 1</b>	<b>10</b>
Any TWO of the following:		■ Sight reading	
■ Sight reading		<b>SUPPORTING TEST 2</b>	<b>10</b>
■ Aural (or unpitched aural – drum kit only)		ONE of the following:	
■ Improvisation		■ Aural	
■ Musical knowledge		■ Unpitched aural (drum kit only)	
		■ Improvisation	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

# Drum kit repertoire books and audio

Trinity's repertoire books, including backing tracks and demos played by professionals, feature a selection of specially arranged pieces and original compositions across a range of styles, as well as the full technical work requirements for the grade, providing teachers and learners with everything they need to prepare for their Trinity Drum Kit exam.



## Initial

BURGESS	Act One Beginners
BURGESS	On the Right Foot
OSBORN	Caribbean Sunset
TRACEY	Blues for Inclusion
OSBORN	Grunk Funk
TRACEY	About Time

## Grade 1

BURGESS	Broadway Bounce
OSBORN	Gunning for Funk
OSBORN	In Seine
TRACEY	Soul Babes
BURGESS	Three Wise Monkeys
TRACEY	Count Me In

## Grade 2

BURGESS	Lava Lamp
BURGESS	NY Nights
OSBORN	Cherry Blue
TRACEY	Gently Does It
BURGESS	Triple Decker
OSBORN	No No Ñaño



## Grade 3

BROWN, arr. TRACEY	Joy Spring
BURGESS	Mean Beanz
OSBORN	Bossa Favour
SHAIMAN & WITTMAN, arr. BURGESS	The Double Bubble Duchess (from <i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i> )
OSBORN	Olé!
OSBORN	Three Line Whip

## Grade 4

COREA & RODRIGO, arr. TRACEY	Spain
MIRANDA, arr. BURGESS	Helpless (from <i>Hamilton</i> )
OSBORN	Film Noir
TRACEY	Algo Latino
BURGESS	Step It Up
OSBORN	Kerfuffle Shuffle

## Grade 5

COLEMAN & ZIPPEL, arr. BURGESS	The Buddy System (from <i>City of Angels</i> )
OSBORN	Snidey Kitten
OSBORN	Where's Juan?
SHORTER, arr. TRACEY	Footprints
BURGESS	Gimme Five
OSBORN	Barrak's Boogie



## Grade 6

HERMAN, *arr.* BURGESS  
SCOTT, *arr.* OSBORN  
TIZOL, MILLS & ELLINGTON,  
*arr.* TRACEY  
TRACEY  
BURGESS  
OSBORN

Overture (from *La cage aux folles*)  
Starsky and Hutch Theme ('Gotcha')

Caravan  
The Genius  
Sept-a-Gone  
Five Six

## Grade 7

GREB, *arr.* BURGESS  
PURIM & MOREIRA, *arr.* OSBORN  
TRACEY  
LLOYD WEBBER, BLACK & HAMPTON,  
*arr.* BURGESS  
BURGESS  
OSBORN

Couscous  
Tombo in 7/4  
7 for 7  
Sunset Boulevard  
(from *Sunset Boulevard*)  
Funk Junk  
Self Destruct

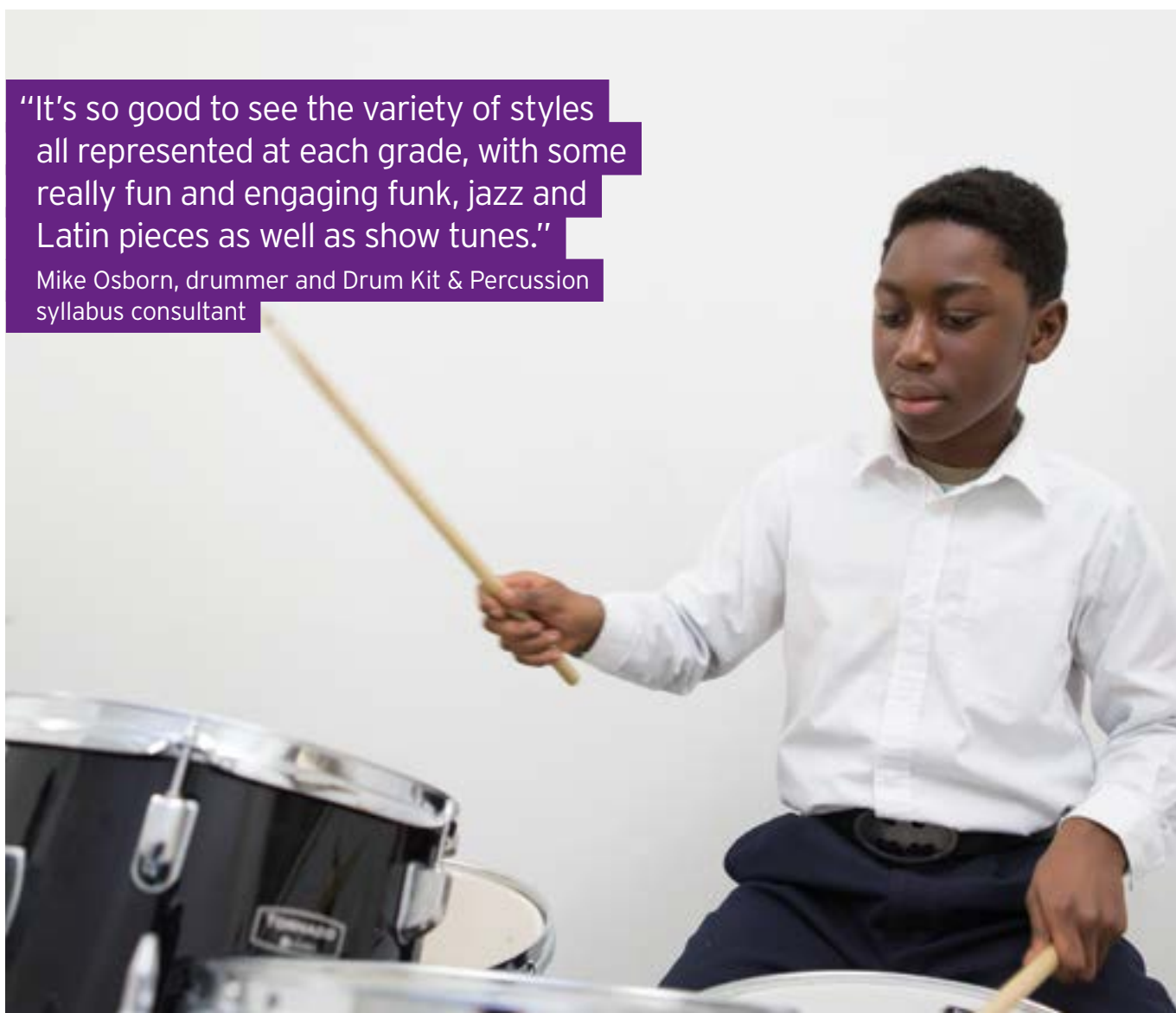
## Grade 8

TRACEY  
GREB, *arr.* BURGESS  
SONDHEIM & STYNE, *arr.* BURGESS  
TRACEY  
BURGESS  
OSBORN

Victory  
Grebfruit  
Overture (from *Gypsy*)  
The Lingo  
Sucka Punch  
Battercada

"It's so good to see the variety of styles all represented at each grade, with some really fun and engaging funk, jazz and Latin pieces as well as show tunes."

Mike Osborn, drummer and Drum Kit & Percussion syllabus consultant





## Drum kit pieces

In addition to featuring pieces by respected professional drummers such as Benny Greb, Trinity has teamed up with specialists, using engaging material that really develops a drummer's all-round musicianship. We have included work by musical theatre expert Chris Burgess, Latin specialist Mike Osborn and jazz drummer Clark Tracey, meaning learners can experience the variety of styles and techniques that drummers really need.

### Benny Greb



Benny Greb is one of the most respected drummers in the world today. Not only has he headlined nearly every major drum festival and toured with his clinics and drum camps worldwide, but he is also recognised as a composer and band leader in his own band Moving Parts, which won him the renowned ECHO Jazz award – the German equivalent to the Grammy Awards in jazz.

We are excited to include two of Benny's songs in our syllabus: 'Couscous' at Grade 7, and one of his best-known, 'Grebfruit', at Grade 8, complete with the backing tracks that are available for download. Trinity worked with the original guitarist for 'Couscous', Chris Montague, to create a bespoke version of the song – together with backing track – specially for the Trinity Grade 7 exam.

**"I am so pleased for two of my songs to be included in the Trinity syllabus. This syllabus focuses on exactly the things you need to become a well-rounded, versatile drummer."** Benny Greb

### Chris Burgess



Chris Burgess' field of interest is musical theatre. 'Broadway Bounce' is an example of a Grade 1 show-style piece that places the student within the soundscape of a theatrical experience. Often in Chris's performance notes, he invites the reader to think about what might be happening on stage at the time or to listen to various parts of the backing, including real-world tempo-change click tracks in some of the later grades. As the student progresses, a wide range of styles and genres are presented including some improvisation work. Well-known shows represented in the syllabus include *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Hamilton*, *City of Angels*, *La cage aux folles*, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Gypsy*.

#### Grade 1 (extract)

## Broadway Bounce

Chris Burgess

**A** Show 2-feel ♩ = 88

mf

(2) (3) (4)

5 (5) (6) (7) (8)

9

# Mike Osborn



Mike Osborn's forte is Latin music. Latin styles are present throughout the syllabus, starting with a basic *cha cha* at Initial and soon progressing to *bossas* at Grade 3 where the *clave* pattern is introduced. The samba study, at Grade 8, is based on the *batucada* rhythm, which would not sound out of place at the Rio carnival, complete with a whistle part for the student to master.

'Where's Juan?' is a Grade 5 Latin piece, which pays homage to the Dominican pianist Michel Camilo. With drum-feature-rich parts, it's a well-crafted look at the style with a brief *soca* section for good measure!

## Grade 5 (extract)

### Where's Juan?

Mike Osborn

Latin ♩ = 100 **A**

*f*

3

5

7

*ff*

**B**

10

*mf*

(2) (3) (4)

# Clark Tracey



Clark Tracey is one of Britain's most well-known and respected jazz drummers, and this syllabus has been greatly enriched by Clark's writing and performing at all levels. The language of jazz begins very simply at Initial, where the drums play a duet with the bass. This establishes the importance of the relationship between the two instruments right from the beginning. On this foundation, other jazz features are built such as Latin rhythms, brushes, phrasing, hits and setups, odd time signatures and solos.

This syllabus includes jazz standards such as 'Joy Spring', 'Spain' and 'Caravan' as well as many original tunes written by Clark. One such piece is 'The Genius', a fast swing tune at Grade 6, which pays tribute to Gene Krupa and his signature accented tom-tom style of playing.

## Grade 6 (extract)

### The Genius

Clark Tracey

Fast swing ♩ = 180  *sim.*  
 R L R L *sim.*



mf

5 **A** R L R L R L R L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R L > 3 3 >

9 R R L L R L R L R L R L R L R L L R L L R L L

13 **B** Hi hat half open  
 x + x x + x (2) (3) (4)

f

17 (5) (6)

21 x + x x + x (2) (3) (4)

25 (5) (6) R R R L R L L L L R L R 3 3



## Drum kit exercises

The *Drum Kit & Percussion Syllabus 2020-2023* is the perfect choice for players who are serious about refining their skills on the drum kit. The technical exercises are unique in the way they explore rudiment combinations in a musical way – drums and cymbals are used in various groove situations by placing them into a performance context. Learning to play fluently with the correct feel, touch and dynamic control is important and the studies really test the students' mastery of these sticking patterns.

### Initial

♩ = 80

R R L L R R L L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R L R

*mf* *f*

From the beginning, students are encouraged to explore the full drum set, introducing four-way coordination and exploring simple movements around the kit to express the techniques melodically.

### Grade 6 (extract)

**B**

5 Drag and stroke R L L R Double drag and stroke R R L L

*mp cresc. poco a poco*

7 Drag paradiddle Double paradiddle Paradiddle Double paradiddle

R L R R L R L R L L R L R R R L R L L R L R L R R L R L R L L L

In this B section, six different rudiments are combined to develop the same musical motif with a foot ostinato to anchor the timing, and dynamic variety to shape the mood of the performance.

### Grade 8 (extract)

**B**

11 5-stroke roll R L R L R L R L R 5-stroke roll R L R L R L R L

*p*

In this extract from the B section, the player gets to explore the kit timbre by playing the snare rim quietly through the metre change. This then leads into a Latin section where the tom toms and cymbal bell are used with a variety of rudiments embellishing the grooves throughout.

# Percussion

Our Percussion exams cover the full range of orchestral instruments: tuned percussion, snare drum and timpani. Candidates can choose to take a combined Orchestral Percussion exam or an individual discipline.

Newly commissioned works give candidates a choice of study for all instruments and grades, designed to help them develop essential playing skills and techniques in a musical context.

Pieces and studies play an extremely important role in developing technique, but are also fun and satisfying to play. They encourage students to play musically with ease of movement around the instrument, dynamic control, tonal control, phrasing, articulation and appropriate sticking patterns.

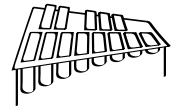
'Blast Off!' from *Introducing Percussion* is featured on the lists at Initial for snare drum, timpani and tuned percussion. All the performance pieces in the book can be played individually or as a group – reflecting the range of ways that students learn – and many feature in the syllabus. Demo and backing tracks are also available.

## Initial



Track 2  
Tuned percussion

### Blast Off!



The musical score for 'Blast Off!' is written in 4/4 time and consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a 'Count in' and a series of four 'x' marks, followed by a double bar line and a melody starting on a quarter rest, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff starts at measure 5, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third staff starts at measure 9, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff starts at measure 13, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The fifth staff starts at measure 17, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes accents (>) over the notes in measures 18, 19, and 20. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fifth staff.

## Support publications



### Introducing Drum Kit

Two volumes exploring all the musical, technical and notational elements required for beginners to Grade 2 level drummers. Through a series of engaging and practical play-along pieces, exercises and teacher-student duets, each element is progressively introduced, with handy tips throughout to illustrate and strengthen concepts.



### Raise the Bar Drum Kit

A collection of the most popular pieces from previous Trinity syllabuses, accompanied by teaching notes. Each book contains an attractive and varied selection that will help drummers expand their repertoire and discover more music from different styles and genres. Backing and/or demo tracks are included for the accompanied pieces as free audio downloads.



### Unpitched Aural: Specimen tests for Drum Kit

This book aims to help teachers prepare their students for the unpitched aural section of the Trinity Drum Kit exams.

The four tests given for each grade are designed to develop the candidate's abilities in the fields of musical perception, discrimination, memory, understanding and analysis. The tests are carefully graded from application of basic skill to more advanced understanding.



### Introducing Percussion

A comprehensive beginners' introduction to the three main orchestral percussion disciplines: snare drum, timpani and tuned percussion. It can be used to develop skills on any one instrument, or all three disciplines alongside one another. The performance pieces can be used in lessons or individual practice, with demo and backing tracks included as a free download.



### Tuned Percussion Scales & Arpeggios

Scales and arpeggios for Initial to Grade 8 for tuned percussion.

- Glockenspiel
- Xylophone
- Vibraphone
- Marimba



### Graded Percussion Sight Reading

Sample sight reading tests for percussion for Initial to Grade 8, with a progressive teaching guide.

- Snare drum
- Timpani
- Tuned percussion



“Trinity’s vision for the exercises has always been to offer the student contemporary pieces of music, full of practical applications of the common rudiments that are both musically appropriate and enjoyable to learn.”

Dave Odart, Drum Kit & Percussion syllabus consultant

## Drum kit and percussion resources

We have developed a wide range of innovative and exciting online resources to support drum kit and percussion teaching and learning at [trinitycollege.com/percussion-resources](https://trinitycollege.com/percussion-resources)

Find out what went into making our Drum Kit & Percussion syllabus, watch our videos showcasing the repertoire and the pro-skills that drummers need, and discover articles and resources from leading drummers and percussionists on repertoire, technique and performance.

## Recognition

Trinity exams are externally regulated in the UK and recognised by education authorities in many countries around the world. They are also aligned to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Grades 6-8 are eligible for UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) points for those applying to UK colleges and universities.

## Certificate and theory exams

Trinity offers certificate exams that provide an alternative to graded music exams and focus solely on performance. To find out more visit [trinitycollege.com/music-certificates](https://trinitycollege.com/music-certificates)

Theory exams are available from Grade 1 to support learners to develop their understanding of the technical language of music. To find out more visit [trinitycollege.com/theory](https://trinitycollege.com/theory)

## Contact us

For further help you can contact the music support team at Trinity’s central office at [music@trinitycollege.com](mailto:music@trinitycollege.com), or find the contact details of your local representative at [trinitycollege.com/worldwide](https://trinitycollege.com/worldwide)

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