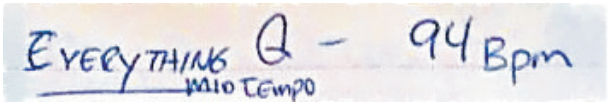
Chapter 4: Dynamic Chart Markings

I have to attribute a big part of my knowledge on chart markings to my playing at Lakepointe Church in Rockwall, Texas. I found out, in hindsight, that I took many of the charts from my playing experience there and merged them with bits of other charts I read to make my own charts. Many of these charts are my own interpretation of what I think is the best that works for me. My method seems to work well, and most of all I can decipher and apply it to any situation when I am preparing for an event or playing a live performance.

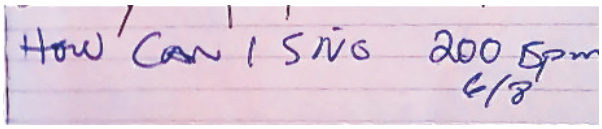
I mostly played auxiliary percussion at Lakepointe Church for four years in support of the drummer. I learned to mark up a given chart to remind me where to place a shaker, a tambourine, hand percussion, a cymbal swell, or any percussion in the appropriate section. I translated these into making charts for the drum kit. Over the years, I incorporated symbols and markings from percussion charts, the charts from Lakepointe Church and PraiseCharts.com to make my own.

Below are the explanations for the different symbols and markings you see on the samples of my handwritten charts, which are a mixture of standard musical notation and Nashville style charts.

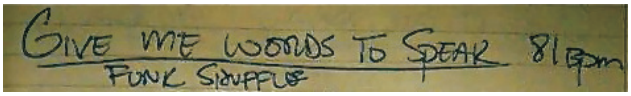
Tempo Markings: I usually put the tempo marking at the top of my chart for future reference in case I am programming my tempos for particular songs or a set. It can come in handy when asked what the tempo is for a particular song.



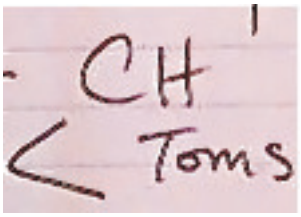
Time Signature Markings: A time signature marking will only be used if I am not playing in common time or 4/4 time. For instance, I will usually put 6/8 time at the top of my page to reference that specific time signature since it's not typical.



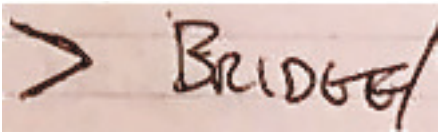
Feel Markings: This refers to terms such as ‘Swing’ or ‘Funk Shuffle’. It's always nice to be prepared to give the correct "feel" to a song.



Crescendo and Decrescendo Markings: A crescendo marking looks like this. These are Italian markings, which simply mean to gradually get louder.

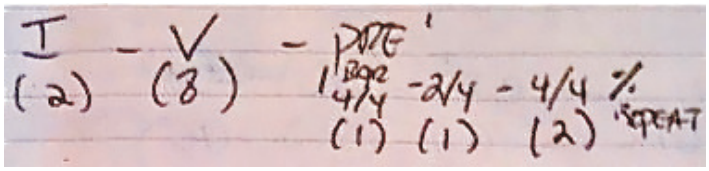


The decrescendo, on the other hand, simply means to gradually get softer.

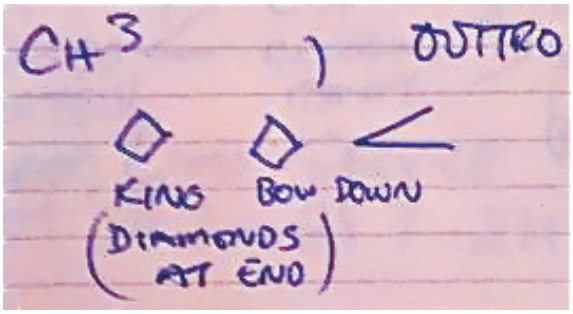


I use a crescendo marking to indicate where I am placing a fill to go into a louder section. As you can see, it usually precedes a chorus or a bridge where a fill is played, going into a louder section of the song. To the other end of the dynamic, I use a decrescendo symbol to indicate where I might use a fill (or not) to go into a softer section of the song. You might see a decrescendo marking as you go into verse sections and down choruses.

Bar or Measure Counts: The numbers under each section of the music denote how many bars or measures there are in that particular section.



The Diamond: The diamond marking is one of the symbols you will commonly see in a Nashville style chart, as shown in the picture. It means to hold out or sustain a note, like that of a whole note in standard musical notation. The diamond marking, like the whole note, usually retains the value of 4 beats. I use it to indicate a cymbal crash that sustains 4 beats or more, going into a down or soft section. I also use it just to sustain a crash through one measure or consecutive measures, until you are back into a section with full groove.



Groove Markings: Groove markings are the little sets of notation or name of a groove to indicate what groove I am playing in a certain section. I only use this to remind me if a groove changes from what it's doing throughout the whole song.

