Stuff That Lives In My Mallet Case

by Mark Shelton

The sound engineer informed me of a problem with too much ringing coming from my snare drum. I quickly reached into my mallet case and pulled out a container of MoonGel. After applying a couple of the dampening pads, the annoying frequencies were subdued. When challenges arise, it is important to have the tools to solve the problem. A close companion at worship band rehearsals, orchestra jobs, and recording sessions, my mallet case contains a variety of items that can assist in tweaking my tone, making repairs, charting a song, and adjusting my set-up.

A stick bag might suffice for a drum set job, but I prefer a hard case with plenty of room to carry my assortment of paraphernalia for percussion gigs. The mallet caddy that I have been lugging around for about a couple of decades measures 18” x 11.25” x 7.75.” A transparent plastic zipper storage bag contains many of the smaller items such as triangle beaters and pencils.

My timpani sticks, electronic tuner, and bass drum mallet only enter my case when necessary. However, there are many items that "live" in my mallet caddy. By revealing several of these residents, perhaps you will be inspired to allow a few new inhabitants into your case.

Sticks
Concert snare drum sticks
Drum set sticks
Timbale sticks
Combination Sticks (bead on one end with hard felt head on the other end)

Mallets and Other Implements
Yarn-covered marimba mallets (for suspended cymbal)
Xylophone/Glockenspiel mallets
Chinese bell tree mallet
Brushes
Bundled Rods
Guiro scraper
Triangle beaters
Cowbell striker
Cajon brushes

Clips, Fasteners, and Mounting Devices
Cymbal stacker
LP Percussion Claw
Knurled mounting posts
Triangle clips
Paper clips
Rubber bands

Writing Supplies
Staff paper
Blank paper
Sticky notes
Pencils
Pencil sharpener
Pen

Tools for Repair and Tone Adjustment
Standard drum key
Timpani tuning key
Pocketknife
Conga/Timbale/Bongo tuning wrench
Djembe tuning key
Screwdriver
Lighter (for tightening natural skin head of tambourine)
Bar chimes replacement ties (also for triangle suspension)
Moleskin padding sheet
MoonGel dampening pads
Cymbal sleeves
Felt washers
Cloth mute for snare drum
Tape

Miscellaneous
File folders (for organizing sheet music etc.)
Adhesive bandages
Nexcare Absolute Waterproof First Aid Tape (skin protection for hand drumming)
Nine-volt battery
In-ear monitors (earphones)
Small practice pad
Egg shaker

"We need a whistle." The last time I heard that request was at a recording session. A quick search of my mallet case ensued, whereupon I located my wooden samba whistle--to the amusement of the producer. After perfunctory mouthpiece disinfection, we recorded my superb whistle performance. I'm glad the whistle was living in my mallet case waiting for its moment!

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Previously published in Worship Musician!, www.worshipmusician.com