

Handbell Ringing is a “percussive art form”. Experience the musical artistry from a view of a professional percussionist. Explore handbell ringing with a percussionist’s view to creating music with sensitive dynamics, phrasing and proper/alternative malleting technique. Recommended for all ringers and rhythm loving people.



### Workshop Presenter & “LIVE” Performers

Damien’s percussion career includes performing with the Singapore Armed Forces Central Band (Principal Timpanist/Percussionist), Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Chinese Orchestra, Singapore Youth Orchestra, Singapore Pops Orchestra, Singapore Wind Symphony, World Youth Wind Orchestra (Austria), HeartBeat Percussion Band, Four-4 Percussion Team as well as in musical theater productions including *HONK!* (George Stiles & Anthony Drewe), *The Wizard of Oz* and *They’re Playing Our Song* (Marvin Hamslich). He also played in the bands that accompanied artistes including Lea Salonga (*Miss Saigon*, *Les Miserables*), Kit Chan, Olivia Ong, Dick Lee & David Tao (HK). Damien is Founder & Music Director of the award-winning **MINISTRY OF BELLZ**, Singapore only independent & premier handbell team. Percussion & Handbells has led him to perform, teach & adjudicate in 23+ countries, including Egypt, Austria, Japan, New Zealand, Turkey, Ireland, USA, Canada, UK & Australia. Damien is was admitted as a Fellow (*FRSA*) with the Royal Society of the Arts (UK) & a Fellow of the London College of Music (UK – FHEQ Level 7). He presently directs 6 school ensembles & is consultant to 8 others. He also serves in the Handbell Ringers of Singapore Guild as its Executive Director. Damien’s interest is in “*Beyond a Typical Classroom: Connective & Effective Music Making & Performance for Youths.*”

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### MINISTRY OF BELLZ – Not for Profit Handbell Arts Company

Formed in 2007

69 Members / Quadruple Choir

Schulmerich + Malmark + Whitechapels + Suzuki

23 Tours (Duets to Full Ensemble)

14 Annual Concerts (5 of which were sensory-friendly)

Past Guest Conductors include: John Hooper, Emily Li, Debbie Rice, Michael Glasgow, Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin, Tim Willetts, Malcolm Wilson, Nick Hanson, Toshikazu Yoshida, Kevin Ko

[www.mobellz.weebly.com](http://www.mobellz.weebly.com)

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## Plink! ..... Percussive

1) Percussion (definition): \_\_\_\_\_ . Handbells being a member of the percussion family. (ie: Clapper STRIKES casting, producing a sound / malleting....etc)

2) Mallet.....4Ws: **W**hich mallet to use? **W**renching the mallet? **W**hat “sound/tone” is suitable for the music? **W**here to use?

3) **W**hich mallet to use

- **Flexible or Stiff shafts (Personal Pref VS Practicality)**
- **Recommended Range of Use for Safety**
- **Parts of the Mallets**



### Wrenching the mallet

- **Holding (Gripping/French/German)**



Gripping (Rear View)



French Grip



German Grip



### Where to use

- **Striking Point**



### What “sound/tone” is suitable

- **Stroke (Arm / Wrist / Finger)**



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- 4) Action & Reaction. How “on time” should you be?
- Looking up while malleting.

• **STRIKING “TOGETHER” ON TIME practice**



**Plank! ..... PRECISION**

- 5) Clarity. Every wonder why sometimes, the left hand hits softer than the right? Consistent striking point on the bell. (Different parts of casting produces different tones)
- **STRIKE THE HANDLE** practice: Accuracy & Consistent Tonal Production
  - **REPEATED** Striking Point VS Level Ringing
  - **BALANCE OF LH & RH** (avoid 2-RH syndrome)
- 6) Miss the beat? Miss the point? Because you were looking at the conductor?
- Getting used to your setup
  - When to look down & when to look up (1 or 2 bar rule)



**Plunk! ..... PERSUASION**

- 7) Body movements (**awareness**) in percussion translated into handbell ringing movements (**stage presence**).

“4 inches more makes a difference between a good performance & a FANTASTIC performance” (McChesney, 2008)

- **Semibreve, Minim, Crotchet (BOP & STRIKE ON TIME, ARM/WRIST)**
- **Freedom of Movement (WAIST, LEGS, ARMS)**
- **Quavers / Semiquavers (CLARITY, FOCUSED, WRIST/FINGER STROKING)**
- **Rolls (LEGATO, LINK)**

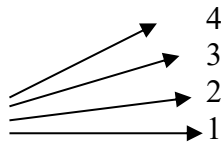


8) COMMON ERRORS / BAD HABITS

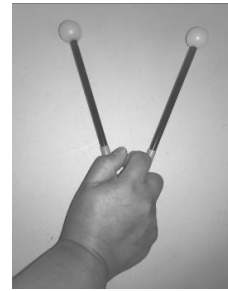
- Holding Mallets too close to the butt or mallet head
- Improper grip, causing lack of clarity of tone
- Using wrong mallets (Brands, Marimba Mallets...etc)
- Crossing Hands

9) Single/Double Suspended Bell Malleting (PPP Part II – if time permits)

- Single Bell (Single Strike)
- Single Bell (Repeated Strikes with Level Ring)
- Double Bell (2 Mallets + 2 Bells)



(A) Shelley Hold.



(B) RH 2 Mallets



(C) Up-Down Hold

10) Q & A



“LIKE” the **MINISTRY OF BELLZ** on



& **MINISTRYOFBELLZ** on



**Workshop Reviews:**

- ... so informational & inspirational (Calgary, Canada, 2011)
- ... is there a Part 2? I wish to learn more. There's so much more to learn. (Calgary, Canada 2011)
- ... so professional & educational. (Liverpool, UK 2012)
- ... probably the best workshop I've attended. (Liverpool, UK 2012)
- ... Enjoyed myself thoroughly! Thank U for all the fun & information (Fremantle, Australia 2013)
- ... Great! (Jeju, South Korea, 2014)
- ... I didn't know there's so much one can do with the mallets (Jeju, South Korea, 2014)
- ... You knew what you wanted to do & knew how to do it (Adelaide, Australia, 2015)
- ... I was very lucky to choose 2 good workshops this morning (Adelaide, Australia, 2015)
- ... Nice Job! Wonderful! Fantastic! Life-Saver! Informative! Awesome! (Edmonton, Canada, 2019)

**Plink Plank Plunk has been conducted at the following events:**

- Ringling Link, Calgary, Canada 2011
- SingBellz Fest, Singapore 2012
- 15<sup>th</sup> International Handbell Symposium, Liverpool, UK 2012
- 27<sup>th</sup> Australasian Handbell Festival, Fremantle, Australia 2013
- Mackay, Queensland Australia, 2014
- 16<sup>th</sup> International Handbell Symposium, South Korea 2014 (Shorter Version)
- 1<sup>st</sup> East Zone COECA Handbell Festival, Singapore 2015
- Hong Kong Visit, September 2015
- 28<sup>th</sup> Australasian Handbell Festival, Adelaide, Australia, October 2015
- 17<sup>th</sup> International Handbell Symposium, Vancouver, Canada, July 2016
- Residential Ringing Week 2017, Sheffield, UK, Aug 2017
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Singapore Handbell Festival, Singapore 2018
- 18<sup>th</sup> International Handbell Symposium, Cairns, Australia, Aug 2018
- ALGEHR Handbell Festival, Edmonton, Canada, Oct 2019
- Singapore Schools e-CCA, Jun – Nov 2020
- ALGEHR Online Workshop, AB, Canada, May 2021

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