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Critical Mass

Composed for the 6th through 12th Grade

Percussionists of Blackman Middle and High Schools

by John R. Hearnes

Medium - 1:47 / 11-40 Players

Instrumentation

**Marching Snares, Marching Tenors,
3, 4 or 5 Marching Bass Drums, Crash Cymbals,
Concert Snare Drum, (2) or more Flubs or Double Headed Toms,
(2) or more Concert Toms, Suspended Cymbal(s),
(2) or more Hand Drums (Djembes, Congas, etc.)**

Performance Notes for Critical Mass

Originally titled *Blackman Audio Attack*, *Critical Mass* was composed to close out a percussion ensemble concert shared by the middle and high schools of the Blackman zone, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. All percussionists, from beginners to seniors, participated.

The piece combines drum line instruments (marching snares, tenors, crash cymbals, and bass drums), and some drums found in front ensembles (rack toms, hand drums of any kind). There are also concert instruments (snare drums, concert toms, and suspended cymbals). Depending on the group, high schoolers can cover the marching drums, rack toms, and hand drums, and the middle schoolers can cover the three concert parts. Or front ensemble students can cover all parts except the four marching parts. There is no need to stress on the particulars of the instruments; simply get the parts covered with as many students as possible and try to balance the “drum line versus concert drums” set up as much as possible.

Critical Mass

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♩ = 160

The score is written for a percussion ensemble in 4/4 time with a tempo of 160 beats per minute. It consists of ten staves:

- Marching Snare:** Features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f* and a note *Λ* above the first measure of the fourth measure.
- Marching Tenors:** Features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a note *Λ* above the first measure of the fourth measure and the instruction "regular crashes throughout, let vibrate, except where marked".
- Crash Cymbals:** Features a pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *mf*. Includes a dynamic marking *mf* and a note *rim* above the first measure of the fourth measure.
- (3) Marching Bass Drums:** Features a pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f* and a note *rim* above the first measure of the fourth measure.
- (4) Marching Bass Drums:** Features a pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f* and a note *rim* above the first measure of the fourth measure.
- (5) Marching Bass Drums:** Features a pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f* and a note *rim* above the first measure of the fourth measure.
- Rack Toms or Flubs:** Features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f* and the instruction "w/ yarn mallets".
- Hand Drums:** Features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f*.
- Concert Snare:** Features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f*.
- Concert Toms:** Features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *f*. Includes a dynamic marking *f* and the instruction "let all notes ring, except where marked".
- Sus Cymbals:** Features a pattern of quarter notes with dynamics *mf*. Includes a dynamic marking *mf*.

Critical Mass

pg. 2

A

Marching Snares

Marching Tenors

Crash Cymbals

(3) Marching Bass Drums

(4) Marching Bass Drums

(5) Marching Bass Drums

Rack Toms or Flubs

Hand Drums

Concert Snare

Concert Toms

Sus Cymbals

6 7 8

ff

ff

mf

hi hat choke

ff *mf*

ff *mf*

ff *mf*

ff *mf*

ff *mf*

ff

ff

ff *mf*

ff

ff

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

Critical Mass

pg. 3

mf

9 10 11 12

Marching Snares
R L L R L R L L R L R L R L R L R R L R L L R L L R L R L R L R L R L

Marching Tenors
R L L R L R L L R L R L R L R R L R L L R L R L L R L R L R L

Crash Cymbals

(3) Marching Bass Drums

(4) Marching Bass Drums

(5) Marching Bass Drums

Rack Toms or Flubs

Hand Drums
mf

Concert Snare

Concert Toms

Sus Cymbals
mf

Detailed description: This musical score page, titled 'Critical Mass' and labeled 'pg. 3', contains ten staves of percussion parts. The top two staves are for Marching Snares and Marching Tenors, both marked *mf*. They feature rhythmic patterns with 'R' and 'L' indicating right and left drum hits, and accents (^) above notes in measures 10 and 12. Below these are three staves for Marching Bass Drums (labeled 3, 4, and 5), followed by a staff for Crash Cymbals. The bottom section includes staves for Rack Toms or Flubs, Hand Drums (marked *mf*), Concert Snare, Concert Toms, and Sus Cymbals (marked *mf*). The score is divided into four measures, numbered 9 through 12 at the top. Measure 12 features a prominent crescendo line across several staves.

Critical Mass

pg. 4

Marching Snares
13 14 15 16
f
R L R R L L R L R R L L R L L R L R L R

Marching Tenors
f
R L R R L L R L R R L L R L L R L R L R

Crash Cymbals
crash crash choke
f

(3) Marching Bass Drums
f

(4) Marching Bass Drums
f

(5) Marching Bass Drums
f

Rack Toms or Flubs
13 14 15 16
f

Hand Drums
f

Concert Snare
f

Concert Toms
f

Sus Cymbals
choke
f