

Exams and repertoire books designed to develop creative and confident drum kit players

The 2014-2016 Drum Kit syllabus from Trinity College London includes a wide range of specially commissioned repertoire by leading drum kit performers and educators, and aims to develop accomplished drum kit players, both musically and stylistically.

The syllabus explores a wealth of different styles that an accomplished player will encounter in the real world of performance. Contributing composers have been selected for their extensive experience of genres and styles of drum kit performance as well as for their ability to write high-quality graded material. Repertoire is challenging, musically appropriate and most of all, great fun to work on.

The Drum Kit syllabus from Trinity offers a flexible approach to the choice of repertoire and the supporting tests, catering for varied teaching and learning styles and enabling teachers to support the strengths and interests of their students.

Why a Trinity Drum Kit exam?

Trinity's Drum Kit exams have been designed to develop confident, creative, and skilled musicians through a structured learning framework, which nurtures development and evaluates a musician's progress at every level.

- ▶ Choice and flexibility – candidates choose three pieces for the exam from the repertoire lists, and two supporting tests (up to Grade 5). At Grades 6-8, sight reading is compulsory and candidates choose one other test
- ▶ A range of specialist contributors – all well-known drum kit educators and performers
- ▶ Newly composed repertoire, as well as popular classics
- ▶ A variety of different styles of music covered including jazz, funk and soul
- ▶ Newly composed exercises designed to develop important drum kit rudiments
- ▶ Uniquely diagnostic mark scheme – providing detailed and specific musical feedback
- ▶ A range of support materials – including graded repertoire books, a special *Introducing Drum Kit* book, plus sight reading and unpitched aural books



How is the exam structured?

Pieces

Candidates play three pieces chosen from the syllabus, two of which are accompanied (group A) and one unaccompanied (group B). In selected pieces candidates may opt to use live piano accompaniment instead of the backing track.

Technical work

For each grade, candidates will need to prepare three short exercises that focus on a specific aspect of drum kit technique. In the exam, two of the prepared exercises will be heard – the first is chosen by the candidate and the second is chosen by the examiner.

Supporting tests

At Grades 1-5, candidates choose two supporting tests from four options: sight reading, aural/unpitched aural, improvisation (rhythmic stimulus only) or musical knowledge. At Grades 6-8, sight reading is compulsory, and candidates choose between aural/unpitched aural and improvisation.

Sight reading

The sight reading test is designed to be musically intuitive and natural. Candidates perform a short, accessible musical extract after a brief period of preparation, at a level approximately two grades lower than the exam being taken.

Aural

The aural test assesses candidates' skills in musical perception and understanding through carefully graded questions about a single musical extract played at the piano by the examiner. At most grades candidates are asked to describe various features of the extract such as dynamics, articulation, texture and style. No singing is required.

Unpitched aural

Four tests are given for each grade: time signature, style recognition, identify the changes and playalong. The tests are carefully graded from application of basic skills to more advanced understanding.

Improvisation

This test explores the candidate's ability to respond fluently, coherently and creatively to a rhythmic idea/stimulus. The stimulus is played on CD or by the examiner on the snare drum, and the candidate is then given preparation time to develop the idea into a drum kit improvisation. Dynamic contrast, thematic development and awareness of phrase lengths and structure should all be considered.

Musical knowledge

The musical knowledge section of the exam is based exclusively upon the repertoire played by the candidate in the pieces section. It is delivered conversationally by the examiner, who draws out what the student knows through questions such as 'point out the most interesting features of this piece'.

Syllabus overlap arrangements

Syllabus overlap arrangements are in place. For further information visit www.trinitycollege.com/music



SAMPLE PIECE

Grade 5

Yabba Dabba

Track 10 – Demo
Track 11 – With click
Track 12 – Without click



Yabba Dabba

Troy Miller

Yabba Dabba by Troy Miller is a funk-based groove study in the style of The Meters and Tom Browne, in which players are encouraged to develop independence and solo ideas in this idiom.

Troy Miller is a visiting professor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and has worked with Adele, Chaka Khan, Donna Summer, Grace Jones and Branford Marsalis among others.

Funk ♩ = 80

Count in

f

3

2

1.

7

10

2.

7²

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in 4/4 time. It begins with a 'Count in' and a tempo marking of 'Funk ♩ = 80'. The first measure is marked with a forte dynamic (*f*). The score consists of several measures of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. There are two first endings (marked '1.' and '2.') and a second ending (marked '2.'). The piece concludes with a double bar line.

This piece is published under licence from Troy Miller.

SAMPLE PIECE

Grade 8

Brazil Overture

Track 27 – Demo
Track 28 – With click
Track 29 – Without click



Brazil Overture

Ralph Salmins

Inspired by Earth, Wind & Fire, Steely Dan, Sergio Mendes, Steve Gadd and Chick Corea, *Brazil Overture* is a follow-up to Ralph Salmins' popular Grade 8 piece of the same name from Trinity's 2011 syllabus. It covers a range of different styles and ideas that all contemporary players should be aware of.

Ralph Salmins is one of the world's most in-demand drummers. Having graduated from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where he studied classical percussion, Ralph has gone on to win numerous awards and polls, including Best Drummer in the British Jazz Awards.

The musical score for 'Brazil Overture' is written for a drum set in 5/4 time. It begins with a tempo of quarter note = 200 and a '(Timp. roll)'. The score is divided into measures 1-4, 5-8, 9-11, 12-15, and 16-19. Measure 1 includes a 'Count in' and a dynamic marking of *ff*. Measure 5 has a 'FILL' and a dynamic marking of *mf*. Measure 8 has a 'Silence' and a tempo change to quarter note = 150. Measure 11 has a dynamic marking of *mf*. Measure 15 has a dynamic marking of *sfz*. Measure 19 has a dynamic marking of *f* and is labeled 'Funk'. The score includes various rhythmic patterns, rests, and dynamic markings.

* = performer's choice of drum(s) to be played using the rhythm shown.

This piece is published under licence from Ralph Salmins.

Contributors

Trinity developed the Drum Kit syllabus with input from a team of teachers, specialist musicians and composers with a variety of musical backgrounds and training. This resulted in a wide range of repertoire options in an array of styles and genres.

Contributors included:



George Double's playing credits include Grammy award winner Jack Jones, Marc Almond and Kym Mazelle. He is active in the West End and in touring theatre, having worked on *Wicked*, *Avenue Q*, *Sinatra* and *Anything Goes* among others. As a writer, George's books and arrangements are published by Trinity and Faber Music.



Ralph Salmins has been a drum kit professor at the Royal College of Music since 1992, and regularly gives masterclasses at the Academy of Contemporary Music and at Drumtech, where he is a patron. He has worked with Paul McCartney, Elton John, James Brown and Tom Jones.



Troy Miller is a professor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and gives clinics at various institutions including Drumtech and the Percussive Arts Society. He has worked with Roy Ayers, Jean Toussaint, Soweto Kinch and Amy Winehouse.



Dave Weckl has developed and maintained a reputation among fans, peers and the international music community as one of the great living drummers. For this, he has received numerous accolades and honours; *Modern Drummer* inducted Dave into their Hall of Fame and named him 'one of the 25 best drummers of all time'.



Pete Riley regularly teaches at the Academy of Contemporary Music, where he is the institution's longest serving tutor. As a performer he has toured internationally, and has recorded albums for a variety of artists including Motörhead and Republica.

Repertoire books

The Trinity College London Drum Kit graded books contain everything the candidate needs to prepare for the pieces and technical work sections of their exam. Playalong CDs accompany each book. *Introducing Drum Kit*, written by George Double, takes players through the early steps of learning drum kit notation via a series of simple exercises and performance pieces.

Sound at Sight Drum Kit books offer a wealth of carefully graded practice tests for the sight reading component of Drum Kit exams and an *Unpitched Aural: Specimen Tests for Drum Kit* book helps students with the unpitched aural component of the exams.

The Drum Kit series is available from your local music shop or online at www.trinitycollege.com/shop



Recognition

Trinity exams are regulated by Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) and are recognised by education authorities in many countries around the world. Grades 6-8 are also eligible for UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) points for those applying to UK colleges and universities.





Teacher support

At the heart of Trinity College London's activity in music education is teacher support. The focus of our activity is supporting and building a community of educators through high-quality online and face-to-face professional development.

Discover Trinity College London

We hold a wide range of teacher support events all over the world. Details can be found on our website or by contacting your local representative.

Trinity's music support site

Developed to support Trinity teachers, our music support site provides free access to teaching resources, articles, discussion forums and more. Teachers can develop their skills through our range of professional development resources, learn more about our range of exams and qualifications, and engage with our online community of educators.

Syllabus support – get up-to-date information about our syllabuses and try our interactive guide to the improvisation test.

Resource library – access free materials for your teaching practice and professional development, including articles, guidance materials and teacher activities.

Community – take part in our discussion forum for teachers where you can ask questions and share your ideas and experiences of teaching music.

Certificate exams

Trinity's certificate exams provide an alternative to graded music exams, focusing solely on performance. Structured as a mini-recital, the candidate is given the choice and flexibility to put together a programme from a wide repertoire list and can include own choice pieces and their own compositions. Marks are awarded for the performance of the chosen pieces and on programme planning, giving good preparation for further progression. Certificate exams are available at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced levels. See the Certificate Exams syllabus or visit our website for full details.

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