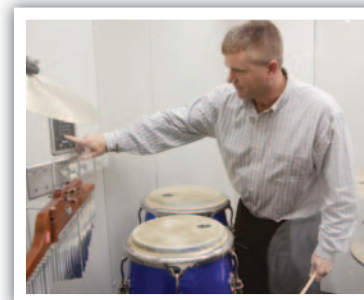


## Discover RHYTHM in Downtown Indianapolis



BY CHERIE YURCO

The Percussive Arts Society (PAS) is dedicated to promoting percussion education, research, performance, and appreciation throughout the world.

Two years ago PAS opened the Rhythm! Discovery Center ([www.RhythmDiscoveryCenter.org](http://www.RhythmDiscoveryCenter.org)) at its headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, to provide interactive exhibits and experiences to promote the PAS mission. Not only does Rhythm! house a unique and extensive display of rare percussion instruments and artifacts from around the world, it also offers programs and performances for the public.

Through sometimes rare video footage in the center's exhibits, visitors learn about the role of percussion in various cultures and also about some of percussion's greatest innovators and innovations. The first exhibit, "Wood—Metal—Skin," introduces the vibrations and sound properties of these materials. Visitors can experiment with an eight-foot gong or explore various pitches and timbres on a log drum.

Learn about the science of sound and the evolution of percussion as you tour the center's newest exhibit, "Instrument Origins," an expanded presentation of the three sound properties of percussion. See what a sound wave looks like and hear the sounds produced by various mallets and hand positions on wood, skin, and metal instruments with 10 interactive portals. Archival displays and video footage introduce the building of percussion instruments in other societies.

Another exhibit tells the story of composer and inventor Clair Omar Musser, who designed innovative mallet instruments. Visitors will examine some of these instruments like the Musser Maestro Marimba Metron



and the Celestaphone, forged from more than 650 pounds of meteorites collected by Musser, who was also an astronomer.

The exhibit "Stage to Screen" explores the role of percussion in theaters, on the radio, and in movies and television, from the early days of instrument sound effects on radio, to unique instruments used in modern films. Meticulously restored and housed in the center's pavilion is Lou Harrison's American gamelan, called Old Granddad. Visitors can try two of its instruments.

Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the center is its interactive area, designed to let visitors of all ages play instruments from around the world, including an Indian tabla, an African talking drum, and hundreds of others. Two Wenger sound booths allow experimentation with the sounds different percussion instruments make in various types of venues.

The Percussive Arts Society's Rhythm! Discovery Center is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.