

Body Music

You've already got "instruments" to make music! Early humans probably made sounds and rhythms just using voice, hands and feet. Many of the performers you see today do the same thing. How many dancers are making sounds with their hands or feet? Do they sing or call to their partners? They are making body music.

Keith Terry is a San Francisco artist who plays body music. Here's one way he does it.

Maybe Yes, Maybe No

Start by rocking back and forth, right foot, left foot. In between steps, mark two beats by slapping your thighs one after the other—right hand on right thigh, left hand on left thigh. Got that?

Try it:

Step right, slap slap. Step left, slap slap. The important thing to remember is to keep the rhythm even, without any pause or "rest" beat.

You can make up a little song in your head to keep the beat, like this:

Maybe yes—maybe no—should I stay— should I go?

Remember, there's no pause between any of the words! Do it fast, do it slow. You can do this in place or while walking. (Try doing it while you're walking down the street and see what happens.)

Then add a little twist! Add a clap before the thigh slaps. Keep the rhythm even, but now there are three beats before your other foot steps down! The song might now say something like this:

Give it to me - Give it to me - Or make up your own phrase!

OK, now for a real challenge, try it in pairs! See if one person can do the "Maybe yes, maybe no" phrase with steps and slaps, and the other the "Give it to me" phrase, AT THE SAME TIME! Start slowly until you get the right pace. Do you start each repetition at the same time, on the same foot beat, and the same first word of the phrase? How many times in a row can you do it, staying in synch?

"Keith Terry and Crosspulse" and their newest recording, "Serpentine," are both available directly from Crosspulse. Call them at (510) 559-9797, and visit their website at <http://www.crosspulse.com>

