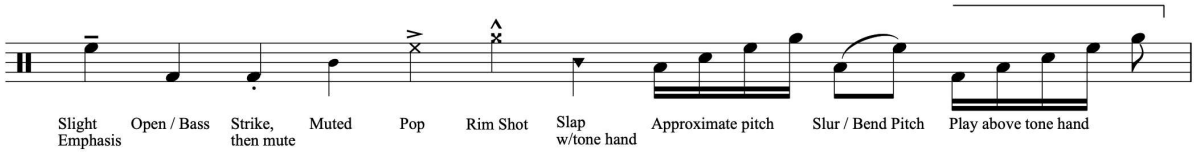
Program Notes

EscALE8 was composed in the spring of 2020 as a vehicle to showcase an instrument that is less commonly scored for in traditional Western percussion ensemble literature: the bodhrán. The piece was commissioned by Jeremy Wade, who serves as the Director of Percussion at George Rogers Clark High School in Winchester, Kentucky. The title ties in one of Winchester's most well-known businesses, the Ale-8-One Bottling Company, which is famous for its unique spin on ginger ale. A finely-skilled bodhrán player himself, Jeremy augmented Chad's initial rhythmic and melodic framework for the piece, providing bodhrán notation, and adding intricacy and nuance to the soloist part.

The bodhrán is featured throughout the piece by serving to propel the energy and pulse of the ensemble as well as taking a lead role in two solo sections. Although the solo sections are notated in the sheet music, the soloist may choose to create/improvise their own part, allowing a more accessible or more challenging solo depending on the performer's ability level. The supporting instrumentation is comprised of one vibraphone, one 4-octave marimba, and one 5-octave marimba.

EscALE8 was premiered in the fall of 2020 by the Campbellsville University Chamber Percussion Group featuring Jeremy Wade on bodhrán.

Bodhrán Notation Key