

# Security Blanket

by  
Matt Conaway

## General Notes About This Piece

While “Security Blanket” can certainly stand alone as a concert composition, I wrote this as a reading exercise for my high school percussion ensemble. None of the parts are particularly difficult for that level, but the piece was designed so all students could learn all of the parts. Over the course of two or three class periods, each student will gain sight-reading experience on mallet, battery, and accessory percussion. Because of this, the music involves a fair amount of pattern evolution and rhythmic/melodic layering.

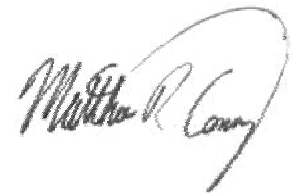
Since many young percussionists have an irrational fear of keyboard instruments, the title “Security Blanket” is a gentle jab at those who eventually find that the mallet parts in this song are much, much easier than they appear or sound.

# Performance Notes

The ink really speaks for itself on most of this piece. I just have a couple of minor (and most likely obvious) suggestions:

- *Control the balance between battery and mallet percussion*
  - It is VERY easy for snare, bass, and timpani to drown out the mallets. In my experience, most mallet players play below the printed dynamic, so ask for a more confident mallet sound at all times.
- *Soft means soft!*
  - It is easy to let crescendos get out of control too quickly. The ensemble shouldn't hit fortissimo until ms. 37!
- *Tempo problems often result from careless playing of patterns*
  - Careful practice with a metronome will help control the mallet tempo from mm. 9-24. As the players become more confident with their mini-scales, this will rush.

Enjoy the piece... and enjoy working with large percussion ensembles! That kind of group has become one of my great joys over the last four years, and I hope to see more percussion groups take root in the years to come!



Matt Conaway



**Matt Conaway** is the Director of Bands for the West Lafayette Community School Corporation in West Lafayette, Indiana. Originally from Woodhaven, Michigan, Conaway completed his undergraduate degree at Indiana University-Bloomington, earning his Bachelor of Music Education-Teaching Area degree with distinction. Following graduation, he served as the Graduate Assistant Director with the Purdue University Bands. In that capacity, he served as an assistant with the "All-American" Marching Band and the concert bands. In addition, he served as a director of the "Gold and Black Sound" women's basketball pep band.

Conaway is currently on the board of directors for the Indiana University Alumni Band and was recently elected to the state board of the Indiana State School Music Association. He is a member of MENC, Indiana Bandmasters Association, Indiana Music Educators Association and Tau Beta Sigma. Matt is also active with the Lafayette Citizens Band and Lafayette Civic Theatre. He has over 150 arrangements and compositions to his credit, including works for the Bloomington "Pops" Orchestra, Indiana University, Purdue athletic bands and several high school and university ensembles in the Midwest.