

Hailing from Akron, Ohio, Austin Ferguson is a percussionist and music educator who focuses on bringing people together through music and its role in connecting communities. During his studies at The University of Akron (BM Percussion Performance '16) he found a passion for the unique sound and history surrounding the steel pan. This inspired greatly by his professors and mentors Dr. Larry Snider and Matthew Dudack and their leadership of the Emmy and Grammy-nominated University of Akron Steel Drum Band, of which he was a member of for four years. He gained experience in performing and arranging for the ensemble while also sharing the stage with such artists as Cliff Alexis, Liam Teague, Ray Holman, Tom Miller, Khan Cordice, Mia Gormandy, and Robert Greenidge. Austin's pursuit of the art pushed him to experience the steel pan in its native home, leading him in 2014 to perform with the PCS Nitrogen Silver Stars Steel Orchestra under the leadership of Liam Teague in the National Panorama Competition in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. He has valued sharing his experiences in the field of percussion and steel pan and has collaborated with the City of Akron - Lock 3 Summer Arts Experience to lead Neighborhood Arts Celebrations where neighbors and city leaders are brought together to experience music and art within their communities. Austin also worked closely with the Children's Concert Society of Akron and the University of Akron Percussion Department to present educational concerts on the history of concert and world percussion to students in the Akron Public Schools as well as neighboring districts.



In Spring of 2018 Austin completed his post-baccalaureate license in Music Education at Youngstown State University where he received extensive training in leading the instruction of instrumental and general music students in grades K-12. He has worked on staff as percussion coordinator in the Tallmadge and Buckeye Local School Districts alongside teaching students privately. Austin has experience in contemporary percussion as is evident by him receiving the 2016 Most Outstanding Undergraduate in Percussion Award at Akron as well as an invitation to participate in the 2016 Sō Percussion Summer Institute at Princeton University. He has performed percussion professionally with the Richmond, IN Symphony Orchestra, Wooster Symphony Orchestra, Summit Choral Society, Found Sounds Steel Band, And Steelbago Steel Band. Austin is currently the Assistant Director of the Virginia Arts Festival's Rhythm Project.