



Teachers' Resource Card *From Scratch: 555 Moons*

From Scratch *Gung Ho 1,2,3D* 1984

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Te Tākaka o te Mātauranga

From Scratch: 555 Moons

About the Exhibition

Formed in 1974, the Auckland-based art/music ensemble From Scratch has performed to acclaim around the world, with its distinctive invented instruments. *555 Moons* reveals the range, depth, and development of From Scratch's work over subsequent decades—and new directions. This survey exhibition features films of the group's performances, instruments and sonic sculptures, drawings, and photos—a sensory feast for eyes and ears. The title, *555 Moons*, refers to the number of lunar cycles between the group's formation and the show's opening.

The From Scratch story began in the late 1960s, when Philip Dadson participated in Cornelius Cardew's experimental Scratch Orchestra in London. Cardew's 'people's liberation' music brought together trained and untrained musicians and artists to improvise on traditional and non-traditional instruments. Influenced by Fluxus, it was wildly diverse and democratic—anyone could join in. After returning to Auckland, Dadson formed Scratch Orchestra New Zealand in 1970. In 1974 he formed a smaller breakaway group, From Scratch, with the emphasis shifting from improv to composition, with a specific focus on rhythm.

The exhibition includes films of performances, including *Pacific 3,2,1,Zero: Part 1* (1982), which protested against French nuclear testing in the Pacific, and *Pacific Plate* (2000), which humourously incorporates foley trays, whistling kettles, spinning plates, a water-cooler drum kit, and a 16mm film projected onto a Venetian blind.

Vocabulary

Rhythm—a regular, repeated pattern.

Percussion—the group of instruments that are sounded by being struck or scraped.

Hocket—a rhythm or melody shared between two or more players (or voices); while one instrument (or voice) sounds, others rest.

Slap tubes—racks of horizontally mounted, end-struck, plastic plumbing pipes. Constructed and performed by From Scratch, these instruments are partly inspired by Solomon Islands bamboo-tube instruments.

Foley—sound effects for radio and films made with objects. Foley trays containing broken china plates were used in *Pacific Plate*.

Fluxus—a movement of artists, composers, designers, and poets founded in the 1960s. Artists emphasised artistic process over finished product. Participants adopted a 'do it yourself' attitude, using materials at hand. Collaboration, simplicity, and humour were key features.

Post-visit Reflection and Activities

Reflect on your visit. What did you discover? What are you curious to try or find out more about?

Develop rhythmic skills with games and exercises in the *From Scratch Rhythm Workbook*.

www.amazon.com/Scratch-Rhythm-Workbook-Phillip-Dadson/dp/0435086707

Investigate the sound-making potential of different materials. Gather a variety of objects, then explore different ways to create noises (beating, shaking, scraping, blowing, etc). Experiment with both natural and manmade materials and listen carefully to the range of sounds produced. Consider the emotional qualities evoked by different materials, such as metal or wood. Think about how you could affect the pitch and volume of sounds, and look online for some interesting science experiments to perform. **Design** a found-object instrument, instrument station, or sound sculpture based on your discoveries.

Construct a set of slap tubes or stamping tubes. Read *Slap Tubes and Other Plosive Aerophones*, which contains information on their history and global cultural context, and detailed plans to construct, tune, and play a variety of instruments.

www.amazon.com/Slap-Tubes-Other-Plosive-Aerophones/dp/0972731342

Find out about taonga pūoro. Take a sound walk focusing on the natural environment, āta whakarongo to the sounds and rhythms that come from Papatūānuku and Ranganui. Notice the sounds made by the wind when it whistles through ngā rākau; noisy cicada songs; pebbles being thrown up the beach by Tangoroa, and the songs of tūī, kōkako, and weka. These sounds inspired the creation of taonga pūoro. Find out more:

www.tepapa.govt.nz/discover-collections/read-watch-play/maori/maori-musical-instruments
www.mcleodsbooks.co.nz/p/maori-books-te-ara-puoro-a-journey-into-the-world-of-maori-music

Visit Philip Dadson's wind sculpture in Evans Bay, *Akau Tangi* which makes soft flute-like sounds:
<https://www.sculpture.org.nz/the-sculptures/akau-tangi>

Research Scratch Orchestra, an experimental musical performance group from the 1960s. Find out more about composers Cornelius Cardew and John Cage, and the Fluxus art movement. Consider their influence on the work of From Scratch.