



Jim Yakas

Director of Percussion Studies **Dr. James Yakas** joined VanderCook in 2015, and recently completed a Doctorate of Musical Arts in percussion performance from the University of North Texas, where he also earned his bachelor's degree in music education.

After earning his master's degree in percussion performance and pedagogy from Northern Illinois University, he spent 12 summers in the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps, eventually becoming their percussion coordinator and arranger in 2003. Yakas has performed at festivals in Trinidad/Tobago and Seoul, South Korea.

He studied Afro-Cuban drumming with Orlando Cotto, and accompanied ethnomusicologist Dr. Steven Friedson for tribal drumming studies in Ghana. Yakas is a member of the Percussive Arts Society Education Committee as well as the Vice President of the Illinois Chapter of PAS.

He endorses Yamaha Percussion, Vic Firth Sticks and Mallets, Remo Drumheads and World Percussion Instruments and Sabian Cymbals.