

PASIC 2018 - Panel Discussion: “Rosewood: One Last Breath?”
Saturday, November 17, 2018. 9AM Room 201

Gordon Stout, moderator. Doug DeMorrow. Ron Samuels. Omar Carmenates. Mark Ford. John Glowka. She-e Wu. Fernando Meza. Frans Swinkels.

Thomas Burritt (Presider)

Happy Saturday morning to everybody at PASIC.

It is my honor as Keyboard Committee member to get today’s session started.

It is obviously a very important topic near and dear to so many of our hearts.

Gordon Stout will be our moderator this morning. You all know Gordon, I'm sure.

He is a PAS Hall of Fame Member and obviously very passionate about this topic, I'm now going to turn it over to Gordon and waste no more time.

Gordon Stout (Moderator): Thank you Thomas

A wonderful panel has been put together here. I am very happy to have them all here.

Having written to each of them in advance, they each have 2-3 minutes to answer questions that I posed to them.

Questions:

1. What are the problems with continuing to make Honduran Rosewood marimbas into the future (the next 10-20 years)?
2. As a manufacturer what will your company do about the dwindling supply of Honduran Rosewood?
3. As a player/educator/professional should we do everything possible to foster an attitude that puts the respect of the wood at the highest level? Should there be a paradigm shift in the consciousness of the percussion industry and community towards that end?

Please feel free to answer any of those questions however you might wish.

Gordon: At PASIC 2013 Omar presented a discussion about Rosewood based on his doctoral dissertation. That was never another session was to further discuss the ideas and knowledge presented at that time. The main reason I submitted this proposal was to follow up on the information he presented in 2013.

Omar Carmenates (Furman University):

It’s an honor to join this esteemed panel and to get to talk about this topic that’s very dear to me. I was hoping I go a little later depending on where the room went. So I'm going to come at this probably from a different angle than most of the people on stage, to the questions of what are the problems of continuing to make Rosewood marimbas into the future.

A couple things I think we all have to understand is that we have the industry, we have performers, how we treat the instruments and how we build them. However there is a global aspect of this and it is important that all of us understand that perspective and how the socio-political environment in all these other things fit into our instrument - we're just but a small part of that.

To start, I think one thing certainly its something that manufacturers know. There aren't necessarily rows of Rosewood trees waiting on a neat farm. It's a jungle tree. It grows in the wild. This is very important. It is part of a local ecosystem in Guatemala and Belize. It is part of an economy. It is part of a society there and it grows in a very small part of the world.

So many issues we face are not just how we will build them, how we play them, but there are issues of climate change, habitat loss, slash and burn agriculture, cattle grazing, the furniture industry, and how the wood is used in all those industries. We are but a very small part of that and some of the larger things to consider are the economy: when it comes down to it the people, when it comes to feed their family they are going to do what pays the most. And right now that's slashing and burning the forest, for cattle and agriculture so they can sell meat on the market. Having cattle is very resource intensive. You have to create a lot of grass, you have to cut down the forest, burn it all down which creates fertilizer for the grass and then the cattle can graze.

Beyond just our industry there are issues like that and construction. That is another part of it. CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)is trying to regulate the use of Rosewood from the top down. They are well intentioned. What happens when those things come into effect are global initiatives, that are important to speak of.

The last thing: the more economically valuable the tree is to the economy of the people of Belize and Guatemala, the more likely we are to have a supply in the future

Gordon: Thank you Omar. After each of the panel presents their answers and thoughts, then of course we will open it up to questions and discussions from the audience
We will just go right down the line: Doug would you like to go next?

Doug DeMorrow (DeMorrow Instruments):

Thanks for coming this morning, It is a very important topic as far as maintaining the marimba into the future. As Omar stated, there are lots of factors that control what we do that are way beyond us, such as government intervention, and rules and regulations on how things are supposed to work.

How they are now trying to control it really effects our supply of Rosewood. For example, yesterday a gentleman came up to me and said he had put in to order multiple rosewood keyboards for his district and was told his request was turned down because the person in charge of the money said: no, you are going to have to get synthetic keyboards because we're trying to be good stewards of Rosewood, which means he was not going to be allowed to buy the rosewood because it is a controlled species of wood.

Rosewood is the only wood that does what it does in the entire world. There are other woods that kind of come close, like Paduk, but it is not as good as Rosewood. My feeling is that because Honduran Rosewood is a single purpose wood, is so limited in where its grown, it's actually fulfilling its true purpose when we create musical instruments out of it. Nothing else is like it. We can build furniture from any kind of wood. You can do this yet if you take the Rosewood away from the marimba you change the marimba as we know it. The marimba will likely change over time. It's very possible that the availability of the wood will get to a point where it's not commercially sustainable to use for making marimbas. I know, from my experience, in finding the wood from other sources that the cost of the wood has dramatically gone up but it hasn't really been reflected in our industry yet as far as the cost of the instruments.

You have to get an import permit, as the use of how much of the wood is being closely controlled by CITES. It could become like Brazilian Rosewood which is shut down. Those kinds of things are things completely out of our control and we don't know how we are going to deal with it when that happens.

Mark Ford (Bergerault/North Texas University):

Thank you Gordon and thank you to all the esteemed guests on this panel. It is an honor to be with you all. Sorry that I have a "PASIC" voice right now.

Through my research, as Doug alluded to, I have learned that CITES is an organization which oversees the type of use of products and organic products that are endangered. It was in their 2016 conference when they identified Dalbergia Icanus wood as endangered, which includes Honduras Rosewood and many other kinds of Rosewood. Starting in Jan 2017 there was a worldwide ban on this Rosewood to protect it. In order for any company (and of course Doug and Ron could talk to a greater extent about this) to import they must have CITES approval or it can't come into the country. It will sit in storage areas if it doesn't have the correct paperwork. And it doesn't of course always guarantee that the wood that they are receiving is the quality of wood that they want to have to be used for making an instrument.

I spoke with Bergerault. They are based in France. Most of their Rosewood, if not all of it, is coming through Guatemala. They know that it is more and more difficult to move the wood overseas. It takes a lot of planning and also just an opportunity for the people on both ends (export and import) to approve that purchase.

I think if you are going to change the world, the only way that we can do this is to come together. I was looking for an opportunity to find an organization with furniture makers of the world. China is a huge importer of Rosewood. They have an amazing addiction to Rosewood furniture. Without addressing this issue, really this conference or these discussions might go nowhere. But the idea here is that we would try to develop some kind of organization. I was looking for such a group in the USA that was trying to answer these questions and to deal with overuse of rosewood for furniture (and when we need it for instruments such as guitars and other artistic purposes). I couldn't find such an organization.

If we are going to make a real difference in the world, we have to be able to find a way to coordinate and to cooperate with organizations that reach these other areas that use rosewood. Also needed is more research and development of materials that sound like Rosewood, but are not rosewood. Currently in my opinion and as most of you know, the synthetic marimba bars that are currently in use are ok but they really don't sound like how we want them to sound. They may be OK when used, OK for certain educational purposes but not suitable for artistic purposes yet. I am hopeful that in the near future that will change and I feel you are going to hear some news about that. I look forward to hearing about such ventures soon.

Ron Samuels (Marimba One):

Thanks Gordon. I first realized that rosewood was becoming more and more difficult to find about 10 years ago. At that time I started traveling down to Central America. Rosewood grows in both Belize and Guatemala on the east and west side of the Maya Mountains.

I eventually struck up a relationship with a Mayan family in Belize. There are Mayan villages in and around Belize and they are mostly living very basic lives. The way they were milling Rosewood at that time was they would take logs and literally put them on a table saw and they would push them through. They were constantly burning up the table saw motors.

I shipped them a mobile dimension band saw mill along with over 100 band saw blades and a blade sharpening set up. I traded them rosewood for the band saw mill. The reason I sent them the sharpening system was because they used to have to travel a whole day just to get a blade sharpened.

The family that I sent the mill to eventually ended up employing a lot of people in their village to cut the Rosewood. I went down there many times to set up the mill and to show them how we liked the wood to be milled.

The idea behind this was I wanted the Rosewood trees to be cut in such a way as to maximize the highest quality marimba bars from the trees. When the trees were done being cut into marimba bars, myself and a few other people would go to Belize and inspect each and every piece of Rosewood. We would be several days on our knees with chickens and pigs running around, looking at future marimba bars, making sure they were all good.

There is definitely slash and burn happening, like Omar was saying, but also there is a lot of poaching because the Rosewood trees are so valuable. And what has happened, at least in this one village, they are less incentivized to poach the wood because now they are employed cutting the wood—making a value added product.

Also in Belize, what's happened in the past 2 years is they are now cutting Rosewood on a rotational tract basis. They have some large areas of land that they haven't cut in a long time and they broke this particular area up into 30 individual pieces. In the first year, they cut all the Rosewood trees that were 12" and bigger in diameter on the first tract of land. And the next year they cut all the rosewood 12" and bigger on the 2nd tract.

Eventually, after 30 years, they will come back to the first track of land and those Rosewood trees that were left will be cut, but only the ones that are 12” and larger in diameter. This is their idea of sustaining Rosewood—and it works so long as the wood is not poached. It’s important that Rosewood is valuable to the communities where it grows so that the local people are motivated to make value added products out of it.

We also get wood from Guatemala. I really like going down to Central America to source the Rosewood. In Guatemala the way it works is they have Rosewood nurseries set up, there’s people out in the forest that find the Rosewood seed pods. Rosewood is in the legume family. They take the seed pods, crack them open and plant the seeds. I’ve been to nurseries with thousands of Rosewood trees growing. It is great that all of these things are happening, but still Rosewood is totally stressed out.

I guess there is one other thing I’d like to say: I believe as instrument makers, we are all getting our wood from these same regions whether it be Belize or Guatemala. It is super important for manufacturers to tune each piece of wood as well possible. Rosewood demands this of us, out of respect for this most amazing of woods. It is like the idea if you are planning to cook a great meal, you could get the best ingredients, but if you burn the food, even though you used great ingredients, the results are still unappetizing,

The exact same thing applies to Rosewood. You can take a great piece of rosewood and not tune it correctly, and it will not be musical. Making marimbas that have bars that are tuned well so that they do not break is its own act of conservation.

Hans Swinkles (Adams):

Thank you Gordon for having me here. And for all the speakers that have spoken before, I think that a lot of things are similar to my experiences. I’ve been coming to Belize for the past 20 years and we have an old saw mill there as well. I was also interested in the politics because this whole Rosewood thing has to deal with politics. You have the Maya and you have the regular government. The Mayas is a very strong culture in Belize and they own a big part of the country and in that part there is a lot of Rosewood. The government says at one moment the land belongs to us and the Maya said no it belongs to us. It went to court and the Maya won. And that was a big fight between the two that the Mayas had Rosewood which the government called illegal Rosewood. And so there is Rosewood because people have to survive, it is a poor country they have to eat to feed their children they have to feed their family and they cannot, so they have to cut the trees to make fields for coffee and cocoa. It is important what’s happening to these trees: do they put them on a big stack and burn them or are they going to select it and are we going to use this for that and that for this? When we started in the beginning it was always told to me we could not import Rosewood as a tree or a log or as a block of wood, it has to be a finished product. So that was rule number one. We have a sawmill there that precuts our pieces so we can use for marimba bars. But then unfortunately there was a big Chinese market was opened and they sold big logs of trees unprepared undone full container full loads to China and that was to me the

beginning of the problem. Then the government found out from where are all these trees going and coming from and then they stopped all this export for Rosewood.

I think again that was the beginning of the problem. We are sitting here because it's not in my opinion that there is not enough rosewoods it's only a fight about who owns the Rosewood and who is going to make the money from it in Belize.

I also think that everything has settled down now. The fight with the government and the Maya is probably still not ultimately fixed. But as long as you have legal Rosewood, as Ron said, it will be ok. Do it good, make it well because the wood deserves good treatment. Using this wood in a good way is very important.

Now I'm going to mention one thing: I have seen some manufactures using our dear Rosewood in ways that don't necessarily respect the wood. You see a very nice piece of wood that is completely destroyed by someone who calls themselves a manufacturer. And for the rest that is basically what my experience is. There's lot of Rosewood it's a wild tree that's growing in the forest everywhere and they need the large pieces of land for coffee and cocoa so they are cutting the trees anyways. Only is it very good with the whole CITES thing, they take care of how Rosewood is exported and imported to the rest of the world. We have to make a re-export document and a receiver in the country. So all the instruments that are around they need to have a permit that the wood is really well imported and exported. We were all worried about when CITES came but at the end honestly I am really happy because then the wood is totally under control

Gordon: I would now like to introduce John Glowka, of Mode Marimba. I thought it was really important to include him in this panel discussion because he has a very different take on these issues and ideas.

John Glowka (Mode Marimba):

I talk really loud and I get really excited so I thought I would stand back from the microphone. If you can't hear me in the back just raise your hand.

I'm the only person here who doesn't really know anything about Rosewood other than when we started to work this idea is that the instruments were too expensive. Just too expensive. For what ever reason. I don't know. I live with some Wal-Mart shoppers - my family - we have maybe a nice car and some nice furniture. Generally a working class family doesn't have however much it costs to get this Rosewood. I m hearing if we doubled the price of this Rosewood we could help these farmers out. We could carve ourselves out a niche but this seems counter to more marimba. More marimba for you, more marimba for students, more marimba for colleges. More marimba in music. So we never even considered using Rosewood. We said this is the sound they want; we had a theory on sound and what is the closest we can get to that sound at an affordable price. We set out to find an alternative something that would be good at an affordable price. It still is not affordable. It's not a \$300 guitar and then you can start classical guitar lessons. The instrument was just so beautiful to me, and I thought it was amazing. It's like the pied piper, when people see what you're doing they are fascinated, like wow

where do you plug it in. The kids were waiting in line to practice this one rosewood instrument. It was out of tune. The resonators were out of tune. But it was this total impression that still sounded good. It wasn't awful: your kid is learning a piece of music. Doing something and you think wow that's an amazing thing if we actually had a whole instrument and could do other things with it, then people would join in and that's what happened since we started. People are yearning for this need we have to have a lower cost alternative.

One of the questions you asked was about paradigms. I came in with a completely different perspective. Five years ago I didn't even know what a marimba was and I'm almost 50 years old. I tell people I build marimbas and they are like what "you're the weird kid that plays the xylophone." They don't understand the music, they don't understand the sound, they don't even recognize it as a keyboard. It is right there in front of them, and as soon as you explain it and tell them what's going on the lightbulb goes off. So I'm giving my own personal experience. My son who was an exceptionally bright kid was bored out of his mind waiting to hit the gong in percussion, you're in the band you're waiting, waiting. You need something to do. That's why your drummers or you want to play an instrument.

So that's how we got involved. I have been saying there has to be something that's acceptable. The students look to their sensei (I call him). It feels good what I'm doing. Even though Rosewood is what you really want, this is a great place for you to start now and maybe even a great place for you to create something. Because it's not exactly, you have to hear it for what it is and what it sounds like and does the music sound good and does it make me feel good when I play it. And this is what I see as the shift in paradigms for alternatives. Not just my alternative, there are dozens of alternatives out there. Half of the percussion departments I go around to are banging on drum brake pads trying to make noises, something creative with an instrument. And for us at Mode it was about finding a less expensive alternative that people could find acceptable and find some creative expression. So we never even considered Rosewood. It was too much time, too much hassle, and too much money.

I have an uncle who is a salmon fisherman and he feels about his right to catch salmon no matter how the season goes because he was there first. And when they change the rules and you start affecting their living it becomes a very personal matter. So whether its salmon, whether is ivory, whether its Rosewood, the world wants this wood. Its hard to tell the person in China that this highest aspiration to have a highly valued wood to have a chair to sit in. We say that's not a viable use. It is very hard to tell the world that we are the only people who can do this. It seems to me it's changing, the world is changing and this will always be here in some form but it may not always be the way forward.

Fernando Meza (University of Minnesota):

I come from a different perspective as a college professor and professional performer. Being from Costa Rica originally I have a particular soft spot in my heart for this issue. I grew up in a country that is absolutely a beautiful tropical paradise where wood is plentiful. Honduras Rosewood itself is not grown in Costa Rica but we grow woods that

are similar and a few years ago I wanted to actually do something about it. I knew about this problem from a long time ago and it struck me that if I wanted to do something I have to do it in my tiny little corner. I decided that I was going to make a step forward somehow. I met this young man and his father in Costa Rica who at the time were building traditional folk marimbas like the marimbas of Guatemala and Chiapas. The instrument is actually the national instrument of Costa Rica by legislative decree and the woods that are used for making the traditional instruments have never been tapped for the commercial market or concert instruments and I was curious as to what could happen if I started to experiment trying to find an alternative. Certainly not a substitute, as it has been established there is no substitute for Rosewood. But I wanted to see what I could do and we started experimenting with a number of things. Turns out the marimbas they were using for the traditional folk instruments did not really work for a concert setting, the wood was too soft, this, that and the other. The point was that I was trying to find an alternative. Some kind of alternative that was not rosewood because Rosewood, but not paduk. Paduk doesn't have the quality we want. I wanted to see if there was anything that could be in the middle. Maybe there was something in the middle. Maybe three quarters of the way up closer to Rosewood. After a lot of trial and error we did find some woods that work, that are a very positive alternative.

Two years ago Oscar Biolley had a booth at PASIC, and brought one of his instrument. You may recall that there was a very warm reception from our percussion community to the instrument.

I think it is also incumbent on us individually to try and address the issue. We have here a very esteemed panel of phenomenal marimba craftsman. And those of us in the implementation side of what they make have a responsibility to see what we can do and what steps we can take forward. We all love Rosewood. I'm in love with that wood. But needs to be a sustainability to the production. The trees grow very slowly. It takes seventy-five to a hundred years for a tree to really mature. We have to figure out what we can do.

There is an issue on the performance side. Those of you that are in the marching arena: the use of Rosewood to me is a bit oxymoronic. It just doesn't make sense to have this precious wood in the field. And I don't know if that hurts peoples feeling in the marching arena. It's difficult to justify that at least in my mind particularly when the wood has become so scarce. I think its just incumbent individually for all of us to find a way to make a step forward. For me it was to find a wood that would help. And the woods in Costa Rica seem to do the trick.

She-e Wu (Northwestern University/Majestic):

I'm an educator. I'm also a player. So I'm going to speak a little bit from that perspective. But what Mark Ford was saying about the CITES (Convention International Trade Endangered Species) is like a little hope. Because so much of it has been bad news so far. So there's a little hope. Last month in Russia there was a committee formed because there are furniture makers and then there are musicians. It doesn't help us that there are tons and tons of African Rosewood in Nigeria is being sold to China and

Vietnam and we are lumped into that. And we are not doing even close to that. So that committee is advocating for musicians and instrument companies and the proposal is made that perhaps musical instrument companies could be exempt from all these regulations and if its adopted it would be May of next year. Not sure if that that will happen or not. We will keep our fingers crossed.

Having said that, one of the questions Gordon put before us is “What will your company do about the dwindling supply of Honduran Rosewood” and I guess I’ll speak about that for Majestic. We will have to continue the research for alternatives, high quality alternative material which means that It could be synthetic and we have to continue to explore for other woods like Fernando Meza has done. We need to further pursue research for alternative wood different species. I don’t actually believe there is only Rosewood ever. Earth is beautiful and I’m not saying we should go start finding trees and cutting them. But I do think there are other species that might work. It will cost a lot of money in Research and Development. Which company is going to do that and spend a \$100,000 to do serious research and find our wood? Who is going to do this, and are we going to split that cost? We probably should add extended synthetic instruments in between synthetic and Rosewood bars.

And for me, I am willing now speaking from an educator standpoint, I would love to start a movement that I said a few years ago, that we practice with synthetic instruments or bars and transition into Rosewood or some other wood for performance. I inherited a really great program at Northwestern University, but when I got there, there were maybe six or seven 5 octave marimbas and guess what? Half of the keyboards had broken bars. You know what I’m talking about. It’s not just the \$300 that your school or your teacher has to pay for a new bar. That might not be possible. So the awareness that we have to all have is as educators about this instrument and the wood it is made from. Fernando also talked about DCI and marching bands. I do think that some directors are really mindful and are aware of the situation with Rosewood and that discussion certainly needs to happen. And perhaps we can practice with synthetic material and to change for the sound quality we look for as performers. I would love to start a movement and have many of you join me.

Matt Coe (Coe Percussion, LLC) Matt was not able to attend, but sent the following comments to Gordon to read, as follows:

The main issue will be continuing to obtain quality wood easily and at a price that will allow for a finished product that is still within an affordable range for the average customer. A second issue could be out of our control and that is what CITES decides to do regarding regulation of Honduras Rosewood. It is very possible that it could eventually be put on Appendix I which would effectively end import of the lumber and export of finished products using the wood. That would end rosewood marimba production. Hopefully that will not happen.

I’m not certain there is much that can be done regarding the supply of the wood because there are so many factors that are not in an individual manufacturer's control.

We try to educate as much as possible about the situation and I have reached out to my state federal government but don't expect much to be done on that front. One big change from when my company started in 1998 is that I now (within the last 12 years or so) use nearly all of the rosewood that I buy and only throw away a very small portion. Not all of it is used for marimba/xylophone bars. We also make woodblocks out of scrap or wood that is not suitable for marimbas/xylos, and we make other non-musical products like cutting boards, drink coasters, or anything else that can be made. Unfortunately the longer term solution to the rosewood issue is finding an alternative material which is a sustainable resource. Most likely a synthetic material. So, we have definitely changed how we use the wood that we can get. I have also talked about this issue on an upcoming spot on the TV show "CBS NEWS SUNDAY MORNING" and the episode will hopefully be airing within the very near future. (*additional note the episode aired on December 16, 2018)

It seems like many people are not aware of the situation, or that they don't see it as important as it is. There is a possibility that there could be NO MORE Rosewood marimbas able to be made in the near future. Existing instruments that are in need of repair may not be repairable. Everything possible needs to be done to teach proper playing technique, and care for the instrument. I believe this extends to composers of marimba music as well, as I've seen way too many customers say "My low C cracked because I was playing this new piece by...." You shouldn't be writing Fortissimo dynamic levels and asking for the hardest possible mallets in the low octave of a 5 octave marimba. I think the xylophone gets overlooked in this respect as there are so many so called 'xylophone mallets' that should NEVER be used on a rosewood xylophone, but they are marketed as such. There definitely needs to be a way of changing attitudes throughout the entire community.

Gordon Stout, for Gordon Peters (retired principal percussionist of the Chicago Symphony):

Gordon Peters wrote a letter that's been circulating around to a few people about this issue. He saw there was an advertisement for this session in Percussive Notes, and took a sincere interest. Gordon Peters is an important guy to the marimba in this country. When I started marimba back in the 1960's, the Etudes by Clair Omar Musser were not published and unavailable. My father finally got a copy of all them from Gordon Peters, so he was really an important guy to me. I knew the music from Vida Chenoweths CD, but I didn't have the sheet music. He really opened my eyes to a world that I knew was there, but previously had no access to. He was a member of Marimba Masters marimba ensemble at Eastman. John Beck, here in the audience today, was also a member of that group. They played on the Ed Sullivan show and Peters was associated with Clair Musser and many people of that era for many years. He still is active.

The letter he wrote is not possible to read here due to its length. He made the point that the five octave marimba is why we are experiencing this Rosewood shortage. When Clair Musser and marimbists of that generation were around we only had four octave

instruments. *Comment by Gordon Stout: I learned to play on a three and a half octave marimba, and remember when the first 4 1/3 arrived at Eastman - a really big deal! We were all totally amazed by those extra 3 notes on the bottom of the marimba, and thought this was just the end of the world. It was so amazing.* With the advent of the five octave marimba there is now less Rosewood. With bigger bars, more wood is used. Also, with 5 octave marimbas to get the low notes to project they have to use heavier sticks with yarn which that also contributes to the problem (*In Gordon Peters generation, as when I started to play as well, marimbists normally played with rubber sticks*). He is also interested in any other woods that might be used for making marimbas. He also advocates building an amplification system into the marimba, and is also concerned about the preservation of older instruments.

There were a few minutes of comments from the audience at this point, which I do not have a transcript of. Thanks to John Glowka of Mode Marimba for finding a recording of this panel discussion, and doing the initial transcription. I have done a small amount of editing, trying to preserve the speaking style of each individual panel member, but making the syntax a little better - I am not an expert here by any means!).

Conclusions (my own):

-There is a global aspect to the problem of the shortage of Honduras Rosewood. As performers and educators in this country, we are a very small part of the socio-political situation that brings this issue before us. Rosewood is part of a local ecosystem in Guatemala and Belize, where it is part of their economy and society in a very small part of the world. "The more economically valuable the tree is to the economy of the people of Belize and Guatemala, the more likely we are to have a supply in the future" (Carmenates)

-Rosewood is the only wood that produces the sound that has become the standard for marimbas world wide. There is no other wood that duplicates its sonic qualities. Using it to produce marimbas is a way of fulfilling its true purpose. Any wood can be used to make furniture. Only Rosewood produces marimbas with the sound we have grown to love.

-If we are going to make a real difference in the world, we have to be able to find a way to coordinate and to cooperate with organizations that reach these other areas of use of Rosewood. (reference to using rosewood to make furniture).

-The development of synthetic bars that sound more like Rosewood bars is of great interest to many people.

-There is a lot of illegal poaching of Rosewood because it is such a valuable wood. In Belize, in the past 2 years, there is now cutting Rosewood on a rotational tract basis,

which is great as long as the trees are not poached. In Guatemala there are Rosewood tree nurseries now in existence.

-Proper manufacturing and tuning of Rosewood bars is its own a form of conservation.

-Making marimbas with synthetic keys is an immediate way to make the music and beauty of the marimba accessible to a lot more people, in a way that is much more affordable.

-Some people have the opinion that Rosewood marimbas should not be used in the field by drum corps and marching bands. Some believe it is OK for performances, but not for rehearsing. That discussion was only briefly talked about in this panel discussion. It is a very difficult topic, with lots of very strong feelings on both sides of the issues, and warrants further discussion, I believe.

-There was almost no discussion of the role the composers have in the degradation of Rosewood keyed marimbas, as a result of the kind of music they write for marimba. There was also no discussion about changing the paradigm of the way marimbas are being played that also causes the all too frequent degradation of Rosewood keyed instruments. This is a critical area of thought that needs much further discussion. Perhaps that is key to the next step in the process of better understanding and preserving the marimba as it currently exists.