

Designing Rhythms

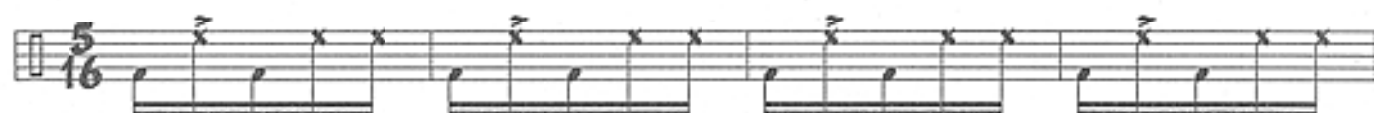
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One of the advantages of developing a deep sense of rhythmic understanding, is that it will always provide you with new opportunities to voice your creativity, and to uncover your individuality. It is possible to design some great sounds by manipulating, and modulating rhythms. These multi-dimensional examples offer some insight into my thoughts as I develop ideas in successive stages.

Basic Idea in 5/16

[1]



Adding a groove

Now I introduce the left foot on all downbeats, with the left hand playing backbeats on alternate downbeats

[2]



Modulating to 4/4

There are two stages in the following modulation. Firstly the 1/16 notes above (ex.1&2) become 1/8 note triplets, and the meter changes from the native 5/16, to 4/4.

While the left hand and left foot are still spaced 5 beats apart, and if there is no other reference to the 4/4, the sound remains the same as ex. 2. However your perception changes drastically. Playing ex. 3 & 4 consecutively will define the modulation, and will re-define the perception for the listener.

[3]



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I complete the modulation, by playing a quarter note groove under the 5's.

[4]

The exercise consists of three systems of two staves each. The right hand (RH) plays a series of eighth-note triplets, each marked with a '3' and an accent (>). The left hand (LH) plays a steady quarter-note groove, marked with an 'x' on the staff. The first system contains 8 measures, the second system contains 8 measures, and the third system contains 4 measures.

The foundation of the modulation has now been established. The challenge remains to break away from the basic groove with the left side, and improvise.

Basic Idea- Groups of 3 as Triplets

[5]

The exercise is a single staff in 4/4 time. It contains 8 measures of eighth-note patterns. The first measure has a triplet of three eighth notes (labeled '1 3'). The second measure has a pair of eighth notes followed by a triplet of three eighth notes (labeled '2 3'). The third measure has a triplet of three eighth notes followed by a triplet of three eighth notes (labeled '3 3'). The fourth measure has a pair of eighth notes followed by a triplet of three eighth notes (labeled '4 3').

[6] Modulating to 1/16 notes

The exercise consists of two systems of two staves each. The right hand (RH) plays a series of 1/16 note patterns, each marked with a number (1, 2, 3, or 4) above the notes. The left hand (LH) plays a steady quarter-note groove, marked with an 'x' on the staff. The first system contains 8 measures, and the second system contains 8 measures.

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[7] Modulating to quintuplets

In ex.7, the hi-hat is playing a 1/4 note pulse. Another interesting modulation would be to play an 1/8 note pulse. This adds a polyrhythmic dimension, and increases the level of difficulty. Because 5 is not evenly divisible by 2, it is important to learn to feel where the 2 is placed in relation to the 5. Following is a break down analyzing this relationship.

In ex. 8 the first 1/8 note falls on the downbeat of the quintuplet, and the second splits the 3rd and 4th beats of the quintuplet (as indicated by the broken lines).

To play it accurately, we must find the lowest common denominator between the 2 and 5, which is 10. (See ex. 9) The accents in ex. 9 are a reference to the beats of the normal quintuplet.

Once you have grasped this concept, you can try applying it the pattern in ex. 7

[10] Quintuplets with an 1/8th note pulse.