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INTRODUCTION

“You are so in the pocket.” Words every musician loves to hear. But what does it really mean?

In The Pocket: Something or someone playing in such a way that the groove is very solid and has a great feel.

Groove: When all players are in sync and the music has an effortless and exciting sound. The “lock” between members of a rhythm section playing well together.

Feel: The overall emotional impact the music is making. In jazz, we use words like really cookin', swingin’, burnin’.

What makes this book different is that you will be playing along with the soloists, not the drummers.

The snare drum solos in this book were inspired by and based on performances by some of my favorite jazz artists. Each solo is based on the melody and instrumental solos of jazz legends like Chick Corea, Keith Jarrett, Ella Fitzgerald, Charlie Parker, and others. These recordings, some of which date back to the 1940’s, are classics. The versions are all available on YouTube and all streaming services. Be sure to use the recordings that I reference. You will also be playing along with great rhythm sections that define the phrase in the pocket.

For rock drummers, this book can be a bridge to developing a jazz feel by playing along with these greats.

At first glance the solos may appear simple. Remember, this IS NOT a book of rudimental etudes. Of course, as they are the basis of all drumming, the rudiments are referenced here, and you should be studying them as well. These solos are to guide you and help you develop a jazz feel. Ultimately, this is a book to help your improvisational skills.

This book works on many levels and can help you to:

- Improve your sight-reading while playing along with brilliant solos.
- Play alongside the recordings of great drummers.
- Learn jazz standards.
- Create your own stickings and dynamics to go with the tracks.
- Use “space” in a solo and allow the music to breathe.
- Develop your feel and groove as a basis for all your playing.
- Raise your improvisation skills through guided solos that encourage creativity

HOW TO PRACTICE THIS BOOK

Each song will have two solos. One is just the melody and the improvisation. The other is the melody and improvisation surrounded by fills that I created. The sequence of practicing these would be:

- Start by playing the melody in solo one.
- Progress to solo two, integrating fills around the melody.
- Revisit solo one and add your improvisational fills.
- As you gain confidence, tackle the solos at their recommended tempos.
- Elevate your experience by playing along with the tracks linked to each solo.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICING IDEAS

- Use a metronome when you can.
- Listen to the recommended track for that solo and follow the music.
- Read the solo at a comfortable tempo until feeling good about it.
- Play the solo at the recommended tempo.
- Play the solo with the track.
- Sometimes the solo will end but the music will continue. Try to keep going and jam with the artists.
- If you are playing these at a drum set, try adding your bass drum and hi hat when you’re ready.

You may want to get right at it or start simple, by playing the solos slowly. If you become frustrated while practicing, cut back a little to where you were having some fun and work up from there.

I am not including a lot of stickings or dynamics. Occasionally I'll put in some stickings or accent marks when I think it will help guide you. This is jazz so I want to allow for creativity and for each drummer to feel the music the way they do. As you play these etudes, your interpretation will probably change. Just make the solos your own and have a blast!

MY GOAL FOR THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book is to get you to emulate the pocket by playing along with these jazz legends and then be able to bring that feeling to any musical situation. It's all about knowing when you are in the pocket and how to get there if you're not. I have always believed that the best way to learn things is to have them presented in a fun and joyful way. I hope this book does that for you and makes you more than just a better drummer - a better musician.

SPECIAL THANKS

Ron Tierno - For writing his book *The Melodic Snare Drummer*. My inspiration for this book came from Ron.

Jerry Kalaf - A great drummer, educator and friend who was a sounding board for this entire process. From Finale help to playing through the solos.

Doug Walter - For his "green visor" editing and being so generous with his time.

Meridith - For having some great ideas and being totally supportive and helpful throughout the creation of this book

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR NO REASON WHATSOEVER

Tom Hanks (Because everybody likes Tom Hanks)

Keith Jarrett

Keith Jarrett is an American pianist and composer. Jarrett started his career with Art Blakey and later moved on to play with Charles Lloyd and Miles Davis. Since the early 1970s, Jarrett has also been a group leader and solo performer in jazz, jazz fusion, and classical music.

Play along with:
“Bye Bye Blackbird”
Keith Jarrett - Live at the Deer Head Inn
ECM Records 1992

Keith Jarrett - Piano
Gary Peacock - Bass
Paul Motian - Drums

Keith’s playing is bursting with spontaneity. I stayed close to what he played and tried to stay in his style. I added accents to help point the way. After a few listenings you should fall right into what he is doing.

Listen to how Paul Motian interacts. Since his days with the great Bill Evans trio, Paul has been one of the most influential drummers of the last 60 years.

To quote my friend Jerry Kalaf:

“When Keith plays four quarter notes he’s playing a lot more than four quarter notes.”

Bye Bye Blackbird - (melody)

Keith Jarrett

"Live at the Deerhead Inn"

♩ = 180

Snare Drum

Melody

37

Chorus 1

41

45

49

3

53

57

61

65

69

Chorus 2

73

77

81

85

89

93

97

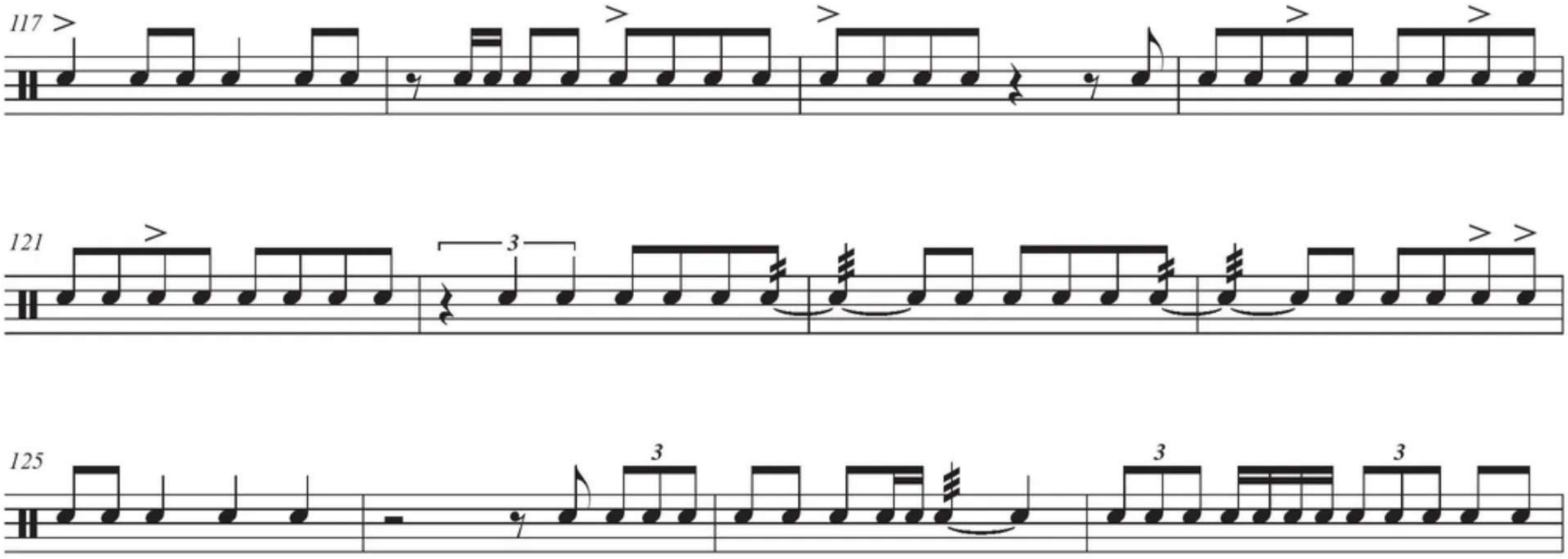
101

Chorus 3

105

109

113



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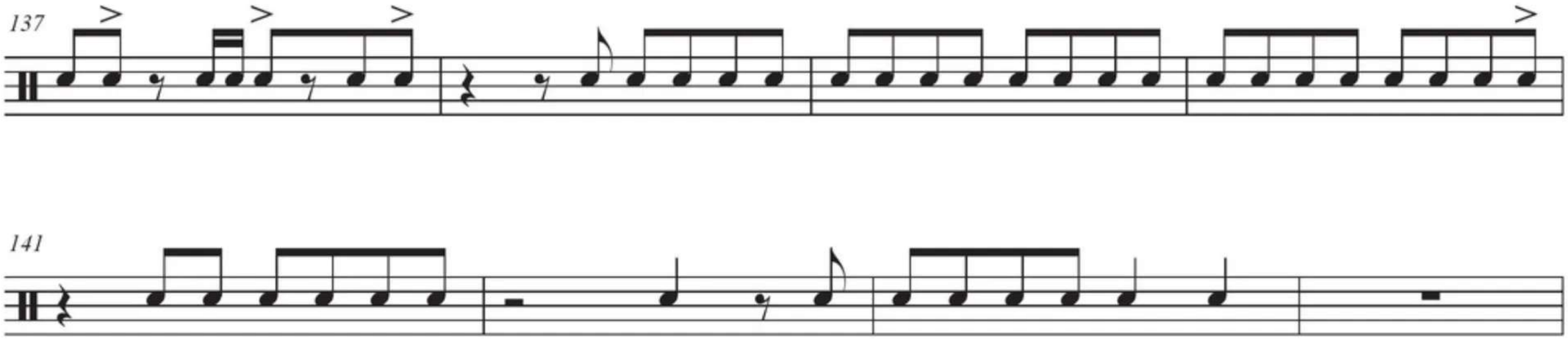

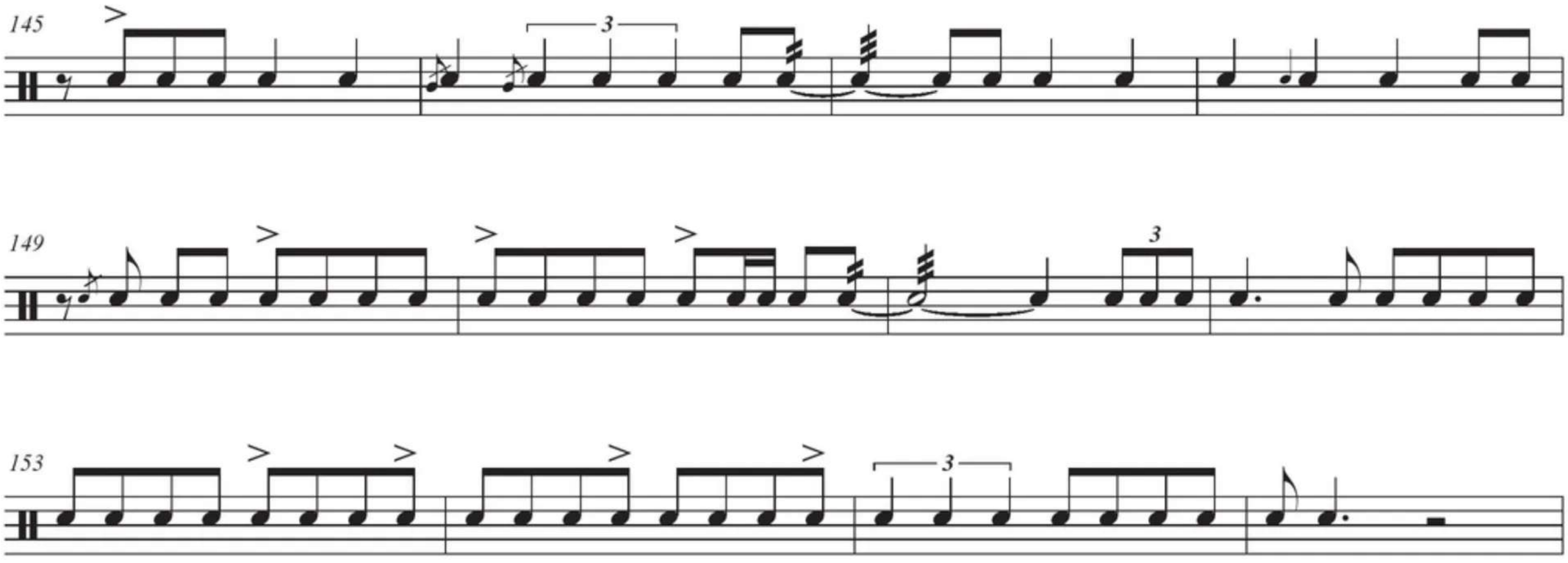

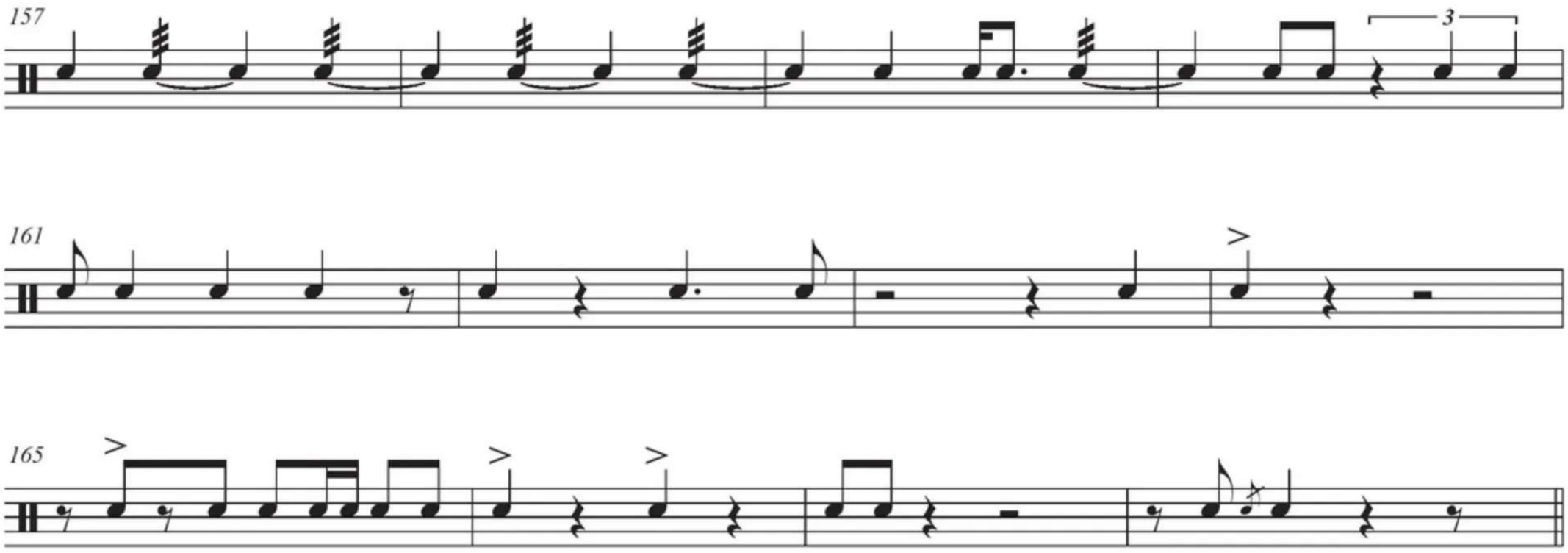

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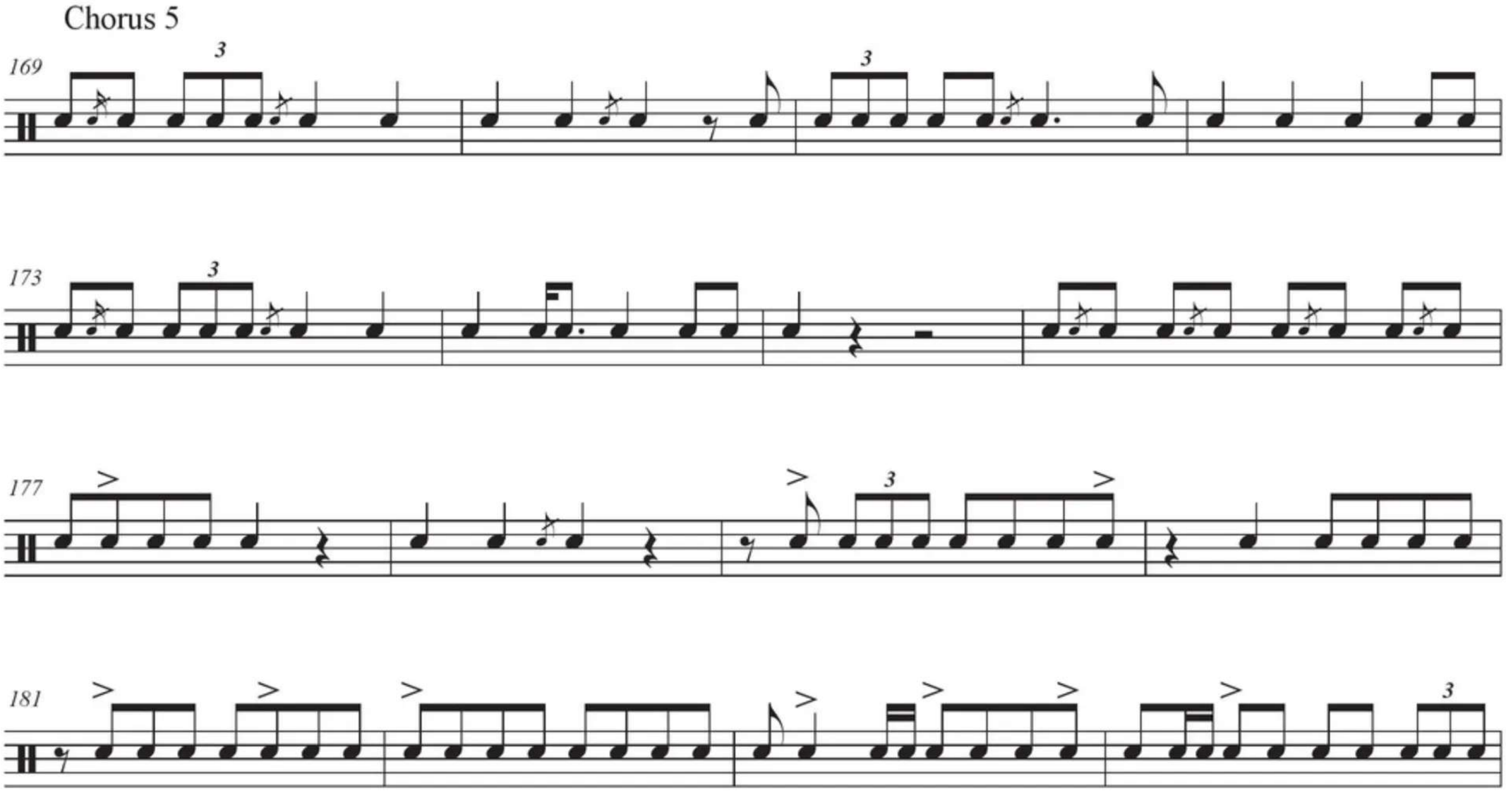

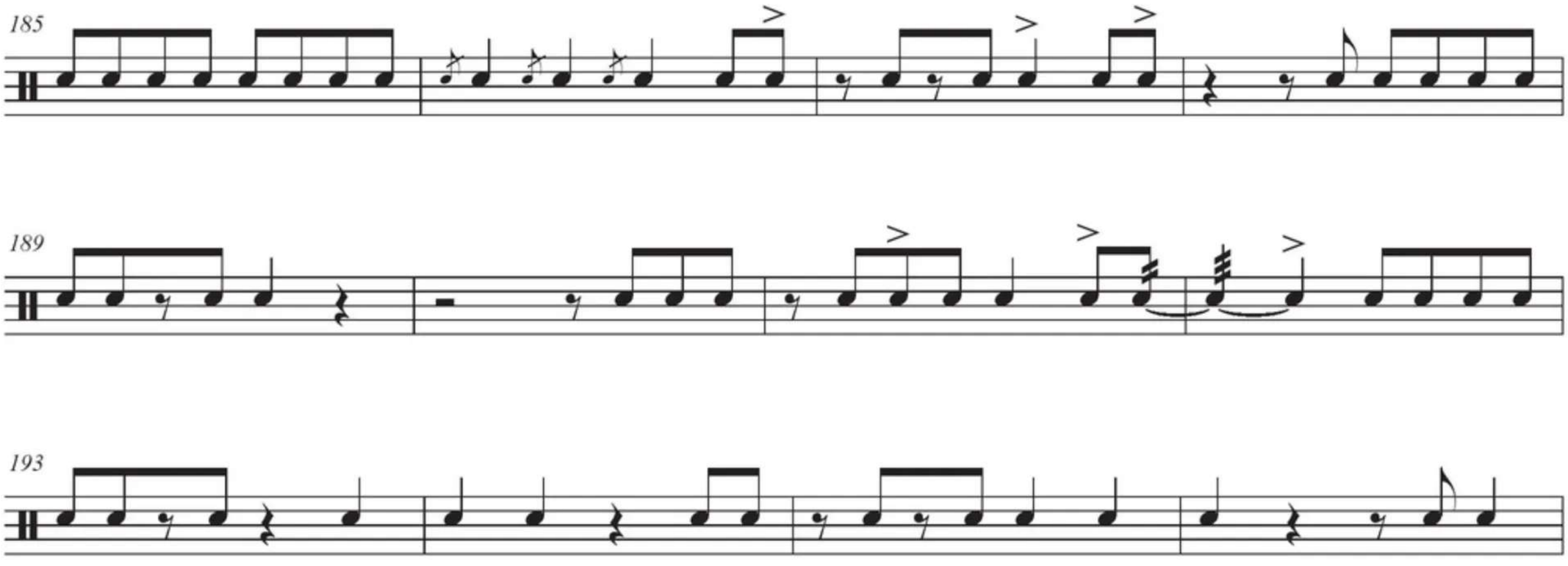

197

Chorus 6

201

5 5

205

3

209

213

217

221

225

229

3

233