
**ALEX
COHEN**

**ULTIMATE
PROGRESSIVE
DRUMMING**

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INTRODUCTION

Basic Side Unisons

Let's check out some more complex combinations of single, double, and triple paradiddles that will really start to push your mental and physical endurance

Ex. 9



A.

Musical notation for exercise A, consisting of two staves in 4/4 time. The top staff contains a sequence of rhythmic patterns: R R, R R R, R R, R, R R R, R, R R R, R. The bottom staff contains corresponding patterns: L L, L L L, L L, L, L L L, L, L L L, L. The notation includes stems, beams, and flags to indicate the specific rhythmic values.

B.

Musical notation for exercise B, consisting of two staves in 4/4 time. The top staff contains a sequence of rhythmic patterns: R R, R R R, R R, R R, R R, R, R R, R, R R, R R. The bottom staff contains corresponding patterns: L L, L L L, L L, L L, L L, L L, L L, L L, L L, L L. The notation includes stems, beams, and flags to indicate the specific rhythmic values.

C.

Musical notation for exercise C, consisting of two staves in 4/4 time. The top staff contains a sequence of rhythmic patterns: R R, R R R, R, R R, R, R R, R R, R, R, R R, R R. The bottom staff contains corresponding patterns: L L, L L L, L, L L, L, L L, L L, L L, L L, L L, L L. The notation includes stems, beams, and flags to indicate the specific rhythmic values.



CHAPTER 2

Cross-Rhythmic Melodic Motions

Now let's focus on taking a double-stroke and single-stroke roll, and moving each hand over a different number of voicings. The idea is to create two separate melodies using the same rudiment. For example, if you do a single-stroke roll where your left hand moves over three voices and your right moves over two, you get a 3/2 melodic voicing. I'll give you a couple basic ideas here, and you should use these to come up with your own.

Ex. 24

A. R R L L R R L L R R L L R L L

B. L R R L R R L R R L R R L

C. L R R R L R R R L R R R L R R R

D. R L L R R L L R R L R R L L

E. R R L L R R L R R L L R

F. L R R L L R R L L R

Ex. 25

Left over 3, Right over 2

A. R L R L R L R L R L R L

Both hands over 2

B.



CHAPTER 2

The Meshuggah Effect

I'd like to introduce a cross-rhythmic concept that comprises the backbone of some of my favorite riffs from one of my favorite bands. Swedish metal titans Meshuggah and their drummer Tomas Haake have been innovators in pushing the boundaries of cross-rhythmic concepts in metal and (now) popular music. Haake's ideas on the latest records often involve a quarter-note cymbal pattern with a snare and bass drum pattern played in a looping, odd phrase, or a pattern involving a subdivided groove using all limbs that matches the guitar line and creates an amazing rhythmic effect. Meshuggah's ideas have been central in my development as a musician, and their ideas are important to understand for the later chapters of this book.

Ex. 26

A.



B.



Ex. 27



It's important to note that you can create and improvise within these patterns, and these will really help solidify your timing and use of odd groupings with 4/4. Check out the transcription below of the song "Rational Gaze," and see how well Tomas makes use of the ideas presented here.

Ex. 28

Crash China



CHAPTER 6

Combining the Hybrid Rudiments as Rhythmic Cells in Your Feet

And are you ready to really push your feet to the extreme? Let's try breaking the hybrid rudiments down into rhythmic cells and creating some elaborate, improvised phrases in the feet while your hands play a steady pattern over the top. The sky is the limit on this one, and, once again, I think I've only scratched the surface of the possibilities here.

Ex. 67

A.

B.

R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L L L

Layering the Hybrid Rudiments

Once you're feeling more confident with your independence and control over the hybrid rudiments, let's start to layer them on top of one another. The goal is to play one rudiment in any two limbs, and the other in the remaining two. These patterns are frequently polyrhythmic with doubles and flam articulation at contrasting rates that really create a feeling of complete separation. I'll write a few out for you where the hands play one rudiment, and the feet play another.

Ex. 68



A. R R R L L L R R R L L L R R R L

MURPHY SHIRLEY
DOUBLE FLAM DRAGS

B.

DOUBLE FLAM DRAG
CHEESE

CHAPTER 6

C.

R R R L L R R

DEVILED EGG HORSEY

D.

R R R L L R R R L L

EGG BEATERS BLUE CHEESE

Split and Reverse Double Ostinatos

Here are a few melodic ideas for some ostinatos in the hands (a la Marco Minnemann) that you can then solo against with your feet. These ideas have some unusual stickings and movements, but can sound really musical once you're comfortable with them.

Once you've got the hybrid rudiments feeling solid in various limb combinations, let's start layering them over one another (similar to the Marco Minnemann and Thomas Lang systems). The idea here is to align different flams, drags, unisons, and other fun material in an accurate, musical manner. In fact, with some of the rudiments, you can actually keep a "2+4" or "3" backbeat going over another. Check out some of the examples below to see what I'm talking about.

Ex. 69



R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R R L L

Polyrhythmic Ghosting Patterns over Ostinatos

We're now reaching the highest levels of coordination. Let's take some of those polyrhythmic grooves we were working on earlier and apply them over some of the rudimental ostinatos against another pulse. These will often end up being three- and four-way polyrhythms, and will push your coordination to the limits.

Ex. 70



A.

B.

C.

CHAPTER 7

Transcriptions:

I've been fortunate enough to have made many wonderful friends and acquaintances throughout my musical career who have inspired me and pushed my musical abilities. In this last section, I'll include some snippets of phrases I've heard some amazing drummers play that really influenced my musical development and approach to the material in this book.

TRANSCRIPTION 1

Malignancy "Neglected Rejection" 7/8 Pattern

Mike Heller's usage of left-hand movement as well as unorthodox motions around the drum set make this pattern a terrific workout, and a real point of fascination when I was learning the Malignancy set. To this day, whenever I think about sculpting melodic patterns and phrases on the drums, this pattern comes to mind as a prime example of unorthodox (and amazing) drumming.

Musical notation for Mike Heller's 7/8 pattern. The notation is written on a single staff in 7/8 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure has a half note followed by a quarter note, with a circled 'o' above the half note and '> LR' above the quarter note. The second measure has a half note followed by a quarter note, with a circled 'o' above the half note and '>>>' above the quarter note. The third measure has a half note followed by a quarter note, with a circled 'o' above the half note and '> L R L R L R L R L' above the quarter note. The fourth measure has a half note followed by a quarter note, with a circled 'o' above the half note and '16' below the quarter note. The notation includes various rhythmic markings such as accents (>) and dynamic markings (circled 'o').

Cited by Thomas Lang as "an amazing Australian drummer," Pete Drummond is at the top of the game when it comes to chops, feel, independence, and then the amazing combination of all three. His layered left-and-right-side quintuplet solo video features a section where he plays a grouping of five over three voices on his left side, and a grouping of three (which he then elaborates and expands on) over two voices in his right side. The resulting pattern creates a contrasting melodic effect that became a huge influence on me when writing this book.

TRANSCRIPTION 2

Pete Drummond's Quintuplet 3/2 Layered Voicings

Musical notation for Pete Drummond's layered quintuplets. The notation is written on two staves. The top staff is labeled 'LEFT SIDE' and shows a quintuplet of five eighth notes with a circled '5' above it. The bottom staff is labeled 'RIGHT SIDE' and shows a triplet of three eighth notes with a circled '3' above it. The notation includes various rhythmic markings such as accents (>) and dynamic markings (circled 'o').