

Samba and Mambo Rhythms for the Marching Percussion Section

by John Wooton

According to Webster's Dictionary, the word rudiment means, "A basic principle or a fundamental skill." By this definition, the true drummer's rudiments would be the basic strokes: 1. tap, 2. up-stroke, 3. accent withrebound, 4. accent without rebound and 5. press stroke. Mastering these strokes is a prerequisite to properly playing what we know as the "rudiments of drumming." Isolating the strokes by using one hand at a time is strongly suggested so that technique and each stroke can receive special attention. Once the strokes are mastered, the rudiments are learned quickly and correctly.

The following exercises will help to develop the strokes discussed above and will also introduce students to the rhythms of the Brazilian samba and Afro-Cuban mambo grooves, which have been transcribed for the marching percussion section.

SAMBA

The samba that follows is a transcription for the marching percussion section of the Brazilian Samba Batucada—a street samba that can be heard during parades at Carnival time or other festive times in Brazil. It is orchestrated for the marching percussion section so that the snares are playing the snare part from the Samba Batucada, the first tenor imitates the atabaque (conga) and the second tenor imitates the tamborim. The two tenor parts can be split among the tenor drummers and should be switched when repeated. The second tenor part is played with the right stickband dampened with the left hand. The bass drums play the part of the surdo, and the cymbals play the part of the reco-reco. The keyboards add color to the groove and should try transposing to all twelve keys.

Because of the limited instruments in the marching percussion section, several instru-

ments used in the Samba Batucada cannot be covered. These instruments, such as the shaker, samba whistle, cuica, agogo bells and cowbell, can be played by additional percussionists if they are available. Even the instruments that are being imitated can be played in the front ensemble. This will give the students a better idea of what an authentic samba should sound like.

When played with one hand at a time, the samba exercise concentrates on the strokes mentioned earlier. The first count of measure one of the snare part begins with an accent without rebound followed by an upstroke. Immediately after striking the accent, squeeze the stick just enough to keep it from rising to an undesired height. The upstroke is executed by raising the arm slightly and breaking the wrist as the drum is struck. After the note is played, the wrist should turn back to get ready for the accent on the upbeat of one. This same technique applies to the tenor drums; however, they must play on several drums while trying to use as little motion as possible.

Play this exercise as slow as necessary until correct form and technique are obtained. At first have the tenor drummers play the exercise on one drum. Once this is mastered they can play the split drum part that is written.

MAMBO

The backbone of Afro-Cuban music is the "clave" rhythm. The clave is played by the bass drums first as a 2-3 Son Clave and then as a 2-3 Rhumba Clave.

The rhythm played on the shell of the timbale drum found in Afro-Cuban music such as the mambo or cha-cha-cha is called the "cascara pattern." Cascara is the Spanish word for "shell." The clave is inherent in the cascara pattern. In the mambo exercise, the cascara pattern is played first by the snare voice and then by the tenor voice. The mambo bell part

is played first by the tenor voice and then by the snare voice. The cymbals are imitating the close-open sound of the low timbale.

The keyboard part utilizes the cascara pattern and major scales and then goes into a "montuno." Montuno is traditionally played on piano and is an ostinato or repeated pattern. The second keyboard part plays the bass part. The first four keys (C, F, Bb and Eb) are given. Continue through the circle of fourths until all twelve keys are mastered.

The cascara pattern is an excellent tool to be used for diddle control. The mambo bell pattern is an excellent tool to be used for stick control (finger/wrist control). This exercise, as well as any other exercise, should be played at different dynamic levels and a variety of speeds. Unlike authentic cascara and mambo bell patterns, try to make all of the notes the same intensity. Wrist and fingers should be used throughout. Technique used in this exercise can be applied to all of the "drum rudiments." **PN**

SAMBA BATUCADA

Snares
 R R R R R ...
 R L R L R L L R L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L R L R L R L R R

Tenors 1
 R R R R R ...
 R L R L L R L R R L R L L L R L R R L R L L L R L

Tenors 2
 R R R L R R R L etc. R R R

Basses

Cymbals crash

Keyboard 1

Keyboard 2

L L L L L ...
 L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L

L L L L L ...
 L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R R L R

L L L R L L L R etc. L L L

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MAMBO

Snares
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ R R R R R R R R / R R | : L L L L L L L L / L L | :

Tenors
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ L R R R R R R R R R | : R L L L L L L L L L | :

Basses
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | : $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | :

Cymbals
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | : $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | :

Keyboard 1
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ R R R R R R R R L... | : R R R R R R R R R R L... | :

Keyboard 2
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ R R R R R R R R L... | : R R R R R R R R R R L... | :

Snares
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ R L R L R R L R R L R R L R L R | : L R L R L L R L L R L L R L R L | :

Tenors
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ L R R R R R R R R R | : R L L L L L L L L L | :

Basses
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | : $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | :

Cymbals
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | : $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ | :

Keyboard 1
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ R R R R R R R R L... | : R R R R R R R R R R L... | :

Keyboard 2
 || C $\frac{4}{4}$ R R R R R R R R L... | : R R R R R R R R R R L... | :

