

Applying Bulgarian Rhythms to Drumset

BY GEORGE TANTCHEV

It was 1958 when a young jazz musician visited a crowded marketplace in Istanbul, Turkey. Fascinated by the sound of street musicians playing a rhythm he had never heard before—1-2, 1-2, 1-2, 1-2-3—he wrote one of his classic jazz compositions. His name, as you have probably guessed, was Dave Brubeck, and the piece was “Blue Rondo A La Turk.”

Since then, asymmetric rhythms have become integral for pop, rock, jazz, new age, and other musical styles. Musicians began to blend different genres with ethnic motifs and rhythms. Some of them were also influenced by Eastern European music where asymmetrical rhythms abound. Especially rich in these rhythms is Bulgarian folk music.

Basically, Bulgarian rhythms are combinations of simple duple and triple meters with an accent falling on the heavier or longer beat. The various groupings of short and long beats of each particular rhythm, and the numerous accent possibilities embodied in them, could serve as an endless source of inspiration and/or improvisation. Drumset players could greatly benefit by learning such rhythms and incorporating them into their favorite style of playing. For example: following are two of the most common Bulgarian rhythms: Paidushko Horo 5/8 (2+3 and 3+2) and Rachenitza 7/8 (2+2+3 and 3+2+2). These rhythm patterns can be used in several different musical styles.

Notation Key

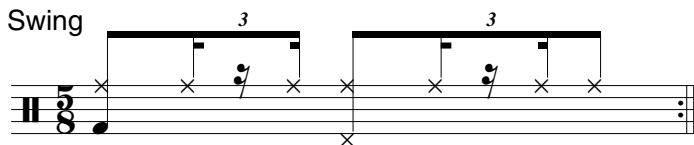


Paidushko Horo 5/8 (2+3)

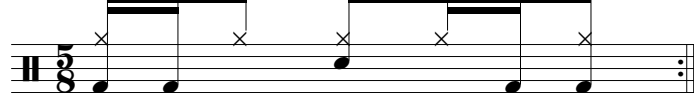
Basic Rhythm



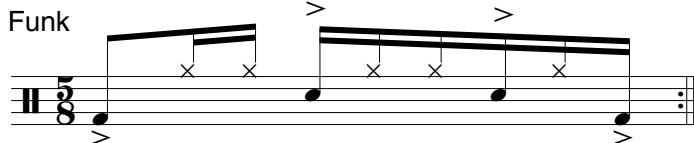
Swing



Rock



Funk



Samba



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(Photo © Marija Grant)

AMY LYNN BARBER: Barber has had a distinguished career as a soloist, chamber and orchestral percussionist, and teacher in the United States and Europe. Formerly on the faculties of the Prague Conservatory, Interlochen Arts Academy and Texas Wesleyan University, she is an artist/clinician for Zildjian and Yamaha. She earned the B.M. degree from Boston University, M.M. from the University of Massachusetts, and the D.M.A. from the Hartt School of Music. Her teachers have included Thomas Gauger, Peter Tanner, Alexander Lepak and Leigh Howard Stevens.



(Photo © Peter Schaaf)

CRAIG PARÉ: Paré has had a distinguished career as a timpanist, percussionist and teacher for more than 27 years. He has performed at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, S.C. and Festival Dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy. Active as a performer, Paré is currently principal timpanist with the Terre Haute Symphony Orchestra, has performed with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and recorded with Hal Leonard Publications. He earned a B.M. from Barrington College, M.M. from Florida State University and a D.M.A. from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music.

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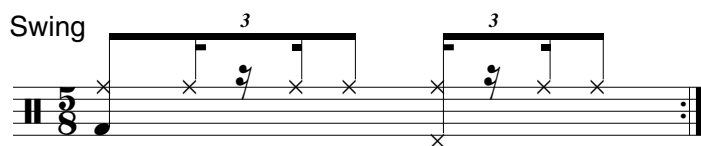
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Paidushko Horo 5/8 (3+2)

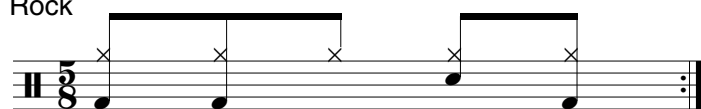
Basic Rhythm



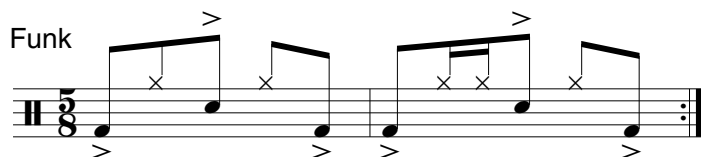
Swing



Rock



Funk

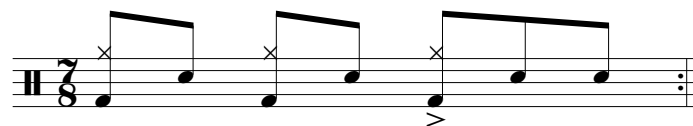


Samba

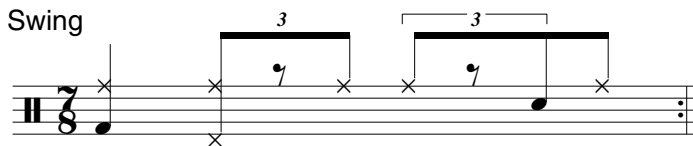


Rachenitza 7/8 (2+2+3)

Basic Rhythm



Swing



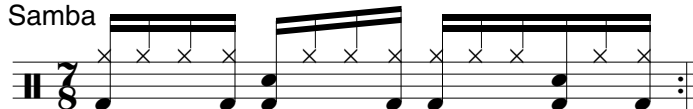
Rock



Funk



Samba





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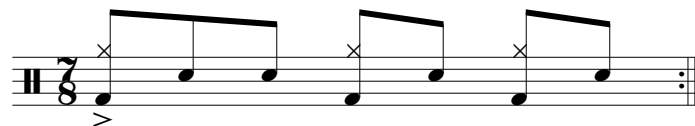
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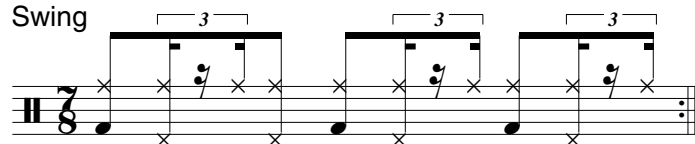
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Rachenitza 7/8 (3+2+2)

Basic Rhythm



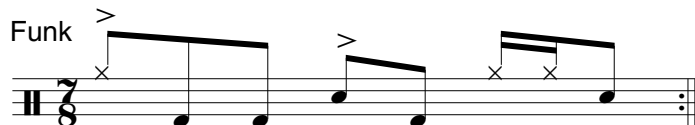
Swing



Rock



Funk



Samba



George Tantchev is completing his D.M.A. at the University of Oklahoma and is on the faculty of the Merit School of Music in Chicago. He holds an M.M. from Ithaca College and a B.M. from the Music Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria.

PN

Shortcuts and Practicing: They go together like a fish and a bicycle.

BY BILL MOLENHOF

Franz Schubert's teacher gave him a little box with five buttons in it. The instruction was to practice the assignment until he could play it perfectly 5 times in a row, and then put one button in the box. The next piece received the same treatment, so that on a good day he would have 5 pieces played perfectly 5 times each.

At Berklee, Steve Swallow encouraged us to practice both slower and faster than normal as well as playing things in different keys "just for the fun of it".

Marimbist Gordon Stout once told me about how much he loved to practice slowly. When practicing, it is important to think about the DEPTH of learning as opposed to simply SPEED of learning. If we truly learn something to the best

of our ability the first time, it saves considerable time, frustration, and your money in the long run.

And the great pianist Bill Evans once said in a radio interview, "it is much better to practice one tune for 24 hours than 24 tunes for one hour."

These musicians have tremendous control, spectrum, identity, nuance and experience. They all came to such a high level thru an individual path and method, but I think you can be pretty sure that they found it necessary to go as deeply as possible into the material which they wanted to master, and master it they did. A careful consideration of total honesty with oneself is mandatory. And that takes a long time to develop, but it is worth it in the long run. It is critical to be encouraging with yourself and to set up the practice method such that not

too much is expected immediately. There is a mirror-image effect of how we feel about ourselves and our music-making going on during the practice time. It takes time to learn deeply and thoroughly.

One day at the American Conservatory in Chicago I was doing a little teaching and noticed a poster of a mountain goat up on a summit in the Rockies. The caption was: "Hey, I'm so far behind I think I'm first!" If you take your time and seriously go for deeper learning in the practice, you may wind up further ahead than you ever thought possible.



FAMOUS QUOTE

"Get yourself a better metronome, and teach yourself to practice."

— BILL MOLENHOF

BILL'S BIG BIO

➤ Bill began his professional career touring the Pacific Northwest and Alaska with guitarist Wayne Johnson, drummer Danny Gottlieb, bassist Dewey Delany and singer Oleta Adams in 1974. At 21, he was invited to teach at Berklee. During that period, he began composing and playing with artists such as Pat Metheny, Ed Thigpen, Alan Dawson and others. He conducts countless workshops and clinics, and has been a faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music, Ithaca College, Temple University, and presently is in-residence at the Hochschule für Musik, Nürnberg, Germany.



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