

ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC

by Rod Morgenstein

An Approach For Playing In Odd Time – Part 3

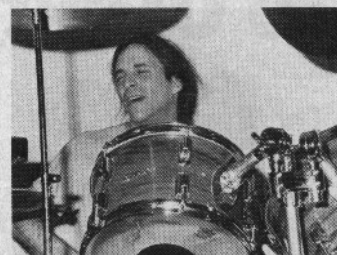
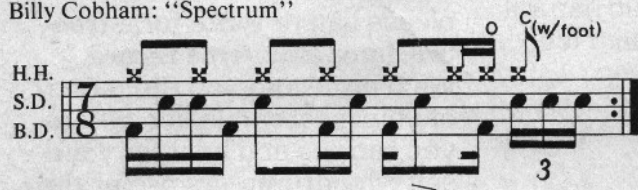


Photo by Lissa Wales

In the previous two articles, we've concentrated on executing written exercises which have been designed to facilitate the playing of odd time. Another effective approach to learning is through listening and transcription. The following songs have one thing in common: They deal, in some way, with seven. However, the application of odd time can vary from one song to the next. For example, a song may be in $7/8$ or $7/4$ from beginning to end with one dominant feel throughout. This is evident in "Spectrum," the title cut from Billy Cobham's first solo album. Here, the musicians sound as comfortable playing in $7/8$ as they do in $4/4$. The melodic syncopations are further heightened by the way they are phrased to tailor fit the $7/8$ context.

Billy Cobham: "Spectrum"



"Get Closer," from the Linda Ronstadt album of the same name, is also in seven throughout, with the exception of one $8/4$ measure (or two measures of $4/4$) which occurs at the end of each verse leading into the chorus. The addition of one beat in this particular measure (which happens only twice in the entire song) adds a special and unique touch to an already exciting chorus lead-in. This song feels so smooth and natural that it takes a while to realize it's not in $4/4$.

Russell Kunkel: "Get Closer"



"Dawn," from the Mahavishnu Orchestra album *The Inner Mounting Flame*, is an example of a song which is also in seven throughout. However, it clearly establishes two very different feels. The A section is mellow and relaxed, and definitely in $7/4$. The feel is established by the bass guitar line which the drums, in turn, play off. In contrast, the B section is aggressive and raucous. The meter is still seven, though due to the apparent doubling up of the time and the phrasing of the last three beats of each measure, there are probably varying opinions on how to count it. (For those of you who are interested in the unlimited possibilities concerning time concepts, this is a remarkable album. If I had to name one album which had the most profound effect on me as a musician, this is the one!)

Billy Cobham: "Dawn" (very basic transcription; each measure is varied)

(A SECTION)



(B SECTION)



"Space Boogie," from the Jeff Beck album *There And Back*, consists of three sections in three opposing time signatures, yet all are very closely related. This shuffle, which combines a dazzling show of physical endurance with very musical drumming, alternates between $4/4$, $7/4$ and $6/4$. The six and seven feels are derivatives of the $4/4$ shuffle. The effect of the $7/4$ groove is heightened by the grace notes in the snare drum part. By lightly filling in the middle note of the triplet, the groove is further intensified.

Simon Phillips: "Space Boogie"

(derived from:)



ROCK 'N' JAZZ CLINIC

by James Morton

Great Grooves - Part 2

Here's another selection of grooves for you to try. Concentrate on developing your coordination, along with the fluidity and smoothness of performance that will put these patterns "in the pocket." The key is to be clean and precise, yet comfortable and

natural. That's what creates the "groove" in the first place. (Hi-hat notation in parentheses indicates that the hi-hat is to be closed with the foot, not struck with a stick.)

L R R L R L R L R L R

H.H.
T.T.
S.D.
F.T.
B.D.
H.H.
w/foot.

R R R L L R R R L R

R R L R R L R R 0

R L R L R L R R L L R

R 0 R 0 R L R 0 R L R

R L L R L R L R R 0 L R

R R L R R R L R R L R

R L R L R L R L R L

= cym

L L R L R L L R L R L

R L R R L R L R L L L R R 0 0

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

= Bell of Cym.

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

= Cow Bell