Multi-Timbre Polyrhythmic Drum Set Fills

EXAMPLE 1

Example 1 shows an example of playing 5 notes in the space of three while using linear voicing techniques.

How do we get there?

Let’s break example 1 down to its basic components and then rebuild it..

EXAMPLE 2

This example is the basic rhythm for Example 1. As you can see, it is much easier to comprehend.

EXAMPLE 3

Now fill the space between the rhythm with sixteenth-notes. This adds some body to the fill and the density increases the excitement while maintaining the clarity of the original.

EXAMPLE 4

Instead of fill in each space with three 16ths, you could use four. This maintains the original rhythm but adds extra rhythmic tension.
EXAMPLE 5

Like example 4, the addition of note adds tension. In this case, we have added five notes to each unit. Both this example and example 4 can be achieved through using a familiar sticking. (eg. Paradiddles or five stroke rolls.)

EXAMPLE 6

Next voice these rhythms over the kit using the “linear” approach.

EXAMPLE 7

EXAMPLE 8
More Multi-Timbre Fills

This is just one example for voicing three notes. You can change the voicing any number ways—start with bass drum; put the bass drum on the second beat; substitute Hi-hat for any of the three beats; etc. And, of course, this is only one rhythmic example. You can apply this concept to other rhythmic skeletons. In conclusion, the “rounding out” of many of the rhythms above is a quick way to achieve the “poly-rhythmic fills” above.