

from hand to drum

HAND DRUM TECHNIQUES

FROM AROUND THE WORLD



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Traditional Cuban Martillo

Welcome to the third instalment of *Hand to Drum's* journey through the world of bongos. This month we're going to move on to some extrapolations derived from the 'thumb-tip' martillo technique from Cuba.

We're going to use some basic conga patterns which incorporate the 'heel-tip' technique, and move them onto the bongos. This means we need to substitute the heel-tip, as on congas, for the thumb-tip technique of bongos. Notes which would be slaps on the congas will be represented by the sharp sound of the right hand hitting the edge of the small drum while the left hand thumb mutes. (For detailed analysis of these strokes, see the last two months' instalments). Ex. 1 says it all – it's the basic pattern found on the conga drum played on the high bongo.

DRUM KEY

TH	F	O	M	O	S
Thumb on small drum	Finger tips on small drum	Small drum open	Small drum muted	Large drum open	Slap on small drum

Ex 1

TH F M F TH F O O



Fig. 1 Playing position on

Ex. 2 Introduces a pattern for two drums.

Ex 2

TH F M O O F O O

Exs. 3-6 are much the same but with a slightly more elaborate rhythmic form.

Ex 3

TH F M F TH F O O TH F M O O F O O

Ex 4

TH F M F M O F O

Ex 5

TH F M O F O O O

Ex 6

TH F M F M O F O TH F M O F O O O

Exs. 7-9 look at a 6/8 conga pattern transposed onto bongos. This pattern is very common in Cuban music.

Ex 7

TH F M TH F O

Ex 8



Ex 9



Exs. 10 and 11 incorporate the slap stroke played on the high bongo. This is integrated into a vaguely martillo-flavoured rhythm. The slap is played in the same fashion as on the congas. All four fingers hit the drum; with the hand slightly cupped, they play into the head and pull back slightly, creating a sharp and staccato sound. See Figs. 2 and 3 for playing position.

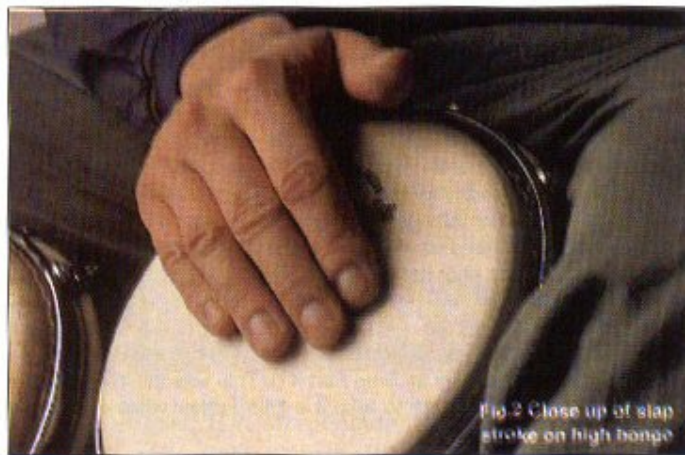


Fig. 2 Close up of slap stroke on high bongo

Ex 10



Ex 11



That's all for this month. See you next time for the Middle Eastern Req.
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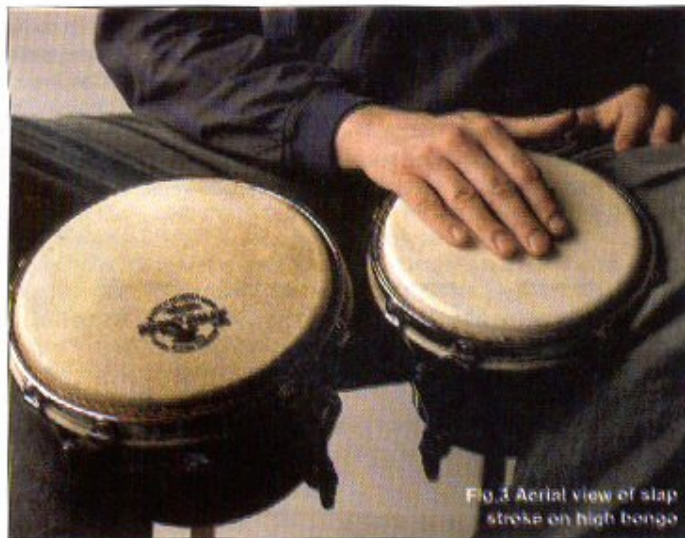


Fig. 3 Aerial view of slap stroke on high bongo