

from hand to drum

HAND DRUM TECHNIQUES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



WWW.PETELOCKETT.COM

The ghatam



Fig. 1 Left hand bass tone



Fig. 2 Left hand staccato tone

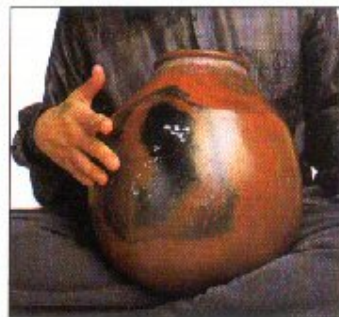


Fig. 3 Three finger striking unit

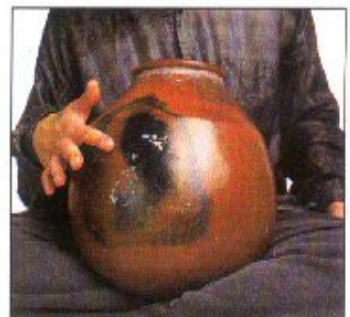


Fig. 4 One finger striking unit

This month we're going to round off our brief look at the ghatam, the clay pot used in Karnatic music from South India. The concept of rhythmic bases and solo motifs introduced last month will be expanded, and we will be looking at some more complicated finger articulations.

For those of you who might want to interpret these examples (and those from previous articles) on the drum kit, I've deliberately used a notation system as close to that of the drum kit as possible. You will notice that I've kept the bass tones at the bottom, where the bass drum would be on the staff, and have interpreted the closed tones on the bass end with a cross which could be played on the hi-hat with the left foot. A lot of the phrases are linear and are easily transferable on to the kit. Get creating!

Anyway, back to the pot. Ex. 1 uses a simple rhythmic motif often found in North and South Indian drumming styles. The solo motif occurs for the last two crotchets of the two-bar phrase and is a linear pattern based on the fast, drum roll-like compositions known in North India as *reilas*.

KEY

LEFT HAND BASS TONE	LEFT HAND FINGERTIPS	RIGHT HAND 3 FINGERED UNIT	RIGHT HAND 1 FINGERED UNIT

Ex 1

Basic rhythm motif

TUM TA NA DIM TA NA DIM TUM TA NA DIM TA NA DIM

Basic solo motif

TUM TA NA DIM TA NA DIM TA TUM KI DA TA KA DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA

Ex. 1a is the reduced length phrase and Ex. 1b is the rhythmic cadence which repeats three times to bring the thematic development to its conclusion. (These were discussed in more detail in last month's article.)

Ex 1a

TUM TA NA DIM TA NA DIM TI TUM KI DA TA KA DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA

Ex 1b
ARUDIE/TIHAI/CORVAY

TI TUM KI DA TA KA DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA TUM TI TUM KI DA TA KA

DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA TUM TI TUM KI DA TA KA DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA TUM

Time resumes

In Ex. 1c we see a more excited conclusion where the slow parts of the tihai are interrupted and replaced with shorter, faster sections. This is a common way for percussionists to surprise the connoisseurs in the audience who would be expecting three longer phrases.

Ex 1c
ALTERNATIVE ARUDIE/TIHAI MAKING A SHORTER LENGTH TIHAI OUT OF THE LAST SECTION OF THE LONGER TIHAI

TI TUM KI DA TA KA DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA TUM TI TUM KI DA TA KA

DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA TUM DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA TUM DI GU TA RI KI DA TA KA TUM

Time resumes

Shorter length Tihai

Section 1 Section 2 Section 3

The remaining examples look at some other basic rhythmic bases commonly found with ghatam, kanjira, mridangam and all the other classical drums of South India. Ex. 2 involves a tricky double stroke with the first finger. These are often put in to switch the lead onto the three-fingered unit so as to articulate some sort of accent later in the rhythm (in much the same way as a double sticking could lead you to stress an off-beat in a pattern).

RHYTHMIC MOTIFS

Ex 2

TUM DI ME NAM TA NAM DI ME NAM TA NAM DI ME NAM KI DA TA KA

Ex 2a

TUM KI DA TA KA NAM TA NAM DI ME NAM TA NAM DI ME NAM KI DA TA KA

Ex. 3 and 3a involve a straightforward triplet groove whilst Ex. 4 and 4a are based on one of my favourite South Indian triplet riffs which involves dividing the triplets into groups of five and seven.

Ex 3

TUM TA DIM TA DIM TA DIM TA DIM TUM TA DIM TA DIM TA DIM TA KA DI NA

Ex 3a

TUM TA DIM TA DIM TA DIM TA DIM TUM TA DIM TA DIM TA KA DI NA TA KA TA DI KI DA TUM

Ex 4
RHYTHMIC BASIS FOR 4a (5+7)

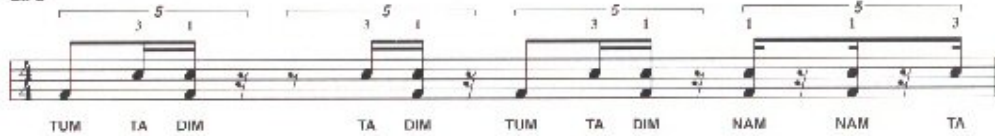


Ex 4a (5-7)



The final two examples make use of a very satisfying quintuplet groove not to be missed in the life of a percussionist.

Ex 5



Ex 5a

