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About the Author

Nic Marcy has played the drumset since the age of four. He studied drumset with legendary teachers Tony Monforte in Binghamton, New York and Alan Dawson at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. He toured with numerous bands in the sixties and seventies and continued to do studio work into the eighties. Nic has taught drumset in Austin and Round Rock, Texas over the past twenty years and has authored four other drum books: *Exotic Coordination*, *Exotic Interdependence*, *Drumset for Musicians Who Don't want to be Dummies* and *Solo Drumset*.

Acknowledgments

My wife Karen for her continual support, and my students for believing in me.

Key



Look for the following icons in the text:



Indicates a video is included (in “Pulse of Jazz videos folder”).



MP3

Indicates an MP3 is included and shows track number.

Track 6

About the Disc

The included disc is a data disc containing MP3s and video files. The MP3s are in the root directory of the disc, and the disc should play like a normal CD in most current CD and DVD players. The videos are contained in a directory entitled "Pulse of Jazz videos." You will need to place the disc in your computer to access the video files, which are in MP4 & Quick Time format. The videos are numbered in the order in which the topics appear in the book. If you use your computer, you can also import the songs into any music software you choose, such as iTunes. Here are the files that appear on the disc:

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Foreword

Jazz is a American art form. It started in the early 1900s in Chicago, New Orleans and New York. It is the USA's greatest export. Jazz was created to express the feeling of the new world of thinking: total freedom of expression! Playing jazz was a way of showing the world that freedom was alive and well. This unique art form must continue and this book is a strong push to keep jazz alive.

Nic is a dedicated musician/drummer who lives, breathes and feels jazz. His desire to share his passion is unending. Wisdom is the combination of knowledge and experience. Knowledge is information. Experience is putting this information into action. Nic has collected a lifetime of jazz enjoyment and this book is the culmination of his wisdom.

To learn jazz is so important for any type of music. Many of the past great rock drummers started out playing jazz. John Bonham from Led Zeppelin loved listening to and being inspired by Buddy Rich and Joe Morello. You are the next generation to stand on the shoulders of great past drummers and keep this art form alive in the 21st century! Nic has opened a different door than past teachers. Inspired by the great Jim Chapin and his independence book, *Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer*, Nic has shown there is more to learn.

Step into Nic's world and feel the groove and expression of a true art form. Then discover your own pulse... and *The Pulse of Jazz*.

-Dom Famularo

I first met Nic Marcy at a PASIC convention some years ago, where we hung out and took in a few clinics together. Soon thereafter, I was on tour with the Broadway show *Movin' Out*, and Nic contacted me when he saw that the tour would be passing through Austin (where he has lived and taught drums for many years). Nic invited me to come and do a clinic at his studio while I was in town. I remember that he had been teaching from my book *Drum Techniques of Led Zeppelin*, and I loved his enthusiasm and positive energy—and I could immediately sense his breadth of knowledge and experience. Nic was the real deal as a drummer and educator, and the clinic remains a fond memory because of Nic's hospitality and the warm atmosphere of his studio, where I could sense the love and respect his students have for him.

As the years have passed, Nic and I have become good friends, and I relish the chance to leave my "official duties" at PASIC and meet up with Nic to take in a drum clinic or a show, and enjoy a few laughs together (we always do!). Last year, Hurricane Sandy hit my home right before PASIC. Because I had a lot of business to attend to, I had to leave my family and attend the convention despite the fact that we had no power at home. When I got to Austin, Nic graciously took me shopping to buy flashlights, batteries, and other emergency supplies to ship home (every Home Depot in New Jersey had been stripped bare of these items), then capped it off by treating me to dinner at his favorite restaurant. Once again, I saw that Nic was the real deal—as a person and a friend.

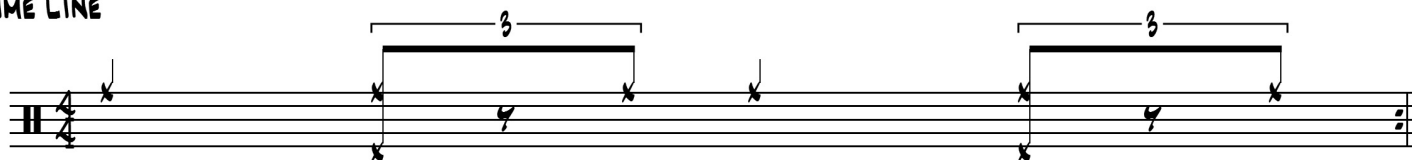
If there ever was a drum teacher who deserved to be published, it is Nic Marcy. I love this book: it's challenging, it's smart, and it's overflowing with Nic's profound passion for his craft. I think you're going to love it too. Wrap yourself in Nic's wisdom and get ready for some serious shedding!

-Joe Bergamini

Introduction

The intention of this book is to provide a method and approach for contemporary jazz timekeeping. In the majority of jazz method books, the time line is written with the standard ride pattern. This pattern, counted “one, two, ah three, four, ah,” is sometimes referred to as “ding-dink-a-ding.”

TIME LINE



In contemporary jazz, the time line is articulated in many forms mathematically, polyrhythmically and melodically. *The Pulse of Jazz* is a book about making creative time lines speak to the music in numerous ways, creating a different atmosphere to shape jazz music. The book will also show you how to comp or improvise against that creative time line.

Jazz music is an art without boundaries played in very specific forms. The art of keeping the form while experimenting within its content is the most specific rule of the art form. Earlier players took less advantage of the endless boundaries, but were always taking intelligent approaches to widen the horizons of the music. After nearly a hundred years of experimentation, the music encompasses miles and miles of wonderful and artful adventure. *The Pulse of Jazz* can help a jazz drumset musician go beyond what was practiced in the past and experiment with challenging ways to approach timekeeping and invent new music. The book will walk you forward musically and generate more interest in the art form.

The styles and application of jazz being less important than the overall picture, these techniques can be applied to almost any style of music. The importance of practice in various art forms, extending ideas further and applying this fusion to your own unique musical mix, cannot be understated.

These writings are of a jazz idiom. However, after teaching over the past twenty years, I’ve come to find that crossing methods, learning other styles and being out of your comfort zone is where you may reap the most personal growth. When I hear a student say “I don’t like jazz” (or any other style for that matter), I feel that person has cheated him/herself of an entire school of thinking and learning. When any student states that he or she doesn’t like a style of music, they have in fact thrown up a wall, closed off a path to new beginnings and techniques that will in fact make them a better musician.

To truly learn a style—any style—you must listen to the masters of that style: the people on the cutting edge of that style and the founders of the genre. After many hours of listening, the student should sample, dissect and emulate their findings, picking up where the artist they are listening to has left off. *The Pulse of Jazz* book is a shortcut in that direction. It has been “crash tested” by my students, other drumset educators and myself. We have shortened the process for your journey and welcome you to some intense but rewarding work.

TIMEKEEPING CONCEPTS

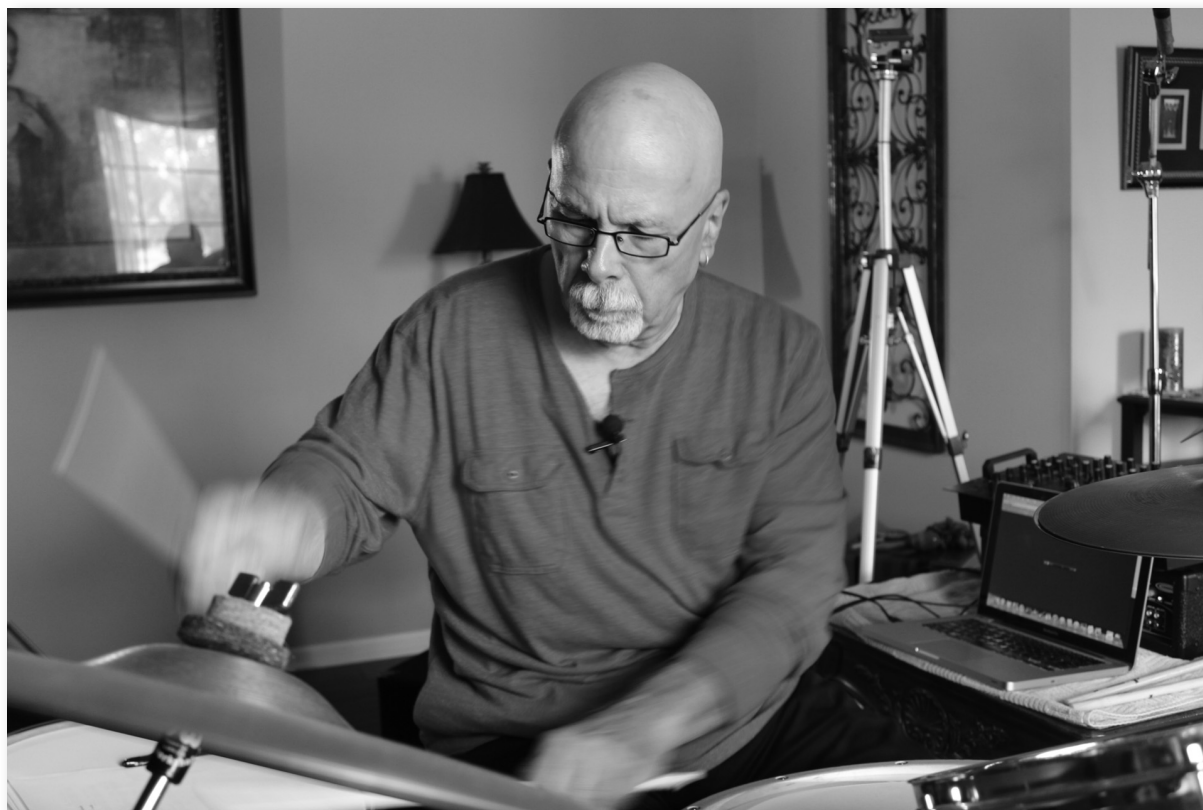


Quarter-Note Core

The pulse of jazz is quarter-note based with 12/8 superimposed. A “skip” note played on the third partial of the second and fourth triplet of 4/4 time (or the 6th and 12th partial of the 12/8 subdivision) became a staple of the bop age in jazz music, and was often referred to as “the standard time line” or “the jazz rhythm.”

As the music evolved, the time lines became more musical and more melody-driven, but kept the quarter-note core as a path to follow. The polyrhythmic modulations, compressed patterns and time manipulations would come later—in the 1960s, a period often referred to as “after Ron Carter.”

A fourth wave of new jazz music has introduced mathematical impositions into old standards, recreating old music in a new complexity.



Quarter-Note Pulse

TIME LINE



COMPS

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Contemporary Timekeeping

Here are some contemporary ideas that create the illusion of a different tempo or time signature, as we've discussed on the previous pages. Check these ideas out and then we'll explore a few of them in the next set of exercises. Count carefully at first to be sure your figures are accurate.

COMPRESSING TIME IN 3/4

A single staff of music in 3/4 time. The melody consists of six eighth notes, each followed by a quarter rest. The notes are beamed in pairs, and the rests are placed between the pairs. This creates a rhythmic pattern that feels like it might be in a different time signature.

TRAVELING THROUGH TIME...

A single staff of music that changes time signature. It starts in 4/4 time with a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes. After two measures, it changes to 3/4 time with a quarter note followed by an eighth note and a quarter rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

EXPANDING TIME IN 3/4

A single staff of music in 3/4 time. The melody consists of six quarter notes, each followed by a half rest. The notes are beamed in pairs, and the rests are placed between the pairs. This creates a rhythmic pattern that feels like it might be in a different time signature.

EXPANDING TIME IN 5/4

A single staff of music in 5/4 time. The melody consists of six quarter notes, each followed by a quarter rest. The notes are beamed in pairs, and the rests are placed between the pairs. This creates a rhythmic pattern that feels like it might be in a different time signature.

TRAVELING THROUGH TIME...

A single staff of music that changes time signature. It starts in 4/4 time with a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes. After two measures, it changes to 5/4 time with a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

EXPANDING TIME IN 7/4

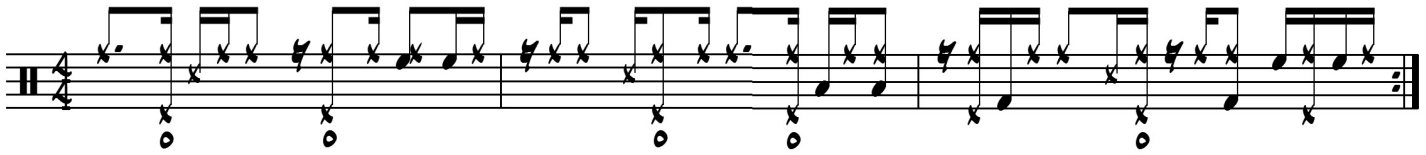
A single staff of music in 7/4 time. The melody consists of six quarter notes, each followed by a half rest. The notes are beamed in pairs, and the rests are placed between the pairs. This creates a rhythmic pattern that feels like it might be in a different time signature.

TRAVELING THROUGH TIME...

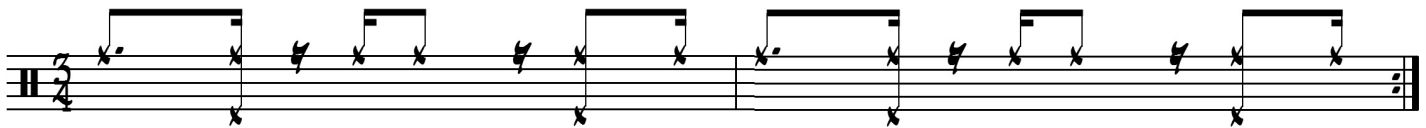
A single staff of music that changes time signature. It starts in 4/4 time with a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes. After two measures, it changes to 7/4 time with a quarter note followed by a half rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Compressed 3 Over 4

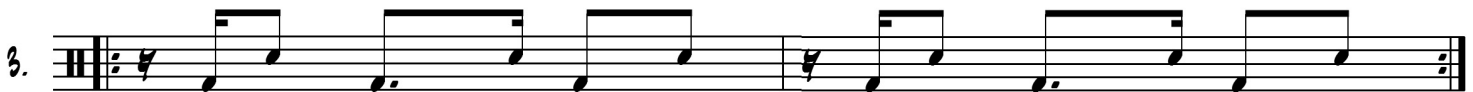
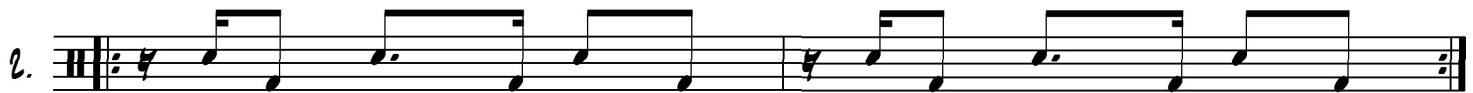
Using 3/4 compression over 4/4, the time line resolves in three bars.



TIME LINE



COMPS



Hi-Hat Tickling



This is a cool, old school hi-hat technique. Place your left stick under the hi-hat cymbals, where it can sometimes play on the hi-hat stand. The right stick is on top, playing the cymbals and the butt end of the left stick.

You'll have to use traditional grip for this exercise.

TAPED ON THE HH-STAND STICK CLICK

1.

2.

3.

4.