

How do you play your 16th notes? Teaching drumset with rock and Brazilian rhythms

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In Brazilian universities the term popular music usually brings to mind various genres of music, ranging from jazz and rock to a vast array of Brazilian styles. All of these coexist peacefully in classes, but when teaching hand technique to drumset and percussion students, a major challenge arises: how do we deal with the different ways to interpret 16th notes? To learn the basics of percussion, we aim to find a perfect balance between our hands, to play solid beats and maintain our dynamics and note placement as steady as possible. In order to do that, there are practices well known by percussionists, such as the study of solos and exercises called rudiments. However, at the same time that students are required to develop the skills mentioned above, there are Brazilian rhythms such as samba, baião and maracatu, in which the technique demands other types of competences. They are all based on 16th note patterns, with characteristic variations on note placement and lots of variations on dynamics. The hands should not play with the same balance and “perfect” is definitely not the goal. This session will demonstrate this matter and discuss other issues about drumset teaching within higher education in Brazil, including experiences with distance education. Equipment needed: data show projector and a drumset.

Biography

Daniel Gohn is a faculty member at the University of Sao Carlos (UFSCar), Brazil. He holds Master’s and Doctor’s degrees from the University of São Paulo and a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Campinas. His main interests in research include the use of technology for music education and processes for teaching and learning of percussion instruments. He is currently the coordinator for the distance education program in music at UFSCar. He is the author of “Music Education and Distance Learning: Approaches and Experiences”, “Digital Technologies for Music Education”, and “Music self-learning: Technological Alternatives” (Portuguese only).