

Groove Construction

Displacement: Part 1

by Wayne Katz

Ask any young drumming student to come up with an interesting 4 bar groove and many, if not most, will look give you nothing but a "rabbit in your headlights" frozen stare. The idea with this **groove construction** series is to give drummers some sure-fire steps to come up with their *own* interesting, musical ideas. Check it out...

In Ex 1 below, the snare on '4' of the first bar has been moved or delayed by an eighth note in bar 2 so that it now falls on the '&' of beat 4. This two bar loop is very interesting to listen and dance to as it creates a sort of **question and answer** effect between the two bars.

Ex 1

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

In Ex 2 I've added a bass drum in bar 2 to compliment or ornament the displaced snare and to fill up the 'hole' that was created when we moved it.

Ex 2

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

We can expand on this principle by moving 2 notes. Take a look at 2 bars of our original groove below:

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

In Ex 3 I've moved both the snare and the bass highlighted above to the following eighth note.

Ex 3

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

In Ex 4 we've completed the idea by once again filling up the 'holes' and ornamenting the displaced snare and bass with a bass and ghosted snare respectively resulting in a way more interesting and funky groove.

Ex 4

This technique of displacing certain notes has been used over and over by Funk drummers to create interesting grooves, but it was a brand new phenomenon when it first appeared. The groove in Ex 4 sounds very much like the one used by Clyde Stubblefield in the 1967 James Brown classic *Cold Sweat*. Well known music journalist of the time Jerry Wexler was quoted as saying that "*Cold Sweat* deeply affected the musicians I knew. It just freaked them out."

Try to apply this displacement to your own grooves to broaden your groove vocabulary. The original groove doesn't have to be fancy, sometimes the more simple the original is the greater the displacement effect will be.

Well what are you waiting for? Don't you have some grooves to construct?

Check out the next installment in the Groove Construction series *Displacement: Part 2* at WAYNEKATZ.COM for more advanced ideas