



Aaron Spears: Beyond the Chops

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presents

AARON SPEARS: Beyond the Chops

Edited by Joe Bergamini

Transcriptions and engraving by Willie Rose

PDF Design by Joe Bergamini and Willie Rose

Photos by Andrew Lepley

DVD Produced by Paul Siegel and Rob Wallis

DRUM KEY:

CHINA STACK	CRASH	CLOSED HI-HAT	OPEN HI-HAT	HALF-OPEN HI-HAT	RIDE	RIDE CRASH	TOM 1
TOM 2	SNARE DRUM	GHOST NOTE	RIM SHOT	TOM 3	BASS DRUM	HI-HAT FOOT	HI-HAT FOOT SPLASH



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PART 1: MASTER CLASS



SYNCOPIATED FILL DEMO

One of Aaron's signature concepts is his ability to place his fills in unconventional places. Here, he demonstrates some ideas for the placement of fills.

1

The image shows five staves of musical notation for a drum fill. The notation is written in a single system with a common time signature (C). It features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and accents. The notation is marked with 'S' and 'X' symbols, indicating specific drum strokes or accents. The fill is numbered '1' at the beginning.



“GIVE THE LORD A PRAISE” GROOVE

Aaron plays ghosted double strokes in this groove, which is the verse of this tune.

2

Musical notation for the 'GIVE THE LORD A PRAISE' GROOVE. It consists of two staves of music in common time (C). The notation features a series of ghosted double strokes, indicated by 'x' marks above the notes and '3' above the stems. The first staff contains 12 measures, and the second staff contains 6 measures, ending with a double bar line.

“SLEEPING DRAGON SHUFFLE”

This transcription shows the first 12 bars of this tune, which has a traditional blue shuffle feel, played with an organ player.

3

Musical notation for the 'SLEEPING DRAGON SHUFFLE'. It consists of three staves of music in common time (C). The notation features a series of ghosted double strokes, indicated by 'x' marks above the notes and '3' above the stems. The first staff contains 4 measures, the second staff contains 4 measures, and the third staff contains 4 measures, ending with a double bar line.

SHUFFLE GROOVE WITH OFFBEAT HI-HAT

In this groove, the left foot plays the hi-hat on the last partial of every triplet, to create a shuffle feel along with the ride. Aaron mentions hearing Steve Gadd utilize this concept.

4

R L R R L L R L R R L R L



SHUFFLE VARIATIONS

Aaron demonstrates different variations on his shuffle feel in this example. Note the use of ghost notes.

5

The image shows five staves of musical notation for a drum set, illustrating various shuffle variations. The notation includes notes with stems, beams, and accents, along with ghost notes indicated by a '0' in a circle. Above the notes are various rhythmic markings such as '3' and '>'. Below the second staff, there are drumming patterns labeled 'R L R R', 'R L R R', and 'R L R R'. The notation is written in a standard musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature.



“I LOVE YOU (THAT’S WHY)”

Here is the introduction and main groove from this Motown-influenced tune. Note the use of quarter notes on the snare drum, typical of this style.

6

INTRO

VERSE

The image shows musical notation for a drum part. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are labeled 'INTRO' and the last two are labeled 'VERSE'. The notation is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes various rhythmic patterns, including quarter notes on the snare drum, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes. There are also dynamic markings like accents and slurs. A '6' is written at the beginning of the first staff.



MOTOWN GROOVE CONCEPTS

In this example, Aaron demonstrates the basic verse and chorus grooves he uses on the Motown-influenced tune "I Love You (That's Why)."

7

VERSE GROOVE



CHORUS



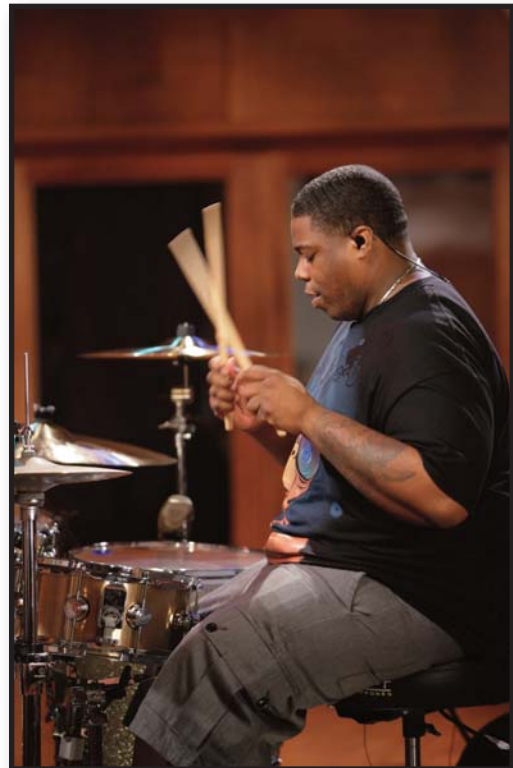
The image shows musical notation for a drum groove. It starts with a treble clef, a common time signature (C), and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notation is divided into two sections: 'VERSE GROOVE' and 'CHORUS'. The 'VERSE GROOVE' section consists of two staves of music. The first staff begins with a 7-measure rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with accents. The second staff continues the pattern. The 'CHORUS' section consists of three staves of music, featuring a similar rhythmic pattern with accents and some rests. The notation includes various drum symbols like 'x' for cymbals and 'o' for snare or tom-toms.



“HYPEJUICE”: REAL-WORLD APPROACH

On the DVD, Aaron plays this hip-hop song in two different ways. In this first example, he performs the song the way he would if he was performing the song on an actual gig.

8



“HYPEJUICE”: PRACTICE APPROACH

Aaron makes the point that he finds playing along to songs is a very effective approach to practicing. In his personal development, Aaron says that he would use his favorite tracks in place of a click, and practice developing fills and phrasing concepts while playing along to the music. He stresses that he would not actually play this way on a real gig, but finds that he can develop new ideas for fills and licks, and place them in context this way. In this next example, Aaron demonstrates how he might practice along with this tune for fun, and to work on his fills.

9

HAND/FOOT COMBO

Aaron is asked on the DVD about some of the hand/foot fill combinations he plays. Here are some of the basic concepts that he employs.

10

The first staff shows a sequence of right-hand strokes (R) on a single note. The second staff shows alternating right (R) and left (L) hand strokes on a single note. The third staff shows a sequence of right-hand strokes with accents (>) on a single note.



“GOLDEN ROCK” MAIN GROOVE

Aaron plays a driving rock feel on this tune.

11

“GOLDEN ROCK” OUTRO

Aaron increases the intensity on the outro to the tune.

12

“STEREOTRONIC” MAIN GROOVE

Although this tune is in 9, when Aaron performs it, it has a relaxed, laid-back groove. Here, Aaron demonstrates the main groove concept of the song.

13

The image shows four staves of musical notation for a drum groove. The notation is written in a 9/8 time signature. The first staff begins with a measure containing a half note followed by a quarter note, with a circled 'o' above the quarter note. The rest of the notation consists of rhythmic patterns for various drums, indicated by 'x' marks on the staff lines. The patterns are consistent across the four staves, representing a continuous groove. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings like accents (>) and slurs.



PART 2: INTERVIEW WITH JOJO MAYER



“SEX MACHINE” GROOVE

Here is Aaron’s interpretation of the classic James Brown tune. The sixteenths are slightly swung. Aaron performed this tune at the Grammy awards with Usher and James Brown himself.

14

The image shows a drum score for a 14-measure groove in common time (C). The notation is spread across seven staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notation consists of rhythmic patterns using eighth and sixteenth notes, with 'x' marks indicating specific drum sounds. Various performance markings are present, including accents (>), slurs, and dynamic hairpins. The groove concludes with a final note on the seventh staff.

BROKEN-TIME FILLS

Aaron demonstrates this example for Jojo when asked about the way he hears some of his signature fills, which have a very complex time feel, sometimes disguising the 1.

15

Musical notation for example 15, showing a complex drum fill with various accents and triplets. The notation is spread across four staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a common time signature. The fill consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accents and triplets. The second staff continues the fill with more complex rhythmic patterns. The third staff shows further development of the fill. The fourth staff concludes the fill with a final rhythmic pattern.

SLOW GROOVES

Locking into a deep pocket at a slow tempo can be very challenging. On the DVD, Jojo asks Aaron to demonstrate some slow grooves. This first example is a groove that could be played in a 12/8 ballad.

16

Musical notation for example 16, showing a slow groove with a 12/8 time signature and a complex drum pattern. The notation is spread across four staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a 12/8 time signature. The groove consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accents and triplets. The second staff continues the groove with more complex rhythmic patterns. The third staff shows further development of the groove. The fourth staff concludes the groove with a final rhythmic pattern. Below the notation, there are two lines of rhythmic notation: "L R R L" and "R L R R L L R L R R L L R L R R L L R L R".

Although Jojo counts it off in 3, the next example is most clearly written in 6/4. This is an example of a groove that Aaron might play for a slow song in 3.

17

Musical notation for exercise 17, a 6/4 drum groove. The notation is spread across three staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a 6/4 time signature. It features a series of eighth notes with triplet markings (3) and accents (>). The second staff continues the pattern with similar triplet and accent markings. The third staff concludes the exercise with a final triplet and a double bar line.

NEW JACK SWING/ SHUFFLE GROOVE

Jojo asks Aaron to demonstrate a groove with a shuffle feel in the New Jack Swing style. The shuffle feel in this groove is narrower than a traditional shuffle; it is between straight and swung. This exercise could also be written out as triplets; be sure to listen to the DVD to understand the feel.

18

Musical notation for exercise 18, a New Jack Swing/ Shuffle groove. The notation is spread across two staves. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). It features a series of eighth notes with accents (>) and a shuffle feel. The second staff continues the pattern with similar accents and a shuffle feel. Below the second staff, there is a sequence of letters: R L R R L R R L R.

BOUNCE BEAT

The last example is a “bounce” beat, similar to a groove Aaron played on a song with the Gideon Band. The intent here is to emulate the feel of a drum machine.

19

The image shows four staves of musical notation for a drum pattern. The first staff is in common time (C) and starts with a 19-measure rest. The notation consists of rhythmic patterns of eighth and sixteenth notes, with various accents and dynamic markings. The patterns are: Staff 1: 19-measure rest, then eighth-note patterns with accents and dynamic markings like ϕ, ϕ^+, and ϕ. Staff 2: Continuation of eighth-note patterns with accents and dynamic markings like ϕ^+, ϕ, and ϕ^+. Staff 3: Continuation of eighth-note patterns with accents and dynamic markings like ϕ^+, ϕ, and ϕ^+. Staff 4: Continuation of eighth-note patterns with accents and dynamic markings like ϕ^+, ϕ, and ϕ^+. The notation includes various rhythmic values and dynamic markings to guide the drummer.





Aaron Spears: Beyond the Chops

DVD CREDITS

Produced by Paul Siegel and Rob Wallis

Directed by Rob Wallis

Co-produced by Greg McKean and Joe Bergamini

Edited by Greg McKean

Conceptual consultant and interviewer: JoJo Mayer

Still Photographer: Andrew Lepley

Drum Tech: Kris Castillo

Bonus/Behind-the-Scenes Footage Fimed & Edited by: Don Seven Setzer

PDF eBook Transcriptions by: Willie Rose

PDF eBook Edited by: Joe Bergamini

PDF eBook Layout & Design by: Joe Bergamini and Willie Rose

Filmed at Bennett Studios, Englewood, NJ, May 27 & 28, 2009

MUSIC

“Give The Lord A Praise”

Written by Cornelius Berkeley and Edward Henderson

Published by GMG World Media Publishing (ASCAP)

Performed by the Gideon Band:

Nate Fields (bass), Steve Walker (guitar)

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“Sleeping Dragon Shuffle”

Written by Arthur Strong

Published by Strongsoundz LLC (ASCAP)

Performed by Arthur “Buddy” Strong (organ)

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“I Love You (That’s Why)”

Written by Levi B. Stephens (ASCAP), Isaac L. Lewis (ASCAP), and Warren K. Jones (ASCAP)

Published by Kollectedoe Publishing (ASCAP)

Performed by Levi B. Stephens (guitar), Tyler Sherman (bass guitar), all other instruments Levi B. Stephens and Warren K. Jones

© 2009 Levi B. Stephens, Isaac L. Lewis and Warren K. Jones

“Golden Rock”

Written by Dory Lobel

Published by Kobalt Music

Performed by Dory Lobel (all instruments)

© 2009 Dory Lobel

“HypeJuice”

Written by Warryn Campbell

Published by Wetink Red Music (ASCAP/EMI)

Performed by Warryn Campbell (all instruments)

© 2009 Warryn Campbell

“Stereotronic”

Written by Christopher Leach

Published by Leach 2 Good Music

Performed by Reger (Ross) Smith (bass), Christopher Leach (keyboards/programming), and Juan “Natural” Najera (guitars)

© 2009 Leach 2 Good Music

Aaron Spears plays DW Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Remo Drumheads, and Vic Firth Drumsticks

Aaron’s Special Thanks:

I would first like to thank God for trusting me with this gift of music that will hopefully touch and inspire everyone who comes in contact with it.

I want to thank my Mom, my Dad, my Valentine Jessica, my family, and my FK*M fam that support me and share me with the rest of the world. It’s your love and support that keeps me grounded and allows me to fly high at the same time.

I also want to thank Paul Siegel, Rob Wallis, and all the amazing people at Hudson for believing and helping me to fulfill a lifelong dream. A huge thank you to JoJo Mayer for lending his insight and creative energy to this project. Also thanks to the good people at DW Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Remo Drumheads, VicFirth Drumsticks, Toca Percussion, PureSound Percussion and Logic(Apple).

To every single person around the world who has ever looked at a clip of me on YouTube or other DVDs: It’s your love and admiration (and even the hate) for what I do that keeps me pushing to make myself better. From my heart, I thank you.

-Aaron

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Carter Beauford/Victor Wooten: Making Music	1 disc • 2 hrs : 55 mins	Thomas Lang: Creative Control	2 discs • 5 hrs : 15 mins
Gregg Bissonnette: Musical Drumming...	2 discs • 4 hrs : 20 mins	Thomas Lang: Creative Coordination	3 discs • 7hrs : 00 mins
Jason Bittner: What Drives The Beat	1 disc • 3 hrs : 00 mins	Modern Drummer: Festival 2006 - saturday	2 discs • 6 hrs : 20 mins
John Blackwell: Master Series	1 disc • 2 hrs : 26 mins	Modern Drummer: Festival 2006 - sunday	2 discs • 6 hrs : 30 mins
John Blackwell: Technique, Grooving and Showmanship	2 discs • 3 hrs : 15 mins	Modern Drummer: Festival 2006 - complete	4 discs • 12 hrs : 50 mins
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Classic Jazz Solos Volume One	1 disc • 1 hr : 00 mins	Modern Drummer: Festival 2003	2 discs • 5 hrs : 50 mins
Classic Jazz Solos: Volume Two	1 disc • 1 hr : 15 mins	Modern Drummer: Festival 2000	1 disc • 2 hrs : 50 mins
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Peter Erskine: Live at Jazz Baltica	1 disc • 1 hr : 15 mins	Buddy Rich: Live @ Montreal Jazz Festival	1 disc • 1 hr : 00 mins
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Steve Gadd: The Master Series	1 disc • 2 hrs : 20 mins	Antonio Sanchez: The Master Series	1 disc • 2 hrs : 53 mins
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Lionel Hampton: Jazz Legend	1 disc • 1 hr : 10 mins	Steve Smith: Drum Legacy (with play-along CD)	2 discs • 5 hrs : 00 mins
Horacio Hernandez: MD Festival 2000	1 disc • 1 hr : 05 mins	Smith/Nussbaum: The Art of Playing with Brushes (w/CD)	2 discs • 7 hrs : 16 mins
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Tommy Igoe: Groove Essentials 1.0	1 disc • 3 hrs : 40 mins	Ultimate Drummers Weekend 11	1 disc • 3 hrs : 40 mins

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Gavin Harrison: Rhythmic Horizons	1 disc • 2 hrs : 20 mins	Jojo Mayer: Secret Weapons/Modern Drummer	2 discs • 3 hrs : 00 mins
Gavin Harrison: Rhythmic Visions	1 disc • 2 hrs : 20 mins	Pat Petrillo: Hands, Groove & Fills (dvd+book+cd)	1 disc • 3 hrs : 00 mins
KoSA Live/2006	1 disc • 4 hrs : 40 mins	Ultimate Drummers Weekend 2004	2 discs • 6 hrs : 00 mins

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