

Anthony Cirone - Portraits in Rhythm - Etude 3

Notes from Matthew Cook, *Los Angeles Percussion Quartet*

Stick Recommendation

This etude features delicate rhythmic passages as well as moments to demonstrate smooth rolls. To do this, you will need a stick that is heavy enough to control during soft passages, but with the correct length and bead shape to produce smooth rolls. (avoid dreamiest sticks for these reasons)

CL-2L - Christopher Lamb Model #2 / Laminated Birch



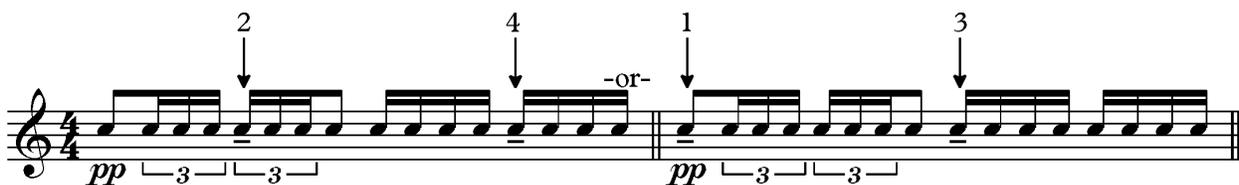
IP-LD - Lalo Davila Model



Be Musical

Make a personal artistic decision for yourself and either prioritize Beats 2 and 4 or Beats 1 and 3 throughout. Either works, but be consistent throughout each phrase. (The last thing a listener wants is to hear a bunch of rhythms “thrown” at them like a computer)

Example of the two phrasing options:



Closed Rolls

Think of **musicality first** with your closed rolls. Depending on your individual hands and stick choice, you could effectively use a variety of roll speeds for a “lush” sounding roll. There’s no “one way” to play a roll. Be creative!

1. Experiment with septuplets (7 notes) to add momentum to the end of a crescendo.
2. Emphasize the first TWO notes (not just the first) on every roll - especially *fp*. Also, at the end of the crescendo, emphasize the last note before the downbeat (as shown below).

musical notation for Closed Rolls. The first staff shows a roll starting with an accent (>) and a dynamic marking of *fp*. The second staff shows a roll with accents on the first two notes, followed by a septuplet (7 notes) and a final note with an accent. The word "equals" is written above the second staff.

Open Rolls

The most challenging aspect of these piece will be to execute the quick 5 stroke rolls in Measure 19 - especially if you haven't play a LOT of technical snare drum material. There is no “short cut” for anything requiring strength and control.

Begin by **isolating this difficult passage** and **making exercises for it** to develop control of your fulcrum, fingers, arm and wrist in one fluid motion.

There are many techniques possible on the snare drum. Consider finding a good local teacher to give you their perspective in person. The approach that I use for passages like this uses a **whipping motion for the accent** - which also results in a down stroke. Also, remember to use *weight* in the note/hand directly before the accent as you end the roll to hear direction. I “whip” this note in 5 stroke rolls, too.

5-Stroke Roll Exercise 1:

1. (remember to do this exercise starting with the opposite hand, too!)
2. Go VERY slow to get comfortable with the motion. No metronome for this one.

musical notation for 5-Stroke Roll Exercise 1. The first staff shows a 5-stroke roll with accents on the first two notes, repeated twice (Repeat together 2xs), followed by a 4-stroke roll with accents on the first two notes, repeated four times (4xs). The second staff shows a 5-stroke roll with accents on the first two notes, repeated twice (2xs), followed by a 4-stroke roll with accents on the first two notes, repeated four times (4xs).

5-Stroke Roll Exercise 2:

1. Start with a metronome at a slower tempo, then work up to 92 BPM.
2. Notice the sticking concept is similar throughout. I wrote some reminders in on 16th notes.

♩. = 92

5-Stroke Roll Exercise 3 (Aka, "Three Camps"):

1. Start slowly
2. This is where you put it all together. Notice the tempo represents how fast the actual passage is. Start slowly and work your way up to 138 BPM.

♩. = 138

Do 8xs in a row, then stop to switch which hand you start with.

Ornaments

Don't accent ornaments on "weak" beats unless they are specifically marked. This includes flams, rolls, or drags that aren't specifically accented or fall on a *strong* beat.

Measure 30:

Don't accent!!

1. Notice the important musical ideas are actually the first and last beats, not the ornaments.

Difficult Passages

1. Make Exercises out of the difficult passages and practice them separately. Break them apart, and re-construct them. See how I've done this on Measure 30.

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

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

R L R L R R L R L R *fp* L R L L

R L R L R ^{rrll} R L R *fp* L

Quick Dynamic Changes

1. To execute Quick Dynamic changes from loud to soft, use a down stroke on the note(s) before the new soft dynamic. It is easy to overplay the first note of a softer dynamic, or mess it up entirely, if we are caught with our sticks too high in the air because we weren't looking ahead.

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time, starting with a treble clef. The first measure contains a series of eighth notes, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second measure begins with a down stroke on the first note, indicated by an arrow and the text "Down Stroke". This down stroke is followed by a triplet of eighth notes, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third measure continues with another triplet of eighth notes, also marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The piece concludes with a final eighth note in the second measure.