

Latin for drummies – Candombe variations.

Candombe is the heritage of African slave's in Rio de la Plata's area. With the popularity of rock in the 60's it was adapted by drummers to the drum set but...How can I make some variations to this groove?

In order to embellish our first Candombe groove. We need to build a concept before, so we direct our creativity in that direction.

We're gonna work on two basic concepts. The first one, making a Funky-Candombe groove and the second one, trying to make a link with Cuban music using blocks and cowbells.

Let's remember the drums, what they play and the relation with the "Madera" pattern and pulse.

How to read:

Symbol	Written in the third space is what the hand plays. It means:
x	REPIQUE & CHICO DRUM - With this symbol we're gonna represent the playing of a slapped-high pitched-tone stroke, without choking the head!
o	PIANO DRUM - It represents the palm of the hand on the head (standing ON the head), like the bass-tone stroke on tumbadoras.

Symbol	Written in the first space is what the stick plays. It means:
o	REPIQUE, PIANO & CHICO DRUM - It represents the open tone notes played by the stick. Remember...Do not leave the stick ON the head. Let it fly back!
x	PIANO DRUM - With this symbol we're gonna represent the stick staying ON the head, without bouncing!

Funkifying Candombe

There are two different elements that let us identify a funky groove. Ghost notes and hihat openings. And as a comment I'd like to add all the subdivisions of sixteenth notes.

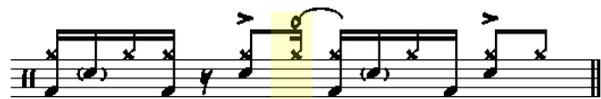
The funky-embellishment is based on our ostinato-modified Candombe groove:



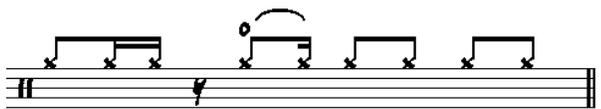
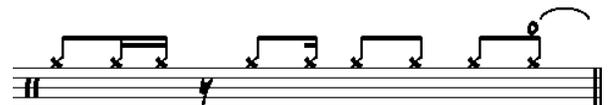
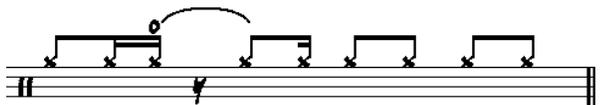
First of all. Ghost notes, but...Where? Remember what the drums play in the traditional context! We're gonna use second-sixteenth notes from the Chico drum:



How about a hihat opening? Where? Remember hand-played notes from the Repique drum:



More opening possibilities



As in funk grooves, you can make a two-bar melody. For that, we're gonna modify the fourth pulse of our first groove, using an accented second sixteenth note and one ghosted fourth sixteenth note.



“Cuban-dombe”.

This approach has the main goal of creating a link to Cuban drum audio. So, we’re gonna use a cowbell to make our ostinato combining it with a pattern played with hihat’s foot on a jam-block with a bracket.

For the ostinato, we’ll use two different tones. An “open tone” (O), playing the cowbell at the “mouth” (opened side) part and making a “closed tone” (C) playing the cowbell in the “back” (the middle). Like this:



Then, we can add the “Madera” pattern with our hihat’s foot playing a jam-block on a bracket:



Now, let’s add the bass drum playing the “open tones” from the Piano drum:



And, finally, completing the melody using the snare drum and the toms:



Check Point.

This is the end of the last of 3 articles about Candombe. Up to this point you’re able to:

1. Recognize the drums and what they play.
2. Start playing, develop and end it in the traditional context.
3. Make an interpretation on drum set with different ostinato and hihat w/foot possibilities.
4. Funkifying it using ghost notes and hihat openings.
5. Make a two bar phrase.
6. Create a link to Cuban audio drum set using a cowbell and the jam black bracket.

Hope you find it interesting and useful. Enjoy it!