

Mambo Jumbo and All That Jazz: A Multicultural Approach to Teaching Jazz Ensembles

Presented By
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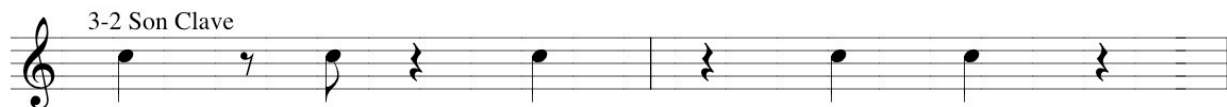
Caliente Performance Selection: Frenzy

The Clave

The single most important aspect of Afro-Cuban music is its strict adherence to the rhythmic pattern known as clave. Afro-Cuban music requires that each musician performing in the group have an understanding of clave

The clave is a two-bar rhythmic pattern that occurs in two forms: forward clave also known as 3-2 and reverse clave, also known as 2-3. In 3-2 clave, or forward clave, the accents fall on the first beat, the "and" of the second beat, and the fourth beat of the first bar, and beats two and three of the second measure. In 2-3, or reverse clave, the pattern is inverted. There is also another clave called the rumba clave. In the rumba clave the last note in the "3" bar of the rumba clave is delayed a half beat and played on the "and" of the fourth beat. Every component of Afro-Cuban drum pattern, piano montuno, bass lines, melodic phrasing, and horn lines has to be in sync with clave.

Examples of the various forms of Clave:



Caliente Performance Selection: Bemba Colora; This selection incorporates both the 2-3 son and 2-3 rumba clave patterns.

Drums

- Typically the drum-set is not used in the performance of traditional Afro-Cuban music. If the drum-set is incorporated, it is used as a support of the hand drums.
- The drummer has the responsibility of translating the rhythmic figures originally played on various rhythm section instruments onto the drum-set.
- The instrumentation of the rhythm section determines the approach used by the drummer.
- To effectively perform the cha-cha-cha rhythm on the drum-set the following approach is suggested:
- Typically, the conga pattern in the cha-cha-cha rhythm is performed in the following manner:

Congas

- In the absence of a conga player, it is recommended that the drummer create a feeling of the congas part by performing the key rhythm accents on the drum-set.
- To perform the cha-cha-cha conga pattern on the drum-set, the slap accent— which falls on beat 2— should be performed on the rim of the snare drum while the open tones— beat 4 and the end of beat 4— should be played on the small tom-tom. Please note the example below.

Drum-set

Notice how the original congas part compares to the drum-set part.

Congas

Drum-set

- The timbales part in the cha-cha-cha is typically played on the cha-cha bell and the low drum of the timbales. See the example below:

Timbales

- To replicate the timbale part on the drum-set, only the cha-cha bell pattern is played.
- It is not necessary to be concerned with the muffle tone and the open played on the timbales; this part is similar to the conga part, which is already played on the rim of the snare and the small tom-tom.
- The cha-cha bell part is performed on the bell of the ride cymbal.

Drum-set

- Notice how the timbales cha-cha bell part lines-up with the ride cymbal of the drum-set.

Cha-cha bell

Low drum muted

Low drum open

Timbales

Ride cym. bell

Drum-set

- The bass drum in the drum-set is used to reinforce the tumbao (toom-ba-o) played on the bass.
- A tumbao is a repeated time-keeping pattern played by the bass and congas.
- The following is the bass tumbao used in "Oye Como Va":

Bass

- Typically only the "and" of 2 and beat 3 of the bass part are played on the bass drum of the drum-set. See the example below.
- Notice how the bass part lines-up with the bass drum of the drum-set.

Bass

Drum-set

Bass Drum

The Role Of The Bass

In the Latin Jazz medium the bass player does not "walk" (the traditional jazz 4-quarter-note-per-measure rhythm), but makes use of lines found in the more traditional types of Latin music. Here are examples of basic bass patterns for two different Latin grooves:

Example performance of a basic Son bass pattern:

Example of a basic Cha-cha-cha bass pattern:

The Role Of The Piano

In traditional Afro-Cuban music, the pianist is responsible for establishing and maintaining the rhythmic pulse. One of the basic elements of this is the “montuno.” A montuno is a repeated, syncopated phrase, usually of 2 bars, although it can be extended to 4 or 8 bars, depending on the harmonic rhythm. While contributing to the harmony in Latin music, the montuno is also a very important figure of the rhythmic element.

Example performance of a basic Cha-cha-cha pattern

Example performance of a basic Son montuno pattern

The Role Of Horn Players

Horn players’ first priority in this genre is rhythm; this music is about rhythm and percussion. The melody should be first interpreted from a rhythmic perspective rather than melodic. Although the common performance interpretation of eight notes is “straight” eights, as opposed to the swing eights, horn players must make sure that their parts lock rhythmically with the rhythm section to create the groove.

Layering

One of the best methods to use to develop rhythmic continuity with the ensemble is a technique called Layering.

- Layering is like putting a musical puzzle together one piece at a time.
- When the parts are all in place the result is a rhythmical Latin groove.
- Layering one rhythm section part at a time is a great way to develop a groove in this style of music.

A Multicultural Approach to Teaching Jazz Ensembles

CHOREOGRAPHY

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Cha-cha-cha

Afro-Cuban music is based on dance rhythms. It is customary for performers to show their excitement for the music by moving their bodies to the rhythm.

Why Start With Cha-cha-cha?

- The cha-cha-cha rhythm is in 4/4.
- Kids have heard elements of the cha-cha-cha rhythm in pop music.
- Artist such as Santana, Marc Anthony, and J. Lo have used the cha-cha-cha rhythm fused with funk rhythms.

Here's a simple modified dance step to the traditional cha-cha-cha. This step is divided into two sections.

- *Beat 1: Take one step to the right with your right foot.*
- *Beat 2: Bring your left foot in to meet your right foot.*
- *Beat 3: Step out to the right once again with your right foot.*
- *"And" of Beat 3: Bring your left foot in to meet your right foot.*
- *Beat 4: Step out to the right with your right foot.*
- *The second part of the dance does exactly what was done in the first part except we step in the opposite direction.*
 - *Beat 1: Take one step to the left with your left foot.*
 - *Beat 2: Bring your right foot in to meet your left foot.*
 - *Beat 3: Step out to the left once again with your left foot.*
 - *"And" of Beat 3: Bring your right foot in to meet your left foot.*
 - *Beat 4: Step out to the left with your left foot.*

Caliente Performance Selection: Oye Como Va

Modified Reggaeton

Here's another very simple dance step. This dance step is not a traditional mambo step. This is one we use to help students find the pulse and perform body movement in tempo. This is a four-count step.

1. Begin on count 1 with bending the knees and dipping down.
2. On count two, step your right foot forward and place only the heel on the ground.
3. On count three bend the knees and dipping down.
4. For count four, step your left foot forward and place only the heel on the ground. Repeat these steps over.

Caliente Performance Selection: Calabria

Mambo

- *Here's a basic mambo dance step. This mambo dance pattern is a six-step move. The basic counting pattern for this dance step is one and, two, three and, four.*
- *Begin with your feet spread apart about 12". Move your left foot one step forward on count one (using a forward/back rocking motion.)*
- *On the "and" of one lift your right foot slightly off the ground and place right back down.*
- *On beat two, step back with your left foot past the original position.*
- *Step back with your right foot slightly past your left foot for count three one (again using a forward/back rocking motion.)*
- *For the "and" of three lift your right foot slightly and place it right back down.*
- *On count four, step forward with your right foot. After this last step you are ready to start the process all over again.*

Note: Although in general mambo rhythms are felt in two, it is easier to understand this dance explained in four.

Caliente Performance Selection: Planta Bandera

Mixing The Styles

Styles in Afro-Cuban music are sometimes interchanged adding variety to the music. This creates a sort of tension and release within a given tune. For example, a composition may start as a Bolero for sixteen or thirty-two measures and change into Mambo or Samba. Styles are interchanged with discretion. Many mixes are made as intros, interludes, verse or body of a tune, or as an ending section within a piece. Four, eight or sometimes sixteen measures at a time are incorporated and usually done once or twice within a section to add some spice.

Caliente Performance Selections: Esta Bien and Chameleon

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About Caliente

Caliente, Houston Press 2003 and 2004 Best Latin Band Award Winner, is the nationally acclaimed repertoire ensemble for Diaz Music Institute. Caliente is the only youth group to receive the prestigious Houston Press Award has appeared with some of the music industry's biggest stars such as Eddie Palmieri, Celia Cruz, Larry Harlow, Frankie Negron, Jimmy Bosch, Pete Escovedo, Danilo Perez, Nestor Torres, David Sanchez, Dave Valentin, Miguel Zenon, John Santos, Brenda K Starr and the Buena Vista Social Club to name just a few. Caliente has appeared at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago, Illinois, the Oregon Music Educators Association Conference in Eugene, Oregon, the Texas Bandmasters Association, Texas Music Educators Association and at the Music Educators National Conference in Minneapolis.