ALEXANDRIA HS WINTER PERCUSSION

HANDBOOK

2014-15

Alexandria Winter Percussion 2014-15

Welcome to the new season. This booklet is given out to all members and it is to be treated as one of the most important things we do and talk about each season. Many of the concepts here are from many different people and are also shared by many lines. These are *NOT MY ORIGINAL IDEAS*. They have been written and passed through many generations of Drum lines. I will say that the concepts stressed in this booklet are **VERY IMPORTANT** and should be thought about **every time you play your instrument**.

PHILOSOPHY

Before we get down to the actual drumming aspects in this book, there are some other even more important issues which need discussing (I encourage you to discuss this with each other & me).

More important than your hands, as you will often hear me say, is your head. For the skeptical & the inexperienced, this may seem like a lot of garbage. I remember a time when I thought, "how can the head be more important than the hands? They have to play the notes!" Little did I know at the time that I was totally fighting my drumming betterment. When I finally realized that I could drum about 99.9998723014289% better when I concentrated on what my HEAD was doing, rather than my hands, a whole new spectrum opened up to me. I could relax, play faster, play more stuff, drum cleaner and look better while I played.

Now, I know that sometimes when you are getting tons of stuff thrown at you for extended periods of time, you get a little confused, intimidated, frustrated & maybe even a little mad. But what you have to realize is that there is a way for you to focus this information into one singular place: Your Instrument.

All the things I'm going to talk about here are **ALL PART OF THE SAME THING!!!** Everything relates to every other thing, and cannot exist independently. ***THE "NIRVANA" STATE***

What I'm talking about is the ultimate goal of a great drummer. To be able to play your most difficult passages and appear that you can do your Math home work at the same time without needing to think too hard about it. This is the "Nirvana" state of drumming (not the band). What it involves is simply the implementation of every aspect that is contained on these pages. It all boils down to one thing - the achievement of a completely relaxed disposition while remaining totally in control. The aura you portray when you have reached this "Nirvana" state is that whoever is watching you gets the strong suspicion that you could play more difficult things than you are. And do you know why you give off this aura? **BECAUSE YOU CAN!**

CLEARING THE MIND

The first step you need to do is to clear your mind of all problems or other things that might get in the way of what you are doing. You need to **"Punch The Clock"** as if you were going to work and **"Check Your Problems At The Door"**. You can pick them up on your way out. You need to be focused at the task at hand. It is hard to think about the squeeze/release in an accent to tap exercise when you are thinking about what happened last night or what your going to eat for dinner. You also must not let other distractions like, "Who is watching us?" or "Who just walked into the room?" get into your mind. **As soon as you think about something different than what you are doing, you are not thinking right and you inevitably make mistakes!** Don't "Zone- Out" or let your mind wander. Keep your focus at the task at hand. Anything else, you can think about later, after practice, when you leave and are on your way home.

VISUALIZATION

Have you ever pictured yourself in your mind doing something or achieving something that you wanted and then actually achieved it? This is what I'm talking about.

Now, visualization is something, which is different for everyone. What you need to do is to visualize someone, like a very talented person that plays the same instrument as you, in your head and then visualize yourself playing like that. If you can visualize yourself playing and marching a perfect show and transfer that image to reality, that is an important tool and is very effective. It will definitely help make your personal performance much better.

Remember - sometimes achieving something you can't do is a matter of visualizing yourself doing it. Rather than bashing your head against a physical barrier, try eliminating the mental one.

COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS (POWER OF THE LINE)

This is a concept that **I want you to think a lot about**, because it takes some time to comprehend. Keep your mind open, because this is a very real phenomenon that I want you to be aware of.

There exists (I know, because I've experienced it) within the line a force which you can tap into by manipulating certain events. Now what I mean by this is the ability of a drummer (or group of drummers, such as yourselves) to know, intuitively, exactly what is going to happen in any given phrase (or "lick" as you'll hear from time to time) or drill move. And from this knowledge be able to adjust almost BEFORE IT HAPPENS! This is what I refer to as the **"Power of the Line"**, or tapping into the **"Collective Consciousness."** It's almost as if, when you're drumming in the line, you know what everyone else knows with out anyone saying a thing.

THE SUM TOTAL CONSISTS OF MORE THAN ITS INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS.

The more time you guys drum and spend with each other, the more this phenomenon will happen. Have you ever felt yourself drumming much better in the line than you could individually? This is part of it. When you all get together, the drumming almost has a life of its own. Now dig this concept:

THE GREATER THE INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS, THE GREATER THE SUM WILL BE!!

That's why I always say that this line is going to be what **you guys** make it**. The better each of you become individually**, the more power the line has!

Now understand that this ties in directly to visualization because the more you are all visualizing the same thing (correct heights, interpretation, style, sound, marching, etc.) the more you'll know exactly what the person next to you is going to do. So almost as important as your own hands & head is **knowing the hands and head of the people next to you.** This way you have a much better chance of tapping into this power. That is also why it is so important for you guys to **be tight away from the line** - you can't just be a few peoples who get together now and then & play drums. You have to talk about this stuff and hang out when you're just chillin'. Get to know each other & get each other's input on this stuff (and other stuff, as well). You guys have to have your own identity as a Drum Line, and this is what's going to make you different from the other schools and Drum Lines of years past. The more you guys are in tune with each other, the easier it is to feel that collective power that is indeed a very real thing. And if there is tension between people in the line, you can be sure to see it in your playing. You have to make every effort to get along with all members of this group. If there is a problem, work it out. Don't let a minor squabble between 2 people make the whole line suffer. **The Key Is Communication**, if something is bothering you, talk about it and if some one comes to you, listen and try to see their point of view. You all will not agree on everything but you all need to realize that different people have different views and no one view is correct. Conflicts will occur but deep down you must remember the definition of a family and no one gets left behind or forgotten. This is very important; **THE WHOLE LINE MUST BE A FAMILY!**

SMART DRUMMING

This is just a term I think you should know which simply means that at any given time, you know **EXACTLY** what is going on around you. On the floor/street, in the line, whatever you're doing. Much like the "Nirvana" concept, when you're confident with everything about your drumming, you have more "brain space" to be aware of other things. Its common sense - if you're struggling with your marching, you're going to play bad and if you're playing bad you're going to struggle with your marching. The more things you have mastered about your gig, the more you can expand your awareness of what is happening around you, and **there is no excuse for not knowing your music!** Be sure that you work on YOUR problems before you try to fix other peoples. We **don't** need 25 instructors. Worry about yourself first, then, worry

about the people next to you. If you see the person next to you constantly playing a wrong part and the instructor doesn't see it, then please tell them. And most importantly, if someone tells you that you are doing something wrong, take it as **CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM**. Don't get defensive, and if they are wrong, don't worry about it. IE/ If I tell a snare that he/she did some thing wrong and it was the person next to him/her, the person that did the wrong thing will hear and there is no need to say, "It wasn't me, It was him/her!" Thus, not creating a controversy. The surgeon who is not willing to listen to advice and is consulting his textbook while making an incision is PROBABLY headed for trouble. If you think about it, you can see how every concept here goes into making a smarter drummer.

MOTIVATION

This is definitely an area where you're going to have to help yourselves. All I can do is provide you with the information you need to be the best drum line you can be - but realize one thing:

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DO IT, I CAN'T MAKE YOU. You have to want it and the effort you put in will show. Every time you go out and perform, your saying**, "This is who we are, and this is how good we can be."** Why not make that performance the BEST it can be. We are all here for different reasons but, we all put on the same show. You are only one of many in this group. Don't be the one person to not try as hard as everyone else and let the rest of the group down. We all work hard together, sweat together, get tired together, ache together, get frustrated together and **perform** together.

In order for you guys to move to the next level, you're going to have to be uncomfortable for a while until this stuff becomes second nature. **You cannot expect to remain in your "comfort zone"** and get any better! Just when you think you've done enough for the day, or when you think you can't learn any more, or you're tired, or whatever, that's when it's time to push! You've all heard this before - and not only in drumming, I'm sure. But it is so true! **You have to take it to the edge!** Go beyond your capabilities - find out what you have to do to get that extra little bit of MOTIVATION required to get better! **YOU** have to do it **NOW**, because the way this group operates, we only get together about once a week. And once the season starts, we may not get any time at all. Remember this, because it is very important:

HOWEVER YOU GUYS ARE "AT HOME" IS HOW GOOD THIS DRUM LINE IS GOING TO BE.

(That determines our success. The effort you put in will show.)

THE GREATER THE INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS, THE GREATER THE SUM WILL BE!!

Just think, how cool it will feel to warm-up and perform in front of hundreds people and just be smokin' on all the exercises and show music. And they are all standing there in front of you with their jaws dropped to the ground. It's a great feeling to impress people and most of all your feeling of self- accomplishment.

Keep this in mind, also - **you should never be satisfied with what you know**. The more you **strive** to learn EVERYTHING, the closer you'll get to it. **The more you put in, the more you get out. You will never be, as good as you can be!** You can always practice more and get better at something. **Never be satisfied with where you are at!!!** Common sense, eh? **STRIVE, STRIVE, STRIVE!!!!!** Just remember, practice the smart way or it is not helping.

Level 1⁄2 (*p*) — the lowest note you can possibly play while still in control. (*grace notes)*
— No arm should be used in this stroke, it should all be wrist turn
Level 1 (m*p*) — tap height also refereed to as 3”
— No arm should be used in this stroke, it should all be wrist turn
Level 2 (*mf*) — low accents and low driving rolls also known as 6”
— Very little arm should be used in this stroke,mostly wrist turn
Level 3 (*f*) — moderate accents, high rolls or known as 9”
— There should be a little pump in the arm in this height area
Level 4 (*ff*) — Full, where stick is perpendicular to the head
— There should be a little pump in the arm in this height area
Level 5 (*fff*) — **SWINE MODE**, where arm is definitely added
— This is where we let it all hang out.
Molar (*ffffff*) — A full stroke that goes over the height of your head
— Stick stays perpendicular to the drum on the way up and down

HEIGHTS

Heights are definitely one of the all-important areas in your road to drumming mastery. By playing the correct heights (along with technique, interpretation and tempo) you can achieve this relaxed, controlled "Nirvana" state we've been discussing. The reason I say this is because when you are playing everything at the correct heights, you are not expending needless energy by playing your taps, rolls, or grace notes too high (not to mention accents).

THE CORRECT HEIGHTS (and volume levels)

For a line to look and sound good.....

EVERYONE must know the height and volume of every single note you play!

FEEL

There are three types of strokes...Legato, Stagato and Staccato. The legato stroke is a loose stroke where the important feel is the rebound back down to the drum, kinda like the feel of bouncing a basketball. The staccato stroke is the opposite. You should feel the up-stroke as well as the down stroke and it should be a squeeze on all strokes. In between the two is a stagato stroke. Its feel is a loose stroke that you defiantly can see and feel like you are in control of. All of these strokes must be mastered at all heights and at all speeds.

That's why you **all** have to play with the correct interpretation **(exact rhythmic value)** of any given notes.

INTERPRETATION

So now you're playing with killer heights and feeling, but what do you suppose that's going to mean if the actual notes you're playing have a different rhythmic value then the guy next to you?

Nothing!

Something you have to understand is that when you receive a written piece of music, the exact definition of where to place the notes is inherent. In other words, you are given all the information you need to play the correct interpretation. If you are reading one rhythm, you wouldn't play another rhythm, would you? Think of the Sprocket on a bicycle. The sprocket (time) is spinning at a constant rate and the holes in the chain (notes) needs to fit exactly in the spokes on the sprocket. The chain (notes) cannot come early or late or it will come off the sprocket and the rider will fall off his bike thus hurting themselves, then, needing to go to the hospital for a broken leg, arm and ego. The exact amount of space is given for every note, thus producing correct, mathematical interpretation. We could even express this mathematically: (use this to impress your friends). All of these strokes must be mastered at all heights and at all speeds.

Remember what we talked about earlier. If for some reason the sprocket speeds up or slows down, everyone can feel that and then change so their chain's all fit correctly. The POWER OF THE LINE. Everything pertains to everything.

1. PLAY WITH A METRONOME!
2. PLAY WITH A METRONOME!
3. PLAY WITH A METRONOME!

TEMPO CONTROL / TIMING

Do you recall at the outset of this booklet that I said these concepts cannot exist independently? Well, keep that in mind when studying and implementing these concepts. Heights are meaningless without good interp, and neither mean anything if you can't play in time. But realize that heights & interp are crucial in order to play in time. A close relationship exists between all aspects that go into achieving the "Nirvana" state. So now let us discuss what it entails to possess great timing and tempo control.

The first step in achieving mastery of timing and tempo control is to first understand exactly where everything is in relationship to the down beat. What is the downbeat? It is simply the definition of a certain section of time by dividing it into fractions of rhythmic space. For example, the downbeat in a measure of 4/4 comes every quarter note. The downbeat in a measure of 12/8 comes every dotted quarter note.

Now - I'm not going to get too heavy in explaining the downbeat, because if you can read music and you have rhythm, you can pretty much figure it out (or feel it). One way to think of it is whenever your feet hit the ground while you're marching. This may take a little time to get, but once you have it, you will never loose it. **Keep the beat with your feet!!!**

Feeling the downbeat doesn't always come quickly, because the more you've been exposed to all different kinds of rhythmic figures and feels, the more you can instantly recognize and relate them to the downbeat. Now, if you have trouble with this, play with the metronome (as I said), and give each note its full value (correct interp). Think about what you're actually doing when you're drumming - you are literally slicing up portions of time. Your goal is to do it so exactly each and every time you play, that you develop a complete understanding of how to lay everything right in the pocket. The more you play with a metronome, the more you develop that "inner sense" which gives you perfect control of everything you play.

*Always remember that as a rule, easy figures tend to rush, and difficult figures tend to drag. When you play with a metronome, find out what your tendencies are for each phrase and memorize how everything feels when it is correct.

If you practice without the metronome, you are leaving too much to chance! Every time you do this, chances are that your internal tempo is far from perfect. This means that you are actually training yourself to play things the wrong way! It doesn't make sense, does it? Why sit there developing bad habits, when it takes the same amount of energy to play it right as it does to play it wrong?

PLAYING "ON TOP" OF THE BEAT

One more thing about tempo control I would be remiss if I did not mention is the **term "playing on top of the beat"**. This is simply what I mean by pushing it **to the edge!**

PLAY WITH CONFIDENCE!!! PLAY WITH CONFIDENCE!!! PLAY WITH CONFIDENCE!!

Some lines, if you listen closely, play so lethargically that it feels like someone is pulling their hands on little puppet strings. You can feel a beat, but it's so lazy and lackadaisical that somehow you feel that they'll never make it to the end of the tune. It's like sitting there all day watching some mold grow on 5 day old bread. You know what I mean? They are expending only enough energy to get by, and barely getting there in time (if at all).

Now - if your line has control of the tempo, this would not occur. When you take the tempo by the _____, so to speak (sorry mom), and play on top of it, you are the one in the driver's seat! No longer does the tempo have control of you - **you have control of it.**

This, accompanied with perfect heights, technique, interpretation, and mental focus is what gives a line that edge I'm talking about! Drumming has energy and life - you can tell its going somewhere. And when you see some line or individual drumming with every concept that I've talked about here, there is no way anything else is going to compare. Watching a group of people who have this kind of knowledge to back up their hands is SCARY!

PRIDE AND ATTITUDE

When you are with this group there is a sense of pride that follows. You definitely need to play from your heart, but guess what? Your head tells your heart what to do so don't forget about that. Don't get carried up in the moment (over hyping). We are all here working for the same goal and we are all putting in a lot of hours of work. You need to feel that sense of accomplishment. And that feeling of knowing who we are and what we stand for is **PRIDE**. As far as attitude goes, you need to express an attitude with out showing it. Let me explain. If you show your attitude people will think you're arrogant and cocky. You need to express your attitude in your aura and your hands. You need to have the attitude, "Hey, I am good and I am confident and I can play and here it is, SO EAT IT!!!". The hard part is you need to express that attitude without ever saying it or showing it. It will just be there if all of the other things we talked about fall into place. On a side note, we are here doing this for ourselves. We are not here for a piece of wood or plastic to say how good we are. We want to show everyone, **"This is who we are and this is how good we can perform."** No one remembers a place and score, but everyone remembers a show and a performance. You can't control how good anyone else is. There will always be someone better somewhere. But, you can control how good you are and you are the one that others can't control. Only YOU can control your part in this group. The only difference between 1st 2nd and 3rd place is the # next to the group. You all work as hard as you can to achieve a great performance.

THE SUM TOTAL CONSISTS OF MORE THAN ITS INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS. THE GREATER THE INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS, THE GREATER THE SUM WILL BE!!

WHAT THIS ALL MEANS

If you guys take this stuff and run with it, there are **no limits** to what we can accomplish this season, and in the years to come. Don't get me wrong - **there are no shortcuts**. We are going to have to work our butts off in order to pull it off.

GET OVER IT!!!

It takes 100% of you giving 100% effort, 100% of the time!

(even if it's only playing 1 note)

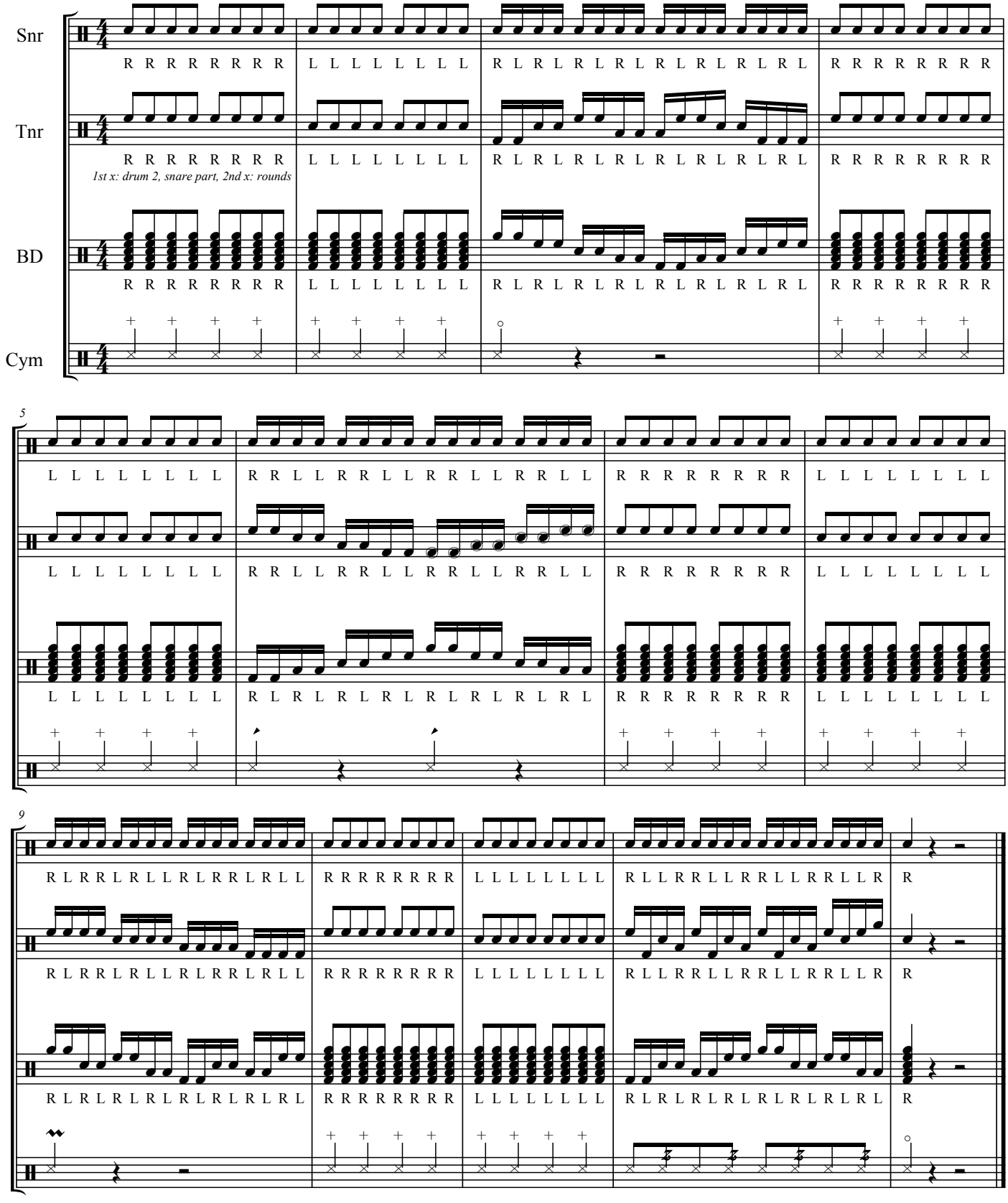
And this is where your time at home becomes so important! I can't (like I said) make you do it if you don't want it. But if you want it bad enough, **you can do anything!** And I am committed to making this drum line the best anyone has ever seen! So if you had doubts before, or you're scared and intimidated by this whole thing, I can only say this:

There is no time like the present - if you're getting your mind caught up in things that make no difference in the end, you're wasting time! You're here for one thing and one thing only: **TO BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE!** And I'll say it again - if you **WORK HARD AND DO EVERYTHING THAT THIS SAYS, WE WILL BE THE BEST THAT WE CAN BE!**

So get your noses to the grindstone, incorporate these concepts into everything you play, and come back SMOKIN'!!!

4 Elements

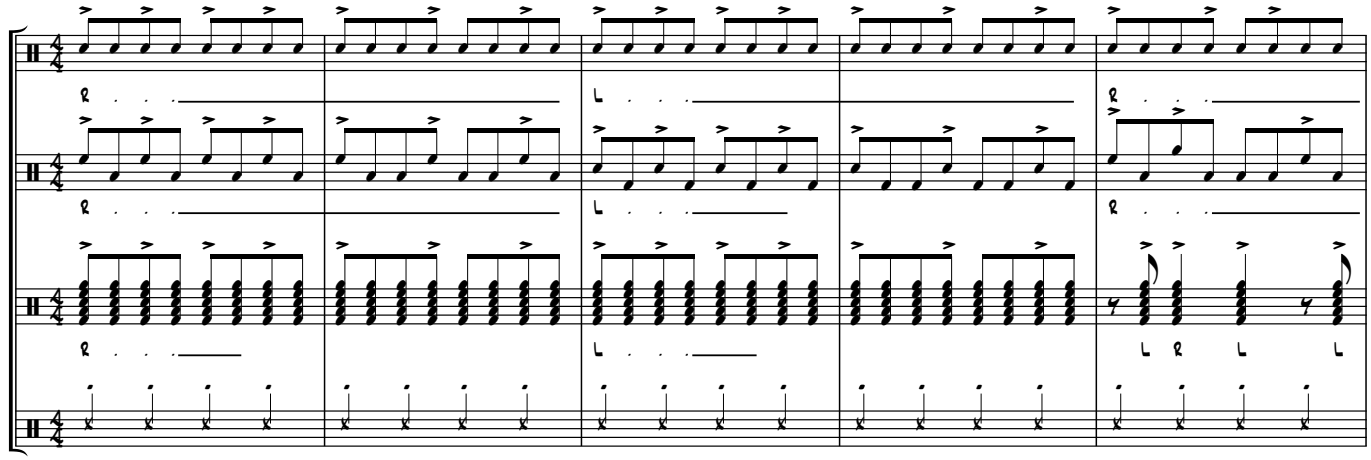
Jeremy Schreifels

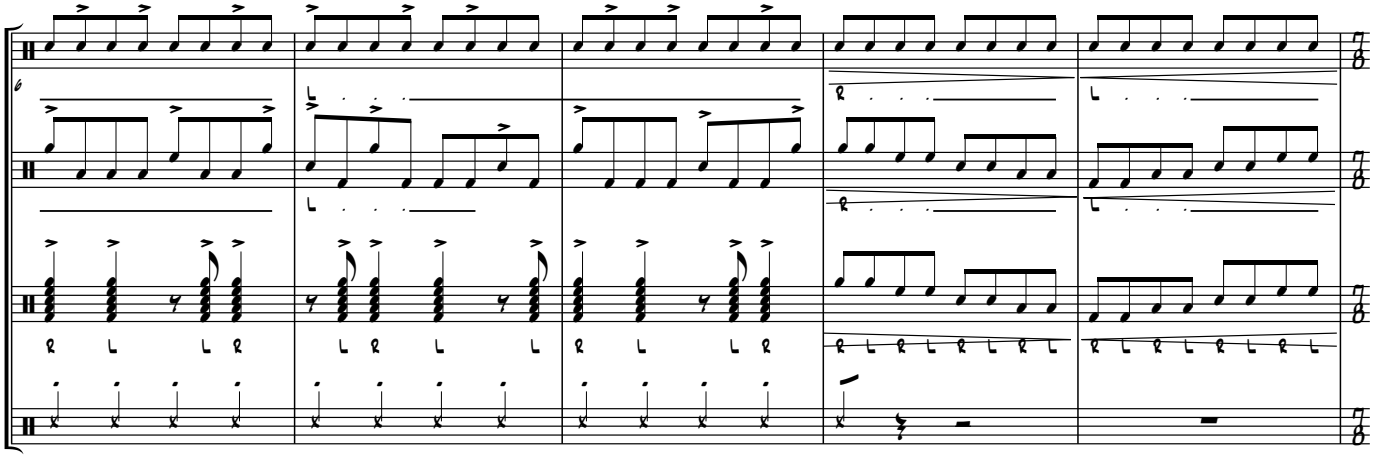


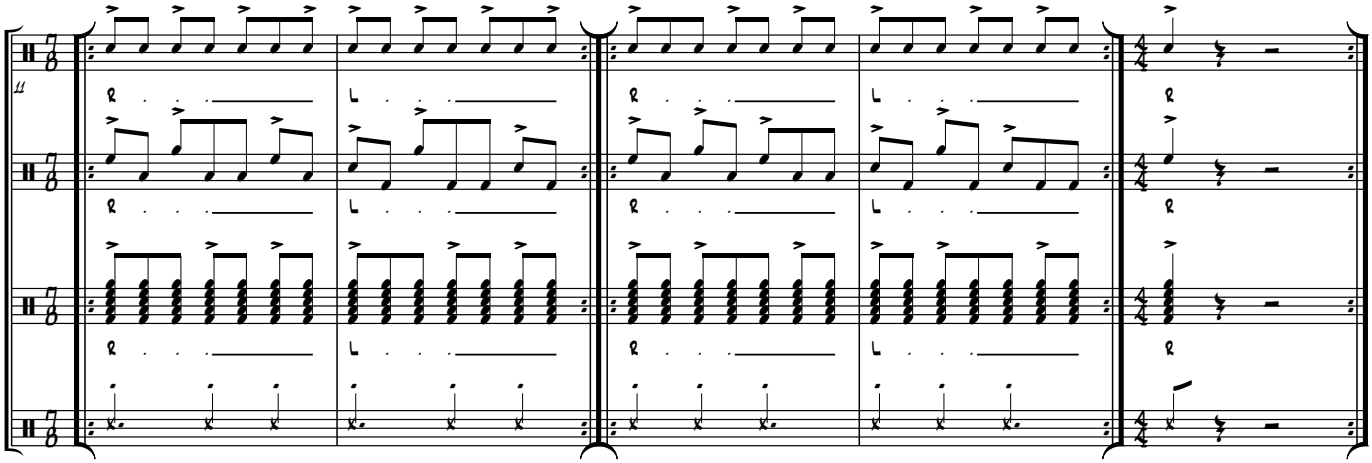
© 2009

Siberian Dwarf Hambster

Jeremy Schreifels





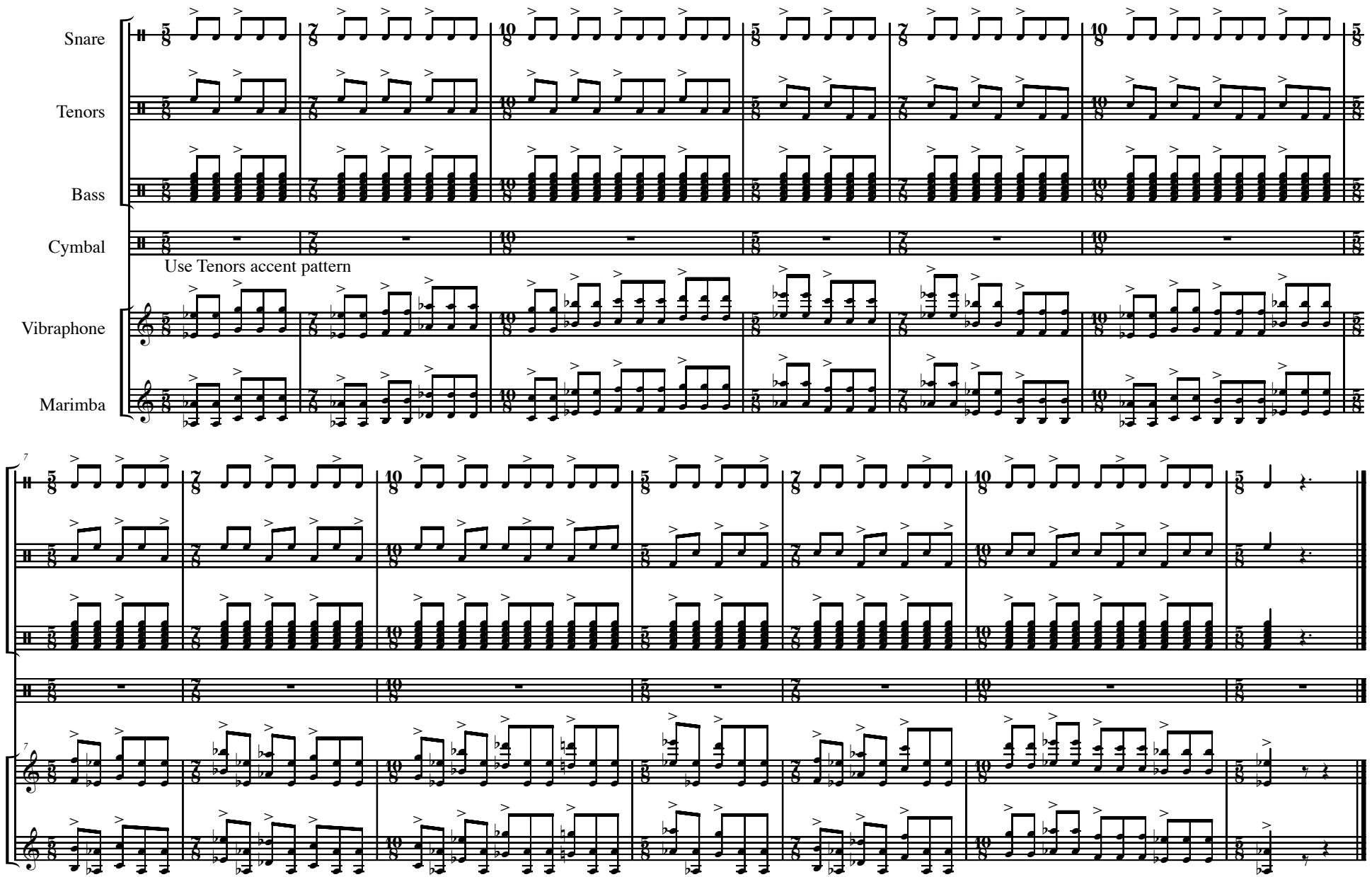


© MusicByJeremy 2008.

5-7-10

Percussion: Universal
Mallets: Jeremy Schreifels

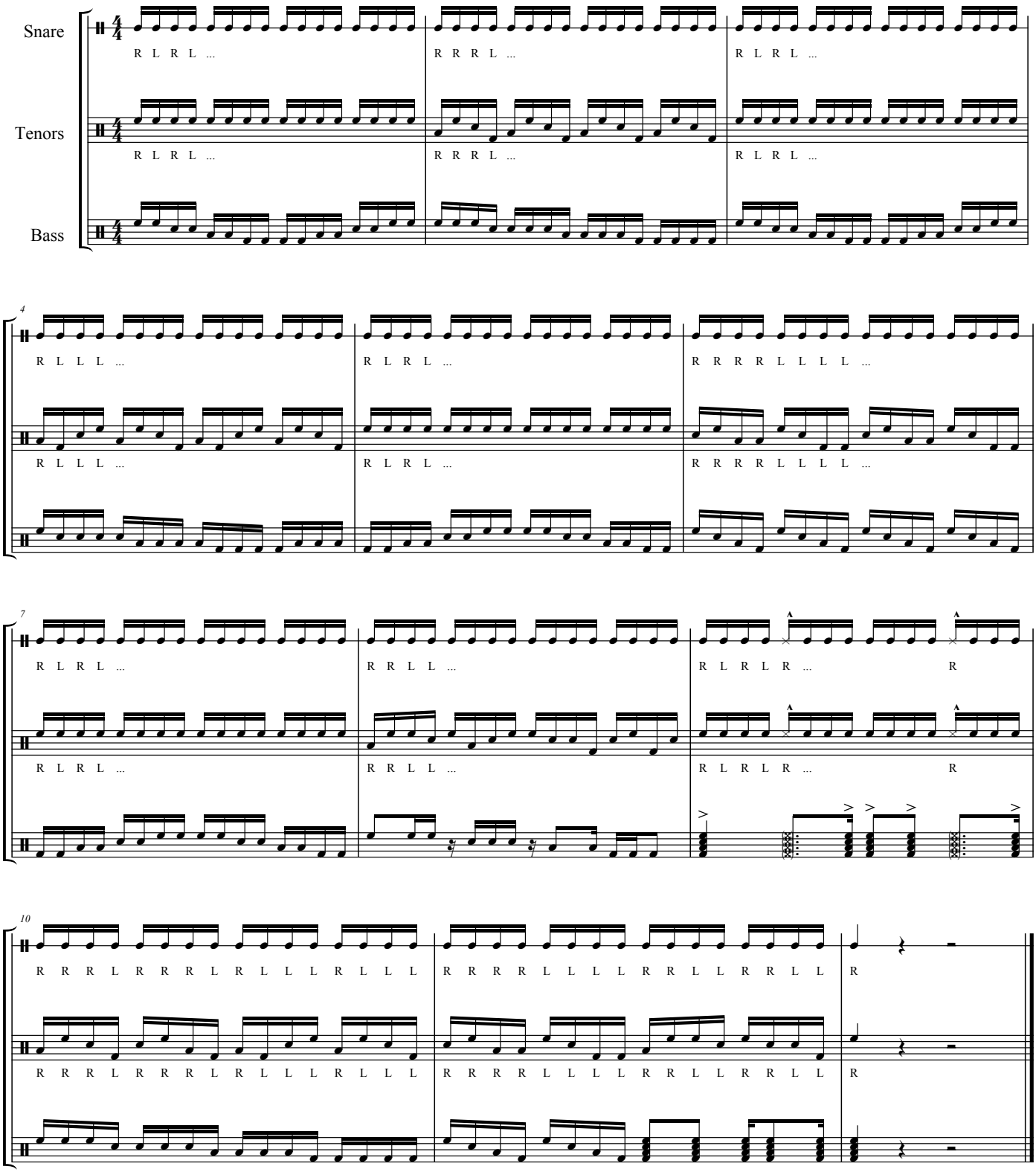
5-7-10



© 2003

Stick Control

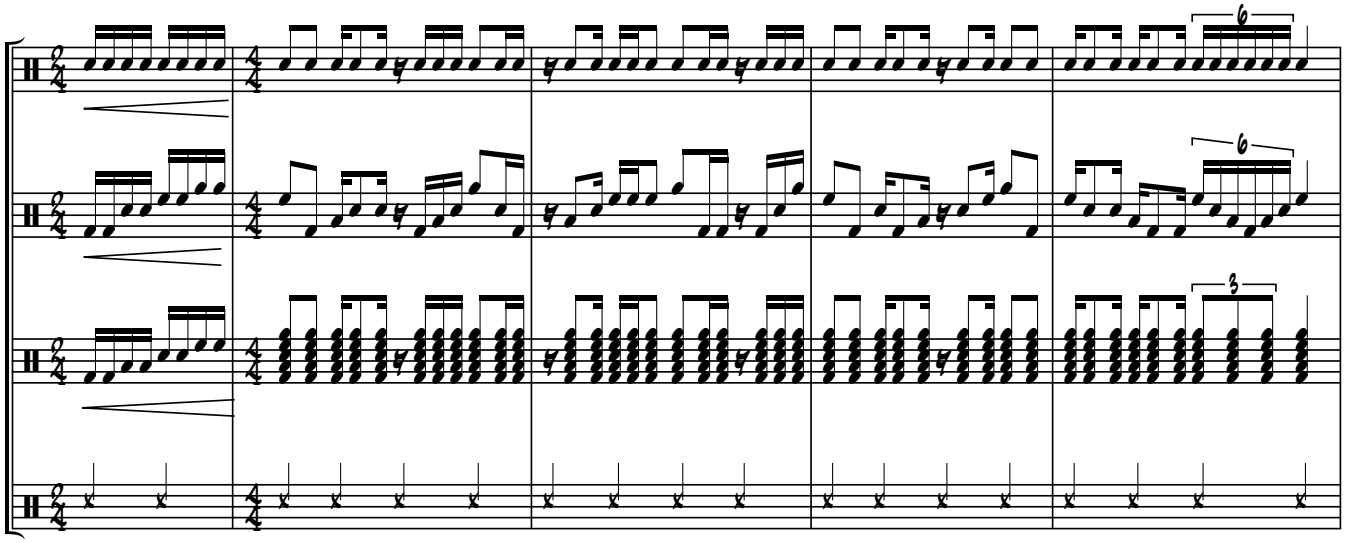
Universal

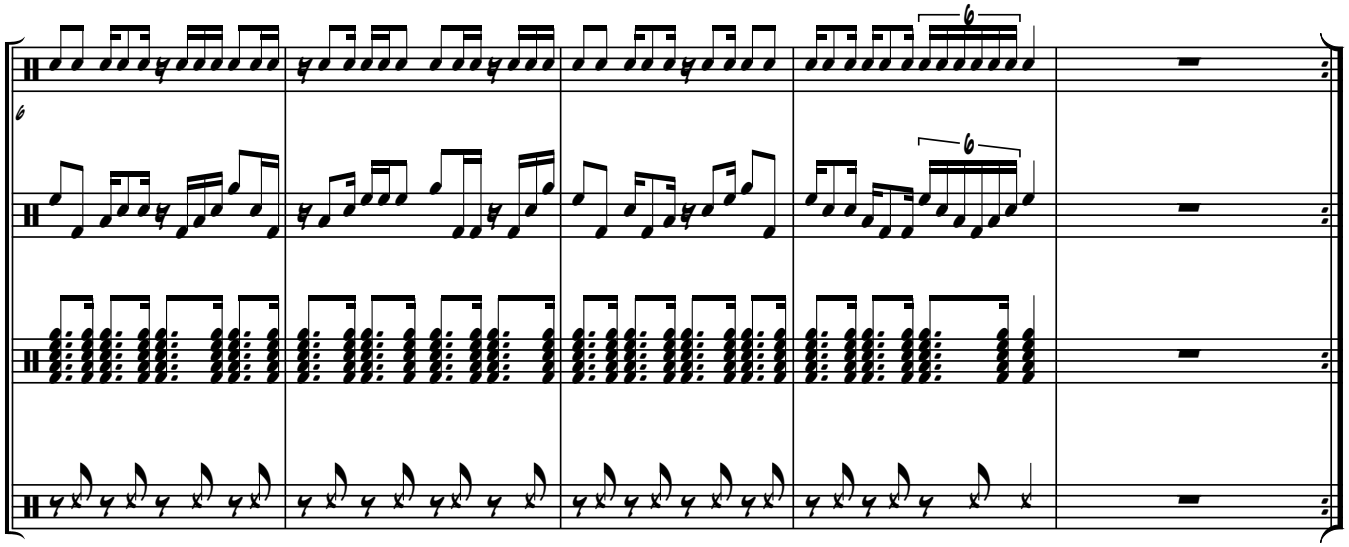


© 2007 MusicByJeremy.com

Groove Spot

Jeremy Schreifels

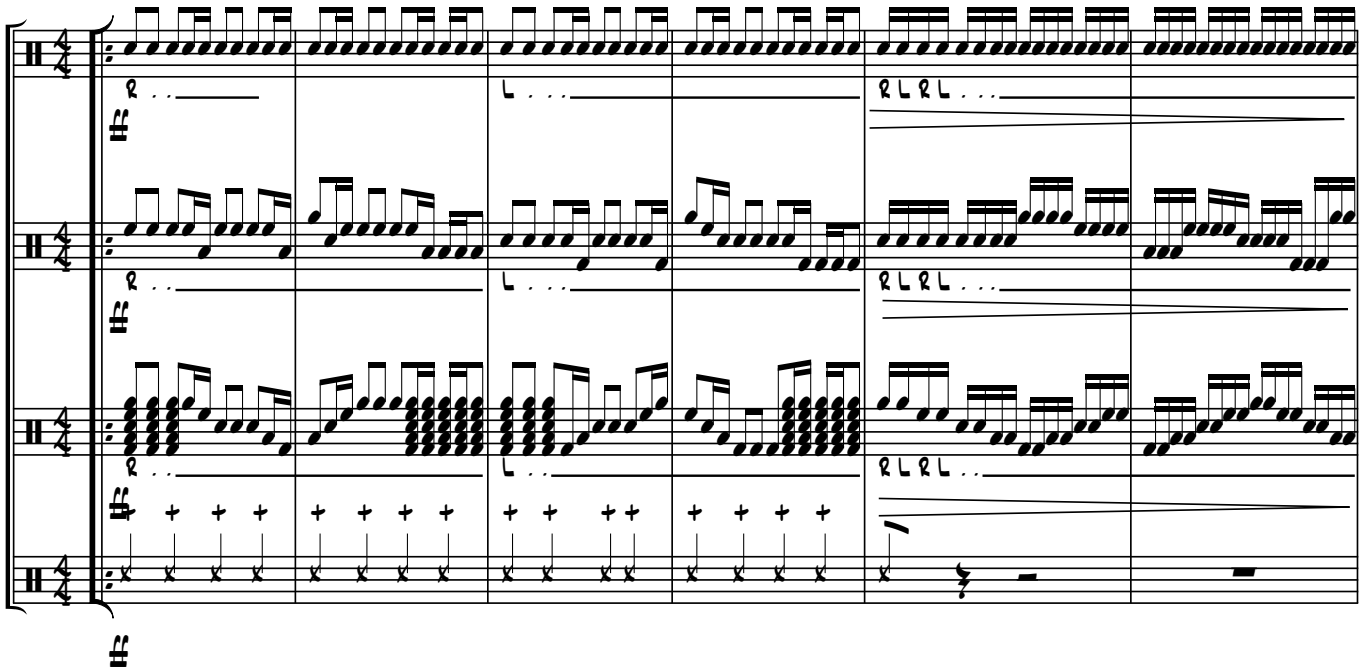


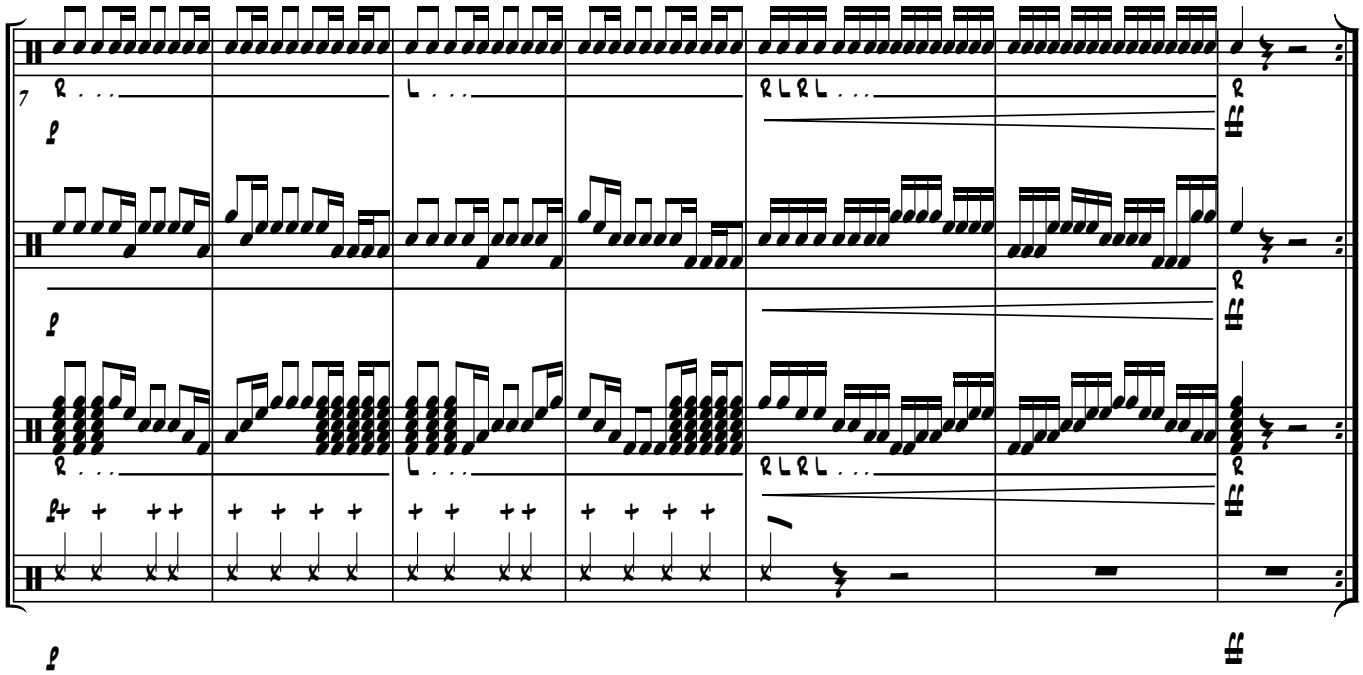


© MusicByJeremy 2008

The Thinking Game

Jeremy Schreifels

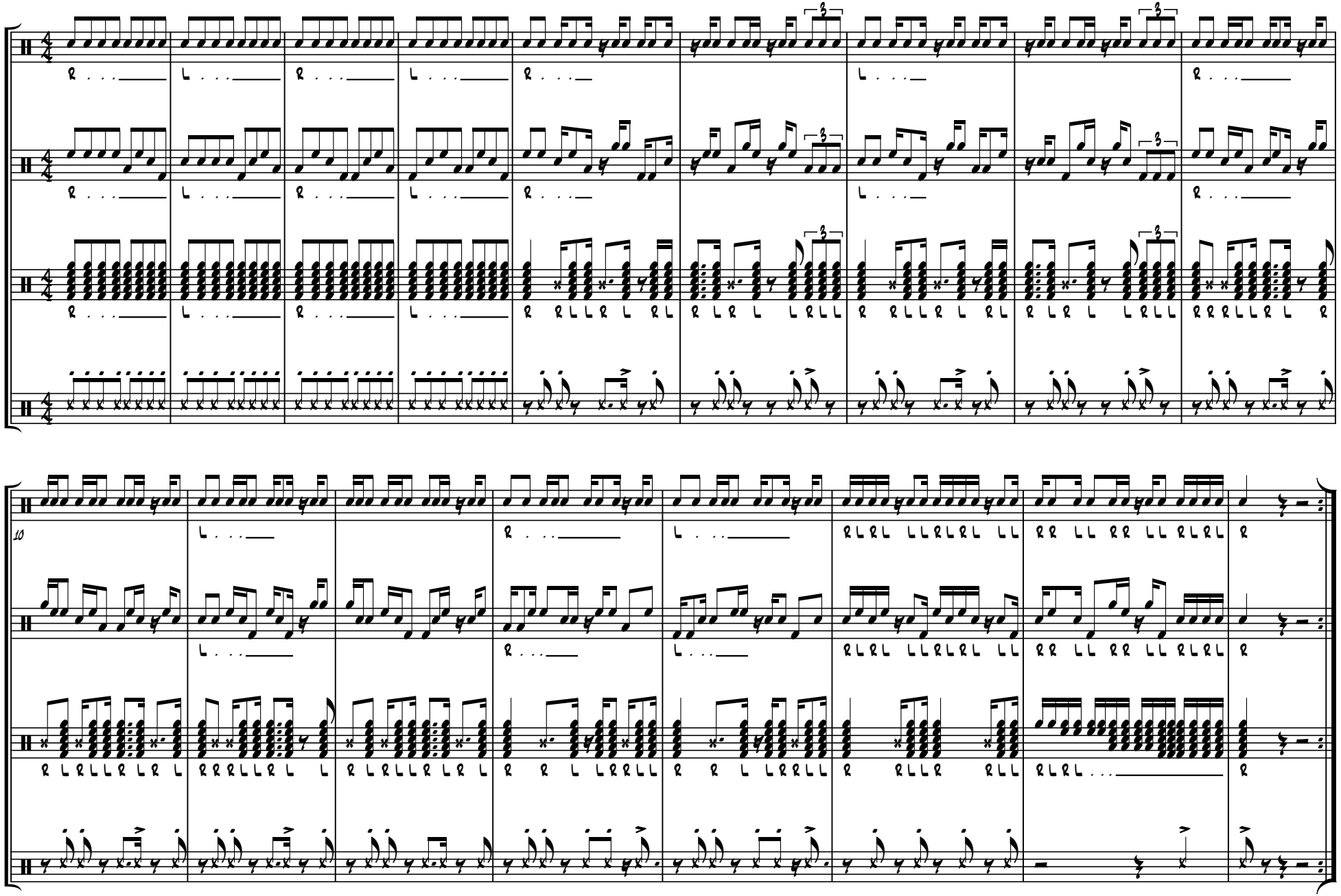




© 2008 Onsite Publishing

Sittin on the Curb

Jeremy Schreifels

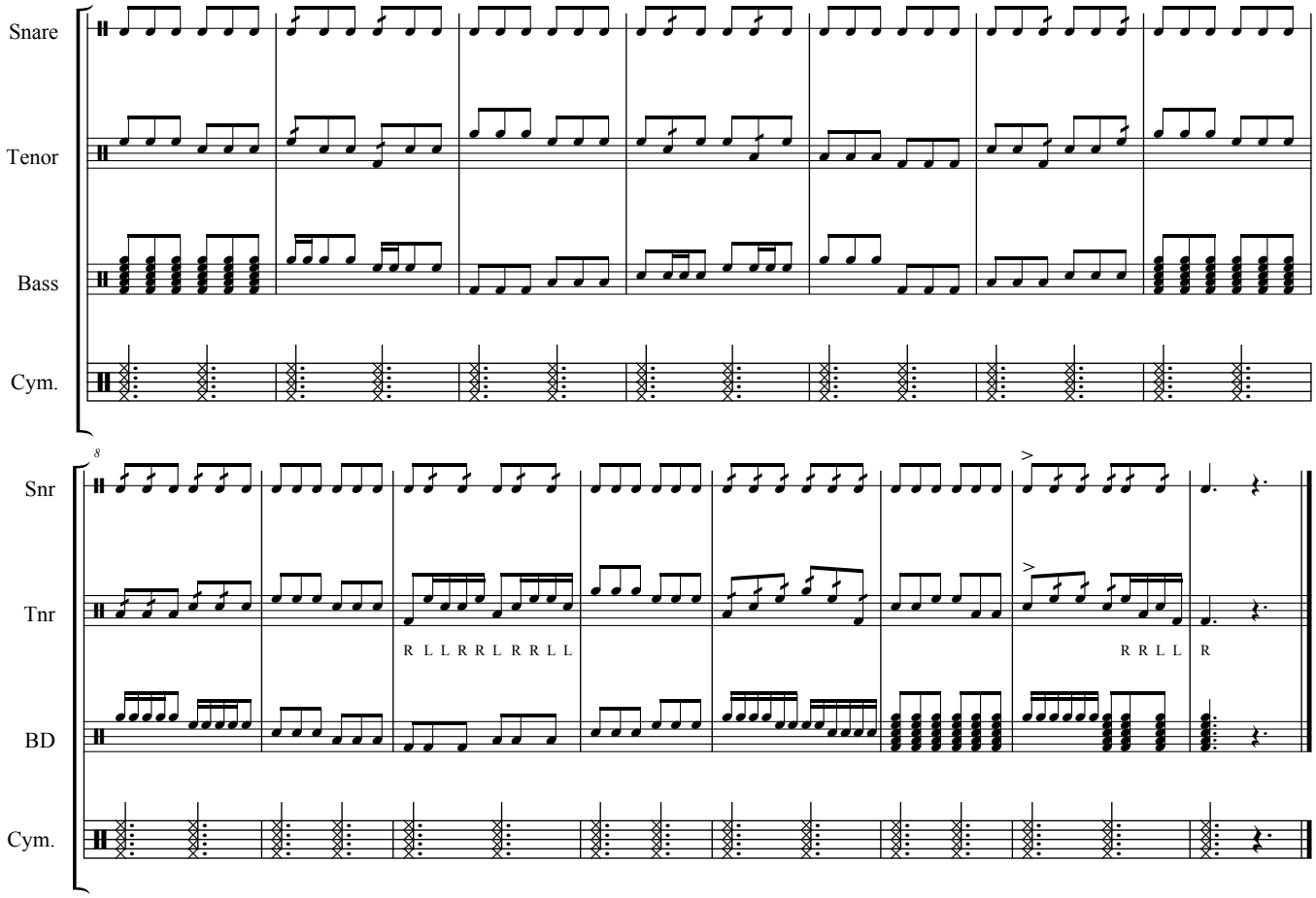


© MusicByJeremy 2008.

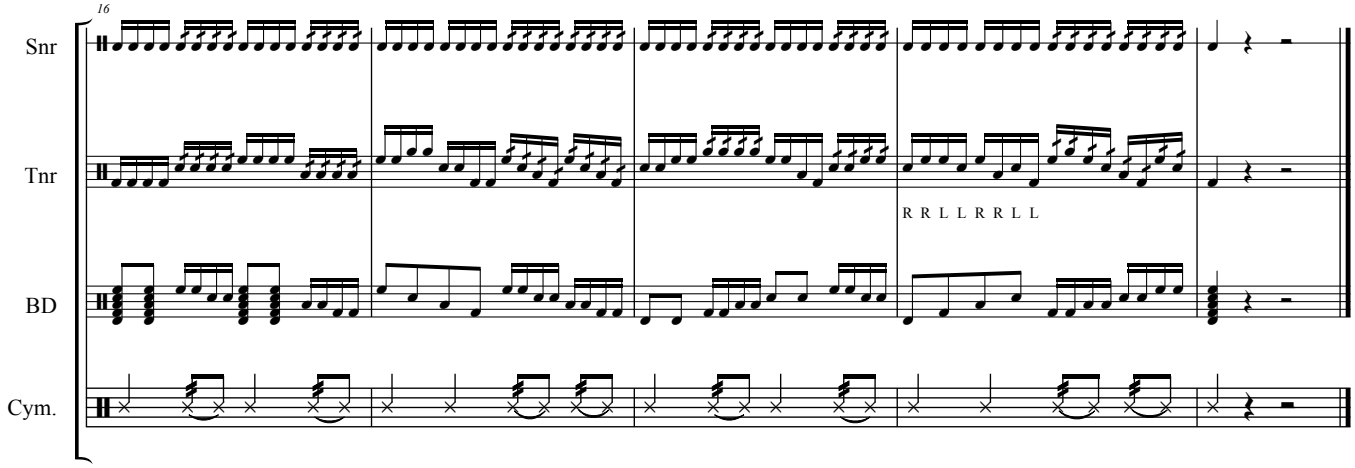
ROLL EXERCISES

Jeremy Schreifels

Triplet Rolls



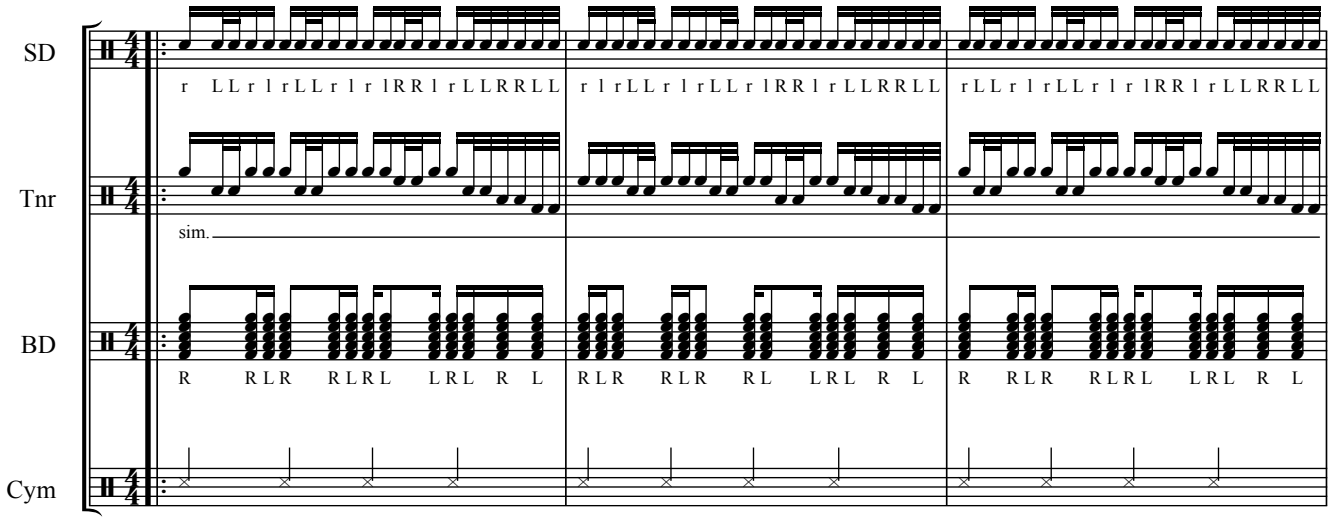
Digga-Digga-Bur

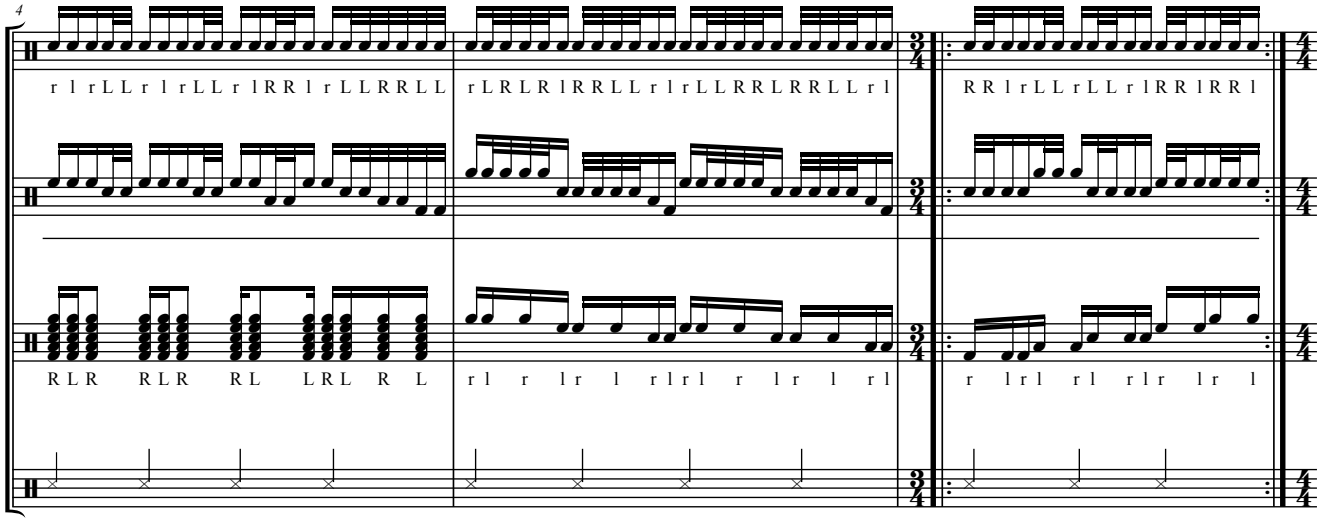


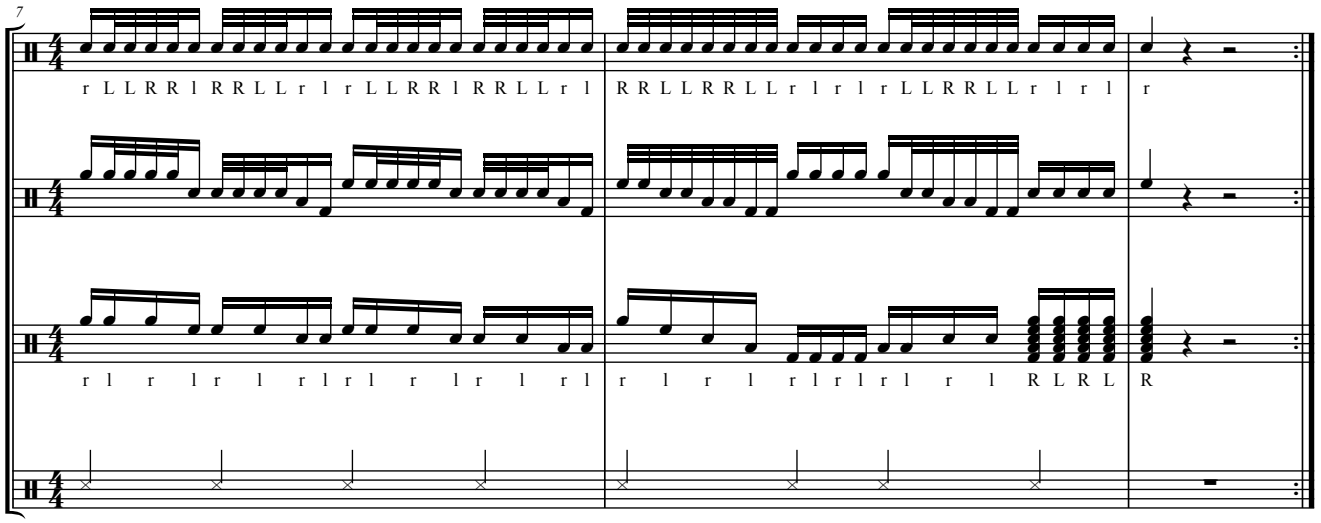
© 2003 MusicByJeremy.com

DRAGS

UNIVERSAL





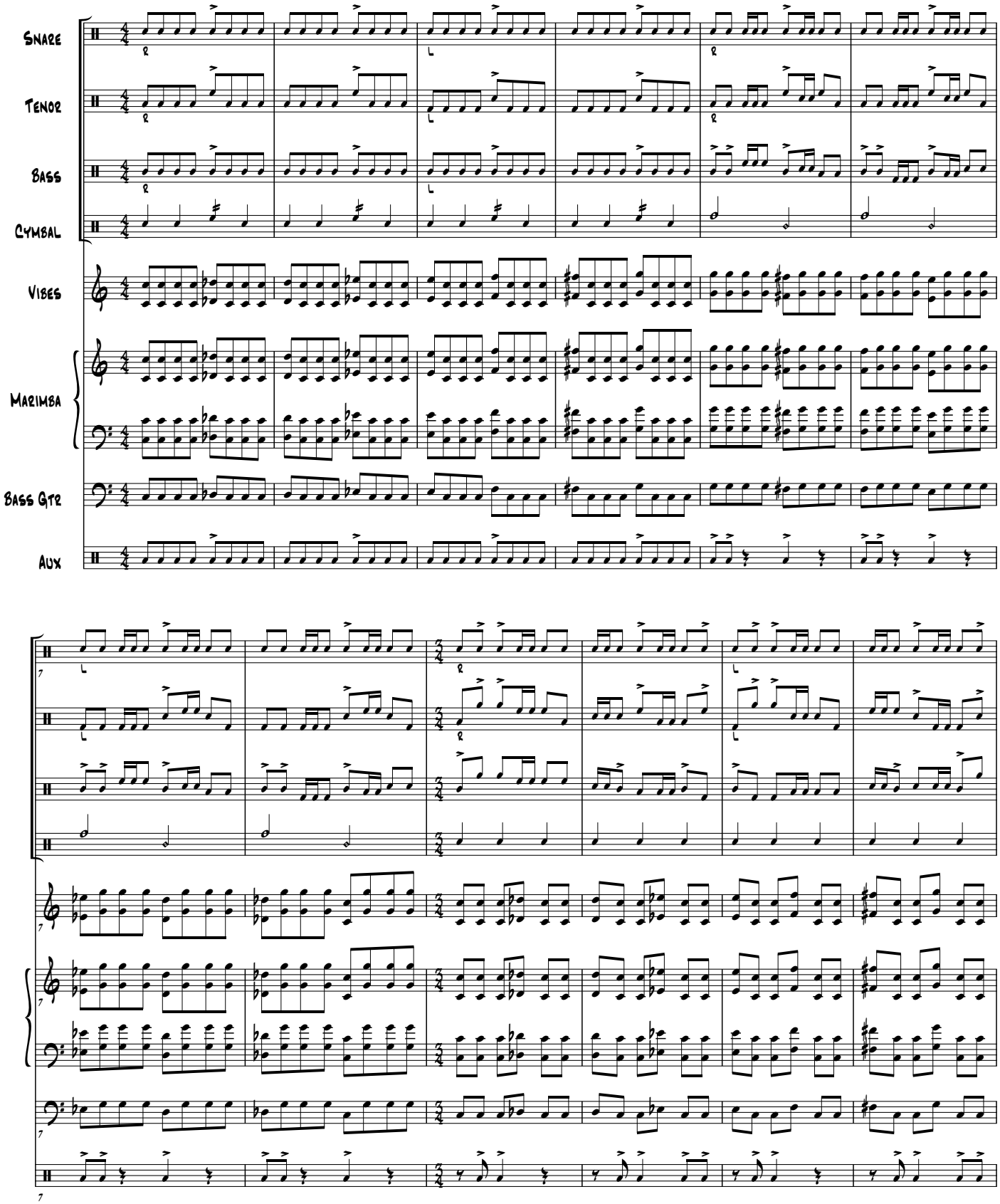


© 2007 MusicByJeremy.com

*All drum parts use the same sticking as Snare drum part.

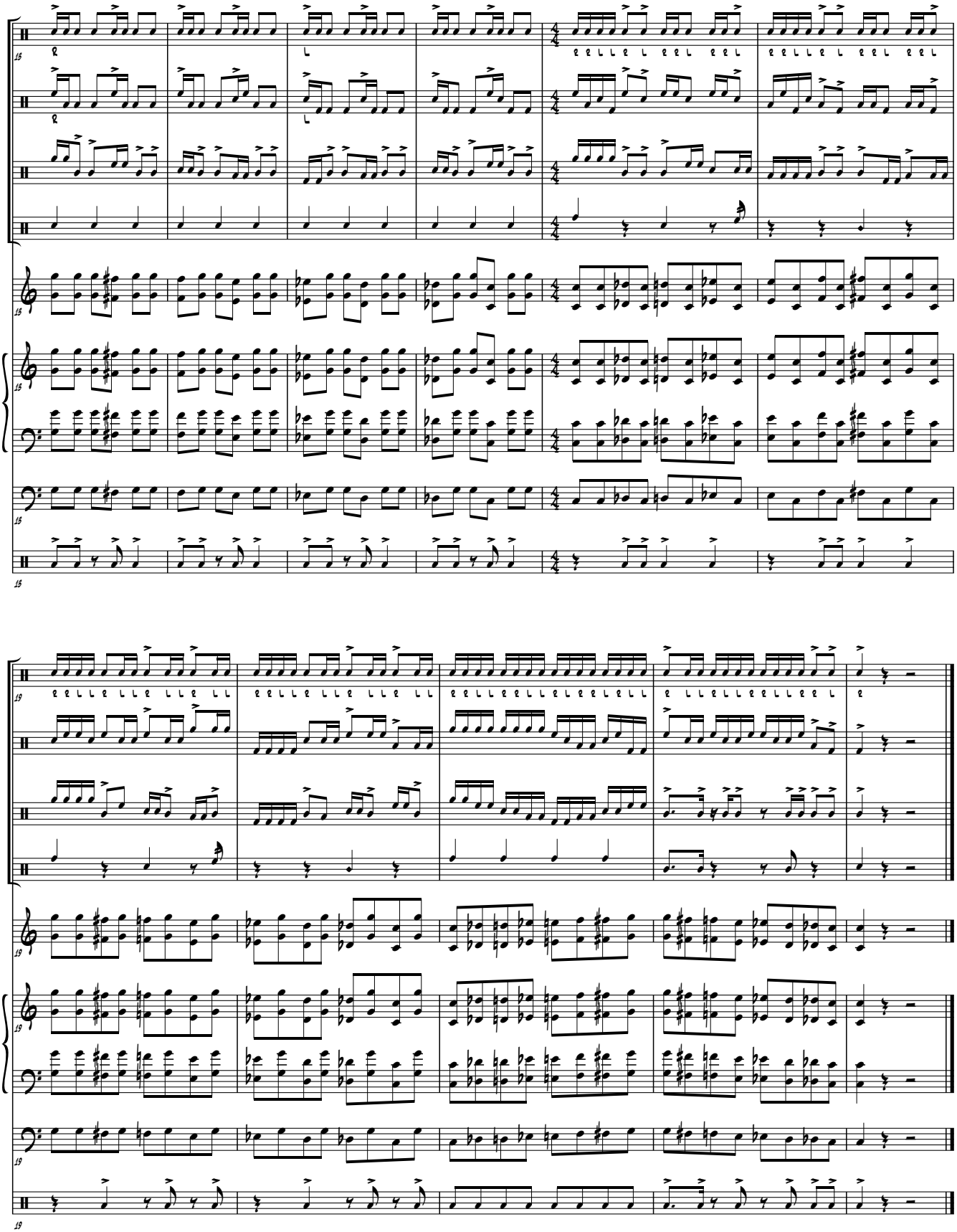
Shark Attack!

Jeremy Schreifels



© 2011 MusicByJeremy. All rights reserved.

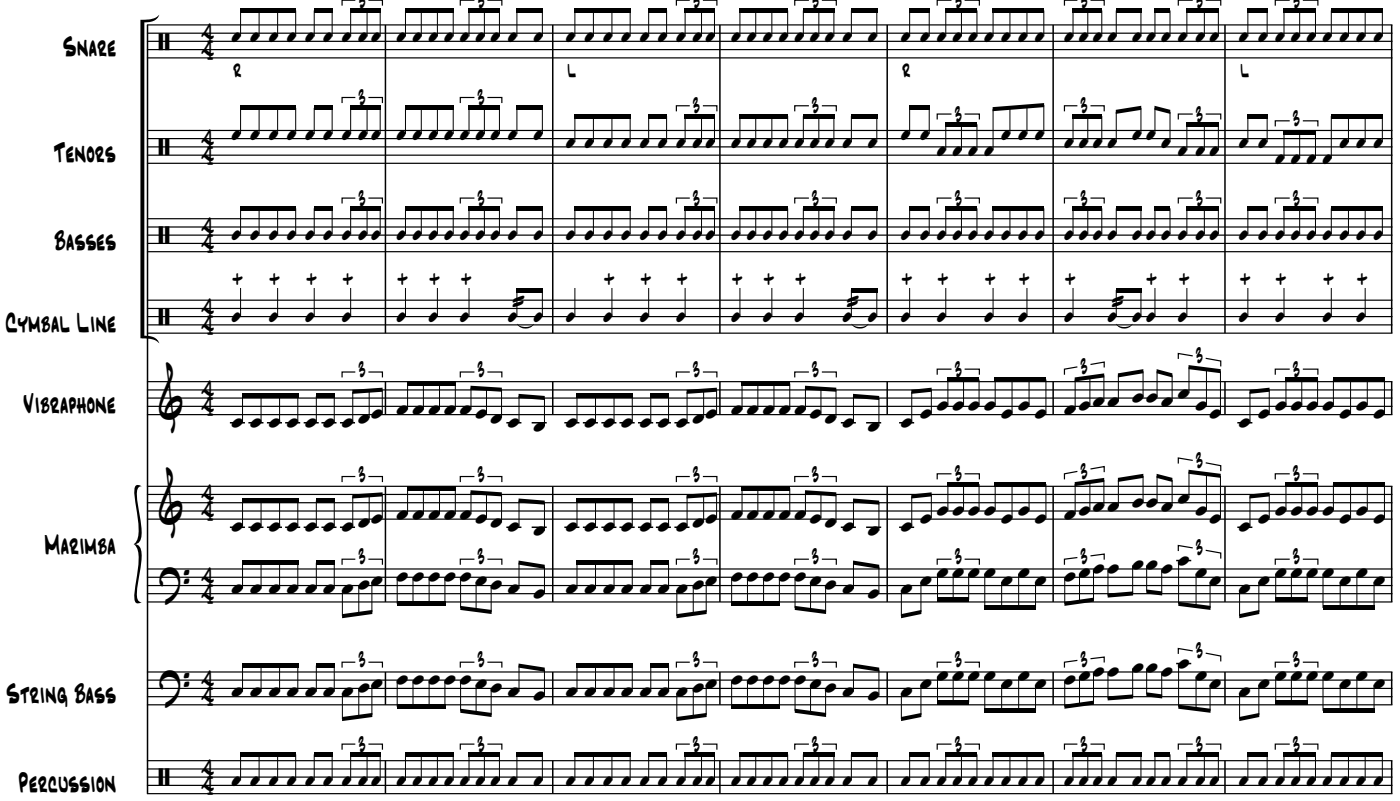
Shark Attack!

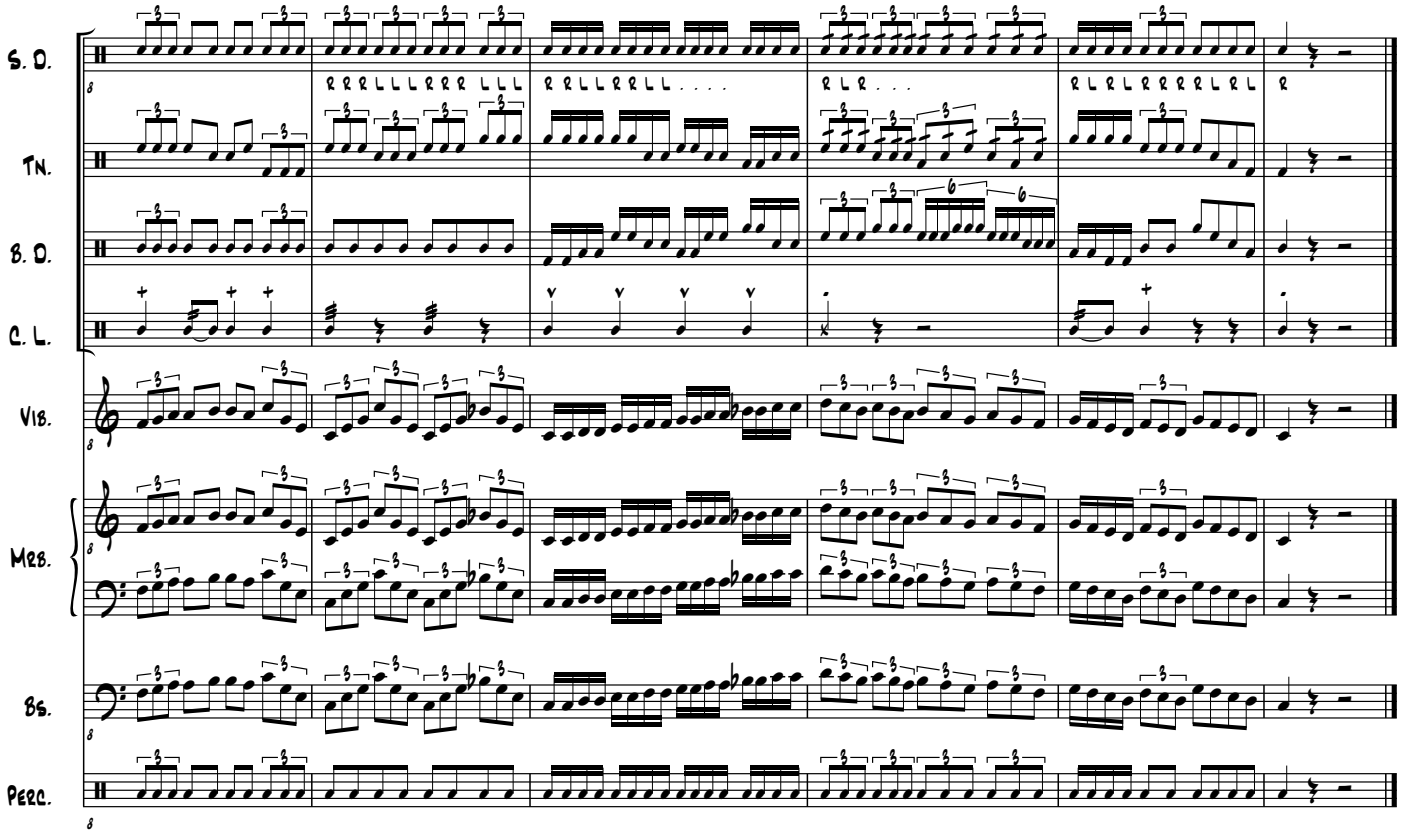


LEGATOES

JEREMY SCHREIFELS

*ALL SECTIONS USE THE SAME STICKING AS THE SNARE DRUM LINE.

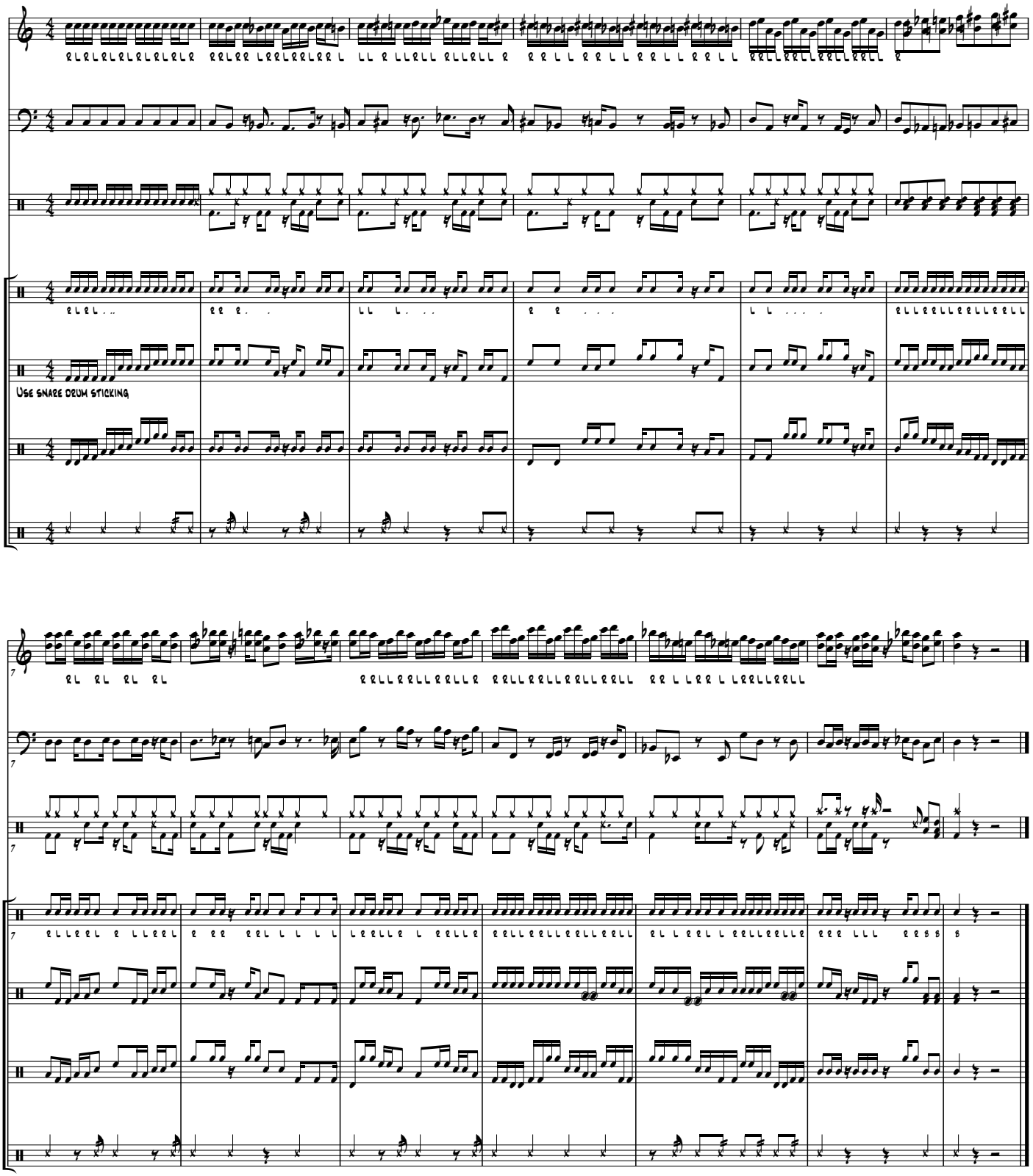




© 2011

Funk the Double

Jeremy Schreifels

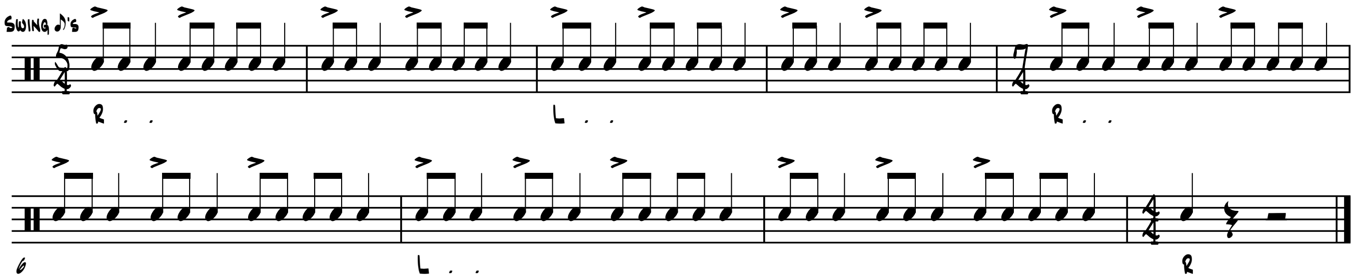


© 2011 MusicByJeremy

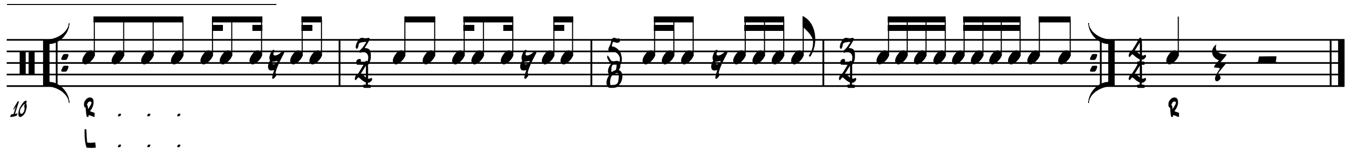
Battery BUILDERS!

Jeremy Schreifels

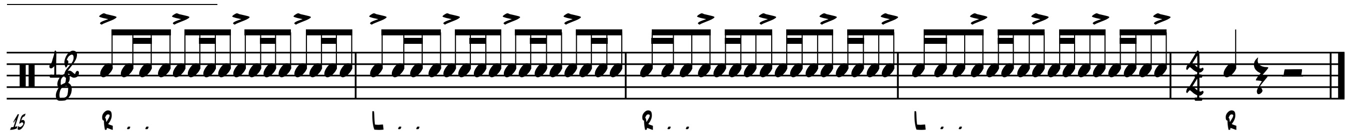
Swing Time



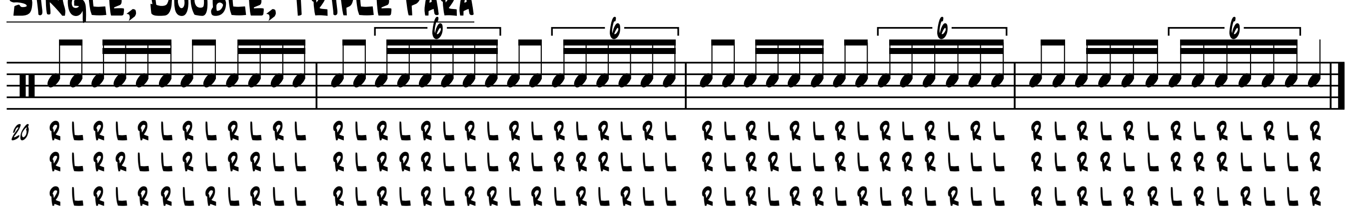
Number Trouble



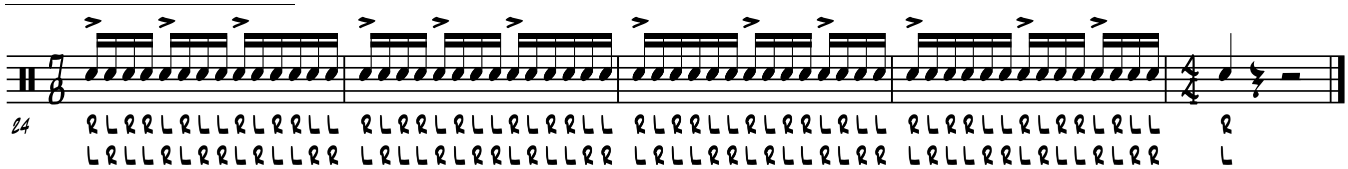
Build a Flam



Single, Double, Triple Para



Afternoon Diddle

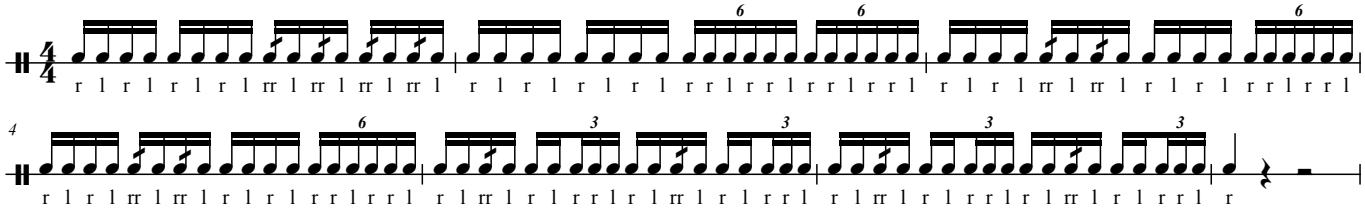


© 2011 MusicByJeremy

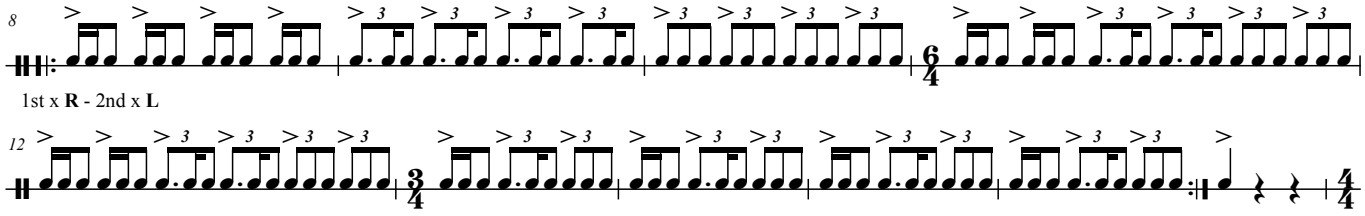
CHOP BUILDERS

Jeremy Schreifels

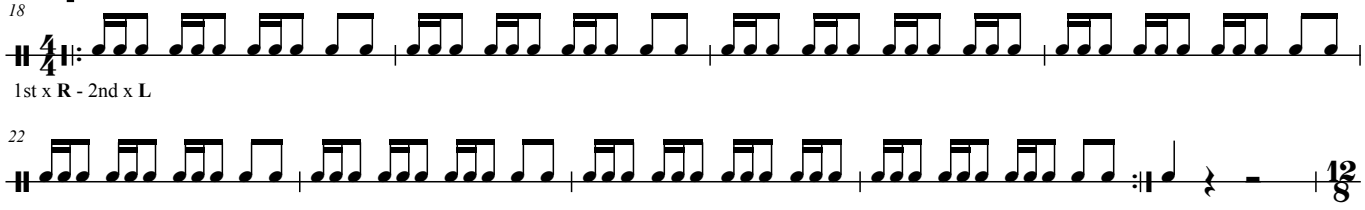
SWITCH-A-ROO!



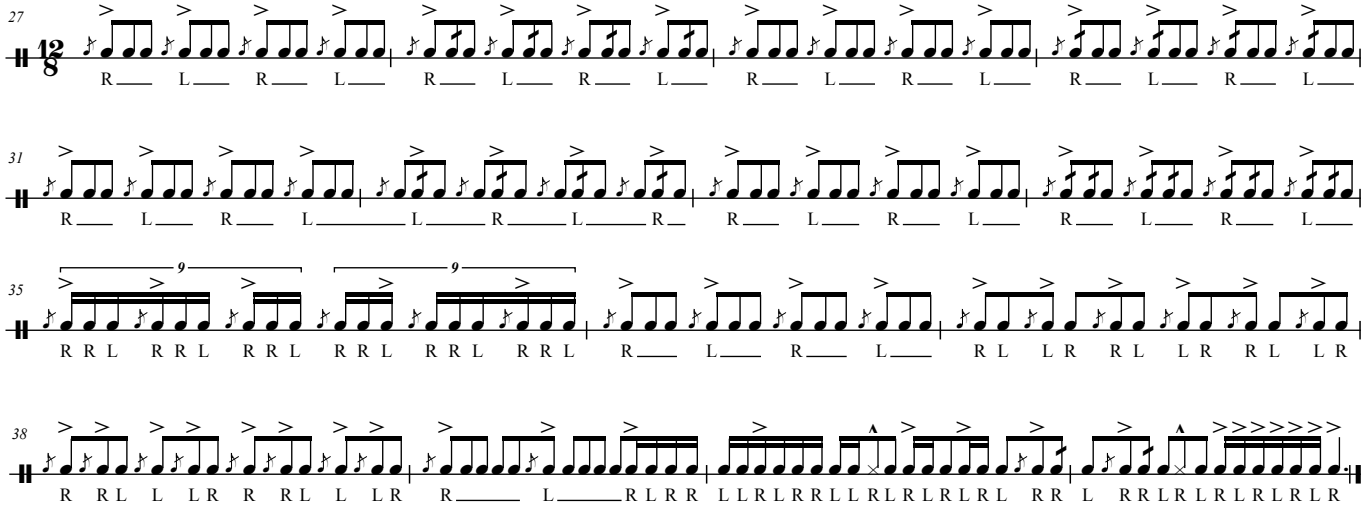
Buk BLUR...



Triple Beat



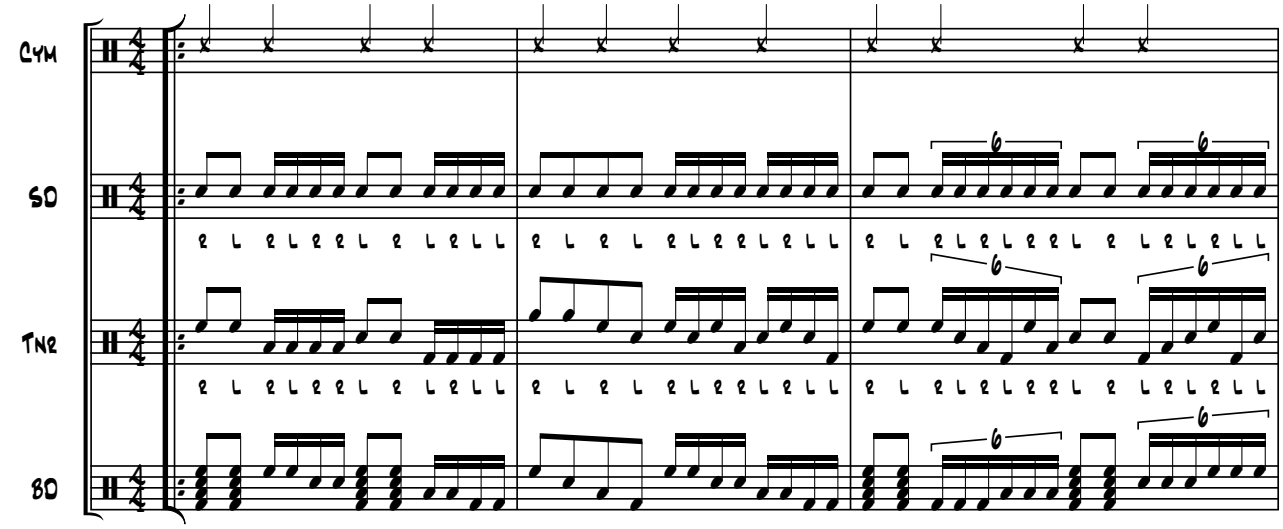
VK - Spree

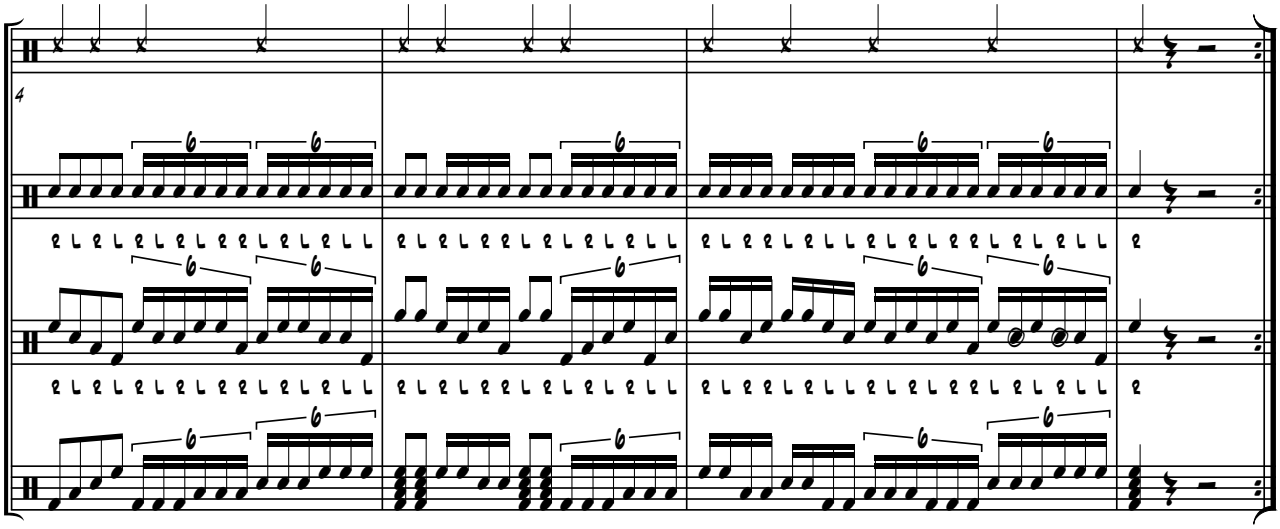


© 2008 MusicByJeremy

Paradiddle YELL!

Jeremy Schreifels

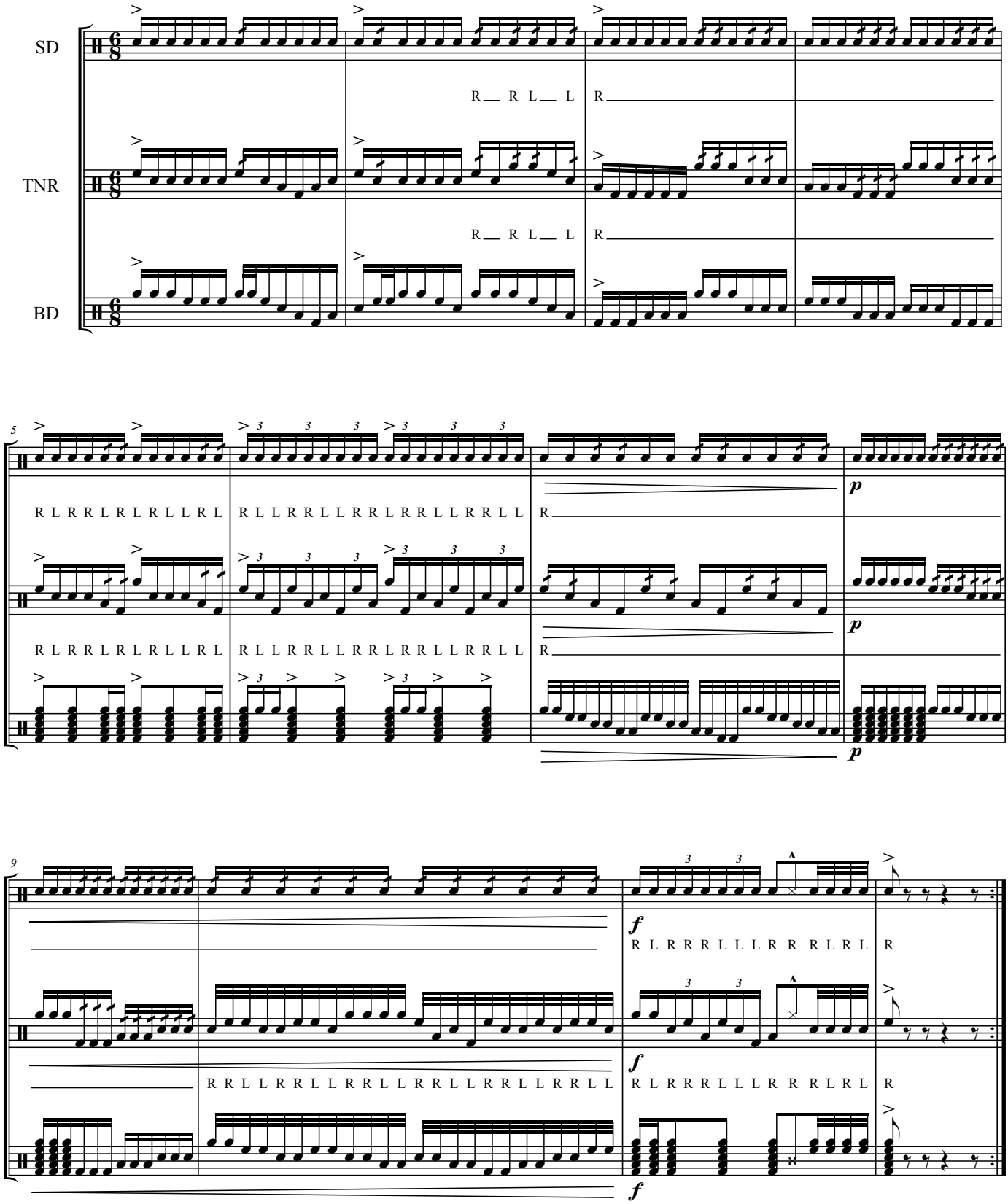




© 2007 MusicByJeremy.com

Roll Targ

Jeremy Schreifels

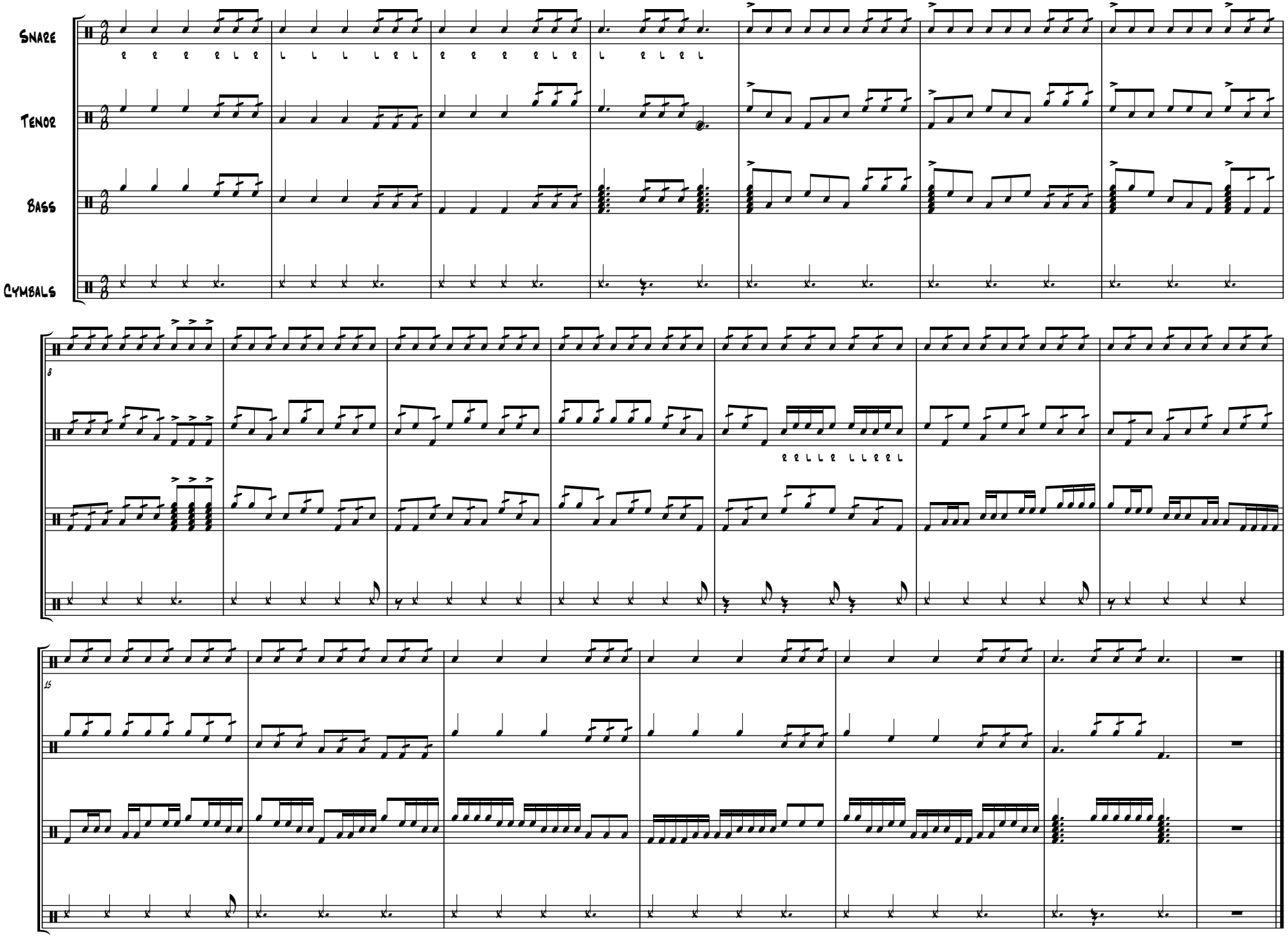


© 2007 MusicByJeremy.com

9/8 Control

(Use natural sticking throughout exercise)

Jeremy Schreifels

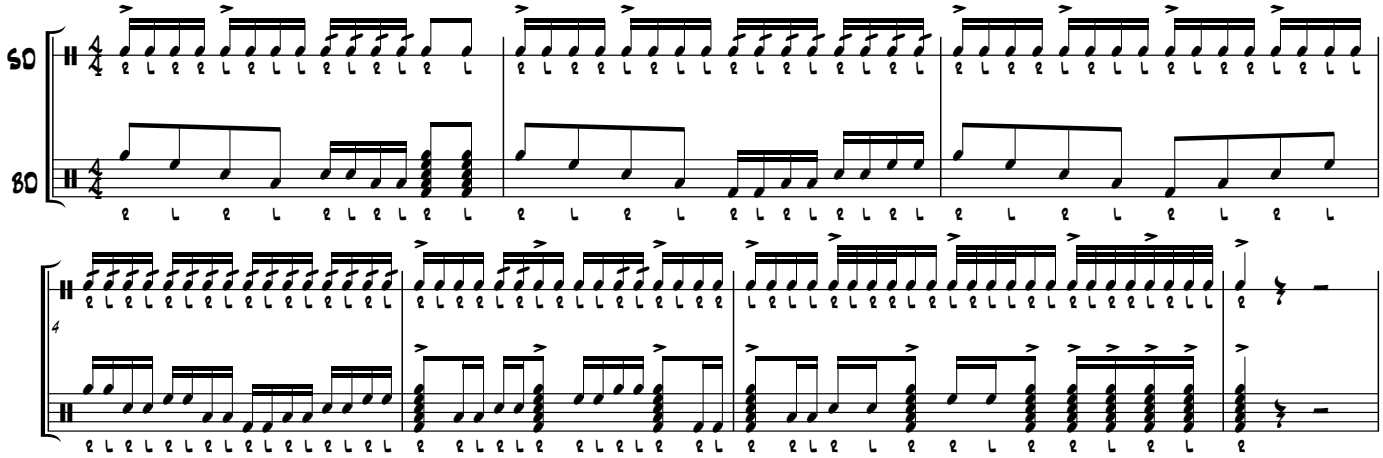


© 2011 MusicByJeremy. All rights reserved.

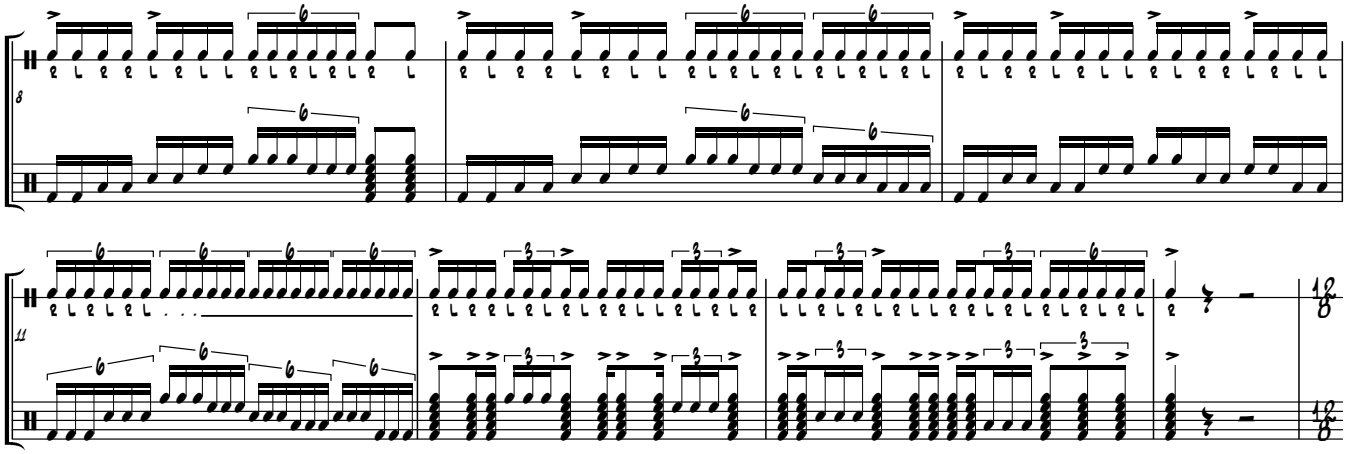
CHOPZ!

Jeremy Schreifels

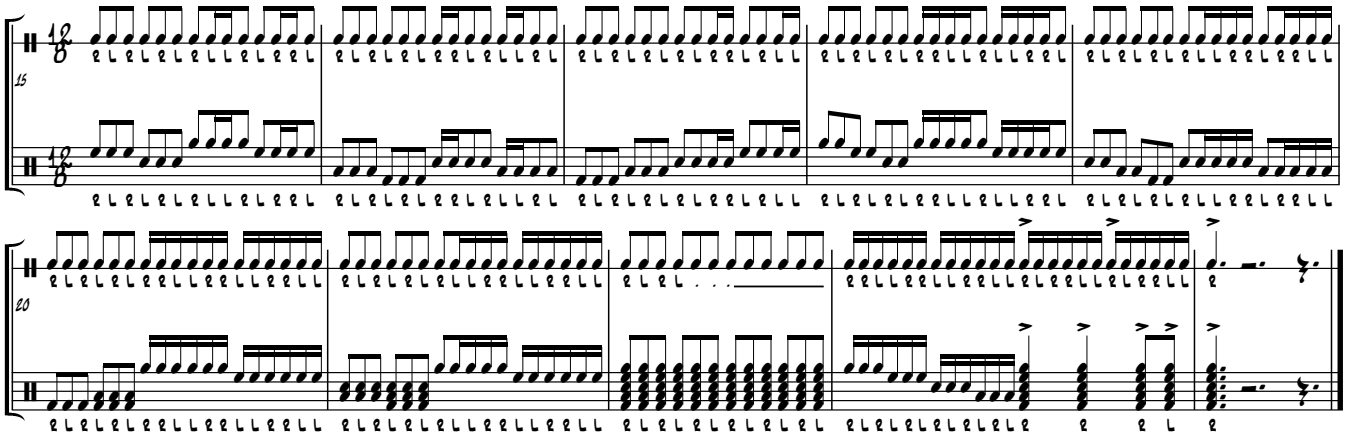
#1: Para-Diggas



#2: Para-Sixes



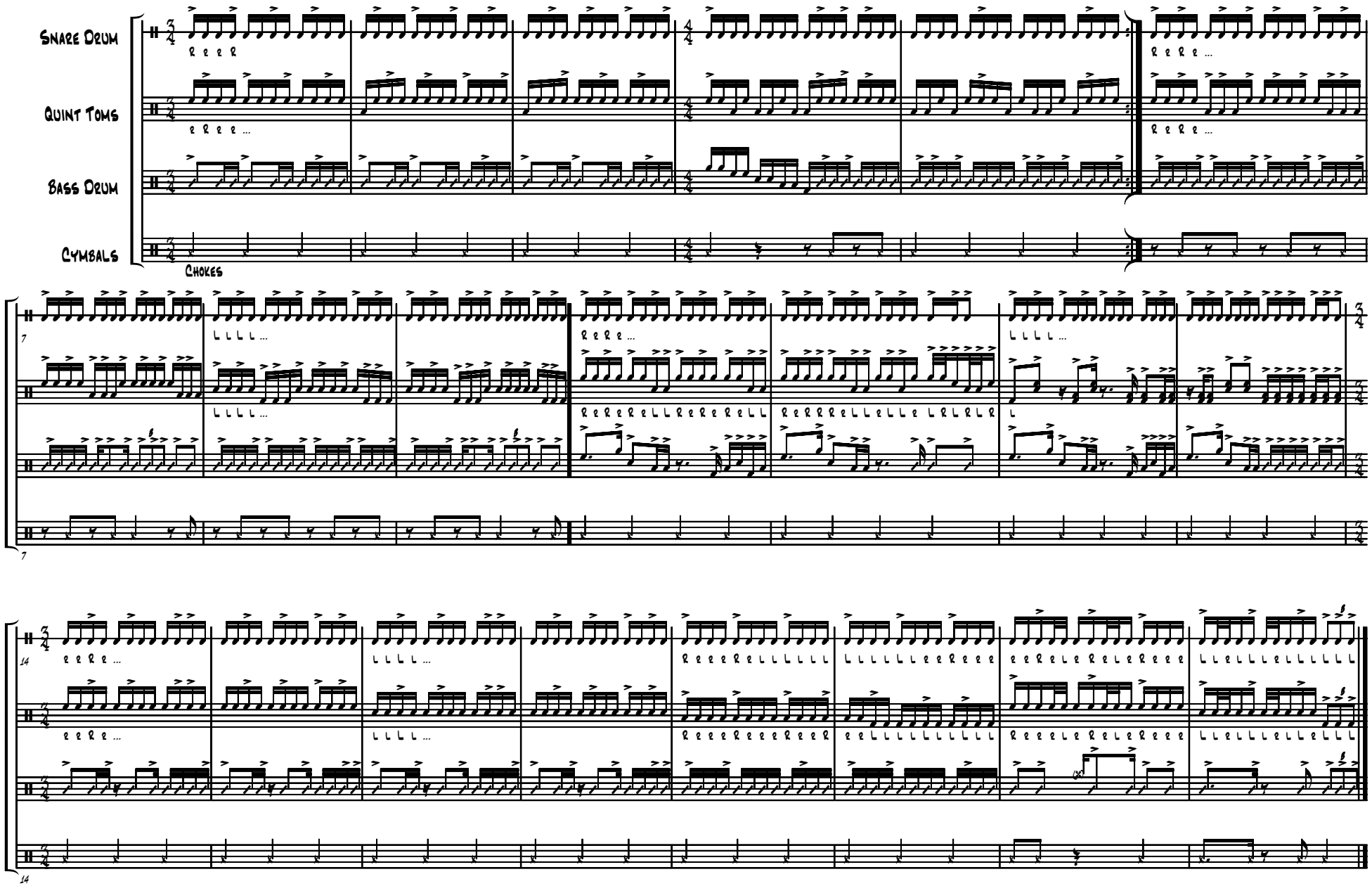
#3: Trippa-Diddle



© 2010 Jeremy Schreifels

THIRTEEN

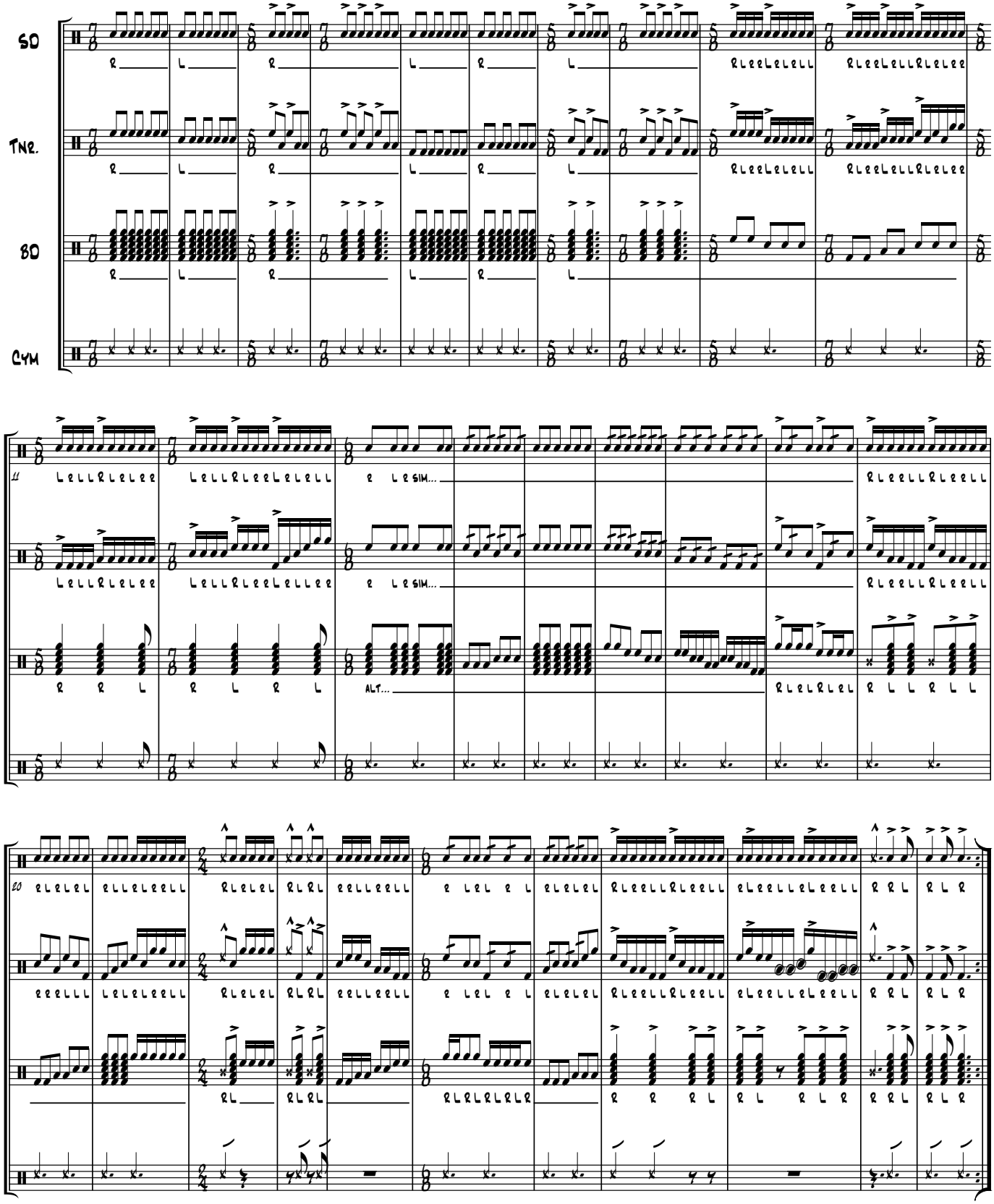
UNIVERSAL



© 2005 ONSITE PUBLISHING

On The Line Chop

Jeremy Schreifels



© 2007 MusicByJeremy.com