# **Drumset Duets**

By Stephane Chamberland

The concept of using two drummers on stage has a long and celebrated history. Artists like the Joshua Redman Double Trio in jazz and John Mayer in his live per formance in Los Angeles ("Where the Light Is") have utilized this approach to add fun and variety. Bands such as Genesis, The Allman Brothers, King Crimson, The Doobie Brothers, The Grateful Dead, and Stuff have also enjoyed the unique possibilities two drummers can create. Much like two guitars, where one can play background chords while the other comps, two drummers can explore a similar dynamic. One drummer can maintain a steady groove while the other solos, or they can use a variety of sound sources and textures to enhance the music.

**Educational Benefits** 

Playing with other musicians is the ultimate goal of studying drumming. A few years ago, I was searching for a method to help my students improve their listening skills while learning new drum beats. With two drum sets in my studio, I felt it was essential to use this setup as much as possible for the students' benefit. This arrangement allows me to play alongside the student not only for demonstrations but also to help them develop their listening skills. In a band setting, drummers must listen to themselves and the other musicians to fully serve the music. This is a crucial skill for all musicians. Drummers, in particular, must focus on many different sounds simultaneously, even when performing the simplest beats.

During my studies with my mentor, Dom Famularo, in New York, he introduced me to an incredible book, *Drumset Duets*. Although it was an old version no longer

distributed, Dom continued using it with his students because of its effectiveness. I am honored to have collaborated with him on various educational projects and books over the years and writing the new edition of *Drumset Duets* was a thrill. Whenever we create a new book. we ensure it fits into a special curriculum we use with our students and then promote it to drummers worldwide. The impact of this concept has been profound.

The digital version is now available on the updated Hudson Music App.

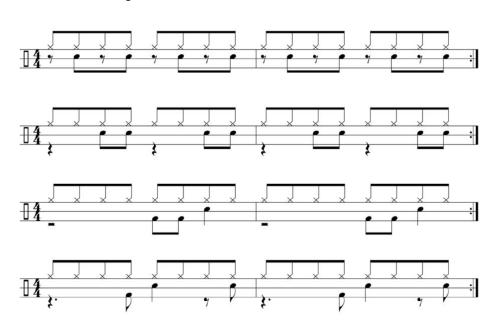
#### **Practical Application**

Imagine two drummers each playing a groove that, together, creates a more complex sound. We explored different styles, such as rock and funk grooves, and added more ghost notes as we progressed through the book. Dom also suggested using different hi-hat patterns to challenge advanced students' independence. I now use this book as soon as my students learn their first drum groove and begin playing with them. I always emphasize listening to their part, then my part, and finally the combined groove. This approach turns exercises into music, similar to playing in a band with other instruments.

#### Let's Try It

Let's start with a warm-up exercise. We'll designate the first drummer as Drummer A and the second as Drummer B. Before playing the snare and bass drum notes, practice syncing your hi-hats. If you don't have a student or a friend with another drum set, click on each groove and you'll hear it, and play the other part like if you were two drummers. You can play as Drummer A or B, depending on your mood. Ensure all notes align evenly with your partner, whether they're on the audio tracks or in person. Remember to listen to your part, then the other part, and most importantly, the final groove.

#### **Groove:**



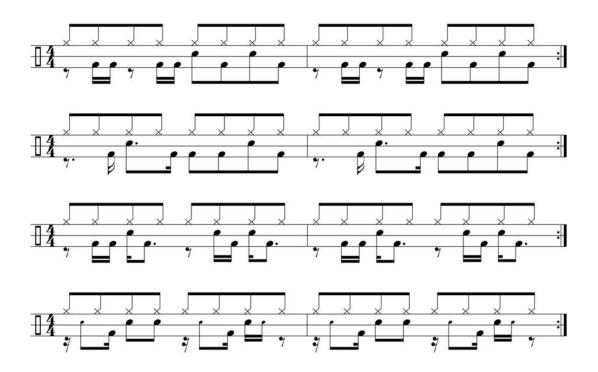
In the next example, we'll include some ghost notes. Ghost notes are played softly near the drumhead, creating a groovy feel and adding lightness to your playing, making it more engaging for other musicians.

## **Ghost Note Grooves**

#### **Groove A:**



## **Groove B:**



## **Exploring Odd Times**

Odd time signatures are popular in many styles. Notable drummers like Neil Peart (Rush), Mike Portnoy (Liquid Tension Experiment), Virgil Donati, and Massimo Russo have excelled in this area. In these examples, we'll add one more beat to create a 5/4 time signature. Count to five before returning to the one. A great exercise is to count aloud while playing the grooves for the first time and maintain eye contact with the other drummer.

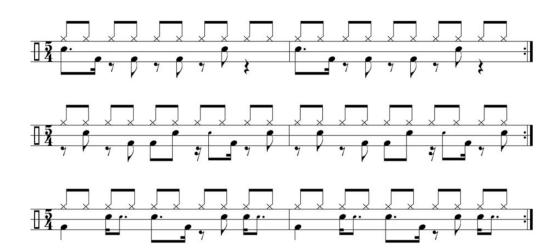
blues form of 12 bars or explore a standard AABA form with a solo section (C). The possibilities are endless.

I hope this article inspires you to explore *Drumset Duets* for your evolution, your students, and perhaps your own band. Think outside the box and challenge yourself daily. Music is an international language that connects us. Record a video of you and a friend playing the exercises from *Drumset Duets* and share it on YouTube.

Good luck on your journey! For more information about *Drumset Duets*, visit <u>Wizdom Media</u> and <u>Hudson</u>. For more about Steph, visit Stephane Chamberland.

#### **Odd Time Grooves**

#### **Groove A:**



#### Groove B



# **Creating Forms**

For an even more fun and challenging experience, create forms or rules. Start with four bars of groove together, then Drummer A takes a four-bar solo while Drummer B continues the groove. Return to the groove together and repeat, switching roles. You can also use a



Check out Stephane's Modern Drummer profile pages and get your copy of Drumset Duets at moderndrummer.com