

## TUTORIAL #7: INDEPENDENT CO-ORDINATION OR INTERDEPENDENCE?

In 1948, the highly intelligent and well informed, Jim Chapin presented Volume One of his Advanced Techniques. He described its contents as **co-ordinated independence**.

Certain authors and clinicians, in more recent times, are insisting that this is the wrong terminology. They believe **interdependence** is the correct summation for such physical activity. And while their comments may be well intended, an area of confusion has entered the minds of many young performers - for they have been presented with a most incomplete statement.

Here's why.

In the execution of any comping figure the first thing that must be decided is what is the grid line that the figure originates from. If it is a triplet based figure then the physical execution of all four limbs will emanate from a triplet grid line. This is where the term **interdependence** is absolute correct. In the execution of the ride rhythm different tempo zones will require a slight adjustment in physical execution, but the manner of execution and the articulation they use must be consistent throughout the chosen tempo in order to achieve the required sound, feeling and forward motion. Most left hand comping figures that we use are syncopated variations. The physical action and articulation that is needed to properly express its contents are totally independent of the ride rhythm. This is why the term **independent co-ordination** is absolutely correct. The bass drum and hi-hat, according to the technique being used, will all have their own physical action, with all four limbs drawing from the same grid line.

We are not suggesting that the performer try to hear all four limbs separately, but one must be aware and understand that the term **interdependence** relates only to all four limbs playing off the same grid line. The term **independent co-ordination** relates to the physical action and articulation of the four lines.

Unfortunately, most who speak of syncopation are not playing syncopation. The word syncopation means disturbed accent. And while many are playing the rhythm involved, they are not giving the phrase its proper articulation which negates its musical motion and expression.

My books on Rhythmical Explorations are **true examples of pure independence**, but if they are not executed with the correct physical motion and articulation their musical content will never be realized.

To all young musicians planning a career in music I recommend, irrespective of their instrument, that they develop a functional technique on the piano. Make a serious study of

Jazz harmony and rhythm. The weakest area of most melodic players is their understanding of rhythm, and their inability to develop rhythmic lines which have motion and impact.

Those of us who have gained respect in our chosen field must be sure that the topic we are discussing has been fully researched and understood before making blanket statements.

JB