

Tricky Rhythm Patterns-2 (Session 37) Asymmetrical Meters with Quarter Triplets

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This composition will be performed at Anthornis, November 2019. **“Del Cinco”** – *“From the Five”*: Written by Brenda E. Austin “For the Houston Chamber Ringers Celebrating of their 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Excellence.” The meter in this composition is 5/4. This is an **asymmetrical meter**, also known as **complex** or **irregular**. (For five years of excellent ringing!)

The suggestion is that the beginning section, the slower part, (quarter = 80) be conducted in 5 even beats. This tempo is not very fast, and the quarter should be subdivided into downbeats and upbeats using syllables “1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 and.”

1. It is important to count using these syllables because it is easy to add an extra beat per measure in order to make the meter symmetrical.
2. Subdividing the beat will also enable the syncopation in the bass clef bells.



1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 and

In measure 39 the tempo changes to quarter = 140. The meter is still 5/4. The suggestion is that this part be conducted in 4. However, this is still an **asymmetrical** meter. The first two beats of this 4 beat pattern will contain three eighth notes and the last two beats will contain two eighth notes contributing to the asymmetry. Counting syllables should be “1 and a, 2 and a 3 and, 4 and” and, remember, all eighth notes are of equal value.



1 and a 2 and a 3 and 4 and

Further complication of rhythm happens in measures 46, 51, 56 and 61. We discussed this pattern in the August 2019 issue (see Session 36), but this is super tricky because the subdivision of the first two groups (as the composer has instructed) “1 and a, 2 and a”, is not triplets but a divided asymmetrical beat; all eighths are equal.

This is the game plan for quarter triplets over two quarter notes in 4/4. You are dividing the quarters on beats 3 and 4 into irregular eighth triplets. The lines in the chart show where the quarter triplet falls.



The 5/4 in **Del Cinco** looks like this. The quarter triplets in measures 46, 51, 56 and 61 appear in the last line of this example.



To practice, take it slow and count five beats: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 an da 5 an da. Accent the underlined beats: 1 & 2 3 & 4 an da 5 an da. Beats 4 and 5 are divided into triplets.

Until next time,

Dr. P

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