



In a Piece
Publishing

Cockroach

the story of a chase!

Warm Up Ideas

All the rhythms presented in these warm-ups are used in the piece Cockroach. This meter is a common dance rhythm in eastern parts of Europe, used for large circle dances. The nine quavers per bar are grouped 2+2+2+3.

Exercise 1

A basic D harmonic minor scale, ascending. The aim here is to not rush the last three quavers – they are not triplet beats, but even quavers throughout. A useful way to secure this rhythm initially is with a clave or a high-pitched drum playing all quaver pulses.

Exercise 2

The objective of this exercise is to keep all quaver pulses even and short with correct placement of the accents. Aim for a very percussive and 'gritty' sound. Use the lower to middle part of the bow. Practice the two up bows at the end of each bar – this bowing is necessary when playing the piece.

Exercise 3

This exercise is a test on counting, or 'feeling' the rest. Stamping feet in the crotchet rest ensures no one speeds up.

Exercise 4

This rhythm occurs in the only legato part of the piece. Aim for a full sound without speeding up on the quaver pulses.

Once the group has these rhythms secured, break the players into groups or sections and play Ex. 1 and Ex. 3 simultaneously. Make sure the rhythms 'lock in' with each other and are not sloppy! Then try the same with Ex. 2 over Ex. 4.

Try playing all these exercises simultaneously in different combinations - maybe use the different instrument groups to play a different exercise. The contrary motion and the different rhythms will create interesting textures and harmonies. Any variation of these rhythms will also work. Ask the student for their ideas.

It is also a good idea to identify where these rhythms are used in the piece and practice them in sections.