Songo revisited
by Mark Powers
www.powerspercussion.com

I recently rediscovered this great Songo rhythm. It was originally shown to me by Dave Stanoch, an instructor at McNally Smith College of Music in Minneapolis (formerly Music Tech). Dave informs me that this particular variation came to him via drummer/educator Chuck Silverman. He notes, however, that it bears a resemblance to rhythms played by Tower of Powers' David Garibaldi and of course, Changuito. Changuito was the legendary Cuban percussionist whose work with Los Van Van included creating Songo by combining elements of the 'son' rhythm with those of the Congo.

Notation Key:

| RH/Cowbell | LH/Snare | LH/Snare 'ghost note' | RF/Bass | LF/Jam Block' | LH/High Tom |

There you have it- a fun, great sounding groove to practice and put to use! But, why stop there? After acquainting yourself with the pattern, play a 2-3 clave rhythm with your Left Foot on a Gajate-mounted 'Jam Block,' or cowbell . . .

. . . and add that to the Songo.

Now let's make two other small changes to the rhythm. First, let your left hand double the last snare drum 'ghost note' stroke, turning that 16th note into two 32nd's.
Finally, move the other left hand 'ghost notes' up to the high tom.

As with the rhythms of any style of music, there are an unending number of ways to vary the Songo and revoice the notes around the drumset. Have fun and explore as many options as you can!