



Butterfly Double Bass

Grounding Space Impulse

WORKSHEET 1

A practical introduction to the
Butterfly Movement System by Alex Holzwarth

Butterfly Double Bass

Worksheet 1 - Introduction: Grounding, Space and Impulse

The Basic Idea

With Butterfly, the stroke is only a small part of the entire movement cycle. What is really interesting is everything that happens around it: the relationship between foot, floor and pedal.

A clear fixed point creates space for free movement.

The Fan Principle

The heel finds its reference point on the floor and acts as the counterpole to the forefoot. This creates a natural fan-like movement between heel and forefoot: the heel movement remains minimal, while the forefoot describes a larger radius.

Heel and forefoot move within one continuous, flowing motion. The heel reaches the floor first; a moment later, contact extends through the whole foot onto the pedal and produces the stroke.

Butterfly Double Bass

Worksheet 1 - Introduction: Grounding, Space and Impulse

The Movement Cycle

Grounding - the heel rests relaxed on the floor and moves naturally as part of the movement cycle.

Space - complete relaxation between strokes.

Upward Movement - the pedalboard moves upward. Feel how its rebound pushes your forefoot upward.

Impulse - the impulse is applied when the movement returns toward the head.

Less Doing - More Receiving

Through Butterfly grounding, the foot gains freedom. As when dribbling a ball, you can focus fully on the feeling of placing the impulse into the relaxed movement at the right moment, with contact and release.

The impulse does not create the entire movement. It connects with a movement that is already there.

Small Foot Movement - Large Beater Movement

At slower tempos, the foot's basic position shifts farther back - away from the bass drum. A larger part of the foot rests on the floor.

At higher tempos, the foot's basic position shifts farther forward toward the bass drum. The forefoot movement becomes smaller, but remains larger than the minimal heel movement. Through the fan principle, a large beater movement radius remains possible.

Tempo does not fundamentally change the movement - it mainly changes where that movement takes place on the pedal.

Butterfly Double Bass

Worksheet 1 - Introduction: Grounding, Space and Impulse

First Exercises

1. Play slow single strokes or downstrokes. Remain relaxed in the resting position after each stroke. The weight of the forefoot rests on the pedalboard. This keeps the beater a few centimeters away from the head.
2. Now play flowing single strokes. Imitate the dribbling of a ball on the pedal - with floor contact on every stroke.
3. Observe how the position of your foot on the pedal changes with tempo without artificially changing the movement itself.

While Practicing

- ☐ Do I feel the grounding?
- ☐ Do I allow the pedalboard to move upward?
- ☐ Does the forefoot remain free because my heel touches the floor with every stroke?
- ☐ Can I feel the fan-like movement between heel and forefoot - with the heel movement remaining smaller than the forefoot movement?
- ☐ Can I feel and hear that the heel reaches the floor a moment before the whole foot?
- ☐ Can I catch the moment when the movement returns toward the head?
- ☐ Does it feel more like interplay than like stomping down on the pedal?

Butterfly Double Bass

Worksheet 1 - Introduction: Grounding, Space and Impulse

Hand and Foot Follow the Same Logic

With the drumstick, too, a clear fixed point creates space for the more mobile part. The relationship between heel and forefoot corresponds to the relationship between wrist and stick tip. Like a fan, the movement at the reference point remains smaller, while the more mobile part describes a larger radius.

Hand and foot technique follow the same logic and thereby become one connected whole within the body. Grounding - Space - Impulse.

Practice Notes
