

## BEAUX MOMENTS MUSICAUX (BATTERIE)

by Ian Muldoon\*

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**A**t a performance of the band Mingus Amongst Us at Foundry 616 in 2022 the musicians foregathered at the break to chit chat, but the drummer was absent. At the end of the night, the musicians get together whilst the drummer packs up his kit. That's right. Is the drummer really a "musician"? Deep South slave holders banned the drum. Is the drummer a sideline act for the music called jazz? Or are the drums central to the music and more?



*Buddy Rich: he started playing when he was 18 months old...*

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*\*Ian Muldoon has been a jazz enthusiast since, as a child, he heard his aunt play Fats Waller and Duke Ellington on the household piano. At around ten years of age he was given a windup record player and a modest supply of steel needles, on which he played his record collection, consisting of two 78s, one featuring Dizzy Gillespie and the other Fats Waller. He listened to Eric Child's ABC radio programs in the 1950s and has been a prolific jazz records collector wherever he lived in the world, including Sydney, Kowloon, Winnipeg, New York and Melbourne. He has been a jazz broadcaster on a number of community radio stations in various cities, and now lives in Coffs Harbour. In 2021 he published a collection of essays on jazz subjects, entitled "My Jazz Odyssey: Confessions of a Lifetime Enthusiast".*

After the voice, banging something with an implement may be the second sound made by the child - Buddy Rich may have begun banging, but he started *playing* when he was 18 months old. Drums get attention. Such banging evolved into communication, celebration, ritual and much else on the largest continent and source of human life, Africa. Spiritual divinities of the material and spirit worlds were part of the daily life of entire societies in traditional African societies. "In sacred rituals, these deities mount and take charge of human hosts who dance to the songs and rhythms that the divinities are said to own, imitating their character and conduct." (*The Oxford Companion to Jazz* ed, Kirchner OUP 2000 p 9).

In African American churches today audience involvement and church music mimic this ancient practise in which hosts are said to become mediums for the spirits, possessed as it were. Such possession is brought on by drumming, chanting, singing, and dance. Our culture may look askance at these "performances" or be uneasy at the expressiveness of worshippers or audiences at concerts, but might we not also stare with astonishment at the costumes, rites and temples of the most theatrical of Christian sects, the Roman Catholic church?

Drumming became a source of deep musical satisfaction and increasingly complex, way outside normal Western musical notation in which order, understanding and control are goals. A recent instance of the latter is the work by steel drum maker Kyle Dunleavy from Brooklyn, NY. He spent two years making a pair of double seconds (pans) that had three octaves of notes. On them mallets get a low C "moong"; a middle C "mung"; a high C "ming"; and a C sharp an octave higher "ping!" (*New Yorker* 20/12/21).

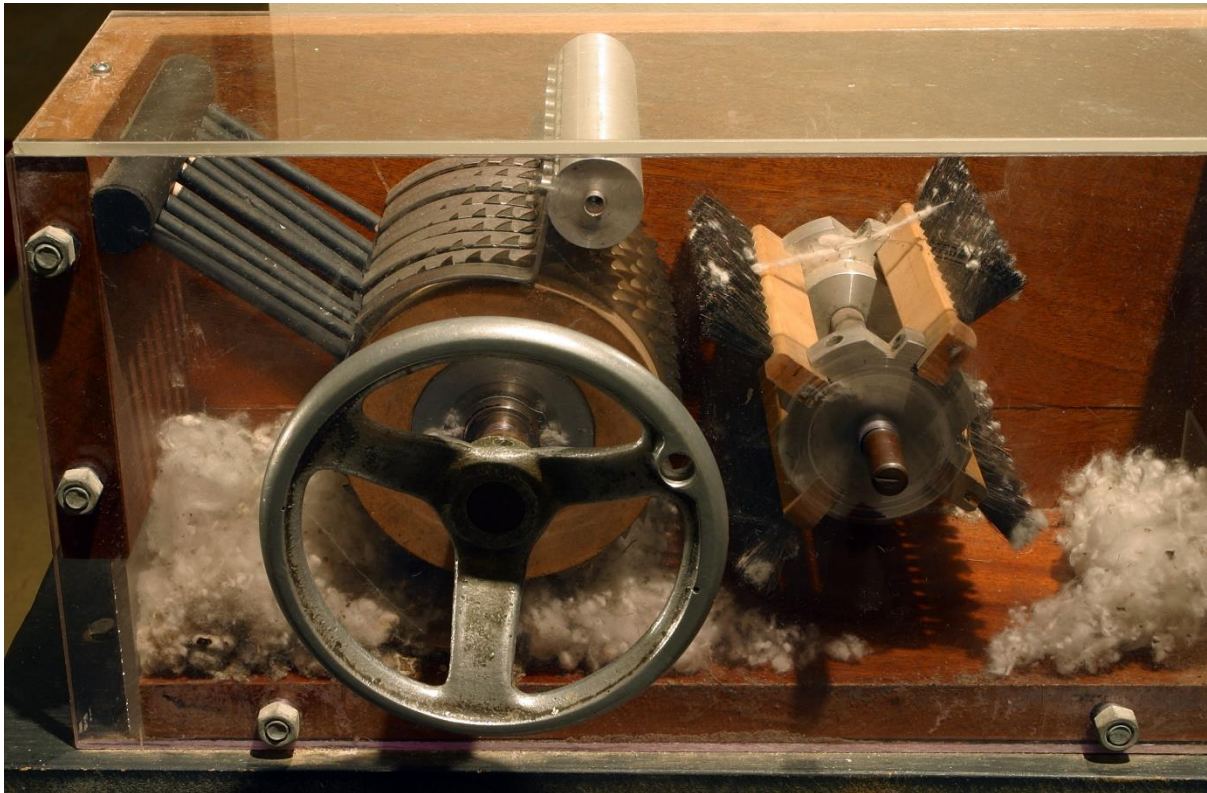


*Steel drum maker Kyle Dunleavy: he spent two years making a pair of double seconds (pans) that had three octaves of notes... PHOTO COURTESY FACEBOOK*



In December 2021 Marc Brooks played them at a Sō Percussion and Friends concert at Carnegie Hall. Ingenuity, knowledge and technical skills may have made the “perfect” set of pans but it’s the playing of them by a jazz musician that makes the most intriguing and moving pan sounds. In the 19th and early 20th centuries jazz drumming blossomed in New Orleans.

During the industrial revolution, and especially after the broad up-taking of Eli Whitney’s Cotton Engine (Gin), New Orleans became one of the most important seaports in the United States and a worldwide entreport for goods, including slaves, to service the economy. Situated on the mouth of the massive water highway of the 3,766 km Mississippi River, the city was a cultural soup of incredible breadth. This interaction of world cultures which musically included dance, European classical music, street music, military music, church music, African drumming music, folk music of the Scots, and Jewish cultures and more, culminated in expressive polyphony, the magnificent improvised solo works of Louis Armstrong and the sophisticated arrangements and compositions of Duke Ellington: these two representatives of the music, their imagination and sensitivity to the sounds of man and nature, helped create a new art form.



*Eli Whitney’s Cotton Gin: after its invention, New Orleans became one of the most important seaports in the United States... PHOTO COURTESY WIKIPEDIA*

Western harmony and sophisticated melodies married to the rhythmic power and complexities of African percussion saw Ellington create some of the most beautiful music in history, a music which seemed to breathe with life, an unparalleled drive and energy different to the power created by a large classical orchestra, and different to the simple melodies and features of folk music. A large part of this change can be attributed to the drum. But Ellington saw percussion and rhythm

everywhere, not just in formal music but also in the clicketty clack of a moving rail carriage along the rail gaps; in the engines of industry; and in footsteps and in dance and in birdsong.



*Duke Ellington (left) in 1934: he saw percussion and rhythm everywhere, not just in formal music but also in the clicketty clack of a moving rail carriage along the rail gaps...PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST*

A beautiful example of dance being made into musical art was *Doin' The New Low Down* (Fields/McHugh) which could be called *Concerto for Tap Dancing* with the tap performed by Bill “Bojangles” Robinson. This composition was part of the *Blackbirds* of 1928 stage show with music performed by Duke Ellington.

Ellington used Robinson’s percussive tap dancing feet to create art, and New York drummer Ches Smith uses his percussive hands playing the Haitian tanbou, a barrel drum, to create art in a duo with John Zorn on an original composition *Through A Glass Darkly* (Zorn) on the 2018 document *In a Convex Mirror* (Tzadik). The piece opens with Zorn on Fender Rhodes piano establishing a moody plaintive atmosphere which is punctuated by runs by Smith on tanbou, and when the alto enters Smith develops a latticework of percussion which creates interest and builds tension over

an arc within the nearly 17 minutes playing time of the piece. It's a beautiful instance of the effectiveness of percussion providing rhythm, dramatic tension and colour to the music.



*New York drummer Ches Smith (above) uses his percussive hands playing the Haitian “tanbou”, a barrel drum, to create art in a duo with John Zorn (below) on the composition “Through A Glass Darkly” on the 2018 album “In a Convex Mirror”...*



I reference these two instances - an older master Ellington and a younger master Zorn - to show that percussion is a substantial and vital element in the music called jazz and comes in a remarkable variety of forms and instruments (including piano) from a wide range of cultures especially Africa and Asia. It's not just some guy banging away in the background, or showing off in the foreground with a huge kit as if some part of a circus, or a simple source of rhythm, but a musical instrument of depth and range in the hands and feet of modern men and women percussionists. These "drummers" have been central to creating a great modern musical art.

There's an old saying which means different people are suited to different things - 'horses for courses'- but I take it to mean you've got to adjust your behaviour to suit the context. Drummer Shelly Manne was a master drummer who exemplified the approach of many musicians, of the working musician in particular, of doing the job you're paid to do. Much employment for jazz musicians was available in film studios in the Hollywood years of 1920 -1970 or backing musicians for albums or in clubs, especially during the Prohibition years. Manne was spectacularly successful in working in the burgeoning film and television industries providing background music. He played in a variety of styles including dixieland, swing, bebop, avant-garde and fusion. I recall his work with the Stan Kenton Orchestra which varied in size from the standard 19, up to 39 members. Manne was part of the very popular piano trio led by Andre Previn and led some experimental groups of the early 1950s which I particularly relish. I seem to recall Manne as part of the LA 4 at a performance at the Capitol Theatre, Sydney in the 1970s with Bud Shank, Laurinda Almeida, and Ray Brown.



*Shelly Manne (above) was a master drummer who exemplified the approach of many musicians, of the working musician in particular, of doing the job you're paid to do... PHOTO COURTESY DRUMMERWORLD*



A fine example of playing for the circumstances in the moment is the song *Just Squeeze Me* (Ellington/Gaines) from Manne's *Shelly Manne & His Men At The Black Hawk - Volume 4* (Contemporary 1996) recorded at The Black Hawk, San Francisco, 24th September, 1959. Manne is the drummer, and leader; Joe Gordon, trumpet; Richie Kamuca, tenor sax; Victor Feldman, piano; and Monty Budwig, bass. It is played in 3/4 time *andante* making it ideal for digestion. The drums, bass and tenor set up the piece with the piano interjecting, and the trumpet stating the melody. A long tenor solo and long trumpet solo slowly builds the intensity to a climax of rim shots, cymbal splashes and a roll by Manne back to the beginning. Time is impeccable throughout and there is no bravado or exhibitionism, just five artists at their best providing a comforting musical performance to accompany the socialising, drinking and eating by the audience. It's a very sweet, and precious recital with the drums perfectly serving the music.



In terms of exhibitionism with the drummer front and centre Buddy Rich has to take the prize. A child of show biz from an early age he was conditioned to the idea of playing loud and fast for the customers paying to see a child prodigy. Widely publicised by some as the greatest drummer in the world, his contribution to the art of jazz is somewhat more conditional. His big band music and his drum displays with the likes of Gene Krupa, pale in comparison to his support playing for some of the greatest artists. One example, is his drumming on *Ella & Louis* (Verve) recorded 16th August 1956 with a pick-up band featuring, Louis Armstrong, trumpet and vocals; Ella Fitzgerald, vocals; Oscar Peterson, piano; Herb Ellis, guitar; and Ray Brown, bass. In terms of taste, time and control, Rich is peerless and this music, a classic of its kind, is an excellent instance of Rich the artist as opposed to Rich the performing drummer.



*Buddy Rich: In terms of taste, time and control, he is peerless on the album "Ella & Louis" (Verve) recorded 16th August 1956...*

In modern jazz drumming, the notion of soloing, in terms of performing and exhibitionism, has tended to give way to integrated musical even chordal statements such as that exhibited by Billy Mintz on *Send Off* (Behroozi) from Dahveed Behroozi Trio *Echos* (Sunnyside) 2021 where Mintz has a song length solo (so to speak) with the piano and bass integrated. It opens with a scrambling, seemingly free piano melange where Behroozi seems to want to sound every note and Mintz on drums with his four limbs working hard. But then the music devolves into a controlled entrancing maelstrom of sound with the piano providing percussive comments on the drums. Mintz has performed with Lee Konitz and Alan Broadbent among many others, and is a consummate artist in the mould of Paul Motian. Classically trained improvising (jazz) artists Behroozi was 41 when he recorded *Echos* and Mintz was 74. If no other document of his work survives, *Echos* is a superb testament to Mintz and his artistry.



*Billy Mintz: a consummate artist in the mould of Paul Motian...*



Behroozi may have contributed scattered percussive notes in the up-tempo *Send Off*, but Duke Ellington provides solid (firm), slow, masculine, ominous, percussive comments to Jimmy Hamilton's languid, feminine and expressive clarinet solo on *Tenderly* (Lawrence-Gross) recorded 9/9/57 from *Ellington Indigos* (Phoenix) 2011. Ellington punctuates the melodic Hamilton with powerful percussive chords and striking insistent repetitive figures building in intensity until the music segues briefly into a swinging interlude after which the whole 16-piece orchestra comes in for a melody recap and orchestral conclusion.



*Duke Ellington on piano, pictured with Jimmy Hamilton on clarinet: on "Tenderly" Ellington punctuates the melodic Hamilton with powerful percussive chords and striking insistent repetitive figures building in intensity...*

The piano as percussion engaging with drums is not uncommon as practised by artists such as Andrea Keller. In short, the routine of a band stating the theme, solos by the horns, then a drum solo as a climactic cap and crowd pleaser, and a theme repeat, becomes under Keller and modern artists more a case of serving the overall musical frame and tone of a piece.

Not uncommonly, Keller becomes as it were part of the percussive musical statement as she does on *Lines on my Face* (Keller) from *Little Claps* (Jazzhead) recorded in 2007 with Eugene Ball, trumpet; Ian Whitehurst, tenor saxophone; Joe Talia, drums, and herself, piano, arranger and composer. Note that Keller lists herself at the bottom which is typical of her value of placing music ahead of the individual contribution to it. The piece has a polyphonic horn mid-tempo opening with Keller playing melodic runs but in the drum "solo" - the drums are prominent throughout - she and Talia engage in a percussive section both contributing to the music which makes it more colourful, melodic and dynamic than it would otherwise be, as well as more powerful with Keller's emphatic forceful control of the keys.



*The Andrea Keller Quartet circa 2007, L-R, Joe Talia (drums), Eugene Ball (trumpet); Keller (piano, arranger and composer), Ian Whitehurst (tenor saxophone)...*

Another very fine example is *Jim's Favourite* (Keller) from the same document where at the half-way mark of the seven-minute piece Talia and Keller engage in a percussive conversation almost to the end, which is a swinging highlight of the programme at medium-tempo with some powerful and telling bottom-end playing by Keller with Talia's looser and fiery drumming creating a delightful tension between the two. Such pianism recalls Count Basie in such works as *Dupree Blues* (White/Herman) 26/1/39 with Walter Page, double bass; and Jo Jones, drums where Basie is another percussionist whilst drummer Jo "Papa" Jones in this classic recital sticks to a subtle and magical floating groove.

Without piano, drummers can make large the smallest aggregations like Charles Moffett does with the Ornette Coleman Trio of Coleman alto sax; David Izenzon, bass; and Charles Moffett, drums, in performance at the Gyllene Cirkein, Stockholm, on 4th December 1965 now reissued as *Ornette Coleman At The Golden Circle Volume Two* (Blue Note) 2002. Critics at the time spoke of Moffett condescendingly as "conservative" and less important to the music than the innovations of both Coleman and Izenzon, but if we listen to the gleeful up-tempo offering *The Riddle* (Coleman) we can discern that Moffett and his "filling" is almost orchestral. His shimmering cymbal on the one hand, with blocks, runs, paradiddles etc on the other, is an exemplary instance of impeccable timekeeping with percussive permutations on the theme and a shifting collage of sound. How many times I've listened and still find *The Riddle* - its energy, melodies and explorations - a riveting experience with as much credit to Moffett as to his confreres. His cymbal work is memorable. And doesn't his artistry give the innovators a strong foundation on which to explore their harmolodics?



*Charles Moffett: impeccable timekeeping with percussive permutations on the theme and a shifting collage of sound... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST*

Coleman's *Lonely Woman* is an interesting and unusual instance of an avant-garde classic, outside standard chord progressions, 32 bars etc, attaining the status of a standard. On the original recording there is no harmony instrument and the drums keep strict time. It has a strong melody and a compelling mood. It has been "covered" by the MJQ (1962); Lester Bowie (1974); John Zorn (1989); J D Allen (1998); and Fred Hersch (2012). Hersch recorded it in February 2012 and it's issued as *Fred Hersch Trio Alive At The Vanguard* (Palmetto) 2012 with Hersch, piano; John He'bert, bass; and Eric McPherson, drums.



*Eric McPherson: a musical artist whose choice of instrument is percussion as he fits our times as the compleat modern jazz drummer... PHOTO CREDIT GUY FONCK*

In the way of seven degrees of separation, it's a quirky fact that McPherson taught himself drumming on a set that had belonged to Coleman's drummer Charles Moffett, before he was tutored from 12 years of age for seven years by Michael Carvin. On the staff of the University of Hartford, McPherson can only be described as a musical artist whose choice of instrument is percussion as he fits our times as the *complete* modern jazz drummer. McPherson is drummer of choice for such distinguished artists as Russ Lossing.

On the Fred Hersch Trio *Alive At The Vanguard* document, Coleman's *Lonely Woman* is melded with the Miles Davis composition *Nardis* (also a standard) in a recital that extends for over 12 minutes. It may well be remembered as a highlight of the trio's week-long gig at the Vanguard. Hersch uses the same arrangement as he used on his album *Evanescence* (1990) whilst moving the tune up to E minor. It opens with the drummer in a measured slow figure using mallets on a tom tom, reminiscent of African drums at night transmitting a message.



The *Kontrabass* enters *pizzicato* helping to establish with the *adagio* piano the haunting and hauntingly memorable Coleman theme. The bass solos with asides from the cymbals punctuated at times by piano - it is spaced to tense and dramatic effect and segues into an up-tempo swinging 4/4 signature. *Nardis* was treated by Bill Evans, who recorded it many times, as no ballad but in *andante moderato* and in later years up-tempo and quite aggressively. Hersch attacks it in the third section and moves to the *forte* climax percussively with Eric McPherson on drums digging in with energetic cymbal splashes until it fades on the upper end of the piano and a single acoustic bass note. McPherson's contribution is central to the power and artistic satisfaction of this performance.



McPherson's contributions are his refined artistry of response to the music of others arising from deep listening developed over years of playing which is the traditional role of jazz percussionists even in the bands of Duke Ellington whose compositions and arrangements are central to that artist's genius. Ellington rarely wrote out drum parts though he may have in longer formal works such as *The Drum is a Woman*. The evolution of the drums into music beyond their traditional role mirrors perhaps a little the evolution of speaking as a musical form.

Charlie Parker said that every night in performance, he was a composer in his solos. Traditionally, music for public performance was usually prepared in advance even if not documented. Parker may be a prominent example of the masterful soloist whose solos make the music artistically resonate but his work was mainly confined to minutes. In larger works by artists like Ellington, composition and arrangements are central in providing powerful frames and settings for individual solos. In public speaking composition has tended still to rule, exceptions being parliamentary debates, but even here much is prepared.



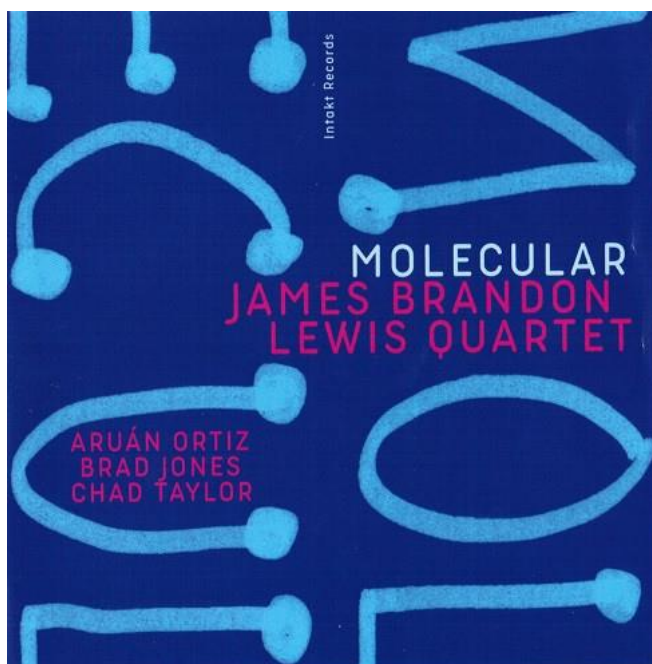
*Charlie Parker, pictured at the home of William Claxton in 1953... PHOTO CREDIT WILLIAM CLAXTON COURTESY GARY GIDDINS BOOK "CELEBRATING BIRD"*

In public speaking, trying to improvise an effective speech is fraught with danger and the nearest to great improvisation in public speaking may be stand-up comedian the late Robin Williams. In such efforts there is a flow, a riff, a tempo, a groove that the speaker attains which may have less emphasis on strict meaning and more on

the music of the words, building on puns, half meanings, word twists and so on with the occasional surprise “bomb” packed with (metaphorical) meaning. Audience response fuels or manages the artist. Music and improvisation in speaking comes together in the work of the likes of Eminem and the popular rise of rap.

An interesting contemporary comparison of two saxophone led quartets demonstrate how different approaches are no barrier to beautiful and enduring music. One is based on composition and arrangements, the other is wholly improvisational with drums playing a pivotal role in each.

The musical integration of the drums is especially evident in the document *Molecular* (Intakt) 2020 with the James Brandon Lewis Quartet with Lewis, tenor sax, compositions; Aruan Ortiz, piano; Brad Jones, bass; and Chad Taylor, drums; including the *mbira* an African percussion instrument with a three thousand year lineage. There are eleven original compositions which have been inspired by the leader’s interest in molecular biology and specifically the concept behind the double helix (spiral). He saw musical parallels between “major, minor, augmented, and diminished chords and the four nucleases of DNA - adenine, guanine, cytosine and thymine.” (Notes to *Molecular* by Peter Margasak). Musically, Lewis mapped out all the possible harmonic relationships within a pitch set. He begins with an initial rhythmic phrase which acts as a kernel in subsequent phrases. He wrote out everything in the music and didn’t reveal his concept to the musicians. The wholly written *Neosha* (Lewis) from the programme has an especially strong melody.



*Neosha* opens with a cascading piano run in the upper register, repeated a number of times, then contrasted by lower end notes, which is complemented by the arco bass and drums. The tenor saxophone enters with a strong melody, echoing sounds of the Middle East, more repetition of the melody, then moves into a solo backed by a walking bass and rhythm section grooving with repetition as the sax arcs into an ecstatic register with up-tempo piano, bass and drums the sax then easing into a melodic rephrasing, piano repetition with a walking bass ending the piece.

Although strongly melodic percussion is central to *Neosha's* appeal, it's the complete integration - harmony if you will - of these three highly individual artists that is thrilling.

In our introductory comments we spoke of deities in traditional African societies arising and taking charge of human hosts and the phenomenon of rhythmic rituals still performed in African American church congregations. Alto saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins and his quartet of Daryl Johns, bass; Kweku Sumbry, drums and Micah Thomas on piano, on their second album *The 7th Hand* (Blue Note) 2022, perform free which is to say with no preceding written compositions or arrangements (except one track by the drummer), being completely improvisational. The leader's (and the music's purpose) is in his words "to become a vessel for the creator" (*Jazz Times*). Wilkins credits his work with "divine intervention" and the finished product, as evidenced in *The 7th Hand* is, is a performance where phrasing is absent and controlled release is all building over six works to a final 26-minute climactic and ecstatic conclusion. Late Coltrane is the obvious precedent particularly regarding that master's spiritual referencing. Yet, Coltrane ended up alone on his saxophone whereas all four of the quartet led by Wilkins are involved and the drums are vital to this project.



Cover for the Immanuel Wilkins album "The 7<sup>th</sup> Hand"...

There is no hierarchy between wholly improvised music and composed music. Both *Molecular* by James Brandon and his quartet, and *The 7th Hand* (2022) by Immanuel Wilkins and his quartet are compelling and beautiful musical documents. The beauty of each is incontestable though the former is composed, arranged and performed with consummate care and the latter is performed with a the goal of transcendence by the players in the moment. Even so the difference in



approach between these two bands is an instance of the tension that can arise between “knowledge” and “feeling” or between control and release or between composition and improvisation (in the extreme case “free jazz”).

This division seems to mirror that between reason (or rationality), and feelings, (or the “heart”). As the scientist Pascal noted: “the heart has its reasons and reason knows not why.” And love between a man and a woman (for sake of the argument let’s keep attraction heterosexual and simple) may be quite irrational or “blind”. Sometimes this “blindness” is chosen over knowledge, a wilful abnegation of jealousy or envy to remain ignorant rather than know all there is to know about the other. Knowledge can be an attempt to master the other, to control the other. To surrender to the other is love, as Leopold Bloom knew in one of the greatest of all love stories, *Ulysses*. To surrender to music is love. I’m happy to be ignorant about the pentatonic scale, or *rubanto*, or *dodecuplet*. D H Lawrence wrote that “science will destroy the moon”. I have no curiosity about the geology, atmosphere or size of the moon and it remains for me a romantic symbol of silent beauty (and easy to rhyme). A modern rising star of drums, who is on Sam Anning’s latest document *Oaatchapai* (2021) is Rajiv Jayaweera. His comments about leadership of his own group on *Pistils* (2020) on *Outside In Music* are apposite:

"My goal was to showcase the melodies and harmony of each song, and to try to create *honest* music as a band. I wanted to serve the songs but didn’t feel the need to feature the drums or play more just because it was a drummer-led album, except for when the music called for it. In general, I like the approach of leaving space and *seeing what happens* (my emphasis)".



*Rajiv Jayaweera: Re his 2020 album “Pistils”, he said “I wanted to serve the songs but didn’t feel the need to feature the drums or play more just because it was a drummer-led album”...*



From the perspective of horn master and modern leader, Roy Hargrove (16/10/69 – 2/11/18), these are his words: “When I play, I’m thinking about the drums the whole time and trying to fit into the rhythm of whatever the drummer is doing.”(2009). His 1997 Grammy award winner *Habana* with Chucho Valdes and Gary Bartz *et al* integrated Afro-Cuban chants and rhythms with modern jazz harmonies.



*Roy Hargrove: “When I play, I’m thinking about the drums the whole time and trying to fit into the rhythm of whatever the drummer is doing”... PHOTO COURTESY PÉTER SMETANA*

As a music lover with no formal understanding of music my goal is to remain fresh to the new, as when say a child encounters with surprise and wonder for the first time the music of Fats Waller. And over the last 50 years it has been wonderful to witness the way in which jazz drumming has broadened its role in music. Take Kweku Sumbry for example.

At the age of 23, Kweku has already graced the stage with Ambrose Akinmusire, Dayna Stephens, Yosvany Terry, Cyrus Chestnut, and Reggie Workman. He is a member of the quartet led by Immanuel Wilkins as outlined above. On the *7th Hand*, the quartet’s latest release, the only arrangement is by Kweku possibly because of the five-member Farafina Kan Percussion Ensemble where all other works are improvisations. To describe Kweku as “drummer” or even “percussionist” seems inadequate as his work on *The 7th Hand* will attest.

To conclude this brief look at the expanding musical horizons of drumming in jazz I cite just two brief performances to illustrate the traditional bebop line-up and the drum solo, and secondly the drum as orchestral centrepiece.



*Kweku Sumbry: to describe him as “drummer” or even “percussionist” seems inadequate...*

The first is Brian Blade playing *Take the Coltrane* (Ellington) from David Berkman’s *Handmade* (1998) Palmetto: Berkman, piano, leader, compositions (except *Take The Coltrane*); Tom Harrell, trumpet; Steve Wilson, alto saxophone; Ugonna Okegwo, bass; and Brian Blade, drums/percussion. It’s an up-tempo opening by the drums followed by a powerful solo prelude by the piano. There are fine solos by each of the horns respectively and a brief solo by the drums. The performance is masterly in combining powerful swing, poise, poetry, and harmony with the drums central to every second of the six minutes.



*Brian Blade: on “Take the Coltrane” (Ellington), the drums are central to every second of the six minutes...  
PHOTO CREDIT  
DANIEL  
SHEEHAN*

The other example could be taken as the climax to the 2017 Village Vanguard performance by a quartet led by Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Sam Harris, piano; Harish Raghavan, bass; and Justin Brown, drums; but I prefer to hear it as time-keeping by trumpet, piano and bass, and orchestral performance by Justin Brown: drums as chordal and melodic instrument.



*Justin Brown: an orchestral performance by him... PHOTO COURTESY DRUMMERWORLD*

Drummer as musician, and artist and much more than timekeeper opens the future of the music to grand horizons indeed.

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***Other articles on this site, which may be of interest:***

*Ian Muldoon, “Hitty Hitty Bang Bang: Percussion Bitter and Sweet” at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/essays-page-50>*

*Ian Muldoon, “Beat Me Daddy, 8 to the Bar: The Rhythm Business in Jazz” at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/essays-page-79>*