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LIFELONG COMMITMENT AND UNMEASURED PASSION: A STUDY OF JAZZ PERCUSSION INFLUENCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM KEY DRUMMERS FROM THE SWING, BEBOP, AND POST-BOP ERAS

BY

DREW COX

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Music
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the circumstantial and creative forces that unify nine of the most historically significant swing, bebop, and post-bop jazz drummers in history to show their influences on one another and their respective genres. Progressing in chronological order of style, I first examine the lives and musical circumstances of swing drummers Papa Jo Jones, Gene Krupa, and Chick Webb. These players made unique, substantial contributions to swing drumming, particularly influencing the drum set language of the Swing Era.

I then examine the drummers that emerged as the Swing Era gave way to the Bebop Era, namely Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, and Roy Haynes. Certainly, bebop would not exist without swing music, and I examine the ways in which this second group of musicians was directly influenced by their Swing Era predecessors. Furthermore, the bebop drummers had a direct influence on the post-bop drummers I analyzed, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, and Jimmy Cobb.

These final drummers comprise three of the most reputable in post-bop jazz, and they were heavily informed by their predecessors. From Papa Jo Jones to Jimmy Cobb, this project illuminates the jazz drum set vocabulary through the lives of nine prominent musicians in three sequential jazz periods. With this chronological analysis, I uncover the circumstantial and creative forces that unify these historic jazz drum set players, including the evolution of the jazz cymbal pattern, incredible musical curiosity, and a lifelong commitment to jazz drumming.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In a 2009 interview, jazz vibraphonist Stefon Harris said, "The way I look at music, what I'm interested in is not necessarily creativity—in many ways I think creativity is overrated, actually" (Borlik and West). This quote speaks to the importance of learning and experiencing music, as opposed to the notion that musicians possess innate talent. Jazz is an art form that is generated by creativity and freedom within the circumstances, or parameters, of its own languages. When considering jazz linguistically, it is not difficult to infer what makes an individual "successful" as a musician—the ability to listen, extensive knowledge of pre-existing repertoire, and the physical act of speaking the language with others in real-time. Just as it is impossible to learn a foreign language simply by reading, it is impossible to truly learn to play jazz only by listening. To become an intermediate or advanced jazz drummer, one must embrace its experiential nature and understand that originality is largely borne out of experience.

The Swing Era is a logical place to begin analyzing the circumstances of the creativity of jazz musicians because this is the period in which the drum set was fully realized as a musical instrument (Gioia, 1998). Moreover, the earliest jazz drummers did not enjoy the recording technology of later eras, and it is difficult to find ample scholarship and clear audio examples of the drummers from the earliest days of jazz from 1900-1920. Therefore, this project chronologically begins with the most prominent drummers of the Swing Era of the 1930s and 1940s.

Papa Jo Jones, Gene Krupa, and Chick Webb are three such drummers that incorporated and developed important drum set characteristics of the Swing Era. These first three chapters of this study reveal the lives and creative connections between these musicians. This study seeks to illuminate the influences of these swing drummers and their connections with and influence on

the next eras of bebop and post-bop drummers. I selected each of the first three drummers because they are widely perceived as three of the most famous, visible, and professionally successful swing drummers.

The Swing Era lasted throughout most of the 1930s and ultimately ended in the 1940s (Gioia, 1998). After its culmination, the Bebop Era began. Bebop is unique in that musicians predisposed to swing music were expanding the boundaries of jazz music in smaller group settings. Bebop is marked by an increasingly complex jazz language and a wider array of rhythmic possibilities. Largely, this music was created by musicians for musicians. Bebop was not invented for purposes of profit, and in fact feels more like a counter to swing music.

Naturally, many bebop drummers were directly and indirectly influenced by swing drummers. Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, and Roy Haynes represent three of the most historically significant bebop drummers to emerge in the wake of the Swing Era. These drummers knew and influenced one another. In examining the lives and creative circumstances of these drummers, I aim to reveal the creative connections between the drummers of the Bebop Era and further draw their creative connections with the Swing Era drummers.

After the culmination of the Bebop Era, jazz music vocabulary expanded multi-directionally. Post-bop incorporated aspects of Latin American music, gospel, avant-garde, and modal jazz. For certain, "post-bop" is a rather vague term that mostly serves to demarcate the period after bebop's culmination in the 1940s and early 1950s. Swing music informed bebop, and, as expected, both styles influenced post-bop. Post-bop's definitional problem lies in its direct bebop origins. It is difficult to establish where bebop ends, and post-bop begins. It is also important to note that the drummers of the Bebop Era continued to perform well beyond the era's

conclusion. Moreover, the drummers of the Post-bop Era were widely exposed to and influenced by the first two styles.

I chose post-bop drummers that are historically significant and close in age to their bebop predecessors. Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, and Jimmy Cobb are three of the most significant drummers of the Post-bop Era. I will explore their connections to one another and to the drummers of the Bebop and Swing Eras. Blakey, Jones, and Cobb each made significant contributions to the jazz drum set vocabulary. Moreover, they had direct or indirect connections with the first six drummers examined.

Ultimately, this project surveys a sequential trajectory of jazz drum set creativity from the perspective of nine highly significant and interconnected contributors. Each of these musicians were born in the United States. It should also be noted that the only white drummer examined is Gene Krupa, and the other eight drummers are African American. The music examined in this project precedes the Civil Rights movement, and race, as it is today, was certainly a factor in the lives and creative circumstances of these drummers.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

I chose nine drummers that are historically significant yet also connected chronologically to one another. By examining three drummers in three periods, I study the diversity of influences and styles within each period. Moreover, studying the drummers of each of the three periods—swing, bebop, and post-bop—can serve as individual studies themselves.

Having gathered source material for biographical information about each subject, I then selected and transcribed a drum set performance of each musician using the software MuseScore. With all pieces, I spent significant time and care in listening to the drum parts. I then transcribed and confirmed transcriptions, some of which took considerable time to analyze to confirm their accuracy. In some cases, I reduced the track's speed in order to determine the drummers' exact and specific language. I also found it more efficient to transcribe from note to note for some transcriptions.

The first of the swing drummers I examined is Papa Jo Jones, an archetype of jazz cymbal work in the 1930s and beyond. Although he is widely known in the world of jazz, there is not much scholarship regarding his personal life. I analyzed his path into professional jazz and determined how his music was foundational for the drummers that followed, using research that contains direct quotations and interviews with Jones (Jones et al., 2011). I chose to analyze a 1958 live recording of his performance with the *Count Basie All-Stars* due to the recording quality being exceptional and this performance is definitively in the swing style.

I selected Gene Krupa as the second drummer to examine, because of the commercial success he enjoyed with Benny Goodman in the 1930s. Krupa is the only white drummer of this project and one of the most visible and commercially successful drummers of the Swing Era. Despite his fame, there is not significant scholarship about his life except for Korall's *Drummin'*

Men: The Heartbeat of Jazz: The Swing Years (1990). After examining the creative circumstances of Krupa's life, I will examine his drum set performance on "Sing, Sing, Sing" with Bennie Goodman and His Orchestra in 1937 because this performance epitomizes the Swing Era.

The final drummer of the Swing Era I examined is Chick Webb. As with the other swing drummers, there is little research available about his life. Yet, in the 1930s he rose to fame as leader of the house band for the Savoy Ballroom and remains historically significant to jazz percussion. In his short life, he established a reputation as arguably the greatest of the swing drummers. I explore the creative aspects of Chick Webb's life and examine via transcription his performance on the tune, "My Wild Irish Roses," because of the unique drum breaks, as well as the band's transitions between cut-time and regular-time (Chick Webb and His Orchestra, 1939).

Following my analysis of three swing drummers, I examine Kenny Clarke as the first bebop drummer. He is featured in this project because he is under-studied and yet considered an archetype of bebop drumming. I trace his creative trajectory and discuss how he was influenced by the aforementioned swing drummers. I also explore his connections to the other bebop drummers. The recording that I analyzed features Clarke in a trio setting with Bud Powell on piano and Pierre Michelot on bass. Although recorded after the Bebop Era in 1959, this recording is high quality and definitively bebop music, so I transcribed and analyzed his iconic performance of "Get Happy" in 1959 to analyze his contribution to the greater jazz drum set vocabulary (Banichka, 2008).

The second bebop drummer I examined is Max Roach, and I explore the significance of his relationship with bebop's seminal figure, Charlie Parker, to reveal Roach's creative process. As with Kenny Clarke, Roach is considered an archetype of bebop drumming. He is also a

significant figure in post-bop jazz drumming. However, his association with Charlie Parker deems that he should be categorized as a bebop drummer for the sake of this project. Upon analyzing his creative circumstances, I will dissect his 1948 performance with Charlie Parker on the composition, “Perhaps,” because of the historical significance and influence of Parker on Roach’s playing (2007).

The final bebop drummer of this project is Roy Haynes. As with Max Roach, Haynes is heavily associated with post-bop music. Yet, his association with bebop icon Thelonious Monk is a logical complement to Max Roach’s relationship with Charlie Parker. Monk is a fundamentally different force from Parker, as I discuss in Chapter 9. Haynes, as with some of his predecessors, has not been widely studied, despite his significant contributions to jazz percussion. I chose to analyze Haynes’ performance of “In Walked Bud” with the Thelonious Monk Quartet (1958). I chose this album because the relationship of Haynes and Monk complements the relationship of Max Roach and Charlie Parker. This recording occurs after the Bebop Era, yet it is definitive bebop music. “In Walked Bud” is an homage to Bud Powell, a quintessential bebop pianist.

The first post-bop drummer I examined is Art Blakey, a drummer who had exposure to swing and bebop drumming styles. I explore Blakey’s connections with the aforementioned swing and bebop drummers, as well as connections with his post-bop contemporaries. Although there is not much scholarship on his life, I used the scant resources available to explore his life and influences (“Art Blakey,” 2023). Blakey’s longstanding association with The Jazz Messengers, a quintessential post-bop jazz band, deems him a crucial subject for this project. I then analyze his drumming on The Jazz Messengers’ 1958 recording of “Dee’s Dilemma” on the album, *Hard Bop,* because this seminal album features Blakey as a bandleader.

The second post-bop drummer I analyzed is Philly Joe Jones, a drummer who performed extensively with Miles Davis and John Coltrane. I discuss how Jones was connected to his swing and bebop predecessors. In the 1950s, Jones was involved in some of the most famous post-bop recordings of all time. *Blue Train* is a 1958 album by John Coltrane that features Jones on drums. I transcribe and examine his drum set playing on the tune, "Locomotion," to reveal his unique contributions to jazz drumming. I chose this piece because it features Jones' snare drum artistry.

The final drummer of this project is Jimmy Cobb. As with Philly Joe Jones, Cobb came to prominence after bebop's culmination and was featured on several Miles Davis albums and contributed significantly to post-bebop percussion. I examine Cobb's connections to the aforementioned swing and bebop drummers, as well as his contemporaries. I then analyze his drum set playing on Cannonball Adderley's overlooked album from 1958, *Cannonball's Sharpshooters.* As with Jimmy Cobb, Adderley came to prominence in the Post-bop Era and was heavily associated with Miles Davis. I analyze the connections between Cobb and his post-bop contemporaries, and further reveal influences from the swing and bebop predecessors.

This study revealed direct and indirect connections between nine of the most historically significant drummers of the Swing, Bebop, and Post-bop Eras. Although each of these drummers is well-known in the jazz community, there is little research about their artistic lives. I incorporated a great deal of firsthand information to highlight the trajectory and interconnectivity of their creative circumstances. This study uncovers the connective forces between these drummers by focusing each of the forthcoming chapters on their individual lives and contributions, weaving in their interconnections and influences over the years.

CHAPTER 3: PAPA JO JONES

Jonathan David Samuel Jones was born on October 7, 1911, in Chicago. He eventually earned the nickname "Papa" for his exaggerated persona and lifetime of raconteuring. Only a few years after his birth, his family went against the tide of the Great Migration and moved from Chicago to Alabama. When he was only six or seven years old, Jones accidentally burned himself so badly in a home accident that he did not recover for nearly two years. He experienced further tragedy at age ten when his father died in a workplace accident. Having experienced such tumult and misfortune at a young age, he came to realize a love for music, acting, comedy, and even dancing. Moreover, his new penchant for entertainment was a way to replace his deceased father's income. His mother passed away while he was still a teenager, so he moved to Omaha to live with his foster mother and continued working in the entertainment industry (Jones et al., 2011). This return to the Midwest would help to expand his geographical range in the entertainment industry.

At some point in Jones' childhood,[1] his aunt took him to see the Ringling Brothers, and this had a visceral impact on his life. He described the bass drum player, Emil Helmicke, as "the greatest bass drum player that ever lived. The impact of the bass drum got me right in my stomach and I never lost that feeling" (Korall, 1990). Within a few years, he was engrossed in show business as a professional performer. As a young teenager, he spent much of his time with trapeze artists, jugglers, and other types of circus performers that were much older than him.

With few exceptions, the only personal musical influences that Jones ever mentioned were from the carnivals and circuses that predate his jazz career. Kid Lips Hackette, for instance, was a brilliant percussionist and entertainer that performed twirls and tricks with his drumsticks.

[1] It is unknown whether this fateful trip was before or after his burn accident.

Manzie Campbell was considered literally the greatest drummer of all time, according to Jones. More so remembered for his comedic skills, he could play a perfect drum roll with just one hand (Korall, 1990). Indeed, Jones' main artistic influences are relatively obscure variety entertainers whose style predated jazz.

His wide array of musical experiences in travelling carnivals, circuses, and vaudeville were largely improvised and sometimes required him to perform on saxophone or even as a comedian. These environments naturally developed his improvisational skills and musical adaptability, although he never claimed to possess a technical understanding of music. As the industry began to favor jazz and swing music, Jones' concentrated his musical efforts on the drum set as his instrument of choice and performed with jazz groups throughout the Midwest, South, and Southwest United States.

The bass drum pedal had been utilized by brass bands in the nineteenth century, and the high-hat cymbal mechanism was not conceived until the twentieth century. Both came to fruition as a primary component of the drum set during the Swing Era of the 1930s. In terms of high-hat cymbal technique, Jones is an archetype, yet he was influenced by a musically eloquent high-hat specialist and drummer named Walter Johnson.[2] Jones portrayed himself as a wholly original force and was reticent to disclose any drum set influences that were distinctly jazz, yet he openly spoke of his admiration for Johnson's high-hat cymbal artistry in the Fletcher Henderson band of the 1920s and 1930s (Jones et al., 2011). Johnson played with a lightness and clarity that informed Jones' perception of the drum set role in a large ensemble. In terms of pure jazz drum set playing, he is certainly Jones' greatest inspiration.

[2] There is very little scholarship of Walter Johnson's performance history and even less of his personal life.

Analyzed and replicated by jazz drummers still today, Jo Jones' drum set playing with Count Basie is emblematic of the Swing Era. Whereas Gene Krupa and Chick Webb had a more explosive presence in their bands, Jones evoked a sense of symphonic elegance. This is not to say that he played with less energy. Rather, his tendency towards cymbals in favor of drums naturally illuminated the harmonic forces and unlocked the euphonious potential of the ensemble.

Jones' thoughtful style of playing is epitomized with the Count Basie All Stars in the 1957 album *The Sound of Jazz*. This album features nine tracks from a CBS television show of the same name, with all recordings taking place in the studio just before the corresponding episode was filmed for a live audience. The track "Dickie's Dream" is a traditional 32-bar, AABA form that features Count Basie and other surviving former members of his big band.

The tune begins with a piano introduction for four measures, after which the drums and bass enter. Jones plays a beautiful and balanced high-hat cymbal pattern that facilitates a smooth entrance for the ensemble as they enter with the melody. Shown in Figure 1, it cannot be proven which of the early jazz drummers first played this specific pattern. Although heavily informed by Walter Johnson, Jones receives much credit for this pattern's proliferation and continued relevance. It is arguably the most proverbial single pattern for a jazz drum set to learn as it functions well on its own. Gene Krupa and Chick Webb also utilized this pattern, and it will be revealed later how the bebop drummers utilized this as a skeletal baseline upon which they would generate new jazz drum set vocabulary.

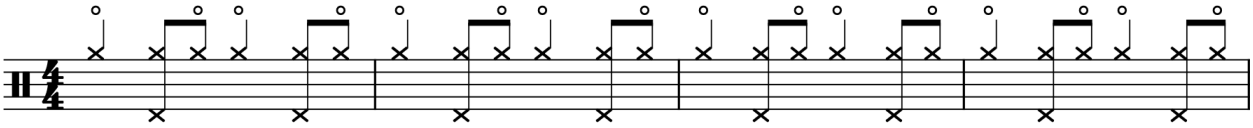

Figure 1: *Four measures of the basic cymbal pattern. Circles indicate an open high-hat.*

Jones finally switches from playing just the high-hat cymbals to adding the ride cymbal on the final "A" section of the form (00:29). This new pattern is very similar—the left foot still closes the high-hat cymbals via pedal on beats two and four while the right hand performs the same rhythm on a different cymbal. By simply switching the position of his right hand, he creates a sustained, resonant sound. This practice of simply changing the hand position is still heavily utilized by jazz drummers to this day. Once a rhythm is learned, the sound possibilities exponentially increase because this one rhythm can be played on any of the drums or cymbals.

In a 32-measure AABA form, changing cymbals for the final eight measures/"A" section is a slightly curious but ultimate highly effective maneuver. Drummers more commonly wait until the form completely resets to change the sound color. To a lesser extent, it is sensible to change cymbals only for the "B" section as this point serves as the musically structural bridge that connects the main strophes, or "A" sections of the form. By waiting until after the bridge, the cymbal switch blends the melody with the opening soloist. Although the form is AABA, there is an eight-measure addendum[3] after the final "A" section (00:36). This climax serves as the ensemble's collective last breath before a series of soloists individually take lead. Jones' sustained cymbal sound fills up the space in the absence of the full ensemble.

Each time the 32-bar form resets, a new soloist is featured. In the absence of other wind instruments, the piano, bass, guitar, and drums continue playing to provide musical

[3] Most jazz musicians more commonly refer to this addendum as a "tag."

accompaniment for each new soloist. As one instrumentalist finishes and another begins, Jones switches between the two ride cymbals, and that provides a fresh soundscape for each new soloist. Finally, Count Basie plays the last solo on piano (04:41). This section reveals a substantial amount of Jones' musical range in a short amount of time.

After playing exclusively on ride cymbals for each of the soloists, Jones finally returns to the less sustained sound of the high-hat as Basie's solo leads the ensemble to a closing shout chorus.[4] The piano solo is the only point of the tune in which all wind players are resting, the rhythm section continuing with incredibly soft execution at an unrelenting tempo. Despite the absence of wind instruments, this highly active rhythm section quartet harnesses an incredible amount of potential energy brimming just below the surface.

Jones is playing the proverbial jazz cymbal pattern, yet he patiently adds slight variation in a way that intensifies the sound. Artfully conscious of the form, he waits until the second "A" section to introduce choice but trace amounts of bass drum and snare drum (04:47). Relative to Chick Webb's bass drum accompaniment (or "bombs" as they became known), Jones' bass drum additions are less audible and perhaps not meant to be actively heard. Jo Jones plays his drums and cymbals together in a way that creates a homogenous sound. In the second "A" section, he inserts a slow moving hemiola[5] by playing bass drum quarter notes every three beats in contrast with the 4|4 time signature (04:50).

Finally, two perfectly placed snare drum notes serve as the punctuation between the "A" section and the "B" section of the piano solo (04:54). Jones' addition of improvised bass drum (and/or snare drum) to the basic jazz cymbal pattern is referred to by drummers as "independence"—the right hand and left foot play a cymbal pattern as the left hand and right foot

[4] A shout chorus is the climatic point of a big band chart and happens near the end of the tune.
[5] A hemiola is a ratio of 2:3. In music, 2|4 or 4|4 time against a feeling of 3|4 time.

are free to improvise on the snare drum and bass drum, respectively.[6] For the remainder of the piano solo, Jones works within the same parameters—steady and intense cymbal play with subtle bass drum and snare drum accompaniment. For the duration of the final eight measures, Jones employs a long and steady crescendo (05:01). A stream of snare drum notes signals the end of the piano solo as the full ensemble enters with a raucous closing shout chorus (05:07).

As is typically the case with any final chorus, the ensemble is at its loudest. Jones appropriately switches to a ride cymbal as the energy turns from potential to kinetic. He further relies more heavily on drums in this section as the ensemble is playing rhythmic figures in unison. Indeed, big band drummers play an increasingly significant role when the entire ensemble is playing in unison. At such a loud volume, it becomes increasingly difficult for each member to hear across the band and the likelihood of error increases. Jones' drumming must now become fully exposed for the ensemble to maintain its uncluttered, sophisticated sound until the very end.

Interestingly, the only instrument in the closing melody that briefly veers outside the form is the drums, although this mistake might not be recognizable even to the average musician. Jones sets up[7] the first the first three ensemble hits perfectly. In the cacophony thereafter, he appears lost in the form, omitting the fourth ensemble hit and playing the fifth hit one beat too early (05:14). As the second "A" section begins, Jones manages to keep the tempo steady as he tries to resynchronize with the form, the rest of the ensemble impressively remaining in perfect unison.

Finally, he finds his place just before the bridge begins. The "B" section features another piano solo as the brass and saxophones take a collective last breath. Jones continues leading the

[6] Most but not all drummers play a right-handed configuration that reflects this sticking.
[7] Big band drummers "set up" ensemble figure by playing a drum fill beforehand. It is an alert to the ensemble.

ensemble with his highly exposed playing, opting to remain on the ride cymbal and setting up the remaining hits with absolute certainty as the tune drives toward its dramatic conclusion. The brass, saxophones, and rhythm section stop playing in a cascading effect as the drums carry on alone. Jones transforms a kinetic, driving tempo into out-of-time drum cacophony that effectively ends the tune. Despite having two tom-tom drums at his disposal, he does not utilize them until this raucous closing drum statement. He knows exactly how he wants to sound and support the ensemble. His patience and maturity are both extraordinary.

Indeed, it is interesting to hear the rare instances in which Jones stretches out and plays the full extent of his drum set with such energy and volume. After all, his drum play is typically secondary while the cymbal play is of primary importance. Jones' balance herein is a universal lesson to drum students seeking to achieve this type of elegant, uncluttered sound. One must be an active listener and practice unorthodox things such as playing the bass drum much more softly than the cymbals. A drum set is attractive with its many percussive sound possibilities yet performing with Jones' type of cosmopolitan elegance involves incredible patience and maturity.

As a supportive drummer with driving energy and superb sense of time, Jones facilitated a euphonious ensemble sound. Like many other players in the early days of jazz, he maintained generally the same drum set vocabulary and sense of swing from the big band heyday until his death in 1985. The coming bebop or post-bop eras did not heavily affect his playing, yet he felt no need to chase the trajectory of jazz as his personal legacy was already immortalized by the 1940s.

CHAPTER 4: GENE KRUPA

The youngest of nine children, Eugene Bertrand Krupa was born in Chicago on January 15, 1909. His father was a Polish immigrant and tragically died when Krupa was still a child, his dutiful mother assuming full parenting responsibilities while owning and operating a hat store. Music was not prevalent in the family, yet his brother Pete worked at a music shop that sold and repaired things like phonographs and piano rolls. Young Gene became an inquisitive regular visitor, and before he was a teenager, he joined his brother and began working for the Brown Music Company. Mostly relegated to odd jobs around the store, he was allowed to help with sales on busier days (Korall, 1990).

Despite his musical curiosity at a young age, Krupa's artistic journey began as a very individualistic endeavor. Apart from the lack of music in his household, he had a difficult time finding young musical acquaintances on the south side of Chicago. According to him, his neighborhood was impoverished and most of the youth were preoccupied with various types of nefarious behavior (Korall, 1990). Krupa became a regular attendee at school dances and socials as they provided a safe opportunity for him to see live music and mingle with other teens.

Watching these bands compelled him to learn what they were doing, particularly the drummers. Thus, Krupa bought a cheap drum set and started replicating the things he heard, eventually earning the right to play at these school functions. He was stricken with a feverish curiosity and dedication that was not born out of any tragic event. Simply, he had become utterly obsessed with music. Dance functions turned into paid performances and so Krupa joined the American Musicians Association (AMA). He became a professional drummer in Chicago while still in his teens, much to his mother's chagrin (Korall, 1990).

Krupa was never a keen reader of sheet music. However, having been in multiple school systems growing up, he received drum and percussion education intermittently from teachers at his various schools. Moreover, Chicago was filled with an incredible array of jazz music and different modalities of drumming in the 1920s and 1930s. Droves of musicians moved from New Orleans to Chicago in the period after World War I because the monetary compensation was far superior (Gioia, 1997).

When Krupa finally transcended the school dance circuit, he began watching and learning from famous drummers in the city such as Dave Tough (Korall, 1990). Only one year older than Krupa, Tough was already established as one of the prominent drum set players of Chicago, ultimately rising to a level of historic significance with Dixieland[8] band leaders such as Eddie Condon and swing band leaders such as Tommy Dorsey and Bunny Berigan. His drum set style was beautiful and selfless—he rarely played drum solos, instead using the drum set as a tool to unify the ensemble.

At Tough's insistence, Krupa sought out another drummer in the Chicago region, Warren "Baby" Dodds. Originally from New Orleans, Dodds helped to bring an erudite type of snare drum mastery to the Chicago scene. He was one of several drummers from New Orleans that boasted a type of rudimental swing drumming. Krupa describes the experience of seeing Dodds at Kelly's Stable in Chicago as a life changing experience (Korall, 1990). Dodds' improvisatory playing revealed a militaristic, rudimental understanding of the snare drum, yet his musical approach was incredibly unique. He would seamlessly switch from dramatic press rolls to playing on the tom-tom drums to playing on the rims of drums with an excellent sense of time, the bass drum simultaneously operating via foot pedal. His ability to transition from one

[8] Whereas "swing" as a genre is more synonymous with progressive big band music, "Dixieland" is more traditional and connected to the traditions of New Orleans. The big band phenomenon helped to revive Dixieland.

percussive timbre to another while keeping excellent time inspired and unearthed a sort of showmanship in Krupa's playing. Moreover, Dodds was not just a drumming sideman—he was the most important musician in his band.

Krupa's discovery of him was followed by a trip to a venue called The Nest in Chicago, where he first saw and heard another buoyant drummer also from New Orleans, Zutty Singleton. Prior to this, Krupa had been exposed to mostly circles of white jazz musicians such as Dave Tough, Red McKenzie, and Eddie Condon. His discovery of Chicago's African American drummers such as Baby Dodds and Zutty Singleton altered not only his playing, but his perception of what the drum set means in an ensemble. The white Chicago drummers were seemingly reticent to be in the spotlight, favoring instead a supportive ensemble role. Krupa's discovery of Dodds and Singleton was revelatory and made him feel less limited in his capacity as an entertainer.

He continued accumulating as much knowledge and musical vocabulary as possible from the Chicago music scene, finally moving to New York City. His relocation was rather fruitless as he had difficulty finding immediate success. In addition, his mother became ill, so Krupa was compelled to move back home to Chicago (Korall, 1990). His second trip to New York was much more auspicious as he found work in Broadway musicals and made a considerable impression on George and Ira Gershwin.

Krupa became inspired to learn more about drums and percussion as his opportunities began to expand in New York City. He sought out a snare drum specialist from the New York Metropolitan Opera named Sanford "Gus" Moeller, who helped him add yet more technical facility to his already highly developed sense of jazz improvisation. His sense of New Orleans influenced snare technique was now being supplemented by instruction from a world class

symphonic percussionist. Indeed, Krupa received much more formal percussion training than the other swing era drummers.

Whereas Jo Jones was performing mostly in the Midwest and Chick Webb on the East Coast, Krupa was able to establish a pipeline between Chicago and New York City while he was still rather young. Despite the advantages that came with his ability to travel between New York and Chicago, he was completely humbled upon first seeing Chick Webb perform live. Krupa's musical perspective was rejuvenated even more so than when he had seen Singleton and Dodds, ultimately admitting he "learned practically everything from him" (Korall, 1990).[9] Webb's originality and virtuosity were incredibly humbling. Krupa was seemingly unmotivated by the fact that he was never going to be the greatest jazz drummer. Encountering each new drummer was an opportunity to learn, and learning was a never-ending process. For Krupa, the journey was greater than the destination.

Krupa understood that he was not the most important drummer in New York City, and that did not impede his determination. Less concerned with ego, he was an obsessive musician that constantly tried to absorb everything around him. His passion, affability, and dedication to his craft ensured continued work throughout the city. Maintaining a connection between New York and Chicago, he began a stint with the Buddy Rogers Orchestra in Chicago, during which Krupa would make possibly the most significant connection in his entire professional career.

Buddy Rogers was a Hollywood actor, band leader, and mostly an entertainer, yet his performance was heavily steeped in commercialism under a veil of patriotism. In addition, he would attempt to swoon the audience by playing each instrument in the band, albeit poorly, throughout the performances. Overall, it was revealed to be a rather artless and insincere

[9] More analysis of Chick Webb is contained in the next chapter.

endeavor (Korall, 1990). The only way that Krupa could find any stimulation during these times were at after-hours jam sessions with other musicians in the band. During this stint with Rogers, Krupa received and accepted an offer to move back to New York and play in Benny Goodman's big band.

As Papa Jo Jones experienced personal fame by joining Count Basie in 1934, Gene Krupa's joining of the Benny Goodman in 1934 was similarly meteoric for his career. Not surprisingly, both drummers already had an incredibly wide variety of professional experiences leading up to 1934. Krupa's enthusiasm, scholastic knowledge, showmanship, and dedication to understanding the drumming language of his contemporaries made him the perfect choice for Benny Goodman at that time. The addition of Krupa increased the band's stock, and in 1937 they recorded a tune of historical significance, "Sing, Sing, Sing." Originally composed and performed in 1936 by Louis Prima and his New Orleans Gang, Benny Goodman's big band recorded an instrumental version in Hollywood in 1937 that would become one of the most famous single jazz recordings of all time.

Krupa's drum set approach in the 1937 version is fresh, more active, and not played exclusively on the snare drum, as is the case on the original Louis Prima recording. The track begins with Krupa playing a repetitive solo pattern on the floor tom-tom. Although the practice of constant tom-tom drumming did not continue as heavily through the bebop and post-bop eras, it was utilized by drummers such as Zutty Singleton and other players to which Krupa was previously exposed. It is unlikely that Krupa originated this as a jazz drum set technique, and he has never claimed as such. The most notable aspect of this piece is perhaps not the tom-tom drumming, but rather the soloistic nature of the drums.

Tom-toms resonate with warmth and clarity while snare drums have a crisp, metallic sound produced by snare wires.[10] If a more subtle sound is desired, tom-toms are a good alternative to the snare drum. Pedal bass drum playing as a technique was still in its infancy, and neither Krupa nor any other drummer of the time likely had the technical capability of playing this rhythm with their feet. Thus, the lowest pitched tom-tom became the drum of choice.

Whether or not Krupa is consciously aware, he begins the tune by replicating a two-measure "cascara" pattern[11] that is shown in Figure 2. In Afro-Cuban music, a cascara rhythm is played with (and in support of) a sparser pattern called a "clave," yet no such explicit clave rhythm exists in "Sing, Sing, Sing." As the basic cymbal pattern was utilized by all Swing Era drummers and beyond, Krupa utilizes this cascara-type rhythm as a framework from which he can elaborate and build variety. His casual and improvisatory interpretation of the cascara rhythm creates a sense that Krupa likely had only a cursory understanding of folkloric music from which it came. He seemed to understand it audially, but perhaps not contextually.

Overall, this piece functions largely as a call and response between the drum set and the rest of the ensemble. The exception is that Krupa does not stop drumming when the band gives a response; the drums keep calling. Like his persistence in the music industry, his drumming is relentless. He seems to place two main rules (or limitations) upon himself—maintain the highest possible energy and do not deviate far from the original rhythm. Indeed, Krupa's vast, continuous exploration of this rhythmic cell is a testament to his patience, dedication, and artistry. More than just an attractive showman, he seeks meaning in his art.

[10] The snare wires can be released from the bottom of the drum, making the snare drum sound like another tom-tom.

[11] The word "cascara" is Spanish for "shell" and refers to playing specific rhythms on the shells of drums.

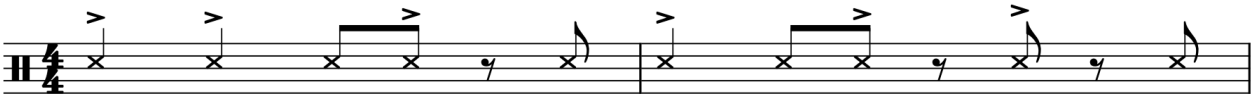

Figure 2: *"Cascara" rhythm lasting two measures.*

Krupa's soul is laid bare before the audience for an incredibly long 8'38." Continuing to unearth the piece's capacity for intrigue, this same band would record a 12'30" version one year later at Carnegie Hall. At that time, the aforementioned "basic cymbal pattern" existed as a combination of a ride and high-hat cymbals playing an interweaving pattern. Krupa could have played the high-hat on beats two and four while his hands play on the tom-toms. Today, most drummers would naturally continue playing the high-hat. At a time when jazz cymbal technique was being fully realized, Krupa played one of the most recognizable drum solo features in history on the floor tom-tom with incredible enthusiasm for prolonged periods of time. His fellow ensemble members would remark that he was always thoroughly soaked in sweat after playing (Korall, 1990).

Unquestionably, Krupa was an artist of dedication and passionate energy. His showmanship and handsomeness ultimately drew much of the attention from Benny Goodman's band. This led to problems and an ultimate split between the two entities in the heyday of their careers. Krupa formed his own big band and proceeded with this same musical style for the rest of his drumming life. Indeed, the Benny Goodman years was the summit of his career, yet he forged ahead. His musical vocabulary had reached somewhat of a plateau, yet he remained a lifelong learner.

Krupa had charisma, but he also understood that he was not the most advanced drummer in New York City. That did not impede his determination. Less concerned with ego, he was an obsessive musician that constantly tried to absorb everything around him. His passion, affability,

and dedication to his craft ensured continued work throughout his life. To Krupa, the journey was greater than the destination.

CHAPTER 5: CHICK WEBB

William Henry "Chick" Webb was born February 10, 1905,[12] in Baltimore and died on June 16, 1939, in Baltimore. Born into a large family, his relationship with his father is largely unknown. However, it is known that his grandfather was a considerable influence on his life and very much a central figure of the entire family. Whereas Jo Jones and Gene Krupa lost their fathers at a young age, Webb's adversity came in the form of health problems that were the result of accidentally falling down some stairs as an infant. This incident left him with several crushed vertebrae and a deformed spine (Falzerano, 2014). His stunted growth resulted in the schoolyard nickname, "Chick." Despite the loss of physical mobility, he remained incredibly active throughout childhood.

The family doctor recommended that he learn a musical instrument to strengthen his bone structure, so Webb began playing pots and pans around the house at the age of three. Parade bands would perform and march through his neighborhood on Sundays. Webb followed them around, paying extra attention to the drummers' hands and their technique. Despite his passion for drums and music, it would be several years before he owned a proper drum set. There were hardships, and so it was required that he and the other children work to provide for the family. Webb developed a knack for selling newspapers and was able to finally purchase a drum set around age ten (Korall, 1990).

Not long after his purchase, he relentlessly pursued every performing opportunity in the area. Having never received formal training, Webb managed to independently develop highly advanced technical skills. Stick tricks and other gaffes were added to his performing arsenal, and they certainly contributed to his overall intrigue. Indeed, his doctor's rehabilitative suggestion of

[12] 1905 is the most likely year of his birth, yet his headstone indicates February 10, 1909 (Falzerano, 2014).

musical performance turned into an obsession. Completely restless, he would show up to performances and sit in on drums whenever permitted. When he could not perform, he observed, listened, and socialized with the other artists in attendance. Within one year of owning a drum set, he was eleven years old and earning a handsome fifteen dollars in tips on Saturday evenings (Korall, 1990).[13]

In his teens, Webb had perhaps exhausted much of the Baltimore area's professional potential. His compensation was fair, yet his burgeoning artistry demanded a broader environment. His last position in the area was with the *Jazzola Band*, an ensemble that performed on leisure boats travelling throughout the Chesapeake Bay (DownBeat, 1937). There he created a lifelong friendship with a guitarist/banjoist named John Trueheart. They relocated to New York City together for the purpose of expanding their musical horizons, both eventually finding success.

In this vast new environment, Webb's wisdom and determination brought him a continuing sense of artistic achievement, albeit with some periods of unemployment. He had saved a considerable amount of money in Baltimore, and this enabled him to spend time networking in the city. Relocating to New York City in his teenage years only accelerated his professional maturation. With no formal training, he was never able to read music. In fact, none of the swing drummers were proficient sight readers.[14]

The first significant connection Webb made in New York City was with trumpeter Bobby Starks. The two became lifelong friends, with Starks ultimately becoming a trumpet player in Webb's forthcoming big band. At the time, Starks was in a band led by pianist and composer Edgar Dowell. Webb became aware that Dowell's entire band was auditioning at the Palace

[13] Fifteen dollars in 1920 is equivalent to roughly $220 in the year 2023.
[14] "Sight reading" refers to the ability to perform music while reading the sheet music for the first time.

Gardens to be considered for a residency. Webb arrived at the audition hall in the off chance that he might be allowed to perform. As fate would have it, Dowell's regular drummer became lost on the subway while trying to find the audition hall. One hour after the audition was supposed to begin, Dowell allowed Webb to assume the drum chair for the audition. His impression was immediate—the band would be hired only if Webb was guaranteed to be the resident drummer (DownBeat, 1937).

After earning his first job in the city, Webb recruited fellow Baltimore native Trueheart to join as the band's guitarist. With Trueheart in the band and Starks on trumpet, Webb had the beginnings of a healthy musician network. At the age of seventeen, Webb was earning sixty dollars per week[15] and professionally established (Korall, 1990). However, times could be rather difficult even for professional New York City musicians in the mid 1920s. Edgar Dowell's band was dissolved for reasons unknown, and Webb found himself without employment for several months.

Despite Webb never smoking or drinking alcohol, two activities that musicians engaged in to form bonds with one another, he consistently socialized and networked with other musicians whenever possible. Although ten years his junior, Webb encountered and befriended Duke Ellington at some point. Ellington was leading his own band at an establishment known as the Kentucky Club. Another venue, the Black Bottom Club, had an opening for a band and Ellington recommended that Webb lead his own band. Despite his lack of experience as a bandleader, Webb had, in one way or another, earned serious respect. After all, Ellington was going to receive a portion of this band's earnings as he had been personally tasked with finding the Black Bottom Club's new band (Falzerano, 2014).

[15] The equivalent of over $1000 in the year 2023.

Webb considered himself a performing drum set artist, and he was reticent to absorb the stresses of leading a band. His first cousin and alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges echoed Ellington's advice, and so Webb finally decided to lead a quintet called the Harlem Stompers. The band performed at the Black Bottom Club for five months. Shortly after, Ellington helped Webb procure another residency at the Paddock Club in New York City. Unfortunately, the Paddock Club was soon burned in a fire, and the band was immediately without work. Webb's next move was to procure an engagement with his new band, The Harlem Stompers, at the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem (Falzerano, 2014). This residency would allow Webb to observe firsthand the most famous swing bands that were constantly travelling through and performing at the Savoy Ballroom.

It seems likely that this continuous exposure to the best professional musicians at the Savoy Ballroom provided him the finest possible laboratory of jazz and swing drumming. Webb and his Harlem Stompers found themselves thrust into the spotlight when one of the venue's managers decided to host a "Battle of Jazz" on May 15, 1927 (Falzerano, 2014). Their competition was King Oliver's Dixie Syncopators, Fletcher Henderson and the Roseland Orchestra, and Fess Williams and His Royal Flush Orchestra. All three of these established bands were soundly defeated by Webb and his Harlem Stompers. His band would continue to dominate most if not all "Battle of Jazz" engagements that took place at the Savoy.

Webb's most notable battle was against Benny Goodman with Gene Krupa on drums on May 11, 1937. As an esteemed professional and one of Webb's greatest admirers, Krupa admitted that Webb was indeed artistically superior. Although there was no specific metric for these battles, the press reflected that Benny Goodman's mostly white band was the winner. Gene

Krupa admitted that he and the rest of Goodman's band were humbled and mesmerized by Chick Webb's inordinate drumming abilities (Falzerano, 2014).

Under the moniker *The Jungle Band*, Webb made his first audio recording with mostly fellow Savoy Ballroom musicians. They recorded a track for Brunswick Records entitled, "Dog Bottom" (The Jungle Band, 1929). Although he is credited with playing drums on this piece, he is playing only a "hand sock" cymbal (Falzerano, 2014). Although not still in common use, a hand sock cymbal is simply a pair of small cymbals connected with tongs that can be slapped against the leg like musical spoons. Otherwise, the player can hold the contraption in the air, using the free hand to strike it with a stick. In the early days of audio recording, large volumes of sound could not be managed with such ease. The hand sock cymbal allowed a large ensemble to be recorded with a crisp, driving cymbal sound without the clutter of resonating drums. Indeed, Webb's performance with the band is well-balanced in this incredibly fast, highly virtuosic recording mix (The Jungle Band, 1929).

From that point, Chick Webb found himself recording either live or in a studio at least annually. In 1939, the last year of his tragically short life, he and his band recorded an arrangement of a composition by Chauncey Olcott entitled, "My Wild Irish Roses" (Chick Webb and His Orchestra). In stark contrast to the previously discoursed "Dog Bottom," this large ensemble performance features several highly unique concepts and full drum set playing from Webb.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this recording is that the ensemble instantaneously switches between regular-time and cut-time with relative ease. That is to say, the tempo doubles, then divides in half, and returns to the original tempo, etc. with uncanny precision. The ensemble deftly makes this maneuver several times and sacrifices no musical energy. This type of tempo

shift is a continued performance practice, yet in 1939 it would have seemed otherworldly. Webb's drumming contribution is what makes these tempo shifts so profound. When the tempo shifts from regular (or *common*) time to cut (or *double*) time, Webb plays a drum break[16] that clearly establishes the rapid new tempo. When the tempo shifts from double-time back to regular time, there is no drum break. Without the aid of drums, the band impressively divides the time in half in perfect rhythmic unison.

The final drum break of this composition has been analyzed as it represents an incredibly sophisticated and perhaps unparalleled level of drum set artistry for its time. Webb executes a moto perpetuo[17] drum solo at a tempo that almost reaches 300 beats per minute. By modern standards, this is incredibly difficult to execute even for advanced jazz ensembles. Despite the constant doubling and halving of the time, there is a type of organicism within the band as the cut time and regular time sections are not individually rigid. There is a human element that allows for the tempo to not feel robotic or metronomic. In theory, the tempi can be explained by multiplication and division. In practice, however, the underlying pulse shifts considerably throughout the performance.

This closing sixteen-measure drum break epitomizes Webb's originality and demonstrates why drumming titans such as Gene Krupa and Papa Jo Jones could have conceded that he was the greatest of the Swing Era drummers. Shown in Figure 3, this dizzying array of notes is executed in the span of just over ten seconds (02:13). Despite being just over four feet tall, Webb centers himself on the snare drum and maneuvers to both the low tom-tom and high tom-tom with fervor and stunning accuracy. At the ninth measure of the break, Webb interrupts a steady stream of snare drum notes with cowbell interjections (02:19).

[16] A drum break is when the rest of the band "breaks" and the drummer continues playing alone.
[17] Moto perpetuo is Italian for "perpetual motion" and typically refers to classical music that is rapid and constant.

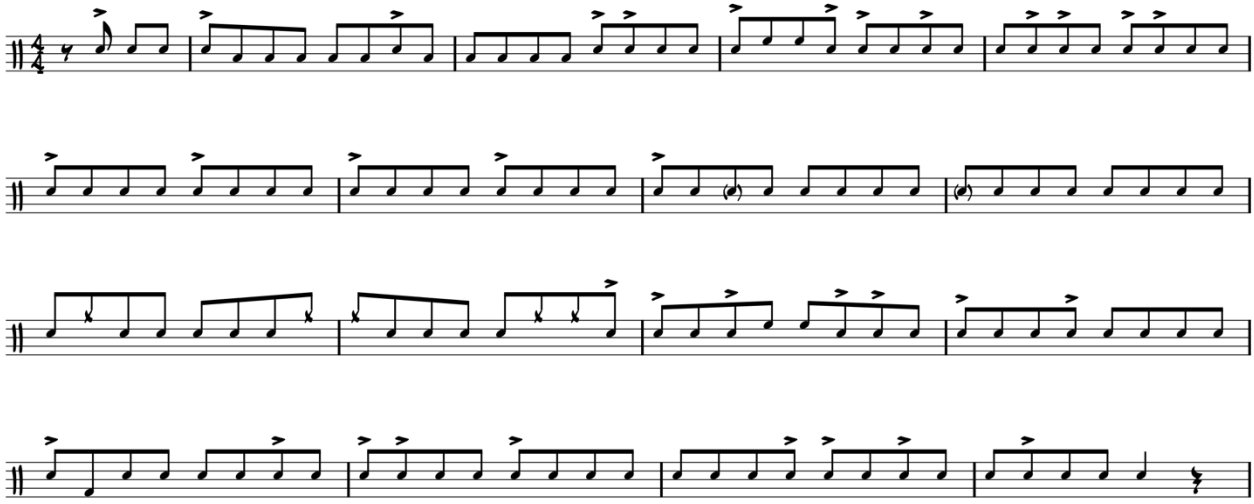

Figure 3: *Sixteen-measure double-time drum break with a pickup measure.*

Despite having limited physical arm length, Webb's capacity to change positions around the kit and rapidly create different sounds in real time seems almost inhuman. Another consideration is that while he is executing this linear stream of notes, he continues to stay within the musical form. None of the drum breaks are random—they must be exactly sixteen measures in length or there is a risk of a malfunction in ensemble play. Considering the incredibly rapid pace of the tune, the potential for failure is exponentially high. After precisely sixteen measures, however, the tempo shifts from double time to regular time and the ensemble returns at this complex juncture in extraordinary rhythmic unison (02:25). The live studio audience cheers vigorously as the remaining few measures are performed and the tune ends.

In the thirteenth full measure of the drum solo, there is a single bass drum note just after the measure's downbeat (02:22). It should be noted that this is a rather difficult concept to physically execute. Earlier in this project, Jo Jones' drum solo from "Dickie's Dream" revealed similar instances of isolated bass drum notes that occurred on downbeats (Count Basie All Stars, 1957). The bass drum is an instrument that is sensible for downbeats, so Webb's placement on an upbeat requires extreme dexterity and coordination. This instance of Webb playing an isolated

bass drum “bomb” on an upbeat is not uncommon in his solo play. Moreover, he and Jones’ unique ability to treat the bass drum as an independent musical force certainly foreshadows the vocabulary of the coming bebop drummers.

Whereas Jo Jones and Gene Krupa experienced a steady rise in their achievements, Webb was thrust into a leadership position at a rather young age. It is interesting to consider their diverging professional career paths, as well as their geographical differences. Webb spent his entire life on the east coast between Baltimore and New York City, while Krupa and Jones came to prominence in the Midwest and did not perform in New York City until they were clearly established professionals. It is a tragedy that arguably the most profound swing drummer died just before the advent of bebop, although he and the other swing drummers are responsible for its existence. Standing four feet and one inch tall, Chick Webb was perhaps the king of the swing drummers.

CHAPTER 6: KENNY CLARKE

Thomas Spearman was born in Pittsburgh on January 9, 1914. During his childhood, he acquired the name Kenny. Sometime in his late teens or twenties, he dropped the name "Spearman" and began using the surname "Clarke" (Jones, 2018). His father, Charles Spearman, was a trombonist originally from Georgia. He abandoned the family soon after Clarke's birth. His mother, Martha Grace Scott, passed unexpectedly when Clarke was around age five. A church pianist and organist, she instilled a love for music into her sons during their short time together. The orphaned Clarke and his older brother Charles went to live with an uncle that also resided in Pittsburgh after their mother's passing (Jones, 2018).

Clarke was very musically curious when his mother was still alive—she would often play the piano while he sat on her lap. He was too young to remember his father playing the trombone, but he was not too young to receive some musical instruction and influence from his mother. In her absence, Clarke's musical curiosity subsided. After her passing, the boys' time staying with their uncle was unmusical and somewhat brief. Their next destination was an orphanage known as the Coleman Industrial School (Korall, 2004).

His time at the orphanage would breathe new life into his musical curiosity. There was a healthy amount of musical performance and quality instruction to be had at the Coleman Industrial School. Clarke and his brother were taught by an instructor known only as Mr. Thomas, a multi-instrumentalist capable of developing students into rather comprehensive young musicians. Clarke learned piano, trombone, and to play a proper snare drum roll from him (Korall, 2004). For certain, one thing to be understood about Kenny Clarke is that his contribution to the bebop drum language overshadowed his inordinately high level of multi-instrumentalism.

After several years at the Coleman Industrial School, he and his brother were taken in by a man they considered to be their stepfather, who had been in a relationship with their mother before she died. Unfortunately for their newfound music habit, their stepfather was a Baptist preacher that did not appreciate music as a practice. This period with their stepfather was difficult and ended in a physical altercation in which their stepfather attempted to strike Kenny, his brother coming to his defense. The brothers were relocated yet again, only this time they were separated. Clarke went to live with a foster family, the Dunsmores, until age sixteen (Korall, 2004).

Just before his last foster residency would end, Clark left school at age fifteen with the equivalent of a junior high education. He procured a rather thankless job at a soda fountain, and soon began to lament that his life no longer included all its previous musical proclivities. Thoughts of a professional career began to consume his mind, so he furthered his musical training by studying drums at a now-defunct Pittsburgh music store known as Hammond and Guelock. As any aspiring jazz drummer should, he familiarized himself with the respected drummers of his local Pittsburgh scene—James "Honeyboy" Minor, Jimmy Peck, and James Watts, the latter helping him to earn the drum chair in the Leroy Bradley Band. Famed jazz trumpeter Roy Eldridge was the overall patriarch and source of guidance to Clarke and many other aspiring musicians in the Pittsburgh scene (Korall, 2004).

His first considerable musical engagement lasted for several years, and it was with bandleader and fellow Pittsburgh native Leroy Bradley. Bradley procured extensive engagements with the Black Bottom Club of Cincinnati, Ohio. At this time, there were several venues throughout the United States known as the Black Bottom Club. Chick Webb had, within the last few years, led his own band for a stint at the Black Bottom Club in New York City. In 1933,

Clarke was performing regularly at the Cincinnati version with the Leroy Bradley Band. This venue was a select destination for many national touring bands, and so Clarke became exposed to the bands of Duke Ellington, Earl Hines, Fletcher Henderson, Jimmie Lunceford, Don Redman, and Cab Calloway (Korall, 2004). Calloway's saxophonist, Ben Webster, ultimately befriended Clarke and encouraged him to move to New York City.

Despite the considerable fear and apprehension of moving to such an enormous environment, Clarke's artistry demanded a vaster space. After all, his professional drum set vocabulary was complemented by a considerable amount of harmonic and melodic knowledge borne out of his multi-instrumentalism. By the time he moved from Cincinnati, he had considerably honed his skills on the vibraphone.[18] New York City allowed for him to synthesize his wide array of musical knowledge into a pioneering bebop force.

Fortunately for Clarke, he had an aunt in Harlem that allowed him to stay for free. In addition, he reestablished a connection with childhood friend and professional bassist, Frank Clarke. It is around this time that Kenny dropped the name Spearman and adopted the last name Clarke. The two were inseparable as friends and musicians. There are several records that mistakenly list the two as biological brothers, yet it is most likely that the two possessed brotherly love for one another and were not technically related (Jones, 2018).

Clarke soon began performing professionally on both drum set and vibraphone at the Black Cat in Greenwich Village. After hours, several prominent big band leaders, such as Count Basie and Bennie Goodman, stopped in for informal jam sessions. Guitarist Freddie Green and trumpeter Bobby Moore were both playing regularly with Clarke at the Black Cat when Basie acquired them for his own band. Unfortunately for Clarke, Papa Jo Jones' drum chair in Count

[18] Then more commonly referred to as "vibraharp."

Basie's band was rather secure. It is intriguing to consider the possible influence of Clarke on this rhythm section and how that may have had an overall effect on the Count Basie rhythm section. Although younger than Jones by several years, Clarke proclaimed that his drumming at least somewhat informed the Count Basie rhythm section of the 1930s. He would also readily substitute in the band when Jones was unable to perform (Korall, 2004).

During his time performing at the Black Cat in Greenwich Village, Clarke was experimenting by adding snare drum improvisation to the basic cymbal pattern. Having a keen melodic and harmonic awareness, he sought to unify the rhythmic and harmonic concepts. He was dissatisfied with the role of the drummer, although he did not view himself as radical by any means. Instead, he was a logical extension of the swing tradition. The basic cymbal pattern was in the process of evolution, and Clarke aided in the proliferation. Unfortunately, these snare drum and bass drum interjections were not popular with most people in the music business. Despite the intrigue surrounding Clarke's comprehensive artistry and inventiveness, many people would not hire him because of his modern approach.

Pianist and bandleader Edgar Hayes was one such believer, deciding to hire him and take him on tour (Korall, 2004). Clarke made his first recordings, albeit in a more traditional style that predates his bebop language, with Hayes in 1936. In Paris, he met Django Reinhardt and fell in love with the city. Throughout Europe, he was warmly received while continuing his experimental drumming concepts. The band's arranger, Joe Garland, would give him trumpet lead sheets for guidance and inspiration. Clarke began to take the weight out of his drumming. Cymbals would provide the underlying time, while drums served to accentuate. The idea of constant rudimental or tom-tom drumming, as with Krupa in "Sing, Sing, Sing," likely would have seemed cluttered and ineloquent to Clarke (Benny Goodman and His Orchestra, 1937).

With the help of his friend Dizzy Gillespie, Clarke was hired by big band leader and multi-instrumentalist Teddy Hill in 1939. Clarke's new approach to drumming was met with disdain by some members of his new band. No stranger to such circumstances, he was ultimately fired for his experimental ways. However, Hill became the manager of Minton's Playhouse in 1941. Although his band members may have disapproved of Clarke's concepts, Hill saw a true artist. He created an environment at Minton's Playhouse that gave Clarke free rein to hire any type of modern jazz musician imaginable on a regular basis. Between the concerts and after-hours jam sessions, Minton's Playhouse came to be known as a place where jazz was being actively modernized. Clarke was not yet one of the most famous drummers in the city, but that would change after his discharge from the Army.

Drafted in 1943, Clarke took his musical talents back to Europe, only this time with the Army's Special Services. He performed on trombone, partially because of demand, but also because quality drums were difficult to find and transport (Daquila, 1995). Incidentally, he witnessed some atrocities of World War II and remained effected by it for some time. The United States military has long maintained an incredibly high number of dedicated musicians, so it is no surprise that Clarke acquainted many of them both in the United States and abroad. One such musician was John Lewis, a pianist with whom Clarke would later form the historic Modern Jazz Quartet (Korall, 2004).

Upon his discharge and return to the United States, Clarke immediately sought out his old friend Dizzy Gillespie. Clarke was transformed by his experiences, and the prospect of returning to the professional scene was overwhelming. Still, Gillespie seriously encouraged his reemergence. Moreover, Gillespie was so impressed with Clarke's drumming that he mentored all his own drummers in a similar, melodic fashion. Clarke's discouragement waned as he

realized his modernized, cymbal-driven approach had taken hold in New York during his absence. Still, his awestruck appreciation for Europe remained unresolved. Despite becoming an established drumming force and forming the historic Modern Jazz Quartet in 1952, he decided to permanently immigrate to France in 1956 (Korall, 2004).

Clarke immersed himself into the American expatriate community and became a mainstay at a venue called the Blue Note in Paris. He felt truly appreciated in Europe, and he decided to remain there for the rest of his life, although he would sporadically return to the States when touring. On December 27, 1959, Bud Powell and French bassist Pierre Michelot performed a jazz trio concert with him at the Blue Note. This recording features the use of brushes instead of drumsticks. The final chorus and coda of Clarke's drumming has been transcribed and is shown in Figure 4.

Jazz brushes originated as found[19] musical instrument accessories. They were heavily utilized by the drummers of Swing Era, and they remain popular for jazz drummers today. Compared to the percussive sound of wooden sticks, brushes naturally lend themselves to a connected, or legato, sound. The previously mentioned problems of noise levels[20] in a recording studio allowed jazz brushes to gain popularity. When large swing bands needed to capture the soft eloquence of a ballad, their drummers would typically opt for brushes. Clarke's work herein is eloquent, but certainly not slow-moving (Banichka, 2008).

Essentially, he is playing the basic cymbal pattern on the snare drum, albeit with brushes. At this tempo, it is impractical to force as many notes per measure as with a slower tempo. As

[19] A "found" instrument is something not created for musical purposes but used for musical purposes.
[20] Recall Chick Webb making his first recording with just a hand-sock cymbal.

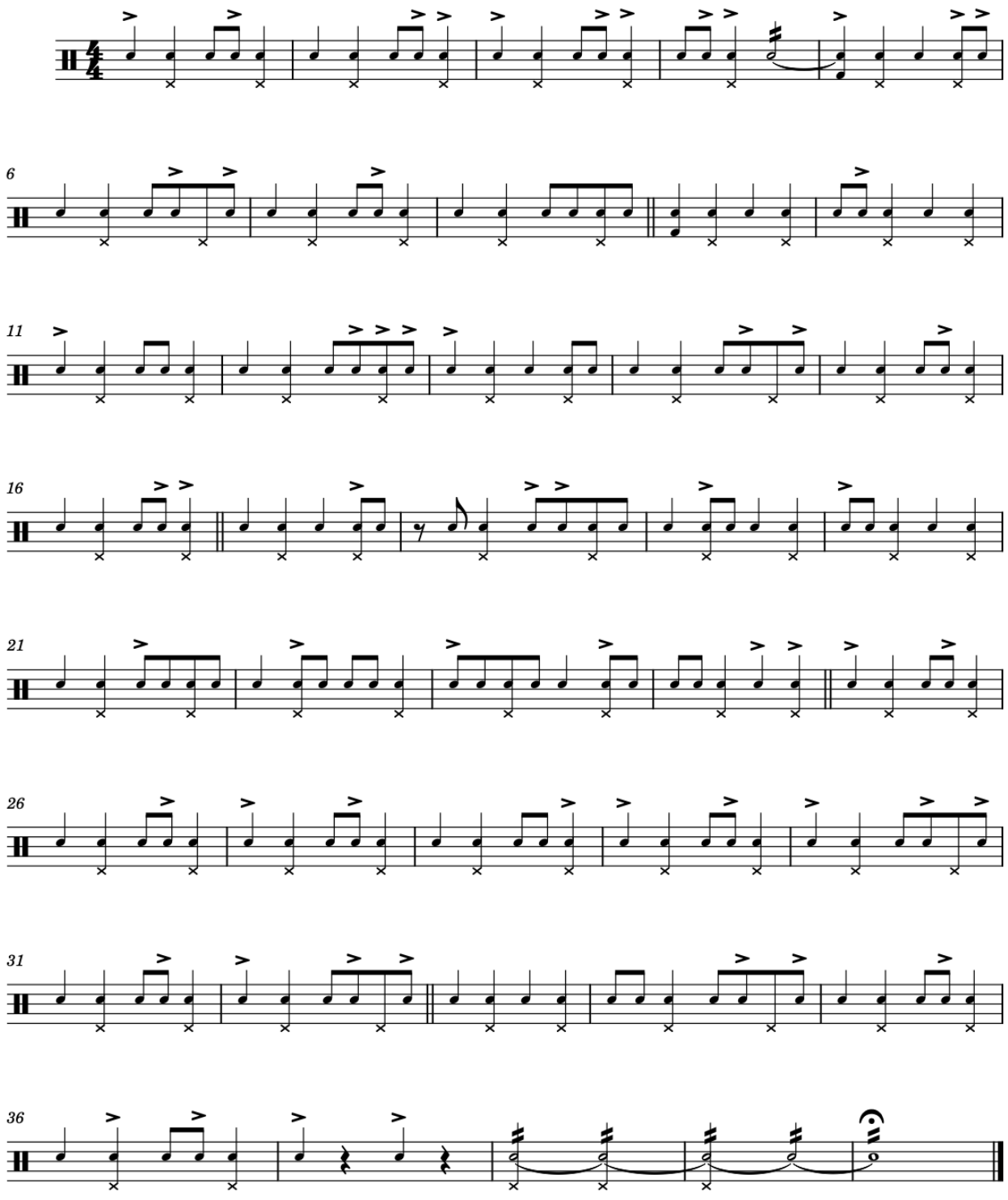

Figure 4: *Forty measures of transcription, double bars sectionalizing every eight measures.*

such, Clarke's brushwork is an interesting variation of the basic cymbal pattern—he methodically takes away from the pattern, rather than adding to it, to find his voice. With drumsticks, it is sensible to contact the drumhead in a straightforward motion. To maximize the legato potential of brushes, it is best to strike the drums angularly. The more straightforward the striking motion, the more analogous to drumsticks. At this recording's incredibly fast tempo, Clarke's brushwork allows for Bud Powell's piano playing to be the most percussive overall force. There is something to be said for the patient, spatial exploration of each member of this jazz trio.

Clarke's brushes execute a pattern that suggests addition by subtraction of the basic cymbal pattern. He pedals the high-hat subtly and tastefully on beats two and four throughout this recording, his hands typically moving in opposite directions. The brushes provide a framework for the bass and piano. Or perhaps all three form the framework—the trio is unselfish and seemingly sparse in its musical conversation. Moreover, there is profundity in the sonic blend when considering the incredibly fast speed. By modern standards, it would certainly be difficult for three advanced musicians to replicate this level of sophistication.

Clarke remained in France for the rest of his life. In general, Europe provided him a peaceful, more fulfilling lifestyle with considerably less racial animosity. His influence on the United States drumming community was well established by the time he had formed The Modern Jazz Quartet and relocated to France. In France, he maintained a "guru" level of status and taught music at the university level (Korall, 2004). He established a rather famous ensemble with Belgian pianist Francois Boland. Featuring a blend of musicians from several different countries, the Clarke-Boland Big Band unfortunately never toured the United States. Clarke's

contributions to bebop, in addition to his now global influence of the jazz drumming community was clearly established when he passed away in France in 1985 at age 71.

CHAPTER 7: MAX ROACH

Maxwell Lemuel Roach was born in Newland, North Carolina on January 10, 1924. His father, Alphonse, was a farmer dealing with increasingly hard times during the Great Depression. His mother, Cressie, was a gospel singer and Max's first source of musical inspiration. When he was four years old, the family left the Appalachian swamplands for New York City so that Alphonse could create a better life for his family. They settled in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, living below the poverty line. Roach's father did not maintain steady work, causing their family to be routinely evicted from apartments in their impoverished Brooklyn neighborhood (Korall, 2004).

To Roach and his brother's delight, one particular apartment housed a player piano that was left behind by the previous tenant. The boys would slowly engage the pedal with their feet while their fingers rested on the keys. Through physicality, they began to recreate at least parts of Fats Waller and Jelly Roll Morton compositions. Their great aunt Clarkie Hinton moved in with the family, further exposing the boys to musical opportunities. She was a gifted church pianist who helped the boys turn their piano roll amusements into more tangible skills.

The church was a refuge that provided numerous communal services for the African American community in New York City around the times of the Great Depression. When not in school, Roach spent most of his free time there playing piano, as well as drums around age eight. When he was twelve, his parents bought him a drum set as a reward for completing elementary school. He did not lose interest in piano, yet he became hyper focused on drum set playing. Much to his neighbors' chagrin, he practiced often and loudly in his bedroom (Korall, 2004).

In response to the Great Depression, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal featured an agency known as the Works Project Administration (WPA) that provided federal funding for churches.

These subsidies allowed for the hiring of literature, music, theater, and dance instructors. Roach remained active in the church as a young performer on drums or keyboard. The Harlem Renaissance was also in full force during this time. Roach was living in a dangerous, crime-ridden Brooklyn neighborhood, and yet this was an auspicious environment for an aspiring young African American artist.

After his newfound appreciation for the drum set, he began attempting more advanced concepts with his fellow Brooklynite musicians. Friends from church and the community would come together to play arrangements of the great bandleaders of the time, including Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Chick Webb. Roach's teenage friends considered him to be a rather intelligent person and a natural musician, and so he was viewed as the ringleader in a group of future bebop revolutionaries that included saxophonists Cecil Payne and Ernie Henry; pianists/composers Randy Weston and Duke Jordan; and trumpeter Leonard Hawkins (Korall, 2004).

It was the Swing Era, and Roach's teenage clique was obsessively performing every day of the week. It was not unusual for them to attend concerts until three in the morning, only to then seek an after-hours performance that lasted past sunrise. The idea of appearing at other musicians' concerts and requesting to "sit in" was and continues to be widespread throughout the jazz community. If Roach and his cadre were not on the bill, they would perform whenever permitted. They all packed food and gear, journeying throughout the city at all hours.

Roach saw the titans of jazz firsthand, including Sid Catlett, Art Tatum, and likely to be his most significant drumming influence, Papa Jo Jones. Roach was taken by Jones' ability to intelligently sectionalize ideas in a way that transcended the bar line. He listened as the Basie drummer kept time on the ride cymbal, remaining selective in his usage of snare drum and bass

drum accompaniment. Jo Jones was playing the drums in a way that accentuated the washy[21] cymbal sound. Barely teenagers, Roach and his musically dedicated friends were learning much about music and life (Schudel, 2007).

As indicated in the previous chapter, fellow bebop drumming pioneer Kenny Clarke was drafted into the Army in 1943. Later in life, Roach remarked that he was not heavily informed by Clarke's playing, despite seeing him perform on drum set multiple times at Minton's Playhouse before Clarke's military enlistment (Korall, 2004). The two drummers are monumental in their contributions to bebop, and Roach was certainly present on the scene by the time Clarke had advanced his own cymbal-driven concepts. Still, it is highly plausible that there was a certain amount of disconnection between the two, despite their place in history as perhaps the two main archetypes of bebop drumming.

As noted in the previous chapter, Dizzy Gillespie molded his up-and-coming drummers in Clarke's style of advanced melodic and structural form awareness. Upon his return from the military, he discovered that Gillespie had been instilling this deep melodicism into emerging New York City drummers. Therefore, it does appear that Roach's vocabularic growth is only indirectly linked to Clarke. Moreover, Roach's ultimate bebop ascension was soon to come. He first recorded with Coleman Hawkins in December of 1943, and it was received well. Yet, it was not until his 1945-1948 recordings with Charlie Parker that Roach would become rather intimidated by his peers in the drum community (Korall, 2004).

Parker was a true pioneer of jazz and Roach's largest non-drumming influence. He played with enhanced chromaticism, double-time rhythm against regular-time feels, and a penchant for creating phrases that stretched across the bar line, all of which were revolutionary.

[21] Drummers use the term "washy" to denote a cymbal's increased sustain/wetness of sound.

Roach complemented these advanced concepts and incorporated them into his own drumming. He seems to have learned as much from the non-drummer musicians around him as he did from other drummers. Throughout his life, Roach mentioned the impact of all the drummers examined thus far in this project, with Kenny Clarke as the curious exception (Korall, 2004).

Indeed, Roach is unique in that his vocabularic drum set knowledge is largely borne out of a method that he established with Parker, an alto saxophonist. All the musicians on these sessions were engaged and informed by Parker's inventiveness. One formative aspect of these 1940s Savoy and Dial sessions is its conversational personality. Parker speaks with originality, and Roach responds demonstratively. The drum set was becoming an increasingly sophisticated, effective means of art. Roach maintained the basic cymbal pattern often throughout these records, yet he was more effusive in his usage of independent snare and bass drum techniques that he had first seen utilized by Papa Jo Jones.

One such recording that typifies this style occurred in New York City on September 24, 1948, on which Parker and Roach were joined by Curley Russell on bass, John Lewis on piano, and a young Miles Davis on trumpet. Parker's *The Complete Savoy and Dial Studio Recordings* featured thirteen total sessions. Billed as the Charlie Parker All Stars, this was the final session of the Parker recording compilation. Shown below in Figure 6, one such track is an original composition by Parker entitled "Perhaps." The form is twelve-bar blues, a typical method of delivery in the bebop era. Blues forms can last sixteen bars or some other length, although that is less common.

In American jazz blues music, it is common for the melody, or head, to be played twice at the beginning and twice at the end of a piece. In the middle, the form is maintained while instrumentalists take turns soloing. Parker's band interestingly plays the opening and closing

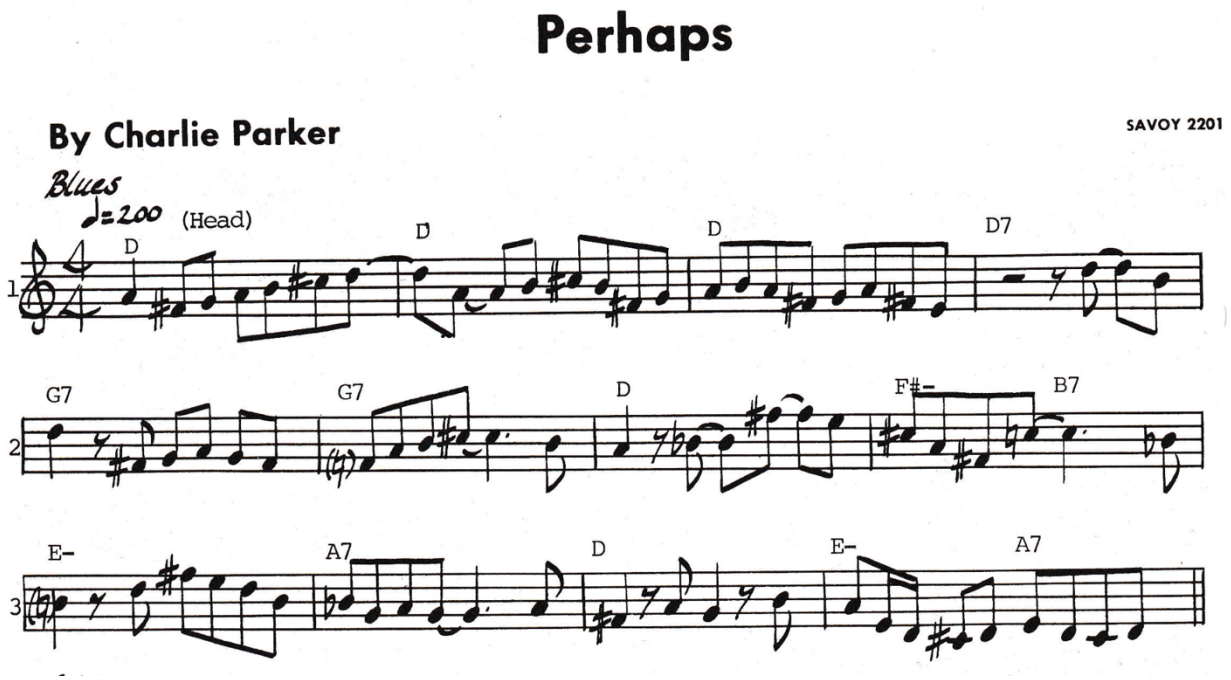

Figure 6: *Roach fills in the space of Parker's melody, which informs the overall performance.*

melody just once herein. Still, there is time for a considerable amount of interaction between the saxophone, trumpet, and drums. The rhythmic breaks in the head are where Roach inserts his snare and bass drum chatter. The basic cymbal pattern continues to underpin the snare and bass drum improvisation throughout the entire performance.

Parker finishes the opening melody and plays the first solo, lasting several choruses (00:19). As the head gives way to the solo section, Roach's drumming becomes less dense as he switches the voicing of the cymbal pattern from the high-hat to the ride cymbal. The ride cymbal is a sensible choice when accompanying because of its sustained sound. Akin to the constancy of white noise, a ride cymbal allows for the drummer's presence to remain felt in the background. By altering the angle of the stroke or the striking position on the cymbal, Roach can quickly enter the foreground if needed. Less volume from the rhythm section during solos is a courtesy that also serves a larger purpose—it allows a broader canvas for the soloist, while the rhythm section maintains its ability to rise and fall dynamically with the soloist as desired.

Roach continues to be engaged and highly reactive within the ensemble, inserting himself in the breaks and accompanying the melodic improvisation in a way that illuminates his understanding of the form. Parker reaches a climax in his third chorus, allowing for the next soloist to enter (01:04). Roach opts for a slightly darker sounding ride cymbal, which has an effect of subtly cleansing the listener's palette. It also provides a fresh backdrop for the next soloist, Miles Davis.

The practice of providing each new soloist with a unique set of sonic forces has become a staple of jazz drummers. With his newly provided cymbal soundscape, Davis enters the space left by Parker. The tune's conversational character persists as Roach grants Davis a considerable scope for exploration. Indeed, it is revolutionary that these musicians can avoid emphasizing downbeats while maintaining a collective understanding of the time. With Roach, the drum set continues to evolve in its artistic capacity.

As with the saxophone solo, Davis reaches a similar pinnacle in his third solo chorus, inviting John Lewis to begin the final solo in piano (01:47). Roach switches yet again to the high-hat cymbal and maintains a softer presence out of necessity. The colloquial nature of jazz deems it a humble artform, and Roach respects Lewis' solo by controlling the underlying cymbal volume. As new soloists emerge, Roach maintains an elevated level of perception from the drum chair. Lewis' piano solo lasts two choruses, yet the band has intelligently synthesized itself to such an extent that it becomes unclear for the average listener to determine where the first solo chorus ends, and the second piano solo chorus begins (02:02). Roach remains centered on the high-hat cymbal, performing the closing head with increased urgency followed by an abrupt ending in unison with the band.

Max Roach's bebop historicity is the only comparable to Kenny Clarke, and it is puzzling that the two had little influence upon one another. Both drummers continued performing professionally well past the Bebop Era. However, Roach would become more steeped in the coming post-bop music scene. Clarke continued playing with musicians in Europe that maintained a style more analogous to bebop.

Roach is unique in that he made significant contributions to both bebop and post-bop music. He viewed himself, appropriately, as part of a long line of unrecognized African American inventors, and he remained attuned to the evolution of Black American musical genres (Gioia, 1998). Overall, Roach was less concerned with genres and more so concerned with his African American musical culture as an influential and edifying force. The longest surviving member of the examined drummers, he passed away at the age of 83 in 2007.

CHAPTER 8: ROY HAYNES

Roy Owen Haynes was born on March 13, 1924, in Roxbury, Massachusetts, a neighborhood on the outskirts of Boston, where he lived until adulthood. His parents were immigrants from Barbados who raised four boys in a highly musical home. His mother was an avid singer and deeply religious. His father was an organist who worked constantly to provide for the family (Korall, 2004). Both parents had very high expectations for their four children, and each achieved high levels of success. The eldest son, Douglas, would go on to attend the prestigious New England Conservatory of Music. Haynes' younger brother, Michael, was a politician and Baptist minister of 40 years who made significant contributions to the Civil Rights Movement and worked directly with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Haynes' passion was for drums and percussion throughout his life, yet he spent one year learning violin at his mother's behest, and the minimal amount of formal training he received on violin was more than he received on drum set. Destined for the latter, he consistently used his thumbs to strike his classroom desk in a musical manner. Ultimately, it became too disruptive, and his parents were invoked to make it stop (Korall, 2004). Haynes was incredibly distracted with percussion music, and yet no one ever taught him how to hold drumsticks or brushes.

Despite a lack of formal training, he first began playing drum set seriously around age sixteen. He listened to Bing Crosby, Art Tatum, Glenn Miller, The Hot Club of France, Duke Ellington, and Count Basie on the radio. His most influential drummers in these formative years were Sid Catlett, Chick Webb, and Jo Jones, who was his primary influence and a man who seems to have rightfully earned the nickname Papa. As this project is revealing, he appears to be arguably the largest single musical influence of all drummers examined.

As a teenager in Boston, Haynes likely did not enjoy the same number of musical peers that Max Roach had in New York City. Haynes' journey was more individualized, and that is reflected in his inimitable drum set playing. His ideas and mannerisms are borne out of his own originality combined with an abnormally keen musical sense. According to Haynes, only plays what he "hears" and "feels" (Korall, 2004). However, his individualized path was not without attending live music performances. One such concert by Artie Shaw and His Orchestra at the Boston Common was so profound to him that it solidified Haynes' determination to become a professional musician (Korall, 2004).

As a teenager, Haynes had limited capital and resources. Equipped with only a snare drum and ride cymbal, his first paid performance was with a local guitarist named Tom Brown. From this professional opportunity, he was able to spend extensive time learning to improvise on a two-piece drum set (Korall, 2004).

Haynes also had a passion for timbales, an instrument consisting of two drums that are affixed. This concept of two connected drums originated in Cuba as a substitute for timpani, or kettle drums (Korall, 2004). Similarly to how a master timbalero can extract a maximal number of sounds from two drums, Haynes was similarly working with the framework of two percussion instruments forming a singular musical instrument.

From a learning perspective, improvising with only two musical forces (or simply one) is often a logical place to begin. Aspiring drummers may attempt to play the entirety of the drum set without first individually learning snare drum technique, which can impede their overall understanding of the drum set. Haynes' unorthodox, untrained approach had some major benefits in his individual musical development, as he had no reason to believe that only a snare drum and cymbal were insufficient for a drum set player.

Such limitations proved to be rather educational for Haynes, as is reflected in the forthcoming drum set analysis. Like several other drummers examined, Haynes was familiar with the elder drummers of his own community. One such player was Lester Schackleford, a drummer with incredibly fast hands. As a teenager, Haynes saw him as the greatest show drummer in the world. Later, Schackleford befriended Haynes and regaled him with stories about jazz saxophone icons Lester Young and Charlie Parker. At the time, Haynes had no idea these two seminal figures would both eventually hire him to be their drummer (Korall, 2004).

Haynes began playing drum set professionally as a teenager and decided to drop out of Roxbury High School before graduating. Musical unions were segregated at the time, so he joined the African American Boston Musicians' Union at age seventeen (Harris, 1950). His first professional gig with Tom Brown was followed by nightly performances with pianist Mabel Robinson Sims at the Paradise Club in Boston. From this work, he earned enough money to purchase a full drum set with cymbals (Korall, 2004). Having acquired the proper equipment, he was ready to transition into the early 1940s Boston big band circuit.

His first big band engagement was with pianist and bandleader Sabby Lewis. Saxophonists Sonny Stitt and "Big Nick" Nicholas were two notable members of this ensemble. Haynes' unique drum set sound was spreading to significant musicians on the East Coast that had direct connections to New York City, and Haynes was performing regularly in and out of Boston. Alto saxophonist Charlie Holmes saw Haynes perform at some private functions in Connecticut. Holmes was a veteran of the bands of Chick Webb, Louis Armstrong, and Cootie Williams.

Impressed with Haynes' drum set artistry, Holmes recommended him to Luis Russell in New York City. Having already known about Haynes, Russell was famous and regularly leading

bands at the Savoy Ballroom and Apollo Theater in Harlem. He took Holmes' advice and sent a telegram to Haynes, who was playing in Martha's Vineyard at the time. Haynes recognized that he could benefit from a broader setting, and New York City would bring immense opportunities, so Haynes responded positively to Russell. After Labor Day of that year, he relocated to New York City to join Luis Russell and His Orchestra (Korall, 2004).

Like Gene Krupa was able to maintain connections with Chicago and New York, Haynes was able to expand his network to include both Boston and New York. He was able to reside in Luis Russell's rather spacious apartment, traveling to Boston as needed. It was the Bebop Era, and his first major engagement was with Lester Young's band in 1947. That same week, he also met and performed with Billie Holliday. Lester Young is heavily associated with swing music, and less with bebop specifically. Still, neither he nor Haynes were occupied with the idea of bebop as a musical concept. They viewed themselves as members of a musical culture commonly known as jazz. Young was always kind to Haynes, allowing the young drummer to experiment with more than just a basic cymbal pattern. Haynes' drum set vocabulary was not fully realized, yet he was continually seeking to develop his own voice on the drum set. He was fully immersed into the bebop tradition.

As a practice, bebop is distinguished by its musical intelligence. Many of the 1940s professional New York musicians were disassociating themselves from the role-playing of large ensembles. This allowed for experimental bebop music to begin to thrive among professional-level musicians. The music has its own rules and limitations. The tempi can be incredibly fast, and the rhythm wildly syncopated. From a player's perspective, this music is not for dancing. Yet, Haynes' playing with Charlie Parker, which began in 1949, evoked dancing from the crowd

on several occasions. Max Roach had left Parker's band and personally asked Haynes to replace him, which he did.

Haynes did not take issue with the fact that his drumming could evoke dancing, even in the context of Charlie Parker. He was driven by the effusive power of music, not its technical advances. He perceived himself as a drummer, not a concert musician (Korall, 2004). That is not to say that Charlie Parker was only motivated by technical advances, but his musical concepts were likely not generated with any concern for danceability. He was constantly exploring within the limitations of the musical form. As a fellow improviser, Haynes is similarly committed to his own types of exploration. There is something fearless, but also purposeful, about his drumming, with nothing wasted as every note complements the broader mix of sound.

Haynes' ascension was steady both before and after his stint with Charlie Parker. In the 1950s, he spent considerable time playing for vocalists Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald. Supporting a vocalist poses unique sound challenges for drummers, as the human voice is relatively soft compared to metal instruments, like cymbals. The effect of playing with vocalists had an overall effect of restraining Haynes' playing. Having been supporting the music of vocalists for the better part of a decade, Haynes joined a musical contrarian that was different from his typical style in 1958, Thelonious Monk.

Monk is unique in that he is a bebop musician who opted for syncopated structures in favor of explicitly fast tempi. He created angular melodic lines that were perceived by some to be simply disjunct and pointlessly experimental, yet his music had incredible depth and meaning. Despite the syncopation of his music, it was executed at danceable tempi. Furthermore, Monk occasionally left the piano to dance throughout the venue as the other musicians continued playing. His music was complementary with that of Haynes, the two were fundamentally distinct

from one another. Haynes' distinct sharpness pairs well with Monk's incessant curiosity. Alongside tenor saxophonist Johnny Griffin and bassist Ahmed Abdul-Malik, they recorded *At the Five Spot* on August 7, 1958, at the now defunct Five Spot Café in New York City (Thelonious Monk Quartet).

This album features bebop musicians playing in the Post-bop Era. Then again, most musicians associated with post-bop were logically informed by bebop. Determining a clear distinction between the two styles is a task that seems less significant for a working jazz musician and more aligned with the work of a musicologist. Monk's melodic angularity is prominent, and Haynes provides a steady but highly expressive and supportive drumming force that reveals his knowledge of the form. As Max Roach had explored within the confines of Charlie Parker's melodic inventiveness, Haynes passionately navigates Monk's own melodic angularity with advanced perceptivity.

"In Walked Bud" is an homage to quintessential bebop pianist Bud Powell and is a featured track from *At the Five Spot* (Thelonious Monk Quartet, 1958). Overall, this album greatly reveals Haynes' musical depth in the context of Monk, Johnny Griffin, and Ahmed Abdul-Malik. Over ten minutes in length, Haynes plays the opening thirty-two measure head in a relatively free manner that outlines the musical form. Ultimately, he has moved beyond snare drum and bass drum independence in the context of the basic cymbal pattern. The basic cymbal pattern is still a basis of generation, yet Haynes only alludes to it in the melody.

Saxophonist Johnny Griffin takes the first solo for several choruses as Haynes remains in the foreground with considerable amounts of explosive potential (00:58). Griffin reveals tremendous melodic and rhythmic range, transitioning back and forth from a regular-time feel to a cut-time feel as the rhythm section remains engaged, mostly in the original tempo. As Monk

takes the second solo, Haynes opts for the basic cymbal pattern, offering plenty of space for piano improvisation (06:22). He slowly increases the snare drum and bass drum chatter until it is time to clear an opening for the next soloist, bassist Ahmed Abdul-Malik (08:06). Haynes deconstructs the basic cymbal pattern further, playing only the high-hat cymbal on beats two and four. Eventually, he drops out during the bass solo (08:50). The musical form resets as Abdul-Malik finishes the bass solo unaccompanied. Haynes enters the space with a comparable level of simmering energy that quickly rises (09:20).

The first sixteen measures of this drum solo are shown in Figure 7. Per his usual style, Haynes' sound is distinct and sharp. His drum set is a single force, not a composite of percussion instruments. He executes the first thirty-two measure solo chorus without ever playing a cymbal. Perhaps the most considerable aspect of this solo, however, is the melodic exploration. In a method that is rather difficult to transcribe, Haynes pivots between his four drums in a way that percussively recreates and expounds upon the melody. The dynamic contrasts are so stark that it deceives the listener into thinking that Haynes is working with a larger drum set. His capacity to improvise within his own limitations is the essence of jazz.

Haynes' buoyant style eventually earned him the moniker "Snap Crackle" (Korall, 2004). His musical voice is robust and confident, his sound a singular force and not merely a combination of drum instruments. Since the previously examined recording with Thelonious Monk, Haynes has worked with countless significant jazz musicians who include Chick Corea, Pat Metheny, and John Coltrane. As compared to the other drummers of this project, Haynes' childhood was rather stable, his upbringing served him well. As of March 2023, Roy Haynes is still alive, and he still performs occasionally.

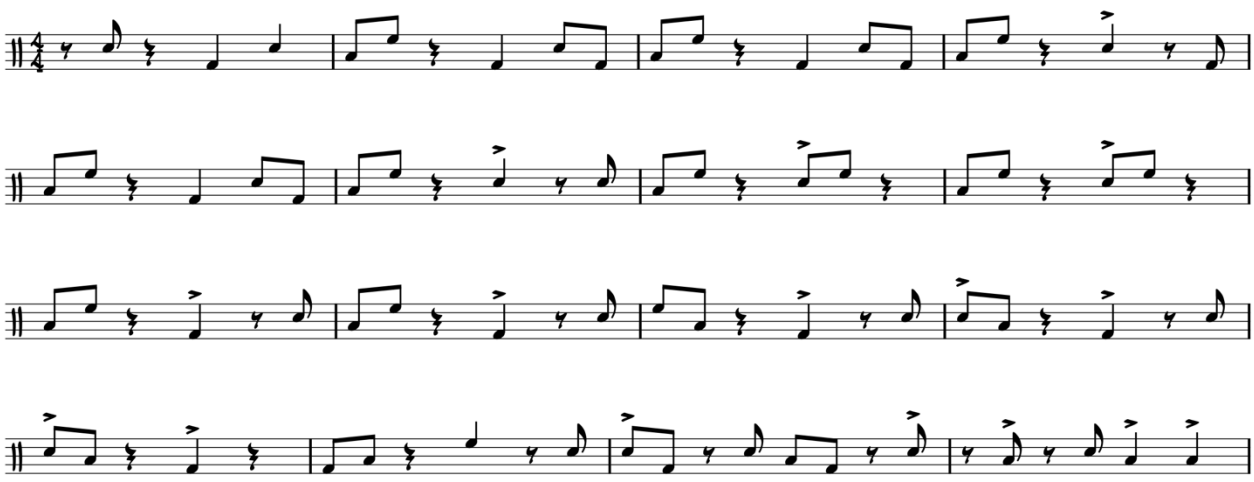

Figure 4: *The first sixteen measures of Haynes' drum solo.*

CHAPTER 9: ART BLAKEY

Arthur Blakey was born in Pittsburgh on October 11, 1919. His father, Bertram Thomas Blakey, grew up in Alabama and migrated to Pennsylvania in the early 1900s ("Art Blakey," 2023). Blakey's father was African American yet had lighter skin than his wife or his son. He determined that his family's blackness would add unwanted distress to his life, and he decided to abandon the family altogether immediately after his son's birth. Blakey's mother, Maria Roddericker, tragically passed away soon thereafter, meaning Blakey lost both of his parents when he was only months old (Korall, 2004). Throughout his life, he suffered a considerable amount of racial injustice.

As a young orphan, Blakey went to live with his mother's cousin, Sarah Parran. She was supportive and loving to Blakey, yet her own biological children would torment and ostracize him, at times because of the darkness of his skin. Moreover, Parran's husband would take part in this colorism. Fortunately for Blakey, his foster mother remained dedicated to raising him in an otherwise antagonistic household. At one point, her husband demanded that Blakey be passed on to someone else. In response, Parran placed her own husband's possessions on the porch, and he left on his own accord (Korall, 2004).

Perhaps the highlight of Blakey's early years was that he had some piano lessons and was able to perform at church. From the beginning, he was naturally gifted in his ability to feel and hear the music. Still, his foster mother was left alone to provide for the family, and Blakey began working in a steel mill when he was fourteen years old to support her (Gioia, 1998). He worked several grueling manual labor jobs as a teenager. At night, he would play piano and drums as much as possible, and on piano, he figured out how to play in a few different keys. With regards

to drums and percussion, he was completely self-taught. His greatest source of education would ultimately be the musicians that surrounded him throughout his career to come.

Blakey's piano abilities finally enabled him to stop working manual labor jobs in Pittsburgh. His musical proclivities translated into proper wages, and he became a professional musician in his teens. The compensation was better, as was the company. Despite being more trained as a pianist, Blakey's curiosity as a drummer was increasing at this time. He believed that learning on the job was far superior to any type of formal percussion instruction. Blakey sought to increase his professional potential by familiarizing himself with the notable players of his Pittsburgh community—Kenny Clarke and James "Honey Boy" Minor. On the radio he listened to Sid Catlett, Ray Bauduc, and Sonny Greer, as well as his most formative drumming influence, Chick Webb (Korall, 2004).

As a pianist, he was leading a band at a now defunct venue known as The Ritz Club in Pittsburgh in 1934.[22] An ensemble from New York City stopped in to play, and Blakey was assumed to be the touring band's pianist. However, the musical arrangements were rather advanced, and Blakey was clearly out of his depth. He struggled to musically accommodate the band. Moreover, a young Erroll Garner was in the crowd. Younger than Blakey by two years, Garner also received minimal keyboard training, yet his piano literacy was superior to that of Blakey (Korall, 2004). It was generally agreed that Blakey could best contribute on drums, and Garner ultimately became the pianist for the concert. From that point, Blakey's focus switched to drum set performance.

In 1939, he caught the attention of big band leader Fletcher Henderson and soon became the fellow Pittsburgh native's new drummer. Not long after beginning his tenure with

[22] This project reveals a trend in the amount of historically significant jazz venues that no longer exist.

Henderson, Blakey was the victim of racial injustice in Albany, Georgia while on tour and was beaten without provocation by a police officer wielding a baton. The racism and colorism from his childhood seemed to persist, yet Blakey was ever resilient. His time with Fletcher Henderson gained him serious exposure in the professional world and his drum set vocabulary was concurrent with the times—execution of the basic cymbal pattern while adding improvised bass and snare drum accompaniment for support and color.

Another Pittsburgh native, Billy Eckstine, formed his own big band in 1944. Blakey was recommended by Dizzy Gillespie, a leading member of the Billy Eckstine Orchestra. In addition, this revolutionary big band also featured Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon, and Miles Davis. The Billy Eckstine Orchestra is perhaps the first bebop big band to exist. Herein, Blakey began to assimilate this bebop vocabulary from the archetypical musicians around him, which was not easy, as they could be punitive and hawkish. It was not uncommon for Dizzy Gillespie to verbally berate him on the bandstand in full view of the audience (Korall, 2004).

Apropos of Blakey's thunderous drumming style, he took risks in the Billy Eckstine Orchestra. At times he failed, yet he always seemed to be learning. Blakey was reluctant to take solos in this group as he thought of himself as more of an accompanist. He began playing cross rhythms simultaneously with the basic cymbal pattern. Whereas snare drum and bass drum independence typically refer to similar types of rhythms between the cymbals and drums, cross rhythms are more difficult conceptually as the term indicates multi-level rhythmic syncopation. For instance, Blakey would play the cymbal pattern in regular time while simultaneously executing half-time quarter note triplets with a somewhat grating effect. To be certain, this is a very advanced and innovative drum set technique for the 1940s. It is not clear if many, or any, other drummers were executing this particular practice.

In the 1940s, Blakey's originality was not received like many of the other drummers in this project, and it could be argued that he was underrated in the Bebop Era. Moreover, Eckstine was an African American man that faced great difficulties leading a big band. He was unable to book the prestigious hotel dates that more commercially successful big bands enjoyed. Also, the Billy Eckstine Orchestra recordings are not high quality. Furthermore, audiences did not seem to be ready for bebop, even in a big band setting. The band broke up in 1947, and Blakey could not find work. Subsequently, he converted to Islam and moved to Africa for two years (Korall, 2004).

Blakey assumed the name Abdullah Ibn Buhaina. His time in Africa seemed more spiritual than musical in nature, although his exposure to indigenous African music certainly expanded his drum set vocabulary and musical decision making. This is significant considering Blakey's strong association with the style of hard bop. The jazz styles that followed bebop are unique in that they include more African, Brazilian, and American Gospel influences. Post-bop seeks to connect the outside world to the jazz tradition, with less feel of an inward musical journey than bebop.

Upon his return from Africa, Blakey sought to take action and create his own opportunities. He formed the first iteration of The Jazz Messengers[23] with Horace Silver in the late 1940s. Co-oping the ensemble became an administrative problem, and Silver felt the band should have one leader. He left the band amicably to form his own group, yet he would return to collaborate with Blakey in the future (Korall, 2004). From that point, Blakey led the Jazz Messengers until his death in 1990. As Billy Eckstine's band featured an incredible depth of

[23] Then simply known as "Art Blakey's Messengers" and/or "Seventeen Messengers."

musicians that aided in Blakey's growth, so would The Jazz Messengers become a finishing school for countless jazz musicians in its almost fifty years of existence.

Some notable characteristics of Blakey's drumming at that point are his continuation of the basic cymbal pattern, penchant for dramatic press rolls, and advancement of cross rhythms. The basic cymbal pattern remains foundational for Blakey's hard bop drumming. By the 1950s, his cymbals had become akin to a continuously erupting volcano. The high-hat cymbals were played with absolute certainty on beats two and four while his right hand would play the ride cymbal with the same force that a heavy metal drummer might exact on a snare drum. As his cross rhythms featured two distinct feels, so did his cymbals enjoy an incredible distinction of sound. The cymbals were the visceral foundation that supported the likes of emerging jazz musicians like Woody Shaw, Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, and Wynton Marsalis.

The Jazz Messengers' first album was self-titled and recorded in 1956. Its personnel included Blakey on drums, Horace Silver on piano, Donald Byrd on trumpet, Hank Mobley on tenor saxophone, and Doug Watkins on bass. The Messengers' very next recording session presented an entirely different lineup, save Blakey. 1957's *Hard Bop* features Bill Hardman on trumpet, Jackie McLean on alto saxophone, Sam Dockery on piano, and Spanky DeBrest on bass (The Jazz Messengers).

One such example of Blakey's advanced cross rhythm concept occurs during the opening melody of the tune, "Dee's Dilemma." Shown in Figure 7, Blakey executes stunningly complex polyrhythms (00:25). The ride cymbal pattern continues against either triplets or dotted eighth note rhythms that he plays with his left hand. Indeed, it seems as though Blakey has not clearly established what specific type of polyrhythm his left hand should introduce to the space. Having listened to this eight-measure section countless times, it seems the most important consideration

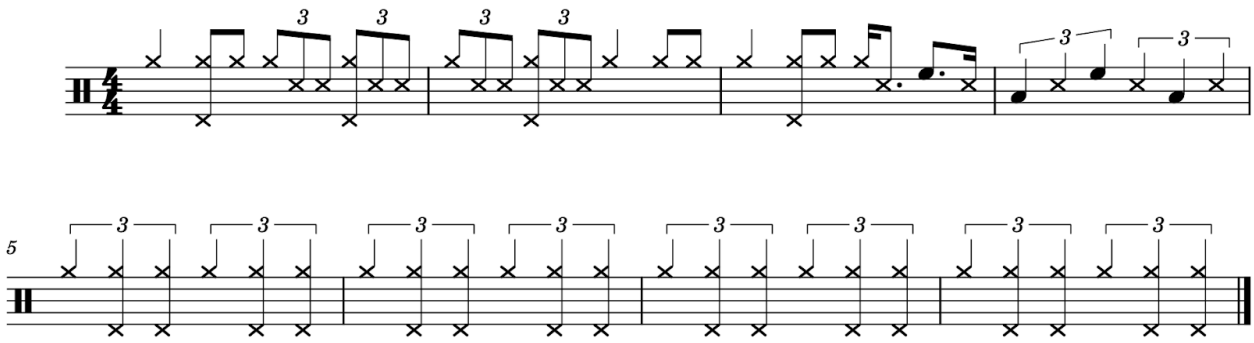

Figure 7: *A wide array of polyrhythms in the span of eight measures.*

is not that he plays a specific rhythm so much as he provides a rhythmical counter against the common time feel. When Blakey is playing the snare drum, he opts for rim clicks,[24] a unique choice. For several reasons, this is immensely difficult to execute for almost any drummer, even by modern standards. Blakey proliferated several novel ideas in his time with the Jazz Messengers, yet he was rather selective not to over apply any of his concepts. Blakey presented his musical ideas in a balanced way that selflessly served the overall sound.

This and many other Jazz Messengers albums feature highly individualized qualities that Blakey created. He would use the force of his elbow to alter the drum's pitch while using his opposing arm to strike the head with a stick. Perhaps he was influenced by seeing talking drums in Africa and relayed a similar type of percussive pitch bending. For certain, Blakey's riveted cymbals are a consummate force. If his cymbal pattern feels like a volcano, his press roll is a tidal wave.

Blakey was altogether relentless throughout his life. He led the Jazz Messengers until his death in 1990 at age 71. Their music incorporated Afro-Cuban, Afro-Brazilian, and American Gospel influences. Music always seemed to be Blakey's guiding spiritual force and sense of

[24] A rim click is when the drum stick rests on the head and vertically strikes the rim on the edge of the drum.

identity. Perhaps his artistry channels the inordinate amount of pain he experienced as an orphaned African American. He died a leader, educator, and source of inspiration for jazz generations to come.

CHAPTER 10: PHILLY JOE JONES

Joseph Rudolph Jones was born in Philadelphia on July 15, 1923. His father Armistead was a coal worker from Virginia who died when Jones was not yet one. His mother Amelia was a pianist from Pennsylvania. She was raised in a highly musical family with six sisters. Jones' grandmother was a concert pianist that instilled musical discipline into each of her seven daughters, seeing music as a requisite for their development. Jones' aunt Helen Scott was an established professional saxophonist that played in one of Vi Burnside's overlooked all-female bands. When Jones was young, his mother taught him the piano (Mallory, 2013).

Jones complemented his piano skills with tap dancing as a child, learning informally by watching and recreating what he saw on the streets of Philadelphia. Jones was gifted, and he regularly appeared as a tap dancer on the popular Philadelphia radio station WIP (Korall, 2004). Although he enjoyed tap dancing, its percussive nature sparked a deeper curiosity in him about drumming. He channeled his dancing abilities and began teaching himself the drums around the age of ten. At night, he would sneak across the street from his home and peek into the windows of a bar that featured live music. Jones would focus on the drummer until his mother forced him back inside the house (Mallory, 2013).

Jones discovered a true passion in percussion and began to study with a well-known Philadelphia drummer James "Coatsville" Harris. He taught Jones mostly about the snare drum and rudiments, which formed the basis of much of Jones' forthcoming vocabulary. As the alphabet is comprised of letters, so is drumming vocabulary comprised of rudiments. Jones continued to improve and gain valuable knowledge by sneaking into bars, requesting to sit in, and presenting his elders with questions about the music industry (Korall, 2004). On the radio, he listened to Papa Jo Jones, the only other known tap dancer of the drummers examined. His main

influence, however, was Chick Webb. At volumes that could be heard throughout the home, Jones would regularly turn his radio to the broadcasts of Chick Webb performing at the Savoy Ballroom.

Jones voluntarily enlisted in the Army in 1941. Although he had not yet graduated high school, he became a military policeman for three years. His time in the Army is something of a mystery, and he was hesitant to discuss it throughout his life. Papa Jo Jones and Kenny Clarke were much older, and yet they were drafted around the time Philly Joe Jones was discharged. What is known about Jones' time in the service is that he performed with military musicians in unofficial capacities and at jam sessions. At age twenty, Jones returned to the United States with a renewed sense of focus. He bought a new drum set and was eager to involve himself in the Philadelphia music scene (Korall, 2004).

Jones' ascension within the music industry was not immediate, and he first needed to secure steady income. Despite racist opposition, he passed a series of rigorous tests and was hired at Philadelphia's Public Transportation Company (PTC). He was the first African American trolley driver in the city's history (Mallory, 2013). By day, he worked and attempted to network with musicians that were passengers on the trolley. At night, he navigated the local music scene and steadily gained respect as a working drummer.

Eventually, Jones was given the opportunity to substitute for Art Blakey at a now-defunct venue in Philadelphia known as Zanzibar (Mallory, 2013). At the time, Jones' drum set vocabulary reflected a knowledge of the basic cymbal pattern, complemented by rudimental snare drum flare. By the time he resigned from the PTC and moved to New York, Jones' technique was developed, and his reputation had transcended the Philadelphia area.

Max Roach and Art Blakey became personal mentors through association and encouraged his relocation to New York City, and in 1943, Jones obliged. His reputation was enhanced by competently substituting for Blakey. Moreover, Roach was his biggest drumming influence at the time, and Jones would travel to New York to watch him play. A logical destination for multiple reasons, New York City was the heartbeat of jazz and other types of modern music. Philadelphia had a healthy music scene, yet Jones needed to relocate to maximize his potential.

His first performance as a New York City resident occurred at the historic venue Birdland with Slim Gaillard, a multi-faceted entertainer of the comedic variety (Korall, 2004). Next, Jones enjoyed a years-long stint with rhythm and blues bandleader Joe Morris. Jones was able to tour the United States while earning abnormally more compensation than ever before. His first recording experience was with Morris on September 19, 1948, in New York. This recording features Jones on drum set, Morris on vocals and trumpet, Johnny Griffin on tenor saxophone, Bill McLemore on baritone saxophone, Elmo Hope on piano, and Percy Heath on bass (Mallory, 2013).

By 1949, Jones had secured ongoing performances with the venerable Tadd Dameron. Indeed, Jones' increased success created a sense of urgency for him that he needed to continue improving, and he sought the highly regarded Cozy Cole for instruction (Korall, 2004). Cole shared a teaching studio with Gene Krupa, and the two eventually co-operated a successful drum school in Manhattan throughout the 1950s (Mallory, 2013). Jones' musical sight-reading abilities were initially weak yet enhanced by Cole's instruction. Moreover, Cole could be rather particular, disallowing Jones from moving on to a new concept until the current idea was clearly

understood. Cole taught Jones for a few years, enhancing both his sight reading and musical decision-making skills.

Overall, Jones' improvisation had a new sense of purpose. Snare drum rudiments were not simply a composite of his musical vocabulary—they possessed an expressive, artistic purpose. His time with Cole proved successful. In 1951, Jones caught the attention of Buddy Rich and became the drummer in his big band. Jones played drums while Rich led the band, singing and playing exactly one thunderous drum solo per night. Considering Rich's place in the pantheon of big band drumming, this situation likely made Jones feel considerable pressure. Still, Rich was a mentor that gave Jones car rides to rehearsals and performances as needed (Korall, 2004).

Jones' stint as Buddy Rich's drummer led to an opportunity to play for Duke Ellington's band. After making a considerable impression on Ellington and his band members at the audition, Jones briefly returned home to Philadelphia and was falsely arrested due to a case of misidentification. As a result, Jones' missed his first engagement with Ellington and was fired (Korall, 2004). This period of his life was difficult as Jones' dealt with substance abuse issues and faced constant pressure in the music industry. Still, his drum set vocabulary was increasingly sophisticated and seemingly informed, at least in part, by every other drummer examined in this study.

As Jones' was dealing with personal and systemic issues, his old friend Miles Davis was successfully quitting his own heroin habit. Davis had moved home to East St. Louis and was performing in the Midwest, away from the temptations that remained in New York. Upon his return, he reunited with Jones and formed a highly regarded quintet that included Sonny Rollins on tenor saxophone, Red Garland on piano, and Paul Chambers on bass. Soon after the quintet's

formation, Rollins was replaced by Jones' old friend from Philadelphia, John Coltrane (Mallory, 2013).

The First Miles Davis Quintet is one of the most well-known groups in jazz history, and Jones' synthesized knowledge was more visible within the music community. Whereas Art Blakey executed cross-rhythms more heavily on the drums, Jones was playing them between the high-hats and ride cymbal for a subtler effect. Press rolls were a significant part of his vocabulary, yet compared to most jazz drummers, they were considerably refined. Likely a credit to his snare drum artistry, Jones' brush playing in the Miles Davis Quintet was exquisite and fully realized. He proliferated highly unique concepts such as brush trills. By placing a brush flat on the drumhead and "trilling" it from side to side, he simulated a snare drum roll elegantly and without the use of drumsticks.

Jones finally left the Miles Davis Quintet in 1958. Yet, before his departure he participated in a historic recording with John Coltrane that also featured Kenny Drew on piano, Lee Morgan on trumpet, Curtis Fuller on trombone, and Paul Chambers on bass. *Blue Train* is a hard-bop masterpiece featuring Jones at his finest (John Coltrane, 1958). Moreover, this album is of incredibly high recording quality. "Locomotion" is the album's third track, and the ensemble performs it at a blistering tempo. The beginning portion of Jones' forthcoming drum solo is featured in Figure 8.

"Locomotion" is an AABA composition in which the "A" sections are twelve-bar blues forms. The "B" section is a standard eight-measure bridge. Thus, the overall form is a rather lengthy forty-four measures. While that may seem extravagant, it should be noted that Jones and the other musicians of Coltrane's sextet had long been internalizing the styles of bebop and

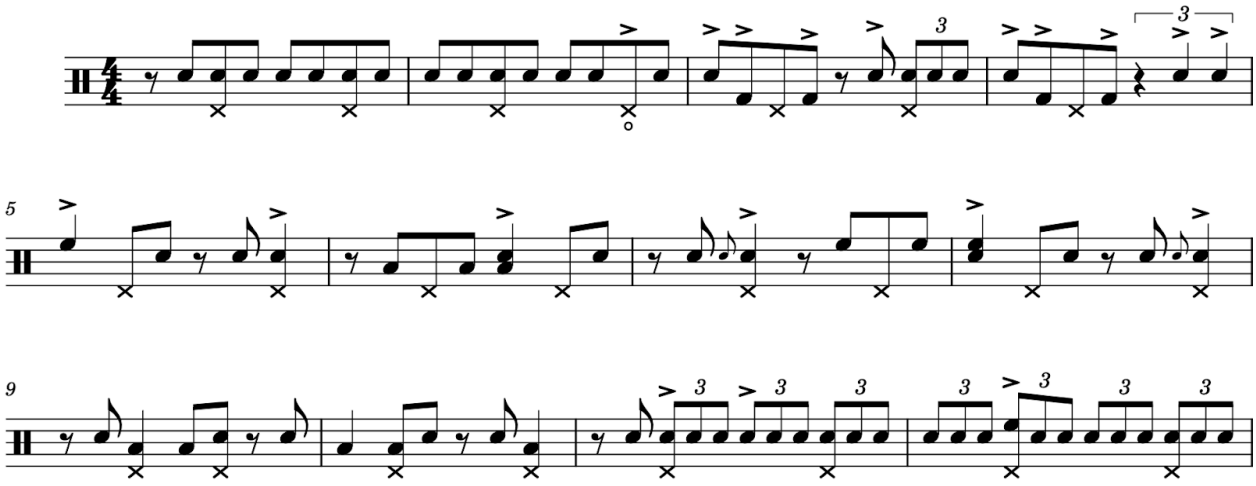

Figure 8: *The first twelve measures of Jones' solo. Note the hemiola (accents) in measures 5-8.*

swing music. Both styles regularly featured twelve-bar blues and thirty-two bar AABA forms, albeit separately.

"Locomotion" is quintessential post-bop in its synthesis of the blues forms in an AABA context. Jones begins the tune with an eight-bar drum solo that clearly establishes the character. Moreover, the head serves as a call and response between Coltrane and the other horns. After solos from Coltrane, Morgan, and Fuller, Jones plays the final solo on drums (05:36). The snare drum is ornamented with flashes from the tom-toms and bass drum. Logically, the high-hat remains on beats two and four. The band likely appreciated that type of unifying force as the tempo is incredibly fast—the capacity for errors is exponentially increased with the tune's speed.

The first twelve measures in Figure 8 reveal not only Jones' snare drum artistry, but also a penchant for emphasizing every third beat in a common time context. Recall from the first chapter that Papa Jo Jones outlined a similar hemiola concept with his bass drum. Moreover, Papa Jo Jones is the only other drummer examined to have been a tap dancer, and his drumming had a considerable effect on Philly Joe Jones.

Jones did not earn the nickname “Philly” until he was roughly thirty years of age (Korall, 2004). Despite his false arrest and immediate firing from the Ellington band, his drumming had made an impression on several of his band members. One such member was clarinetist Tony Scott. Supposedly, Scott first called him “Philly” at Minton’s Playhouse in 1953 for the purpose of distinguishing him from Papa Jo Jones (Korall, 2004). Philly Joe Jones welcomed the distinctive name and seemed proud to be associated with the city of Philadelphia. He died on August 30, 1985, just five days before his elder Papa Jo Jones, who passed away on September 3, 1985.

CHAPTER 11: JIMMY COBB

James Wilbur Cobb was born in Washington, D.C., on January 20, 1929. It does not seem that he grew up in a highly musical home, although he is known to have been exposed to music growing up in the Catholic Church. In a 1979 interview, Cobb mentioned an unnamed friend who was obsessed with drumming, using his thumbs to percussively strike everything around him (Mattingly, 1979). Cobb would follow his friend throughout Washington, DC, as he attempted to establish himself as a serious drummer. In their journeys throughout the city, Cobb became obsessed and began teaching himself to play the drums.

In his early teens, Cobb was working in a drug store with his mother, a short-order cook. Balancing work and school, Cobb earned twenty-eight dollars per week as a busboy (Mattingly, 1979). After several months, he had enough money to purchase a proper Slingerland drum set. Without any formal training, he assembled the drum set and began to explore different sound possibilities. Cobb ultimately considered his lack of formal knowledge to largely be an asset, as he was unrestricted in his expressive capabilities. Once he had learned a modest number of coordinative concepts, he began teaching himself to read music.

In the evenings, Cobb would stay up late and listen to jazz broadcasts from New York City. He appreciated a broad array of drummers, including Sid Catlett, Kenny Clarke, and Max Roach. Cobb participated in his high school band yet did not receive individualized training there. He sought training from a professional percussionist with the National Symphony Orchestra, but the two did not make a strong connection, and Cobb realized that formal training may be a pointless endeavor (Mattingly, 1979). Besides, he needed training outside of orchestral percussion.

As with all other drummers examined in this project, Cobb mostly learned about music on the job. World War II had drafted many musicians into military service, displacing them from the industry. Cobb was at the opportune age and ability level to fill the void (Mattingly, 1979). His first notable performances in Washington, DC were with Billie Holiday. These few engagements led to a long stint with tenor saxophonist and fellow Washington, DC native Charlie Rouse. Rouse had been traveling extensively back and forth from New York, playing with such talents as Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker. These connections enabled Cobb to properly learn tunes firsthand that were being performed by the top players in New York City.

Following his considerable exposure to the most advanced musicians, Cobb needed to relocate. His first performances in New York occurred with Earl Bostic, a saxophonist and established bandleader in the city. Bostic fronted a unique ensemble that ranged from six to thirteen members, depending on circumstances. Interestingly, Cobb never played in a legitimate "big band" throughout his life, Bostic's ensemble was likely the largest. After one year with Bostic, he was offered the chance to play with Dinah Washington, a vocalist with an ensemble that could also vary in size as needed. Cobb enjoyed this flexibility of ensemble size as it created different artistic possibilities (Mattingly, 1979). During his time with Washington, Cobb was careful to maintain a conservative, unobtrusive cymbal presence.

As I discussed in the chapter on Roy Haynes, supporting a vocalist requires special consideration from drum set players. Cobb naturally possessed subtle and supportive instincts, proper complements for a singer. Perhaps supporting Dinah Washington enhanced his drumming sensitivities, or maybe he was hired because of his supporting style. One thing is certain—Cobb's background energy is existential. Transcribing his drumming reveals a surprising amount

of activity in the context of the basic cymbal pattern. In the broader sound mix, his snare drum and bass drum are engaged inconspicuously.

At one point in Cobb's three-year stint with Dinah Washington, he was on a musical tour of the South and met Julian "Cannonball" Adderley. Adderley was a working alto saxophonist and former high school band director in Florida. He had been interested to learn more about the scene in New York, so he followed the band to their hotel (Mattingly, n.d.). Cobb and the rest of Dinah Washington's ensemble made a favorable impression, and Adderley relocated to New York with his brother, a trumpeter named Nat. Upon their arrival to the city, the Adderley brothers wasted no time in their professional pursuits. They sought Cobb to be their drummer and established a working relationship, ultimately recording *Cannonball's Sharpshooters* in 1958 (Cannonball Adderley). In addition to Cobb and the Adderley brothers, this album also features Sam Jones on bass and Junior Mance on drums.

The first track is "Our Delight," a composition by Tadd Dameron. Adderley's band executes this opening tune at a searingly fast tempo. Despite all the previously mentioned subtleties of Cobb's artistry, his energy remains in the foreground with Adderley's group. Cobb hearkens back to Kenny Clarke as he accompanies the opening melody on the high-hat cymbal with snare and bass accompaniment. Recall how Clarke played a similarly fast tempo, albeit with brushes, in a way that eliminated parts of the cymbal pattern as a method for creation. At such fast tempi, it becomes sensible to remove potential clutter.

Subsequent solos from the saxophone, trumpet, and piano lead to Cobb trading fours with the band (03:18). "Our Delight" is a 32-measure AABA form, and the band plays the first four measures of the "A" sections. Cobb performs the latter half of the "A" sections and the entirety of the "B" section alone. As a musical practice, trading can occur naturally in jazz, yet the

specific trading stipulations in “Our Delight” seem to have been determined before recording began.

As the trading concludes, Cobb performs a feverish solo that heavily utilizes the snare drum (03:38). The character of the outgoing melody is established as the band reenters (04:07). Indeed, Cobb’s depth and range are fully illuminated with Cannonball Adderley. His drum set language had become enhanced by a considerable number of his predecessors examined in this project. *Cannonball’s Sharpshooters* features the cross rhythms of Art Blakey and Roy Haynes, the snare drum artistry of Philly Joe Jones, the drum breaks of Chick Webb, and of course the basic cymbal pattern of Papa Jo Jones.

During 1958, Adderley was heavily involved with Miles Davis. Davis’ drummer at the time, Philly Joe Jones, was struggling with substance abuse issues and sometimes failed to appear for musical engagements. Adderley insisted that Cobb be present in case Jones was absent for a performance. This was an opportunity for Cobb, as he was able to insert himself into the Miles Davis Quintet by simply being present. To be sure, his highly synthesized drum set vocabulary was also a necessity. As Chick Webb previously benefited from an unnamed drummer getting lost on the subway, so did Cobb benefit from Jones’ continued absences in Miles Davis First Quintet. In 1959, Cobb was afforded the chance to record the most commercially successful jazz album of all time, *Kind of Blue* (Miles Davis).

This historic album features Miles Davis on trumpet, Bill Evans and Wynton Kelly on piano, Paul Chambers on bass, and Jimmy Cobb on drums. It should be noted that the pianists do not play on the same track—each track is performed as a quintet, with Kelly only appearing on “Freddie Freeloader.” Despite the overlap of personnel, *Kind of Blue* is distinctive from the previously discussed *Cannonball’s Sharpshooters*. Cobb had revealed incredible depth and range

with the Adderley brothers, yet Miles Davis required his understated musical personality. Davis' album seems to have a unifying theme in which everyone contributes maximally while remaining unobtrusive and unselfish.

As with all acoustic music, *Kind of Blue* is not executed to perfection (Miles Davis, 1959). That is not to say it sounds imperfect. Rather, acoustic music is intrinsically imperfect and contains blemishes. The tempo may shift, and pitch is not always executed with empirical perfection. Also, there can be decisional disagreements within the band. For instance, in the opening track "So What" there seems to be a discrepancy as to when Bill Evans' piano solo ends and Paul Chambers' restatement of the melody should begin (08:00). As the band navigates through this rare moment of confusion, Cobb continues with an unerring sense of time, and the listener is none the wiser. As an artistic concept, perfection is a problematic concept. Precision could be applied to individual goals and practice benchmarks, not to artistic expression. A testament to the caliber of these musicians, their sound remains euphonious within this imperfection. For them, knowledge of the jazz language is a requirement, but perfection is not a goal.

Kind of Blue is an understated masterpiece that is proven to be accessible to non-jazz musicians. The album's character beautifully synchronizes with Cobb's style. Perhaps his incidental foray into the Miles Davis Quintet is partially responsible for the album's success. Although, it is interesting to consider how Philly Joe Jones would have performed were he featured on the album. As with *Cannonball's Sharpshooters*, Cobb's full essence is revealed in *Kind of Blue.* The difference is that the latter requires more active listening to understand the extent of Cobb's vocabulary. The Davis quintet is more akin to a singular musical force and less a composite of individual musicians.

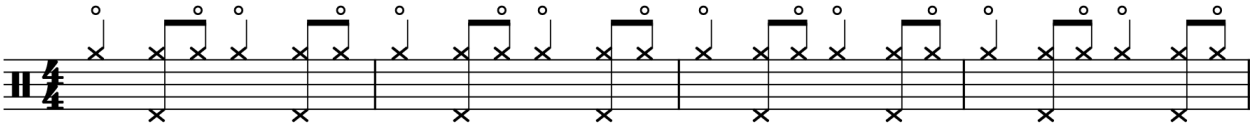

Figure 9: *This study reveals the importance of this basic cymbal pattern.*

Perhaps the most substantial aspect of Cobb's drumming in *Kind of Blue* is the prominence of the proverbial basic cymbal pattern, shown above in Figure 9. In the case of jazz waltz "All Blues," Cobb adjusts his cymbal pattern to accommodate a time signature of 3|4. Indeed, this album features Cobb frequently working within the confines of the basic cymbal pattern. Papa Jo Jones and the other swing drummers helped to proliferate this technique in the 1930s, and Cobb was keeping it alive.

To be certain, musical inspiration was not always moving in a singular direction—some younger drummers have certainly influenced their elders. Both together and separately they have made the world a better place by generating an intelligent and inspirational artistic language. As the last drummer of this thesis and performer on one of the greatest jazz albums of all time, Jimmy Cobb certainly carried the torch and passed it on to future generations. A monumental jazz influence for over 60 years, he passed away on May 24, 2020, at the age of 91.

CHAPTER 12: CONCLUSION

My examination of these nine drummers from the Swing, Bebop, and Post-bop Eras has revealed their individual contributions to jazz chronologically. My thesis provides a unique analysis of these nine musicians and their influences across three sequential jazz periods. Each drummer is characterized by unique musical contributions to the jazz drum set language, along with possessing inordinate amounts of musical dedication and passion. The findings of my analysis are novel, and there is no other study of these figures of this size and scope.

The first drummer, Papa Jo Jones, was more influential on those who followed him than other scholarship has noted. He was heavily informed by the variety shows that he began performing at in his youth. Upon entering the professional swing music scene, he proliferated a basic cymbal pattern that became a basis of jazz drum set creation for generations of musicians. This pattern was utilized at one point or another by every drummer examined, and many of these musicians claimed Jones was their primary influence. It could be argued that Jones is the most influential of all drummers examined.

The next swing drummer, Gene Krupa, advanced the concept of the drum set player as a soloist. Heavily associated with Benny Goodman in the 1930s, Krupa captivated audiences with his charisma and showmanship. He was influenced by the snare drum artistry of Baby Dodds and Zutty Singleton while living in Chicago, and their influence helped develop Krupa's style and showmanship. When Krupa moved to New York, his ultimate influence was determined to be Chick Webb. Krupa possessed incredible enthusiasm as a soloist, and ultimately benefited from his whiteness by having an increased access to opportunity. He lost in a drum battle against Chick Webb at the Savoy Ballroom according to his own account. However, the press identified Krupa and the rest of Benny Goodman's band as the winners.

The final swing drummer I examined, Chick Webb, was a self-taught musician who learned through professional experience. He was born in Baltimore and moved to New York City. Webb is the only swing drummer in this study to remain on the East Coast his entire life. Conversely, Papa Jo Jones and Gene Krupa were born in Chicago and did not enter the professional New York scene until their careers were established. Transcribing Webb's drum set playing revealed unparalleled virtuosity in the Swing Era. He was revered by his swing contemporaries, as well as the later bebop and post-bop musicians. Considered to be one of the greatest swing drummers, he was entirely self-taught, and his musical training occurred on the bandstand. He did not live long enough to experience the Bebop Era.

Regarding the bebop drummers, Kenny Clarke was the first of this study. A native of Pittsburgh, Papa Jo Jones was his greatest drumming inspiration. This study uncovers the extent of Clarke's multi-instrumentalism, considering he also played vibraphone and trombone at a professional level. After having a strong impression on Dizzy Gillespie, he returned to the United States after three years in the military only to discover that drummers were playing in his signature style. Gillespie was taken by Clarke's drum set playing and instilled it into many emerging New York City drummers while Clarke was drafted and deployed in the Army. Moreover, he innovatively performed the basic cymbal pattern by reduction using brushes in favor of drumsticks. Clarke was creative in the way that he chose to omit certain notes of the pattern to facilitate an incredibly fast tempo.

The second bebop drummer I examined, Max Roach, had a less direct connection to Kenny Clarke than I anticipated. Roach's ascension into bebop can largely be credited to his association with his primary musical influence, Charlie Parker. Roach conceptualized the drums melodically and constructed his own language by conversing with Charlie Parker's melodies.

Roach's tireless roaming of the New York jazz scene as a teenager, watching and sitting in on drums whenever possible, shaped his unique style. This type of innate desire was shared by every drummer of this study.

Roy Haynes is the last of the bebop drummers examined. His drum set playing is revealed to be a unified force that does not sound like a composite of percussion instruments. This was demonstrated in a transcription of his performance with Thelonious Monk. Haynes' partiality toward timbales was examined as he played only drums and no cymbals for extended periods of his solo. Haynes' association with Monk was historic, and it parallels Max Roach and Charlie Parker's relationship. As of April 2023, Roy Haynes is still alive and occasionally performs on drum set.

Art Blakey is the first post-bop drummer examined in this study. He was orphaned at a young age and faced racial injustice throughout his life. Blakey worked in factories in his teens until he was able to earn a decent wage as a jazz pianist. He switched to drums, and Chick Webb was his most considerable drumming influence. A veteran of the Swing and Bebop Eras, Blakey was overlooked before he came to prominence in the Post-bop Era. One signature aspect of his playing that this study uncovered was his utilization of cross-rhythms in the context of the basic cymbal pattern, a concept that has become popularized by aspiring jazz drummers.

The second drummer of the Post-bop Era I examined is Philly Joe Jones. Jones studied with Philadelphia percussionist James "Coatsville" Harris and learned about snare drum rudiments. Jones learned to tap dance as a child, after which he became obsessed with drums and percussion. After becoming professionally established as a drummer in New York, he sought out Cozy Cole, a swing drummer who shared a teaching studio with Gene Krupa. Jones' sound is

characterized by snare drum artistry, which is evidenced in my transcription of his drum solo on John Coltrane's 1958 album, *Blue Train.*

The final drummer of this study is Jimmy Cobb, a self-taught musician from Washington, DC. Despite appearing on some of the most famous jazz albums, there is scant research about Cobb's life, which this study examines. Interviews with Rick Mattingly revealed that Cobb was inspired by Max Roach and Kenny Clarke. Ultimately, analyzing Cobb reveals his style as a broad synthesis of all drummers in this study. Cobb utilized the basic cymbal pattern that was developed by Papa Jo Jones. He further exuded virtuosity, the usage of cross-rhythms, and a clear understanding of the melody. Cobb had strong connections with the musicians around him, and his drum set language represents a synthesis of the drummers examined before him.

These nine drummers grew up with varying degrees of privilege and a diversity of backgrounds. Several of these jazz titans were orphaned, impoverished, and grew up in unstable, impoverished conditions. Considering their contributions to jazz percussion, it is unfortunate how little biographical information about them is available. Although these drummer's life paths differed, there is one force that unifies all these musicians—passion. When each of these drummers discovered music, there seemed to be no alternative. Several were in the military in various capacities, yet they all immediately returned to the professional music scene upon discharge. As of April 2023, Roy Haynes still occasionally performs at age 98. The other eight musicians in this project continued playing drum set with passion for the rest of their lives. This study uncovers the unique influences, interconnections, and contributions of these nine remarkable musicians and their common passion for jazz percussion.

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