

EXTENDED IMPROVISATIONS IN THE DRUMMING OF MAX ROACH AND

KOFI GHANABA: RHYTHMIC CORRESPONDENCES

by

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## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Extended Improvisations in the Drumming of Max Roach and Kofi Ghanaba: Rhythmic

Correspondences

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The Ghanaian drummer Kofi Ghanaba is not frequently discussed as a central figure in the historical trajectory of modern jazz drumming. However, the nature of his musical relationship with the firmly influential Max Roach implies that Ghanaba may have had an important impact on the vocabulary of the jazz drumset. This thesis, using historiographic and analytical material, attempts to show the specific transference of musical data and concept from Ghanaba to Roach, thus re-orienting Kofi Ghanaba as a significant figure in the evolution of 20<sup>th</sup>-century jazz drumming.

Historiographic and analytical methodology can help us to surmount the problems inherent to attempts at defining influence when there is an absence of verifiable primary-source testimony. The identification of a relevant temporal period and the use of transcription and analysis to comprehensively search for instances of “individual rhythmic correspondence” between Roach and Ghanaba is referred to using the metaphor of building an historiographic “sandbox,” through which we drag an analytical “comb.”

Section I uses historical documents to establish proof of the physical and aural relationship between Roach and Ghanaba. Section II draws on existing research, my own

comprehensive discographical exploration, and transcription and analysis to narrow down the possibilities of “individual rhythmic correspondence” between the two drummers. The use of complex ostinatos in long-form individual improvisations emerges as the most likely point of transference from Ghanaba to Roach.

There are inherent historiographical difficulties in tracing point-to-point musical transference that can make proving lines of influence between artists an exceedingly murky endeavor. However, the significant documentation of physical and aural proximity, primary source confirmation of musical influence from both subjects, and concrete musical correlations supported by transcription and analysis suggest a firm basis for understanding Kofi Ghanaba as an influence on Max Roach, and, by extension, on the continuum of 20<sup>th</sup>-century jazz drumming.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The guidance and support of family, friends, colleagues and instructors has been essential to the completion of this thesis. First, I would like to thank Professors Henry Martin and Lewis Porter at Rutgers, who made it possible for me to attend the Jazz History and Research program while still being able to work as a touring musician for the past four years. Their endless flexibility and support have made the dream of continuing my education in jazz history while not “pressing pause” on my career a reality.

This thesis was written primarily under the direction of Dr. Martin. His thoughtful and thorough edits have been invaluable, as was his introduction to royal hartigan, who I now count as not only an indispensable resource concerning the influence of African culture in jazz, but also as a kindred musical spirit. Sean Lorre oversaw the initial paper in 2018 that became the basis for this thesis. It has been a joy studying with him under varying topics during my time at Rutgers.

My fellow students at Rutgers have been essential to my development as a researcher, and I would like to particularly thank Scott Brown, Saul Castellanos and Karuna Maddava for their inspiration in and outside of the classroom. Jazzinstitut Darmstadt provided me with a wealth of bibliographical resources, and their prompt assistance has helped facilitate my research.

Billy Hart and the late Mel Zelnick planted in me a love of jazz music and a deep respect for Max Roach. Their inspiration, coupled with the loving support of my parents Nita and Dan Morris and my brother Jesse, has provided the basis for my career as a student and as a professional musician. Without them, none of this would have been possible.

Paul Greene and Tom Lifsey provided continuous and indefatigable emotional support on countless phone calls throughout the writing process. My extended family in Taiwan, particularly my sister-in-law Long You-Zhen often lent a helping hand while I was struggling to juggle rehearsal and performance schedules with the thesis. Terence Hsieh, Julian Wittich, Scott Prairie, Noah Hecht, and countless other colleagues sat through protracted sessions of me working out my ideas “in real time.” I am grateful for their patience and friendship.

During the writing of this thesis the global COVID-19 pandemic accelerated, and I was stranded apart from my wife Long You-Wen due to strict border controls in much of Asia. Over the past nine months that we have been separated she has shared with me so much support, love, wisdom, and encouragement. I count myself blessed to share my life with her.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                            |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Abstract                                                                   | ii  |
| Acknowledgments                                                            | iv  |
| Introduction                                                               | 1   |
| Chapter 1: Developing Context for Physical and Aural Relationships         | 3   |
| Chapter 2: The “Comb” and the “Sandbox”                                    | 10  |
| Chapter 3: Analysis of “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II”                | 21  |
| Chapter 4: Max Roach’s 1977 <i>Solos</i> and Comparisons with “Lady Marie” | 47  |
| Chapter 5: Comparison of “Blues Waltz” and “The Drum Also Waltzes”         | 66  |
| Appendix A: Kofi Ghanaba Chronology                                        | 95  |
| Appendix B: Creating “Temporal Ripples” to Define Discographic Area        | 101 |
| Appendix C: “The Drum Also Waltzes” Transcription (Abridged)               | 102 |
| Appendix D: Interview with royal hartigan                                  | 108 |
| Bibliography                                                               | 129 |
| Discography                                                                | 133 |
| Jazzinstitut Darmstadt Bibliographies                                      | 135 |

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis suggests the direct transmission of rhythmic content between Max Roach and Kofi Ghanaba.<sup>1</sup> My methodology was built around the metaphor of dragging a comb through a sandbox, with the comb representing specific musical characteristics employed by Ghanaba, and the sandbox representing a relevant cross-section of Max Roach's discography. In theory, particular moments in Max Roach's playing would "catch" as we dragged the comb through the sandbox, showing instances of "individual rhythmic correspondence" between the two musicians.<sup>2</sup> Once a sturdy historiographic framework showing the temporal and physical relationship of Ghanaba and Roach was in place, those "rhythmic correspondences" would show a transmission of influence.

However, after early experiments with this methodology, I discovered a flaw in my logic. A community of musicians consists of a complex web of relationships between dynamic, growing individuals that exist within a relevant socio-cultural context. Attempts to extract specific rhythmic correspondences between two subjects will generally run aground amid problems of prior or contemporary diffusion of similar content within the community. This makes straight lines of musical influence between two subjects (subject A and subject B) exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to prove without subject B's

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<sup>1</sup> While Kofi Ghanaba was known by different names throughout his career, including "Guy Warren" and "Guy Warren of Ghana," for the sake of consistency I will use his final chosen moniker of "Kofi Ghanaba" throughout this thesis, regardless of the time period in question.

<sup>2</sup> I borrow the term "individual rhythmic correspondence" from royal hartigan. While I was first made aware of this term in a personal interview with hartigan in 2018, the same concept appears in his 1986 dissertation *Blood Drum Spirit: Drum Languages of West Africa, African-America, Native America, Central Java, and South India* (Ph.D. diss., Wesleyan University, 1986), 184-198. Here, hartigan conducts a masterful examination of various west African rhythmic concepts/performance practices and their possible corollaries in "African-American drum set styles," focusing primarily on the drumming of Edward Blackwell, who participated in the study.

direct admission of that influence.<sup>3</sup> Originally written as a paper in 2018, my goal here was to document the processes involved in constructing this comb/sandbox methodology, provide an examination of the moment where our “comb” breaks, and offer possible solutions relevant to the study of transatlantic musical influence. In 2020 I was finally able to explore some of the “possible” solutions offered in 2018, readjusting the original paper’s “comb” to identify more relevant correspondences by focusing on both drummers’ remarkable use of ostinatos in their extended improvisations.

I believe my continued exploration of this methodology specifically within the context of Kofi Ghanaba and Max Roach’s relationship is merited, simply because there are primary source documents from both subjects involved that testify to the transmission of influence. However, the *specifics* of that influence remain unclear in any of the existing documents. Hopefully this thesis can suggest some of the possible lines of influence between Roach and Ghanaba, and in doing so helps resituate Kofi Ghanaba more firmly within the historical narrative of 20<sup>th</sup>-century jazz drumming, where, as Max Roach stated passionately in the 1970s, he so rightfully belongs.

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<sup>3</sup> As Sean Lorre, who, while editing the original draft of this thesis at Rutgers University in 2018 pointed out, “there [also] remains the possibility that, even following such an admission, a performer was subconsciously influenced by another set of (similar) ideas through other channels.”

## CHAPTER 1: DEVELOPING CONTEXT FOR PHYSICAL AND AURAL RELATIONSHIPS

In tracing historical transmissions of musical ideas, it's of prime importance to show that there was also a viable historical context of *people interacting*, be it by physical migration or the material movement of cultural ideas through a different medium (i.e. recordings). By showing that Max Roach and Kofi Ghanaba had significant contact, and by examining the nature of that contact, we can add validity and context to whatever tentative conclusions are suggested by transcription and analysis. With an accurate chronology of Ghanaba's movements between Africa, London, Chicago, and New York, as well as a comprehensive assessment of recording and release dates of Ghanaba's music, it's possible to identify points of contact between Roach and Ghanaba, both physical and aural.<sup>4</sup>

With a chronological framework in place, we can start looking for specific moments of musical transmission. Upon arriving in Chicago, Ghanaba recollected that he and Roach had been in contact, with Roach suggesting he make the move to New York,<sup>5</sup> and that Roach had expressed interest in his use of the "talking drum," ostensibly the *bintin obonu* that Ghanaba employed frequently throughout his career.<sup>6</sup> Ghanaba's first record *Africa Speaks, America Answers* was recorded in Chicago in 1955 and released by Decca in 1956.<sup>7</sup> Robin Kelley discusses the influence that this record may have had on

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A for a complete chronology of relevant events in Ghanaba's life.

<sup>5</sup> Guy Warren, *I Have a Story to Tell...* (Accra, Ghana: Guinea Press, 1962), 20.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen Feld, "Guy Warren/Ghanaba," in *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra: Five Musical Years in Ghana* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012), 72. See also Warren, *I Have a Story*, 54. For the *bintin obonu* as "talking drum" terminology, see Robin D.G. Kelley, "The Drum Wars of Guy Warren," in *Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press: 2012), 26.

<sup>7</sup> royal hartigan, "Ghanaba and the Heritage of African Jazz," *Annual Review of Jazz Studies* (1997): 147. Session data taken from the Tom Lord Jazz Discography, session #: W1293.

the jazz community at the time, describing it as “the first LP in jazz history that fused jazz and African music.”<sup>8</sup> I would like to posit, however, that any concrete, direct influence on Max Roach would have come approximately two years later, after Ghanaba had moved to New York.<sup>9</sup>

### **“Temporal Ripples”: Defining Useful “Book-ends” for the Chronological Context.**

The “aha moment” when searching for a concrete exchange of ideas between Max Roach and Kofi Ghanaba came while scouring through the autobiographical information contained in Ghanaba’s 1962 tome, *I Have a Story to Tell*. As this book details, Roach and Ghanaba had been in contact in Chicago, and after Ghanaba made the move to New York in 1957 and began working steadily at the African Room, their relationship continued to grow. Roach frequented the club and at one point sat in with the band.<sup>10</sup> Then, after Ghanaba’s return from a trip to Ghana (sometime after July 10, 1959), Max Roach and Willy Jones made a visit to Ghanaba’s home in New York to “listen to some records and to chat.”<sup>11</sup> Ghanaba:

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<sup>8</sup> Kelley, “Drum Wars,” 23-24.

<sup>9</sup> Ghanaba moves to New York in 1957: hartigan, “Ghanaba,” 147.

<sup>10</sup> Warren, *I Have a Story*, 55-56. Kelley notes that James Hawthorne “Chief” Bey, an African American percussionist, worked with Ghanaba at the African Room during this period. Bey was a figure situated firmly in the lineage of pre-Ghanaba African influence in the United States, being a student of Ismay Andrews, who had studied with Asadata Dafora, and was one of the few African Americans that Ghanaba acknowledged as having a grasp of “authentic African drumming as opposed to the more popular Latin and Caribbean styles” [Kelley, “Drum Wars,” 28]. As Bey had a profoundly personal relationship Ghanaba and had contemporaneous collaborations with many jazz musicians in New York, as well as with Babatunde Olatunji, a historiographical examination of Bey’s physical and aural movements within the jazz community might reveal possible “second-hand” influence from Ghanaba.

<sup>11</sup> Warren, *I Have a Story*, 56. “Willy” here is Ghanaba’s spelling of the name. I believe that Ghanaba is referring to William “Willie” Jones, Jr. (October 20, 1929 – April 9, 1993) who had played with Thelonious Monk and Lester Young, among others. The ca. July 10, 1959 date is extrapolated from a Ghanaian newspaper stating that Ghanaba was still present for a concert in Accra on that date and mentions Ghanaba’s preparations to return to New York “mid-July” of that year [see newspaper clipping in Warren, *I Have a Story*, 101]. Ghanaba also states that the visit occurred approximately one year after Roach sat in with him at the African Room. I have not been able to find a specific date for that evening, but, through Ghanaba’s newspaper clippings, it appears that would have happened near the beginning of Ghanaba’s

I delved into my musical theories again, and as the conversation got more involved with everybody sharing in, I decided to play my album “Themes For African Drums,” which none of them had heard. They both sat up! Willy Jones was all ears, and he kept on urging Max to listen to this phrase and listen to that. One track in the album swept them both off their feet. It was “Love, The Mystery Of.” The rhythm in this number is shaggy and juicy. When it ended, they asked for a repeat, and again and again, and they asked me how I was able to weave such a rhythm. I explained it to them academically. *A surprised look, bordering on the unbelievable, appeared on Max’s face. He said, “how could you have explained it to me so simply?” I said to him, “Because I have the key and you don’t.”*<sup>12</sup>

Ghanaba continues:

...I played side two of my album, the track titled “The Lady Marie Drum Suite.” In the first section of this suite, I used a team of five drummers. I did the second section, all by myself, just using one standard set of jazz drums. As the record played, *I told Max and Willy that I was playing the drums all by myself, and I explained to them, the component parts of the rhythmic structure. Then a strange thing happened...Max Roach said, “Guy don’t fool me. You didn’t do all that by yourself. It’s impossible. You’ll have to do it for me to see. You can’t fool me. I am a drummer.”*<sup>13</sup>

Ghanaba then describes Willie Jones leaping to Ghanaba’s defense while Roach becomes increasingly agitated, the implication being that “The King, Max Roach himself...must have felt like a king about to be dethroned.”<sup>14</sup> Considering Ghanaba’s tendency towards egotism, parts of this story should be taken with a grain of salt. However, the meeting appears to have taken place, with a photograph of the three drummers having been taken by a friend of Ghanaba’s.<sup>15</sup> It is also worth taking into

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tenure at the club, probably early 1958 (or possibly late 1957). Note that these newspaper clippings appear in Ghanaba’s *I Have a Story* and are in re-typed form, ostensibly copied by either Bill Buckman (who “typed the manuscript,” according to Ghanaba), or perhaps by other employees of Guinea Press. I have not, as of yet, cross-referenced these clippings.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 56. Emphasis mine. I have included Ghanaba’s sometimes unorthodox syntax in these quotations.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 57. Emphasis mine.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Emphasis removed.

<sup>15</sup> Unless the account of the photograph is fabricated. I assume that it was not, however, due to the detail with which it is described (Max Roach apparently is holding a water pistol that Ghanaba had been using to spray everyone with periodically...one of his “funny ways”). I suspect it can be found in Ghanaba’s extensive collection of items accumulated throughout his career and stored at the Kofi Ghanaba African



consideration Max Roach's public and private attitude toward Ghanaba, which consistently shows a deep respect for Ghanaba's music and its influence. Roach had travelled to Ghana in 1974 with the specific purpose of finding and communicating with Ghanaba, ostensibly to organize a series of concerts and lectures back in the United States.<sup>16</sup> Kwasi Ampene, an ethnomusicologist who became close with Ghanaba after a trip to Ghana in 2003, notes that during the 1974 trip "Ghanaba exposed Roach to live performances of traditional drumming and dance."<sup>17</sup> Upon his arrival in Ghana, an open letter by Roach was published in Accra's *Daily Graphic* newspaper, an excerpt of which follows.

In this letter, I [would] like to record that Ghanaba was so far ahead of what we were all doing, that none of us understood what he was saying, that in order for Afro-American music to be stronger, it must cross-fertilise [sic] with its African origins. Ghanaba's conception, like that of Marcus Garvey, George Washington Carver, etc., was beyond our grasp. We ignored him. Seventeen years later, Black Music in America has turned to Africa for inspiration and rejuvenation, and the African soundz [sic] of Ghanaba is [sic] now being imitated all over the United States wherever Afro-American music is played. . . . I have now come to realize what an immense role Ghanaba could play in Black Music, of which he is the Father, if he could record more of his music for posterity, and appear in Universities, and schools, and places of education in the United States, as well as on stage in specially arranged public

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Heritage Archives and Museum in Accra. I am unaware if this museum is still open, but this link (<https://www.musicinafrica.net/directory/kofi-ghanaba-african-heritage-archives-and-museum>) is still functioning, and appears to have been updated in 2015, seven years after Ghanaba's death. This could imply that the museum is still being maintained. Kwasi Ampene notes that NYU had entered into an agreement to help Ghanaba "develop his African Heritage Archive located at his home," which was in Achimota at the time. Steven Feld and royal hartigan also make mention of Ghanaba's archive/museum in their writings. [See Kwasi Ampene, "One on One: Max Roach in Conversation with Kofi Ghanaba," *American Music Research Center Journal* (2011): 7; Feld, "Guy Warren/Ghanaba," 76; hartigan, "Ghanaba," 163.] Due to the 2020 COVID-19 global pandemic, ongoing at the time of this writing, acquiring access to the materials at the archive has been untenable. Future opportunities to view hard copies of Ghanaba's personal effects would be an invaluable addition to the research presented in this thesis.

<sup>16</sup> Ampene, "One on One," 3-4.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 1.

concerts . . . and to do a series of lectures. It was this idea which brought me to the doors of my friend and compatriot Ghanaba on July 31, 1974.<sup>18</sup>

Roughly one year after Roach and Willie Jones' visit to Ghanaba's New York home in 1959, Roach made his seminal "move toward Africa" as described by Steven Feld, recording "All Africa," the last number on *We Insist! Max Roach's Freedom Now Suite*.<sup>19</sup> These two historical moments provide us with the first, and most controlled, chronological bracket for examining the actual recorded music of Roach and Ghanaba.

[ca. July 10, 1959 – September 6, 1960]

[Roach becomes aware of *African Drums* – Recording of "All Africa"]

Using the historiographical data that we've already examined, we can expand further temporal "ripples" out from the more concrete center.

[1958 [ ca. July 10, 1959 – September 6, 1960] 1962]

[Roach frequents African Room [*African Drums* – "All Africa"] Ghanaba's *African Rhythms*]

Continuing outward:

[1954 [1958 [ca. July 10, 1959 – September 6, 1960] 1962] 1969]

[First contact in Chicago/*Africa Speaks* [African Room [*African Drums* – "All Africa"] *African Rhythms*]

*Afro-Jazz*]

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 3-4. Steven Feld also quotes this letter but lists the year of Roach's visit as 1973 and leaves out everything after "I have now come to realize." This omission is curious, considering the deep emotion this portion of the letter shows for Ghanaba. See Feld, "Guy Warren/Ghanaba," 71.

<sup>19</sup> Feld, "Guy Warren/Ghanaba," 70. See attached discography for release information concerning *We Insist! Max Roach's Freedom Now Suite*, as well as the other records listed in this section.

We can look at 1974's trip to Ghana as marking a new period of collaboration and contact between Roach and Ghanaba, as well as an example of their deepening friendship.<sup>20</sup> Feld writes that the two were visiting "back and forth between the States and Ghana in the 70s and 80s and 90s," noting especially the March 1986 Royal Albert Hall collaboration entitled *A Historical Concert in Dedication to Africa's Contribution to the World*.<sup>21</sup> Using these later dates we can continue to expand our set of "temporal ripples" outward, with the addition of a unidirectional time-line built on nodes of significant contact between the two drummers:

{ 1974 } { 1986 } { 1993 }  
 { Trip to Ghana } { Royal Albert Hall } { Sankofa Premier }<sup>22</sup>

It is my assumption that the proximity between the two performers may have resulted in a direct exchange of ideas. Focusing on the recorded material around these dates may prove more fruitful than a simple "top-to-bottom" comprehensive

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<sup>20</sup> For more on this trip and its significance see Ampene, "One on One," 1-7. Ghanaba spoke often in interviews of his friendship with Roach, and their relationship is perhaps most poignantly described in Steven Feld's account of events surrounding the premier of *Sankofa*, in which Ghanaba performed. "[Ghanaba's] penultimate trip to New York City was for the 1993 premiere, to which he invited Max Roach. After the screening Ghanaba gave Max the film's poster, with his image on it. But in the moment, Roach signed it in dedication and gave it back to him. The inscription, which I could read clearly sixteen years later, was just above his head as we spoke: 'Ghanaba, You are one of the Greatest.' Next to his signature there, Max drew a three-piece drum set. While many pictures, awards, and signed notes of praise fill a long public hallway at Ghanaba's house, the presence of this poster, the only thing of its kind, in his inner sanctum, indeed marked a special relationship." [Feld, "Guy Warren/Ghanaba," 73.]

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 71. Regrettably, I could find no audio or video documentation of the Royal Albert Hall collaboration.

<sup>22</sup> Ghanaba performed with Randy Weston at the 1998 Panasonic Jazz Festival in New York. While not specifically relevant to this thesis, that might be an interesting "node" from which to explore influences between Ghanaba and other drummers. It also lends a fascinating irony to Ghanaba's life story, considering his somewhat negative stance toward Weston, which extended at least from 1962 until 1994. [See Clarence Atkins, "Panasonic Jazz Festival Features Extraordinary Performers," New York Amsterdam News, 3 September 1998: 21; and Feld, "Guy Warren/Ghanaba," 66-67 concerning the festival and Ghanaba's views on Weston, respectively.]

discographical comb. Put together with our “temporal ripples” approach, we now have a somewhat coherent historical timeframe with which to organize explorations into the recorded material.<sup>23</sup>

[1954 [1958 [July 10, 1959 – September 6, 1960] 1962] 1969] —

{ 1974 } { 1986 } { 1993 }

[Chicago [African Room [*African Drums* – “All Africa”] *African Rhythms* ] *Afro-Jazz*] —

{Ghana} {London} {NYC}

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<sup>23</sup> See Appendix B for an alternate graphic representation of this timeframe, i.e. “the sandbox.”

## CHAPTER 2: THE “COMB” AND THE “SANDBOX”

### First Attempts

In theory, the methodology here is simple: Identify a specific, characteristic attribute of subject A’s playing (such as an often-used rhythmic cell, etc.), and then reference that against relevant recordings of subject B, in the hope of identifying potential, quantifiable relationships in the musical data between both parties. These characteristic attributes, the more concrete the better, will function as the “teeth” for our historiographical comb. Let’s start with an attempt to organize relevant rhythmic content appearing in Ghanaba’s compositions “Love, the Mystery Of” and “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II.”

Ghanaba uses a group of drummers—some combination of James Hawthorne Bey, Robert Whitney, and Philip Hepburn to establish the structural rhythmic content in “Love, the Mystery Of.” Compositionally, the piece begins with a rubato melodic statement from Lawrence Brown on trombone {INT}, followed by a presentation of the structural rhythm {RHY}. The drums drop out and a 12-beat vocal line is presented by itself two times {VCL}, then repeated throughout the rest of the piece. After the second repetition of the vocal line the structural rhythm returns, entering in layers. Once all parts are present {A}, Ghanaba improvises vocally over the texture of the repeated vocal line for slightly over one minute {SOLO A<sup>i</sup>}. Then the vocal line drops out, and Ghanaba solos over the remaining texture using what appear to be bongos {SOLO B<sup>i</sup>}.<sup>24</sup> The vocal line and another vocal improvisation {SOLO A<sup>ii</sup>} separate this solo section with another shorter

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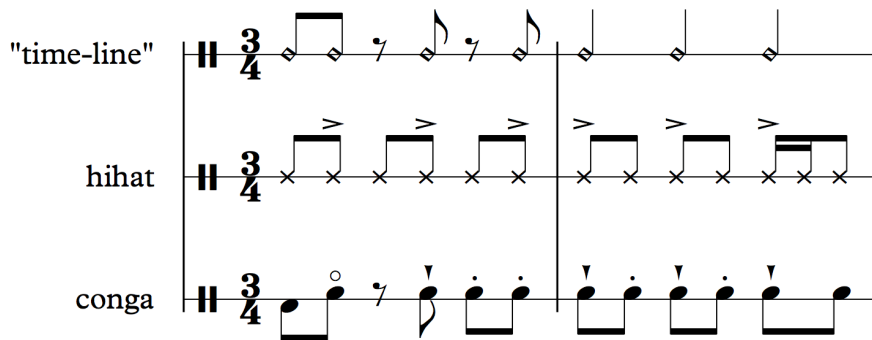
<sup>24</sup> Kelley states that many of Ghanaba’s solos on this record are played on either the “*bintin obonu* or bongos, played against the other percussionists” [Kelley, “Drum Wars,” 29]. My ears suggest bongos here, although I haven’t found a definite written statement supporting that.

drum solo, played over the fuller texture of both the structural rhythm and the repeated vocal line {SOLO B<sup>ii</sup>}. The drums drop out, leaving two iterations of the 12-bar vocal line, followed by a coda from Lawrence Brown, repeating similar melodic material from the introduction.

{ INT | RHY | VCL | A | SOLO A<sup>i</sup> | SOLO B<sup>i</sup> | SOLO A<sup>ii</sup> | SOLO B<sup>ii</sup> | VCL | INT }

*Figure 1. Basic structure of “Love, The Mystery Of.”*

For the purpose of identifying rhythmic cells characteristic of Ghanaba’s playing, section {RHY} serves as a jumping off point for transcription and analysis.



*Figure 2. Composite of rhythmic content present in section {RHY}.*

These rhythms are repeated throughout the main body of the piece, unchanging except for slight embellishments to the “conga” and “hihat” parts. The term “time-line” is borrowed from Gerhard Kubik, referring to his identification of 12-pulse asymmetric time-line patterns in West African music (the above being an example of a seven-stroke

form).<sup>25</sup> Here, the time-line rhythm appears to be played on the shell of a floor tom, and then doubled by what sounds like a high-pitched drum, perhaps Ghanaba's *bintin obonu*. Ghanaba's original liner notes offer no information as to the instruments or rhythms used in this piece. A variation of this time-line rhythm appears in "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II," as discussed below. The repeated use of this rhythm in Ghanaba's playing, as well as the popularity of "Love, The Mystery Of," which was frequently performed by the groups of both Art Blakey and Randy Weston, makes material from this piece a solid candidate for functioning as the first "tooth" in our historiographical comb.<sup>26</sup>

"The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" is essentially an extended drum solo, prefaced by a short introduction on bamboo flute and a brief vocal section.<sup>27</sup> The piece begins with an ostinato played by Ghanaba on the bass drum. It's important to note that Ghanaba asserted that he had played all of the content here by himself, a claim that we will examine in Chapter Three, which is devoted to a more complete analysis and discussion of "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II." "Part I" of the suite, while similar, uses a 5-person drum choir to illustrate the rhythmic structure. Ghanaba suggests that both movements are based on central African Watutsi rhythms.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> See Gerhard Kubik, *Africa and the Blues* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 51-62 and Kubik's *Jazz Transatlantic, vol. I* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2017), 157-165. Although the rhythm appearing in the "time-line" part matches any number of West African 12/8 bell patterns, the 3/4 meter and slower tempo here makes the aural effect drastically different than the 12/8 patterns more commonly described by any number of ethnomusicologists working on the African continent. Although it's out of the scope of this thesis to attempt to identify a clear musicological root to this particular usage, further exploration here might prove to be an interesting direction for further research.

<sup>26</sup> Weston generally lists the piece as "Mystery of Love," as seen on *Music from the New African Nations featuring the Highlife* (1963). On *The African Beat* (1962), Art Blakey records the song using its original title.

<sup>27</sup> A complete transcription of "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" appears in Chapter Three, along with a more thorough structural analysis.

<sup>28</sup> As described by Ghanaba in the original liner notes. This could be up for some debate, considering the liner notes state "the rhythm in this suite is adapted from a Watutsi ceremonial rhythm, *Uwa Begayga*," an assertion that Ghanaba refutes in *I Have a Story to Tell*, claiming that the actual basis for the rhythm was the Watutsi *Zidje Zikerabue*. According to Ghanaba, the fact that nobody calling him out on the mistake is

{INTRO} | {SOLO<sup>i</sup>} | {flute} | {voice} | {SOLO<sup>ii</sup>}

Figure 3. Basic Structure of “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II.”

There is one particular cell that Ghanaba returns to throughout the piece that I find particularly relevant to our identification of West African time-line patterns as characteristic of Ghanaba’s playing. This is a transposition of the pattern seen in the structural rhythm from “Love, The Mystery Of” into a more common West African 12/8 form, used here in a phrasal, soloistic context.<sup>29</sup>

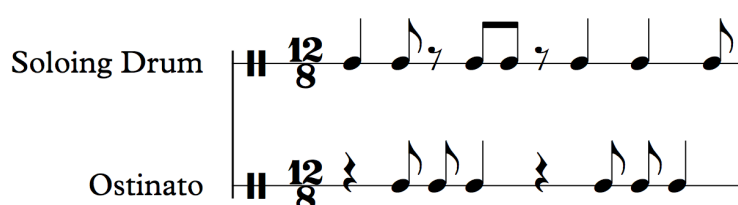


Figure 4. Presence of 12/8 “standard pattern” as an isolated phrase in “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II.”<sup>30</sup>

proof “that many, many people do not know anything about Africa...They don’t know that the title is wrong...how can they know if the rhythm is right?!!” [Warren, *I Have a Story*, 69.] Notable is the similarity between Ghanaba’s playing and Leo Verwilghen’s documentation of Watutsi “Ceremonial Drums.” [See the second track on *African and Afro-American Drums*, edited by Harold Courlander, in the attached discography.]

<sup>29</sup> Kubik identifies this form as the “standard pattern,” a term first used by A.M. Jones and promulgated by Anthony King [Kubik, *Africa and the Blues*, 53]. The idea of “rhythmic transposition” in this case is also generally taken from Kubik, who argues that the unchangeable mathematical structure (perhaps most easily explained as the contained sequence of 2’s and 3’s) of asymmetric African time-line patterns such as the one above allows them to retain their integrity regardless of which note the pattern starts on. For a general presentation of this idea and its consequences for tracing transatlantic rhythmic genealogies, see *Africa and the Blues*, 53-56. For a more in-depth mathematical analysis of these concepts, see Kubik’s *Jazz Transatlantic*, 163-166. It’s important to note that the term “time-line pattern” refers specifically to a rhythm occurring throughout the entirety of a piece [Ibid, 159]. However, this does not negate the idea that isolated, phrasal instances of these rhythms could be traced to African time-line antecedents [See Ibid, 157-163 for a complete discussion].

<sup>30</sup> The pattern described in the “Soloing Drum” part maps accented notes in Ghanaba’s use of this cell, simplified here for clarity. For a more complete representation of his actual playing, see the transcription in Chapter Three.



Hypothetically, we would now have the beginnings of our historiographical “comb”: a set of rhythmic cells, compositional techniques, or other content characteristic of Ghanaba’s musical-mechanical approach that we could then start to “drag” through the wealth of discographical data we’ve identified by filling in the “temporal ripples” derived from our basic historical data. The specific process would be to simply take the next recorded instance of Max Roach indicated by our discography, and “drag the comb through the sandbox,” as it were, looking for where it catches on parallel musical content. Each “catch” would, in theory, show an individual rhythmic (or compositional, etc.) correspondence. Let’s see what actually happens in practice.

### **Our First “Catches” in the Discographical Sandbox**

*We Insist! Max Roach’s Freedom Now Suite* is widely considered as one of Roach’s seminal dates as a leader. As noted by Steven Feld, “All Africa,” the penultimate track, can be seen as Max Roach’s most significant early move towards African-themed material.<sup>31</sup> The analysis here will focus specifically on formal and rhythmic content relevant to our discussion of “individual correspondence” between Roach and Ghanaba. Structurally, we can consider “All Africa” as having two individual movements. Movement I begins with a rubato intro featuring Abbey Lincoln and drummer Olatunji {INT}.<sup>32</sup> The structural rhythm of the piece is presented {RHY}, followed by the entrance of the principle melody, which outlines a blues-like harmonic structure {A}.

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<sup>31</sup> Feld, “Guy Warren/Ghanaba,” 70.

<sup>32</sup> Although Max Roach collaborated with Olatunji as well as other non-American drummers of the transatlantic diaspora (as well as having made a visit to Port-au-Prince to meet with the Haitian drummer Tiroro “during the early 1950s” [Ampene, “One on One,” 3]), this by no means negates the historiographical and musical evidence suggesting that a profound musical exchange was probable between Roach and Ghanaba.

After three choruses and a brief tag on the tonic {A +}, a new structural rhythm played on what sounds like a *gankogui* bell is presented at a faster tempo, marking the beginning of Movement II. This entire section consists of Olatunji and Max Roach trading solos against the back drop of the other drummers, ending with a crash and leading us into the next track on the record, “Tears for Johannesburg.”

I. {INT} {RHY<sup>i</sup>} {A A A +} → II. {RHY<sup>ii</sup>} {SOLOS}

Figure 5. Basic Structure of “All Africa.”

The structural rhythm of Movement II is built around another permutation of the West African “standard” bell pattern.<sup>33</sup> At minute 5:58 Roach moves the bell pattern from the shell of the floor tom to the ride cymbal bell.

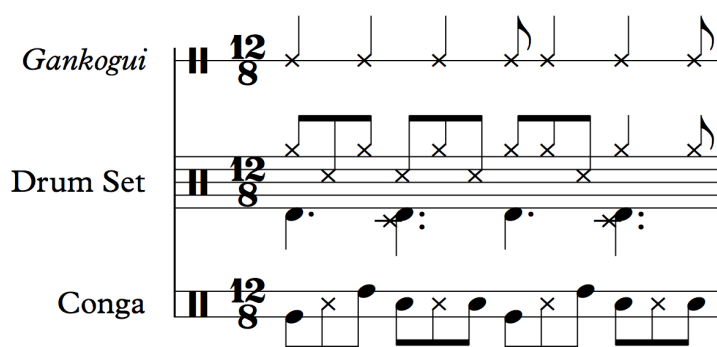


Figure 6. Structural rhythms in Movement II (5:58)

<sup>33</sup> While this transcription identifies the bell pattern as beginning on the “3” side of the structure (x.x.x.), it could also be notated as starting on beat three (designated by the third dotted quarter note), beginning with the rhythm (xx.x.x). Observing how the ensemble frequently “turns the *clave* around,” (borrowing parlance from Cuban performance practice, here meaning that the bell pattern alternates between starting on beat one and beat three), we can assume that either starting point can be used in our analysis. Note also that Roach’s structure sometimes begins on the “3” side, while the bell player simultaneously uses the “4” side as a starting point (xx.x.xx.x.x.), and vice versa. These “turn arounds” may or may not be intentional.

So far, we've identified and extracted some musical content that shares significant aural and contextual similarity. The correspondence between the "time-line" rhythm in "Love, The Mystery Of" and that played by the *gankogui* in "All Africa," Movement II is readily apparent, and there are structural parallels between "Love, The Mystery Of" and Movement I of "All Africa," notably in the use of a rubato intro and section {RHY} that present both pieces' structural rhythms.<sup>34</sup> Texturally, those two compositions are very similar, and both utilize a triple meter. Movement II of "All Africa" is significantly similar to "Lady Marie" in aural impression, employing a very similar tempo and an almost identical aesthetic of percussion-based solos superimposed on a consistent structural rhythm. However, it's difficult to use this content to effectively suggest a clear transmission of influence between the two drummers, primarily due to the fact that much of the specific rhythmic and aesthetic content described in these examples was present in the United States before Ghanaba and Roach were in contact with each other.

African influences existed in the United States and in the jazz community well before Ghanaba's 1954 arrival in Chicago.<sup>35</sup> Robin Kelley, in his chapter "The Drum Wars of Guy Warren," takes a general look at pre-Ghanaba African influences in American music as a way to provide historical context to some of Ghanaba's more radical statements concerning his own perceived influence on the jazz community.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The relationship between the specific placement of notes in Ghanaba's and Roach's usage of the "time-line"/*gankogui* rhythms can be quantified as the following: Ghanaba's phrase begins on the eighth eighth note of Roach's rhythm. Likewise, Roach's rhythm can be seen as beginning on the sixth eighth note of Ghanaba's. As discussed in footnote 29, The integrity of each note's value is maintained in this sort of transposition, and in and of itself does not invalidate a general connection between both rhythms. However, we should note that different starting points in African time-line rhythms generally suggest different cultural antecedents. Thus, while these examples show parallels in the use of the "standard pattern," the transposition of starting points may prevent us from suggesting a common West African antecedent for both drummers' usage. See especially Kubik, *Africa and the Blues*, 55-56 for further discussion.

<sup>35</sup> Or Olatunji's arrival in the US, for that matter.

<sup>36</sup> Kelley, "Drum Wars," 13-17.

Kelley's overview has profound historiographic implications for any attempt to trace linear influences between musicians in the context of "African" musical material.

The examination of pre-Ghanaba/Olatunji African influence in the United States brings us to three main spheres of discussion, each one already a subject of significant academic weight in jazz historiography. First, jazz contains "building blocks" of African-derived material. This parallels discussions of the "standard paradigm" of jazz's distant origins: considering jazz in part as an extension of transatlantic influence, with African formative material being essential to basic aspects of the rhythmic, harmonic, melodic, and broadly "aesthetic" (performance practice, etc.) content of the music.<sup>37</sup>

Second, there were African musicians and dancers from the continent who had moved to the US decades before the arrival of either Ghanaba or Olatunji. Notably, Prince Efrom Odok, a master drummer from the Calabar region of Nigeria, had moved to the US by 1920.<sup>38</sup> Asadata Dafora, the dancer, choreographer, and drummer born in Freetown, Sierra Leone, moved to Harlem in 1929. As avid teachers, organizers, and performers, both were influential in disseminating African culture in the United States. Perhaps most notable are the 1942 and 1943 AAAR concerts, bridging African and Afro-Cuban/Caribbean music and dance with that of the US, and attended by bebop pioneers including Dizzy Gillespie. Odok said that by 1943 there were "20 expert African drummers in the United States." That's a relatively small number, but this is 11 years before Ghanaba moved to Chicago. Ideas of pan-Africanism were also around long

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<sup>37</sup> Gerhard Kubik, Ivor Miller, and Ned Sublette are a few examples of scholars whose work relates to this model.

<sup>38</sup> Dates, quotes, and other relevant information in this section are taken from Kelley, "Drum Wars," 13-17, unless otherwise noted.

before the '50s, as noted by Ingrid Monson.<sup>39</sup> Also note Odok's mission statement, to "teach black New Yorkers 'the music and dance of their forefathers.'" Odok had already made the observation that swing was "nothing but an imitation of native African music," and he himself eventually "crossed-over" into a jazz context, playing with Frankie Newton and Ray Parker in 1945. Kelley also notes the presence of Moses Mianns from Nigeria—a proponent of the *ashiko* drum and widely influential as a teacher. Mianns had a personal relationship with Art Blakey, perhaps providing Blakey with a more realistic point of access to Ijaw culture than his 1947-48 Nigeria trip of somewhat doubtful historical veracity. There was "an explosion" of widely available ethnomusicological recordings appearing in the early 40s. Harold Courlander edited an influential collection of field recordings of "African and Afro-diasporic" rhythms that was circulating in LP form in the 1950s.

Third, West African musical influence, translated through Cuba and the Caribbean, was present in jazz well before Ghanaba's arrival in Chicago. Rhythms traceable to West Africa and used in Afro-Cuban/Caribbean religious music were promulgated by percussionists like Chano Pozo, and a few years later Sabo Martinez and a wealth of other musicians from Cuba and the Caribbean were collaborating with jazz musicians in New York.<sup>40</sup> This is particularly relevant when discussing the difficulties of identifying specific transmission of influence from Ghanaba to Roach, considering the amount of contemporary material in which Afro-Cuban/Caribbean musicians portrayed African-themed imagery.

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<sup>39</sup> Ingrid Monson, "Africa and the Cold War and the Diaspora at Home," in *Freedom Sounds: Civil Rights Call Out to Jazz and Africa*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 107-108.

<sup>40</sup> See Ivor Miller's work for a discussion of specific West African influences in the Cuban Abakuá, especially "Bongó Itá: Leopard Society Music and Language in West Africa, Western Cuba, and New York City," *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal* 5(1) (January 2012): 85-103.

Due to these considerations, a readjustment of the parameters of our “comb and sandbox” is necessary to effectively suggest connections between the two drummers. One of the more musicologically oriented correlations touched upon by royal hartigan during a 2018 discussion concerning Ghanaba and Roach’s relationship was the use of continuous rhythmic ostinatos underneath improvised material.<sup>41</sup> While hartigan relates Roach’s improvising against an ostinato in his drumset compositions (for instance, “Conversation,” “The Drum Also Waltzes,” “The Third Eye,” etc.)<sup>42</sup> as being roughly analogous to that of Ghanaba’s soloing over a rhythmic structure provided by an ensemble (as is the case in “Love, The Mystery Of”), I believe the same relationship also appears in another, perhaps more concrete way. Ghanaba’s “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” exhibits an extreme level of independent virtuosity, maintaining a syncopated ostinato in his foot while weaving complex, improvised rhythmic patterns with his hands. This is a direction that Roach explored throughout his career, although with considerably different sonic results. While much was happening in New York concerning “African”

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<sup>41</sup> royal hartigan’s ideas concerning broader parallels in transatlantic music making are profound and very relevant in establishing a complete picture of the relationship between Ghanaba and Roach, but the significant departure from quantifiable analysis made necessary by that discussion exceeds the scope of this thesis. Worth special consideration, however, would be the idea of corresponding “percussive attitude[s] toward music making” on both sides of the Atlantic, and how that “extends to acting in life, in [one’s] self, in [one’s] psychology, and the world.” The abundance of simultaneous musical events made possible by shorter percussive attacks results in an abundance of “levels of [simultaneous] hearing.” Members of the ensemble come together in this layered framework “to make [a] composite statement that expresses individual and collective meaning, history, genealogy, or the feeling of a moment, say sadness at a funeral, that expresses that communal voice of the village in its history and life...In jazz, [the] ensemble comes together with multiple layers of time and accent to make a composite statement that expresses that moment...There are other cultures in the world that do this too, but as African arts they have that intimate connection of being a simultaneous expression of the reality of that place, people, who it’s for, occasion, meaning, and goal of the performers in the village that it’s in. And that village could be the Village Vanguard. [...] That coming together, that composite statement, is the essence of what the music is. That communal voice is ‘truth in the moment.’” [royal hartigan, interview by the author, 3 December 2018, Massachusetts and Beijing, electronic recording.] Related ideas, focusing more on hypothetical mechanics of transatlantic cultural transmission, appear frequently in Gerhard Kubik’s work, especially *Africa and the Blues* and *Jazz Transatlantic*, vol. I. Remaining quotes and ideas attributed to hartigan in this thesis are taken from the above-mentioned December 2018 interview.

<sup>42</sup> See *Deeds*, *Not Words* and *Long as You’re Living*; *Drums Unlimited*; and *Survivors* respectfully in the attached discography.

drum choir textures (Art Blakey's *Orgy in Rhythm*, for example) around the time of Ghanaba's release of *Themes for African Drums* and Roach and Willie Jones' exposure to "Lady Marie," instances in which the performance of similarly layered rhythmic textures being created by a single person appear to be relatively scarce.<sup>43</sup> In other words, this approach to the instrument could be a much more viable "tooth" in our historiographical comb than characteristics widespread in the music community at the time (i.e. the use of West African derived time-lines and "African" themed percussive textures).

Roach's developments in the use of complex ostinatos in the decades following his initial contact with Ghanaba in the 1950s fit conspicuously well in the historiographic fabric we've established so far, with specific changes in approach corresponding neatly with Roach's 1958 exposure to "Lady Marie: Part II" and the 1974 trip to visit Ghanaba in Africa. The following chapters will take a deeper analytical look at "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II," examine relationships between Roach and Ghanaba's use of ostinatos and ostinato-like structures around Roach's encounter with "The Lady Marie Drum Suite" in the summer of 1959 and the 1974 trip, and contrast two of Roach's ostinato-based improvisations recorded before and after his exposure to Ghanaba's work in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

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<sup>4343</sup> And are still largely absent today, with the most visible exception being *clave* patterns kept in the left foot in modern Afro-Cuban drumming (e.g., Horacio Hernandez, Dafnis Prieto, etc.). A deeper musicological and historiographic examination of contemporaries of Ghanaba and Roach's soloing over similarly complex, individually contained ostinatos would be important in future pursuits of the hypothesis that this approach was transmitted from Ghanaba to Roach. Dr. Henry Martin suggested to me the possible importance of Joe Morello's drumming on Paul Desmond's composition "Take Five" from the Dave Brubeck Quartet's *Time Out* (1959), with Morello soloing in 5/4 over the "Take Five" ostinato. While both "Blues Waltz" and "Lady Marie: Part II," two of the early examples of ostinato-based improvisations in Roach and Ghanaba's playing, predate "Take Five," the magnitude and lasting influence of Morello's work may very well have had an impact on Roach's trajectory, especially considering his preference for 5/4 ostinatos later in his career (e.g., "Five for Paul" from *Solos* [1977]).

### CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF “THE LADY MARIE DRUM SUITE: PART II”

Pages 33-46 include an annotated transcription of “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II.” For our purposes, there are two principal areas of interest identified in the transcription:

- A) Musical evidence concerning the question of whether or not this piece was recorded by Ghanaba himself, and, if so, whether the improvised material played by the hands was recorded concurrently with the complex ostinato that appears in the feet, or if overdubbing techniques were employed.
- B) “Direct rhythmic correspondences” between Ghanaba and Roach. The most relevant passages in the transcription will appear in conjunction with corresponding material in Max Roach’s playing throughout Chapters Four and Five.

Regarding the first issue, did Ghanaba actually play the improvised material “in the hands” over the complex ostinato “in the feet”? According to Ghanaba, Roach became visibly agitated upon hearing “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” insisting that it was impossible to play as one drummer, as we discussed in Chapter One. In his autobiographical work *I Have a Story to Tell*, Ghanaba makes an interesting statement concerning Roach’s reaction to hearing the piece: “The King, Max Roach himself...must have felt like a king about to be dethroned.”<sup>44</sup> If we examine Roach’s discography and consider his artistic location in the jazz community at the time, Ghanaba’s appraisal here may be accurate. In 1957, Roach recorded *Jazz in 3/4 Time*, which includes what was to

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<sup>44</sup> Warren, *I Have a Story*, 57.



become an exceedingly influential innovation on the track “Blues Waltz”: The use of a consistent 3/4 ostinato being played in the feet with Roach’s trademark rhythmic/melodic phrases superimposed over it in the hands. This solo, precisely because of its melody/ostinato layering, remains important in the lexicon of modern drumming to this day, with new transcriptions continuing to appear online and in print publications.<sup>45</sup> Ghanaba’s “Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II” is strikingly similar to Roach’s solo on “Blues Waltz” in its basic concept of layering the melody/ostinato strata in a non-4/4 context.<sup>46</sup> However, the complexity of the underlying ostinato and the virtuosic nature of the improvisation in the hands show a much more impressive “independent” functioning of the upper and lower extremities than what is heard in “Blues Waltz.” The difference in complexity of the two pieces is made clear simply from visually skimming the transcriptions. Aurally, the difference is, to my ears, irrefutable.

It is indeed possible that Roach may have been disturbed by this recording. “The King,” as Ghanaba so aptly described Roach, who had further cemented his location as an innovative drummer with *Jazz In 3/4 Time* just one year before the release of Ghanaba’s “Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” was suddenly made aware of a recording that took the same fundamental concept of “Blues Waltz” but extended it to an as yet unheard-of level of virtuosity. Because of Roach’s specific developments in modern drumming directly preceding the release of “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” I find Ghanaba’s account of Roach’s agitation believable.

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<sup>45</sup> For example, Daniel Harding Israelsen’s *Max Roach Solo Book* (2017) or Augustin Strizzi’s transcription at <http://www.agustinstrizzi.com/en/max-roach-jazz-in-34-time-1957-blues-waltz-2/>.

<sup>46</sup> Note that my transcription of “Lady Marie: Part II” does appear in 4/4 meter for the purposes of simplicity, but that the piece is clearly an example of compound quadruple meter (12/8), as are many of the “drum” recordings Ghanaba put out during his time in the United States.

There's also evidence that Roach followed up on his request to Ghanaba to "prove" to him that it was really *just* Ghanaba playing on the track. According to Jocelyn Osborne's liner notes to Ghanaba's *African Rhythms: The Exciting Sounds of Guy Warren and his Talking Drums*, released in 1962, Roach was present in the studio at the single recording session for the record on October 17, 1961, in New York City. This was the very next session that Ghanaba participated in after recording *Themes for African Drums* (1958). As well as showing a continuing (and deepening) relationship between Roach and Ghanaba, this lends support to the suggestion that Ghanaba's account of the Roach/Willie Jones interaction around "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" is at least somewhat accurate.<sup>47</sup>

However, the verdict of the question that so agitated Roach is still unclear. While there is a tremendous amount of virtuosic rhythmic material on *African Rhythms*, and the basic concept of layering complex rhythmic ideas over (or, as we will see in the following chapters, "detaching" these ideas from) an ostinato permeates the record, there is not an example of an ostinato similarly complex as that heard in "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II." Indeed, it isn't until Ghanaba's later video recordings in the early 2000s that we actually are provided with proof of sufficiently similar independent detachment of the rhythmic functionality of each limb that supports the idea that Ghanaba could've recorded "Lady Marie: II" on his own in one take...and by this point Ghanaba's style had changed enough that it's hard to draw any convincing parallels.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> However, there's still some very real historiographical gaps here: for instance, *who is Jocelyn Osborne?*

<sup>48</sup> For perhaps the clearest example of Ghanaba's later playing, see the film recording *Die Nacht Der Trommeln* of Ghanaba and Robyn Schulkowsky's October 2000 concert in Accra. Interestingly, after *Themes for African Drums*, Ghanaba became notably more transparent about his recording techniques. Both *African Rhythms* and *Emergent Drums* (1963) list in detail which parts were overdubbed, which parts were played with other drummers concurrently, and the specific places where all parts were performed by

Strictly in terms of the recorded artifact, the transcription of “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II” identifies multiple instances that can support either side of the question of how the piece was played in the studio. There are many passages in which the “swing” of the melody/ostinato strata remains consistent, with improvised variations and accents lining up between the two strata in a remarkable way, suggesting that this was in fact one drummer performing. However, there is evidence suggesting that the opposite is true, perhaps most notably in what sounds like a wood stick clicking against the rim of a drum heard in the ostinato part at m. 120: This sound, if we assume that it is actually a wood-on-wood timbre as opposed to a recording artifact, would be physically impossible to create if the sound source of the ostinato was played with a bass drum pedal, as Ghanaba claimed. But then we listen again, and the alignments of accents, polyrhythms, and the general temporal push and pull of Ghanaba’s own “swing” seem to clearly point to one player, performing both parts in real time...and so the argument goes back and forth, perhaps as it did on that day in 1959 when Ghanaba played Roach the recording of “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II” for the first time.<sup>49</sup>

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Ghanaba without the use of overdubbing. His specific impetus for doing this is very intriguing: far from “bragging,” it seems that Ghanaba is almost over-careful about suggesting that he was responsible for recording all of the parts “live”—something that runs almost directly opposite to his general tone as a writer, which can veer very close to blatant egotism. I wonder if Ghanaba’s interactions and debates with Roach around the question of “who played what” had some kind of influence on his change in documentation.

<sup>49</sup> One thing that does seem clear, however, is that if Ghanaba played both the improvised instrumental “melody” part and the ostinato by himself he would have had to use at least some overdubbing for the vocal line: There are instances of a musician’s vocalizations heard *underneath* the sung melody at certain points in the recording. I think that this could likely be the result of two different scenarios, either A) that there was in fact another drummer present during the session that was responsible for the ostinato (possibly James Hawthorne “Chief” Bey, who recorded other tracks on the record) who started to vocalize under Ghanaba, or B) that Ghanaba overdubbed the sung vocal melody after the instrumental performance—a technique he would go on to use in his following two records in 1961 and 1963. Another musician present in the studio who was moved by the performance and started to vocalize may also be a possibility, considering the close relationship between Bey and Ghanaba at this point in time (Ghanaba refers to Bey as his “Blood Brother” after performing “a secret African ceremony with him” in the notes to the track “Blood

Venturing into the realm of conjecture, I think that the evidence points to a portion of “Lady Marie: Part II” (from its beginning up until m. 70) being recorded by Ghanaba with him executing the instrumental “melody” and the ostinato simultaneously, as he described in both the liner notes to *Themes for African Drums* as well as in his book *I Have a Story to Tell*. Here, however, the melody (which I hear as being clearly overdubbed) enters, and Ghanaba may have begun to play the ostinato with his hand using a mallet on the bass drum. This may have been recorded as a separate take and then spliced together with mm. 1-69, with the rest of the instrumental material (m. 70 until the end of the piece) recorded separately, “on top” of the ostinato. I suggest this possibility for four main reasons:

- A) The timbre of the ostinato changes markedly after the entrance of the vocal melody.<sup>50</sup> While this might in part be a result of late 1950s recording technology, the timbre for the rest of the piece is strikingly similar to that of a bass drum set on a chair horizontally, with the sounded drum head facing upwards, and then played with a mallet.<sup>51</sup> The m. 120 sound artifact would also support this: the wood-on-wood timbre could easily be the result of the shaft of the mallet connecting with the rim of the bass drum when played in the manner described above. Also, the rhythm held by the ostinato becomes

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Brother” on *Themes for African Drums*. There is also ample discussion of their relationship in Ghanaba’s autobiographical *I Have a Story to Tell* from the early ‘60s).

<sup>50</sup> The vocal melody is not included in my transcription, while the part labeled “melody” indicates what Ghanaba performed using his upper extremities.

<sup>51</sup> Please note that this is not all that “unconventional” of an occurrence: this is essentially what would have been the arrangement in situations where “double-drumming” was employed—that is, typically all pre-bass-drum-pedal (c. 1900) drumming where there was a single percussionist, using one hand on the bass drum and one hand on the snare drum. This technique has persisted through the modern era for period-specific performance reasons and/or timbral considerations.

much more feasible when imagined as resulting from the hands rather than from the feet, due to the inherent technical realities of drumset technique.<sup>52</sup>

- B) The presence of the m. 120 artifact, for the reasons we've discussed already.
- C) In the 1961 session for *African Rhythms*, at which Roach was ostensibly present, Ghanaba did not produce a similarly complex ostinato as that heard in "Lady Marie: II." One might assume that, after Roach's denial of Ghanaba's claimed execution of the piece, Ghanaba would have taken the next opportunity to prove his ability "on the record," as it were.<sup>53</sup>

With these three points in mind, I suspect the narrative between the two drummers unfolded as follows: Ghanaba claims he plays all of the drumming on "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" concurrently and entirely by himself, which may have only been partially true. Roach doesn't buy it, and comes and watches Ghanaba in the studio during the recording session for the next record. During this session, the ostinatos are notably

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<sup>52</sup> We could arrive at a similar "feasibility" by assuming that Ghanaba played the ostinato with *two* feet, instead of one. However, Ghanaba's trademark "double bass drum" approach of his later years, in which he attached the bass drum pedals to two giant *Fontomfrom* drums had yet to be developed in 1958, the time of "Lady Marie: Part II"'s recording. This puts this possible explanation for the ostinato in a somewhat more distant realm of possibility. Also, it's important to acknowledge that just because something sounds difficult to the point of being unbelievable according to the broad trajectory of instrumental technique does not, by itself, "debunk" that execution. In this case, it's the multitude of "gray areas" (such as the m. 120 artifact, or the lack of other recorded evidence of a similarly complex ostinato in temporal proximity to "Lady Marie: Part II") that collude with the inherent difficulty of the ostinato and the superimposition of the ostinato/melody strata which draws Ghanaba's claim of self-contained, real-time performance of the piece into question.

<sup>53</sup> Admittedly, this is not particularly historiographically water-tight reasoning: There are an abundance of possible reasons that a similar ostinato did not appear on *African Rhythms*, the most obvious of which would be the simple question of "why do the same thing again on another record released so soon after the original?" It's certainly in the realm of possibility that Ghanaba *did* "prove" it to Roach, but just didn't record that proof. Roach's comments concerning Ghanaba in the 1970s certainly don't detract in any way from Ghanaba's musical standing (on the contrary, they clearly do the opposite, as seen in Chapter One), and there is absolutely no evidence in the documentation of their relationship that Roach walked away from the 1961 session saying "See! I told you you couldn't play it!" With all of this in mind, the differences in complexity between the "Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" and the later "drum" recordings is fairly clear: it wasn't until 1969's *Native Africa*, a more experimental solo record where the use of overdubbing is fairly certain, that an execution demanding such an as-yet-unheard-of level of virtuosity as "Lady Marie: Part II" appears in Ghanaba's recorded output.

less complicated, in part because Roach is there and Ghanaba can't overdub his playing without refuting his earlier (and soon to be published) claims about "Lady Marie: Part II." But there's still enough virtuosity and complexity to inspire Roach, especially in the realm of melody/ostinato layering (perhaps because Ghanaba is still trying to prove that he could have executed the "Lady Marie: Part II" material). My guess is that Ghanaba, legendarily stubborn, wouldn't admit to the "Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" being overdubbed, and Roach, seeing his recent innovations in the realm of concurrent performance of melody/ostinato strata (1957's "Blues Waltz") being clearly surpassed in virtuosic impact by "Lady Marie: Part II," resulted in *both* drummers spending the next few decades working on their capacity to improvise over increasingly complex ostinatos! Video evidence late in Ghanaba's life clearly shows complex ostinatos existing in significantly separate "time-lines" than what his hands are playing, and Roach's continued development with odd-meter ostinatos and complex linear rhythms that approach Ghanaba's ostinatos in aural terms during the 1970s is evidence of concerted dedication to this particular concept. For Roach's part, the continued experimentations with these techniques have served to inspire generations of drummers to come. The irony is that, concerning the ostensible impetus for this whole direction of technical development (that is, the melody/ostinato strata in "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II"), Ghanaba may possibly have been fudging the truth as to his execution of the piece.

Regardless of how it was recorded, I suggest, as stated above, that the aural reality of "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" prompted Roach to continue exploring ways to manipulate the relationships between melody/ostinato strata, developing a capacity for the "independent" functionality of the upper and lower body that would come to

influence countless drummers and, at least partially, help define his contributions to the continuum of modern jazz drumming. Chapters Four and Five discuss the musical evidence supporting the suggestion that the development of this capacity was directly connected to Roach's relationship with Ghanaba.

Pages 33-46 present a complete transcription of Ghanaba's drumming in both the ostinato and "melody" (played by the lower and upper extremities, respectively) of "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II."<sup>54</sup> First, some notes concerning my annotation.

Throughout the piece, Ghanaba fluidly shifts between triplet and 16th-note subdivisions in both the melody and ostinato. This is a product of Ghanaba's own "swing" and is difficult to quantify. Interpretations of the sounded subdivision are largely subjective: Listening for the triplet often reveals the triplet, yet the same is true for the 16th notes. I have notated these shifts when they seem particularly clear or relevant, but the reader should keep in mind the fluid nature of Ghanaba's playing and reference the recording when in doubt. There is a simple color scheme used in my annotation: Red text/note heads are used to identify instances of the "shifting" described above, purple shows passages relevant to the discussion of multiple vs. single performers, magenta denotes clear instances of "true" independence, orange denotes non-

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<sup>54</sup> Note that from this point on this thesis will generally assume that Ghanaba's claim of playing both ostinato and "melody" parts concurrently and by himself is true: that is, at each instance in which we discuss material played by "the hands" or "the feet," we will generally omit the caveats we've examined in this chapter for the sake of simplification. This is done strictly for notational clarity: the context as discussed above is still relevant.

repeating/compositional variations in the ostinato, and blue shows selected instances of clear polyrhythms.<sup>55</sup>

Parentheses below or above a note indicate something that is probably played, but could not be transcribed with certainty, usually due to issues of recording quality. Similarly, a question mark indicates a note that I was unsure about; the difference between the use of parentheses and question marks is one of degree. Simply, parentheses translate as “probably,” while question marks ask “maybe?”

There is a prominent instance of a “non-standard” musical notation being used: mm. 156-160 indicates a roll consisting of 81 sounded notes in the space of 48 triplet time units. This can be described with the ratio of 81:48. This idea, which we will refer to henceforth as the “non-metric single stroke roll” (that is, a roll played with alternating wrist motions in which there isn’t a clear metric relationship to the ostinato), will be discussed at length in the following chapters.<sup>56</sup>

There are a few instances of dashed lines vertically traversing the staff. This indicates the aural implication of a phrase starting at a point other than “beat one” of a measure. Here it is important to state that this transcription is purely *descriptive*: that is, I have done my best to visually represent the material on the record using the conventions of Western music notation. However, due to the nature of the music performed and the

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<sup>55</sup> These changes in color are usually accompanied by a brief indication of their corresponding “topic” near the beginning of the transcription, and are typically discarded after a few instances, unless there is something specific to a particular passage that merits further elaboration.

<sup>56</sup> The notation of these rolls (appearing with slashes across the stem) should not be taken as an indication of a specific number of notes or wrist motions, as they are in standard “drum” notation. Rather, the sounded reality of the roll is described using ratios of sounded notes to time units, as described above. The exception is when there is a single slash through a note stem. In my transcription of “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” this denotes two sounded notes in the space of the “slashed” note, usually played as a rebound (that is, one wrist motion producing two sounded notes). A “z” on the stem denotes a “buzzing” sound made with one hand pressing the drumstick into the head of the sound source.



inherent limitations of said notation, sometimes (and in thankfully rare cases) things “don’t quite line up.” Thus, as a rule, I ask the reader to refer directly to the actual recorded music when there is a question as to the conventions of my description.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the structural content of the piece can broadly be organized as below:

{INTRO} | {SOLO<sup>i</sup>} | {flute} | {voice} | {SOLO<sup>ii</sup>}

Due to the near constant sounding of the triplet gird, which Ghanaba maintains in his playing as an underlying, consistent string of triplets for almost the entirety of the piece, structural and phrasal material can be difficult to identify without referring to the actual transcription. However, there are some clear organizations within the broader structure stated above.

The {INTRO} section establishes the ostinato figure, with Ghanaba’s playing of the triplet grid entering at 0:14. {SOLO<sup>i</sup>}, lasting from 0:21-:39, might be understood as an extension of this introduction, due it’s static pitch level and lack of responsorial two-bar phrases that characterize the rest of the solo. The entrance of the {flute} section marks the beginning of the piece proper and can be understood in three sub-sections: “A,” “B,” and “C.”

In {flute A} (0:39-1:03), Ghanaba introduces his principal two-bar phrasal structure: One of these bars typically contains a polyrhythm or polyrhythm-like series of accents, paired with metrically simpler material in the other. These accents can serve to either create or release rhythmic tension, depending on their placement in the two-bar

structure. This placement typically remains consistent in larger organizations, but can vary between sections (e.g., the polyrhythm appears in bar one, with the two-bar structure repeated three times at the end of {flute A}, while the two-bar structure beginning at {flute B}, also repeated three times, moves the polyrhythm to bar two). At {flute B}, while the same use of accents remains, the different pitch levels are incorporated, further delineating the “statement-response” aspect of the organization. Typically, a high pitch level statement in bar one is met with a low pitch level response in bar two. The larger organization of a two-bar responsorial structure (high pitch level – low pitch level) repeating three times and followed by a “resolving” phrase of varying length appears in both {flute B} and {SOLO<sup>ii</sup>}, with an additional variation present in {flute c} and {{SOLO<sup>ii</sup>}. We will refer to this organization as “HL<sup>x3</sup>+resolution.”

In {flute B} and {flute C}, Ghanaba’s playing takes on a more clearly structural sense, eschewing the fluid improvisations of {SOLO<sup>i</sup>} and early {flute A} which interact with the ostinato rhythm without a clear, repeated sense of specific phrasal organizations. Instead, the high-low two-bar responsorial structure becomes increasingly dominant. At 1:17 we see the first iteration of Ghanaba’s largest organization, comprised of a repeated two-bar structure built on a short, non-metric roll statement and a polyrhythmic response, which is then followed by a variation on the HL<sup>x3</sup>+resolution structure.<sup>57</sup> This variation replaces the general high-low responsorial structure with a similar two-bar melody built on the high tom and floor tom. The difference between this melody, which also follows a “statement and response” phrasal pattern, is in its specificity: where the HL structure can incorporate any number of sound sources, as long as the general melodic contour is high to low, this two-bar melody is repeated verbatim in each iteration of the larger structure.

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<sup>57</sup> More on these rolls in the following chapters.

It will be referred to as  $AB^{x3}+resolution$ . The entire structure in question concludes with another specific two-bar responsorial melody, repeated twice. We will refer to this melody as “CD.” The whole organization concludes the {flute C} section and can be represented as follows:

$$[roll | response]^{x2} [AB^{x3}+resolution] [CD]^{x2}$$

Ghanaba’s drumming in section {voice} shows a clear phrasal connection between vocal and instrumental melodic content, loosely represented as  $A A^i B$ , with A sections built on the high-low responsorial structure, and the longer B section staying primarily on the floor tom. Section {SOLO<sup>ii</sup>} begins with a clear repetition of the {flute C}  $[roll | response]^{x2} [AB^{x3}+resolution] [CD]^{x2}$  structure discussed above, followed by looser improvisational material punctuated by two prominent long-form non-metric rolls. This is followed by a return to the general high-low two-bar structure, as well as the introduction of a third two-bar responsorial melody (referred to below as “EF”). At 4:20, after the third and most prominent long-form non-metric roll of the piece, the consistent sounded triplet grid is discarded, with the following improvised material still being played according to the general two-bar responsorial structure. The second iteration of the  $HL^{x3}+resolution$  structure is followed by the presentation of new, highly syncopated and polyrhythmic material that concludes the piece. Using the principal phrasal organizations of each section, we can expand the broader structure discussed in Chapter Two as follows:

{INTRO: presentation of ostinato and triplet grid} | {SOLO<sup>i</sup>} | {flute A: introduction of  
 two-bar responsorial structure} {flute B: HL<sup>x3</sup>+resolution} {flute C: [roll | response]<sup>x2</sup>  
 [AB<sup>x3</sup>+resolution] [CD]<sup>x2</sup>} | {voice: A A<sup>i</sup> B} | {SOLO<sup>ii</sup>: [roll | response]<sup>x2</sup> [AB<sup>x3</sup>+resolution]  
 [CD]<sup>x2</sup>, looser improvisation around rolls, return to HL structures, EF melody, long roll,  
 HL<sup>x3</sup>+resolution, new polyrhythmic and syncopated ending material.

# "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II"

Kofi Ghanaba/Guy Warren

Recorded May 1958, Webster Hall, New York

INTRODUCTION

"Melody"

Ostinato

3

5

8

Note that, as in later examples of "stretching" between 16th and triplet subdivisions, these aural change is barely perceptible, especially at tempo. The notations represent more a fluidity of phrasing rather than a quantifiable change in note value.

11

4

SOLO I

"independence" shown through non-vertical stretching of triplet/16th subdivision ("swing")

15

17

20

22

The image displays a musical score for a solo section, labeled 'SOLO I'. The score is written for two staves, likely representing a piano and a drum set, with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. The measures are numbered 11 through 22. The notation includes various rhythmic figures, including triplets and 16th notes, which are highlighted in red. A purple box highlights a specific measure (measure 15) where the two staves play different rhythmic patterns, illustrating the concept of 'independence' through non-vertical stretching of the triplet/16th subdivision. The score is marked with 'SOLO I' and includes a '4' above the first measure of the solo section. The notation includes various rhythmic figures, including triplets and 16th notes, which are highlighted in red. The score is marked with 'SOLO I' and includes a '4' above the first measure of the solo section.

FLUTE A vertical alignment of accents, defending "one person" argument

25

( )

28

31

FLUTE B

34

37

The image displays a musical score for two flutes, Flute A and Flute B, across measures 25 to 37. The score is organized into systems. Flute A's part is shown in the upper staves, and Flute B's part is in the lower staves. The notation includes various rhythmic values, primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets (indicated by a '3' over the notes). Accents (marked with a '>' symbol) are placed above many notes. A purple box highlights measures 25-27 of Flute A, with a text box above it stating 'vertical alignment of accents, defending "one person" argument'. In measures 34-35, specific notes are marked with red dots and an 'x', likely indicating a correction or a specific performance instruction. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign in measure 37.

40

43

stretch

46

FLUTE C

"true" independence

48

51



54

54 55 56

(slight stretch in ostinato)

57

57 58 59

60

lower pitch?

60 61 62

63

63 64 65

66

66 67 68

69 VOICE enters...and pitch of bass drum changes!

vertical alignment of accents in a variation

72

74

( )

76

clear polyrhythm

78

81

Both voices "swing" together...

84

(slight difference in pitch)

87

SOLO II

89

"stretch"

clear polyrhythm

"true" independence

92

( )

95

98

101

( )

104

107

There is a significant pull here, both in terms of tempo and "independence," implying the possibility of separate players.

110

At tempo, the ostinato sounds as matching the accented roll. There is significant, independent metric "stretching" here...so much so that almost an entire 8th note of temporal length is lost from the melody. I've done my best to quantify this here, but, as always, the reader should defer to the recording.

112

114

"true" independence

116

119

A "wood" clicking from a bass drum (m. 120) is not physically possible when played with a pedal. If this timbre is in fact wood as opposed to a recording artifact, then the "one player" argument is in trouble!

122

125

128

This is interesting: the "mistake" artifact coincides with a stretch in the ostinato...

( )

"swings" together

131

accents lining up with ostinato, after a severe shift (!)

134

137

140

143

clear polyrhythm

146

clear polyrhythm

accents lining up with ostinato, after a severe shift (!)

polyrhythm (m. 146) coincides with a stretch in the ostinato...

149

strong suggestion of single person concurrently improvising both strata

152

polyrhythm coincides with a stretch in the ostinato...

155

158

roll = 81 sounded notes in the space of 48 triplet time units

This phrase (m. 161) is significantly "stretched," with the downbeat being slightly anticipated, giving a much more exaggerated sense of "polyrhythm."

161

Passages like m. 166-167 illustrate a shift between ternary and binary subdivisions significant enough to merit a change in notation.

164

slight shift toward 16th subdivision in ostinato



167

170 (slightly anticipated) > (shift apart in melody and ostinato)

173

accents played together, grounding melody and ostinato

176

(pushes w/ melody!)

179

There's some kind of slight fumble in the melody here (m. 179), which makes sense with the attempt at what sounds like closing the hihat.

(slight shift in melody and ostinato)

The polyrhythm + "mistake" artifact coincide with a stretch in the ostinato.

The melody stretches here to the point of implying a *tresillo*, similar to the tendency toward a sixteenth-note subdivision at the beginning of the piece.

signifiant shift in ostinato

196

Measures 196 and 197 of a musical score. Measure 196 features a right-hand part with six groups of eighth-note triplets, each marked with a red accent and a red '3', and a left-hand part with six groups of eighth-note triplets, each marked with a red '3'. Measure 197 continues with a right-hand part featuring a triplet of eighth notes, a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and a triplet of eighth notes, and a left-hand part with a triplet of eighth notes, a quarter note, a triplet of eighth notes, and a quarter note. Both measures end with a double bar line.

198

Measures 198 and 199 of a musical score. Measure 198 features a right-hand part with a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, and a left-hand part with a triplet of eighth notes, a quarter note, a triplet of eighth notes, and a quarter note. Measure 199 features a right-hand part with a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, and a left-hand part with a triplet of eighth notes, a quarter note, a triplet of eighth notes, and a quarter note. Both measures end with a double bar line.

## CHAPTER 4: MAX ROACH'S 1977 *SOLOS* AND COMPARISONS WITH "LADY MARIE"

The closest aural correspondences to Ghanaba's use of complex ostinatos in Roach's playing appear in his 1977 record *Solos*. The fact that evidence of Roach's mature use of complex ostinatos begins to appear in 1977 is remarkable: This is three years or so after Roach had returned from his 1974 trip to Ghana, where he sought out Kofi Ghanaba, writing a letter stating specifically that it had taken jazz musicians "17 years" to really recognize the musical content that Ghanaba had brought to the States in the 1950s.<sup>58</sup> The difference between this recording (the first specifically "solo drumset"-themed recording after his return from Ghana) and the similarly-themed recording produced in closest temporal proximity to the 1974 trip to Ghana (*Drums Unlimited*, recorded 1965 and 1966), is notable in the later record's aural similarity to Ghanaba's solo drumming concept that started to emerge with *Themes for African Drums* in the late 1950s. The chronology of Roach's drum-centric recordings suggests that it did indeed take about "17 years" for Roach to really approach in a convincing way the ostinato-based techniques that Ghanaba was developing in the late '50s and early '60s. But there are some pronounced differences in approach, described in the musical examples below.

These differences are a result of something characteristic of Roach as a composer/improviser: the ability to adapt both general concepts and specific phrasal components *already existing in his improvisational vernacular* into new frameworks, resulting in innovations that remain "grounded" in Roach's specific vocabulary as a soloist. This contributes to Roach maintaining an identifiable "sound" across the

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<sup>58</sup> Ampene, "One on One," 3-4.

significant variety of conceptual and contextual situations he recorded in throughout his career.<sup>59</sup> Below, we can see this process of adaptation at work in two different levels when viewed in relation to the influence of Ghanaba's "Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II"—"intrapersonal," identifying instances of Roach's own previous phrasal material presented in a new context, and "interpersonal," describing how that vocabulary is translated through the lens of Ghanaba's influence, resulting in significant aural similarity.<sup>60</sup> First, evidence of the "intrapersonal" is seen in the connection between Roach's "Un Poco Loco" cell, prominent in the May 1, 1951 recording of the Bud Powell track of the same name, and a compositional element of "J.C. Mose-Is" from *Solos*, recorded August 30, 1977. Note the direct correspondence between the additive nature of both passages, "5 + 5 + 6."

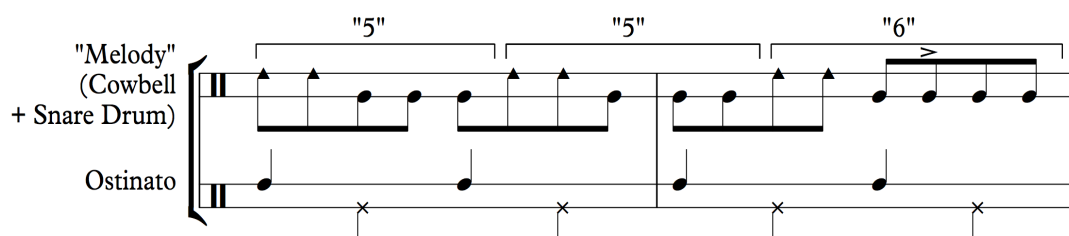


Figure 7. "Un Poco Loco" cell.

<sup>59</sup> Ironically, this vocabular consistency has resulted in an oversimplification of Roach's playing by the contemporary "drum" analytical community, as seen in the numerous incorrect transcriptions of Roach's "The Drum Also Waltzes" available online, which often appear in established publications (e.g., a version appearing in an October 2000 article for *Drum! Magazine* interviewing the noted drummer Steve Smith: <https://drummagazine.com/steve-smith-on-the-art-history-of-drum-soloing/>). Many of the rhythmic cells used in "The Drum Also Waltzes" are clear adaptations from the earlier 3/4 solo "Blues Waltz," but altered through processes of "metric detachment" (a trademark of Ghanaba's ostinato-based playing, as discussed in Chapter Five). These subtle but clearly quantifiable differences are often disregarded by transcribers, as seen in the *Drum! Magazine* article. The result is a profound misunderstanding of Roach's career-long trajectory as an improviser.

<sup>60</sup> These concepts are discussed at length in the analysis and comparison of Roach's "Blues Waltz" and "Drums Unlimited" in Chapter Five, where the interpersonal adaptive process is identified in more concrete detail.

Figure 8 shows musical notation for "J.C. Mose-Is," cell A1. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of three staves. The top staff, labeled "Melody", shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents, grouped into three measures labeled "5", "5", and "6". The middle staff, labeled "Bass Drum (foot)", shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents, grouped into three measures labeled "5", "5", and "6". The bottom staff, labeled "Hihat (foot)", shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents, grouped into three measures labeled "5", "5", and "6". The time signature is 4/4.

Figure 8. "J.C. Mose-Is," cell A1.

While lacking the direct correspondence to the "Un Poco Loco" cell seen above, Roach applies the same additive concept in cell "A," which precedes the "A1" cell in "J.C. Mose-Is." Each cell repeats four times at the beginning of the composition without any variation, clearly indicating the intention of the 9/16 meter seen below, rather than as an unintended artifact of the non-quantifiable processes of "swing."

Figure 9 shows musical notation for "J.C. Mose-Is," cell A. The notation is in 9/16 time and consists of three staves. The top staff, labeled "A", shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents, grouped into two measures labeled "4" and "5". The middle staff, labeled "Bass Drum (foot)", shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents, grouped into two measures labeled "4" and "5". The bottom staff, labeled "Hihat (foot)", shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents, grouped into two measures labeled "4" and "5". The time signature is 9/16.

Figure 9. "J.C. Mose-Is," cell A.

The “interpersonal” adaptive process from Ghanaba to Roach in the above examples, unlike the more concrete examples we will examine later in this chapter and in Chapter Five, is somewhat speculative. Ghanaba generally eschewed the use of additive meter, preferring instead to focus on manipulating the relationship (often to the point of breaking) between improvised “melodic” material and an ostinato in the context of compound quadruple meter (as seen in “The Lady Marie Drum Suite,” “The Third Phase,” etc.).<sup>61</sup> While Roach experimented with a similar process, as we will discuss, the cells above demonstrate a significantly different approach, one in which the aural juxtaposition of the “melody” against the ostinato is created through quantifiable and metrically related elements: odd-numbered additive groupings interacting linearly with a rhythmic line in the feet. The result, however, is the same: whether we approach the aural impact of a complex layering of melody over ostinato through “true” independence (as demonstrated by Ghanaba) or through additive processes (as seen above), we still end up with a sonic product that is fundamentally similar, both in basic concept and in sounded impression.

Another prominent instance of the “Un Poco Loco” cell in Roach’s later playing appears in the principal structural component of “South Africa ’76,” also from the 1977 record *Solos*. This component is repeated throughout the piece, which begins with eight unvaried iterations. Here, the “2” + “3” structure of the “5” fragment directly corresponds with the original 1951 cell. Roach creates complexity over the ostinato by applying the additive structure to a 24-note grid, sounded as (5 + 5 + 2) (5 + 5 + 2). The length of the additive phrase is extended by voicing the second ten-note group between the middle tom and the snare drum. While the structure as a whole varies from the original “Un Poco

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<sup>61</sup> It’s important to note here that Ghanaba did frequently use contrasting groupings of accents to create tension between the melody and the ostinato, as seen in the “Lady Marie: Part II” transcription at the end of Chapter Three.

Loco” structure (which resolves into a 16-note grid: 5 + 5 + 6), the general principle of resolving angularity within an additive structure remains, with the “2” fragment serving the responsorial role of the original “6.”

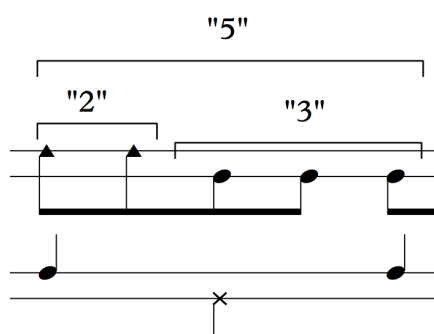


Figure 10. “Un Poco Loco” “5” fragment additive composition.

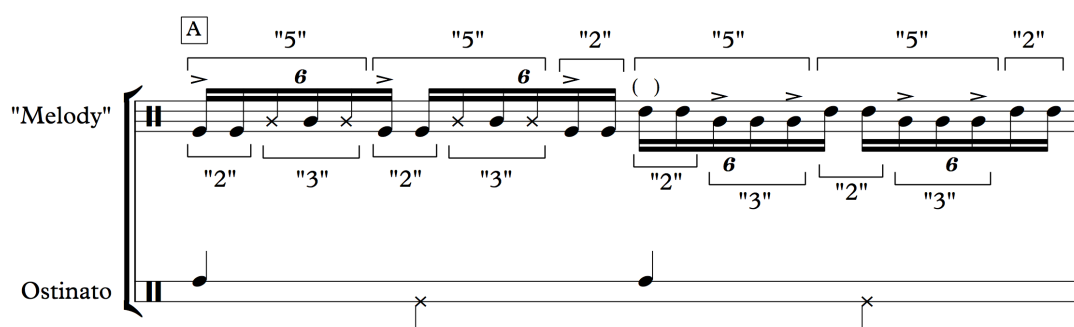


Figure 11. “South Africa ’76,” structural component A.

While the ostinato above is “simple,” the process of additive mapping creates a significantly complex relationship between melody and ostinato that suggests conceptual and aural similarity to Ghanaba’s melody/ostinato layering.



There's another way we can notate the "A" component, using a more "linear" approach to describe Roach's played content.<sup>62</sup> While somewhat counterintuitive, the example below, which notates the melody in 16th notes and alters the ostinato accordingly, actually bridges the descriptive distance between this piece and "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" by identifying a more "complex" ostinato. Additionally, the following descriptive method is a practical necessity if we are to describe subsequent thematic variations of the component "A" material using the standard conventions of Western musical notation.

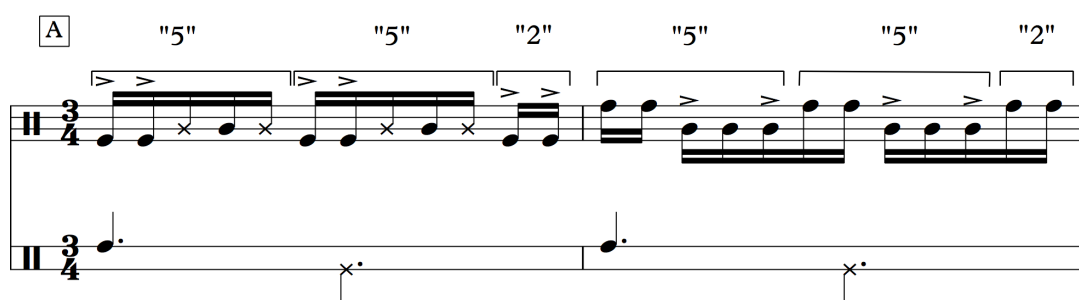


Figure 12. "South Africa '76," structural component A, linear notation.

If we continue to describe the ostinato as being in 4/4, as seen in Figure 11, we run into a notational issue fairly quickly. In "A1 (variation)" and later sections, there is a metric angularity within the ostinato that cannot be described sufficiently in 4/4, requiring our description to modulate from a tuplet-based grid to 16th notes (as seen below). The fact that a "clunky" device such as this metric modulation becomes a

<sup>62</sup> I use the term "linear" here somewhat loosely. Where the previous example used a tuplet-based subdivision to justify the ostinato appearing in 4/4 meter, the following "linear" notation maintains a 16th-note subdivision.

transcriptional necessity so early in the piece should make us question the descriptive accuracy of this notation's interpretation of the melody-ostinato relationship.<sup>63</sup>

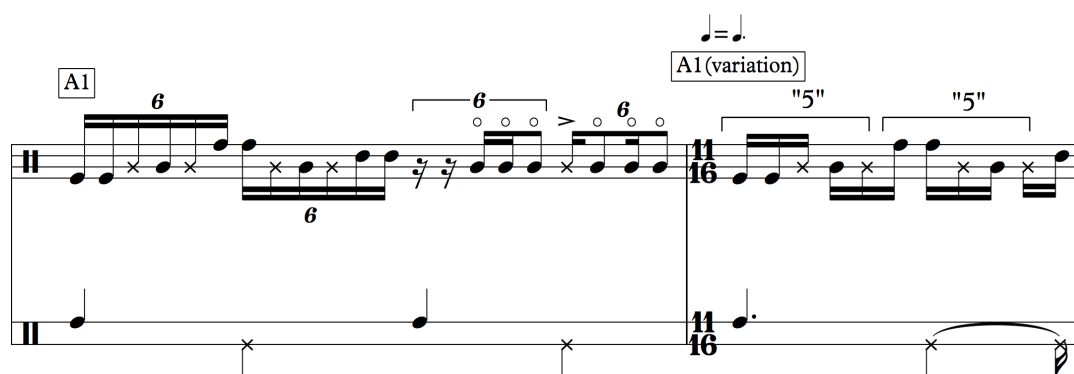


Figure 13. Modulation in “South Africa ’76,” m. 10, arising from notation of ostinato in 4/4.

However, if we discard our attachment to 4/4 from the beginning, and opt for the 3/4 description in seen in Figure 12, we can more fluidly describe subsequent variations.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> The nature of improvised music often does not hold the intentions of future theorists in mind. In sounded reality, generally a sort of “Ockham’s Razor” of performance practice needs to be acknowledged: overly complex theoretical explanations for what is heard usually are ill-suited to represent the performer’s thinking. In this case, I think it’s doubtful that Roach intended to modulate and remodulate the ostinato between measures, as shown in the example below. However, the limitations of Western musical notation remain, and we must find *some* solution to represent the sounded notes in the chosen musical-analytical language of this thesis. While the notation in all of these examples is strictly descriptive (meaning that I doubt that Roach would write these passages out in such a way), it is nonetheless important to stay as close as possible to the reality of the performer in our descriptions.

<sup>64</sup> Note that the pattern played by the feet does vary slightly in these variations, as represented by the changing time signatures in the following figures. However, three considerations prompt me to continue using the term “ostinato” when referring to these patterns: A) The melodic structure of the pattern is static, always appearing as a note at the bass drum pitch level followed by a note at the hihat pitch level; B) Due to the static organization of pitch levels, at Roach’s brisk tempo the variations initially sound unchanged from cell to cell; C) Historiographic considerations discussed in this thesis place these patterns in the continuum of Ghanaba’s ostinato-based influence on Roach—while Roach’s method at creating complexity between the ostinato/melody strata in these particular examples differ from Ghanaba’s, the aural results are

The figure displays two musical staves. The top staff, labeled 'A1', features a melody with two groups of five notes, each marked with a bracket and the label '"5"'. A bracket labeled 'resolution' spans the final note of the second group and the first note of the third group. The bottom staff, labeled 'A1 (variation)', shows a similar melody with two groups of five notes, each marked with a bracket and the label '"5"'. Both staves have a time signature of 11/16 at the end.

Figure 14. “South Africa ’76,” linear notation eliminating need for modulation.

With this notation, we can understand the entire melody as being organized into 16th-note subdivisions over a duple ostinato-like pattern mapped into 3/4 (that is, using a dotted-quarter notation with slight variations to navigate the changing time signatures). This allows us to dispense with the modulation from sextuplet-based subdivisions at a separate tempo into the 16th-note subdivisions that are required to explain “A1 (variation).” I’ve included both approaches, as Roach’s rhythms can be heard as “sounding” in both realms of subdivision: the “linear” (or 16th-based) and the tuplet-based.

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significantly similar. All that being said, the term “ostinato-like” as opposed to “ostinato” would be more accurate concerning Roach’s playing in our “South Africa ’76” examples.

It's important to note that the 11/16 time signature is not an outlier in this solo. Repeatedly, Roach returns to the melody of the 11/16 bar (A1 [variation]) as a sort of compositional place holder: [11/16 melody – improvisation (which typically lasts a duration of 13 16th-note pulses)], [11/16 melody – slightly longer improvisation], etc. This clear, structural repetition firmly denotes intention.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, in these “call and response” systems of Roach’s structural melody and corresponding responsorial improvisations, we can observe Roach’s use of polyrhythm and “independent” functioning of the limbs in a rhythmic-melodic context, which bears striking similarity to Ghanaba’s usage in “Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Charles Foldesh, a fine jazz drummer with extensive knowledge of Max Roach, once commented to me while comparing transcriptions of Roach’s classic solo “What Is This Thing Called Love” (1956) that his impulse was to disregard many of the artifacts and seemingly out-of-place rhythmic patterns as mistakes, but, due to his understanding of Roach’s meticulously logical approach to music, had learned to assume that, in general, *Roach played what he intended to*. I’ve certainly had to practice this in my transcriptions here: at first, I assumed that the 11/16 bar was an error or miscalculation, that a 16th note had been shaved off of the original A1 melody through the processes of Roach’s rhythmic momentum (or “swing”) at this tempo. On closer listening, I believe that the opposite is true: as stated above, the repetition of the 11/16 melody and repeating ostinato clearly denotes intention.

<sup>66</sup> Due to the subtle temporal malleability inherent to “swing” (especially at this tempo), I’ve found that an “exact” metric transcription of Roach’s improvisations is, in certain cases, misleading, and can obscure the meaning behind the sounded notes. While a complicated metric representation of Roach’s *compositional melodic content* is appropriate and shows the logical organization so characteristic of Roach’s structural approach, the more clearly improvised cells tend to “drift” in an almost imperceptible way, which can result in the quantifiable representations of Western music notation distracting us from the sounded notes.

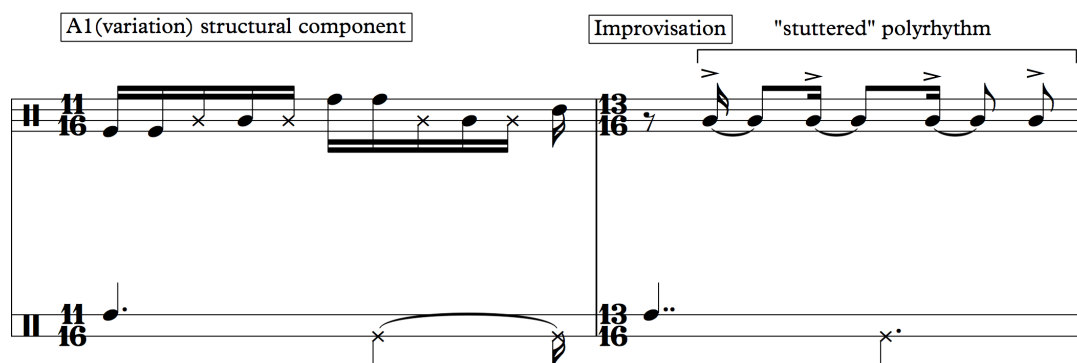
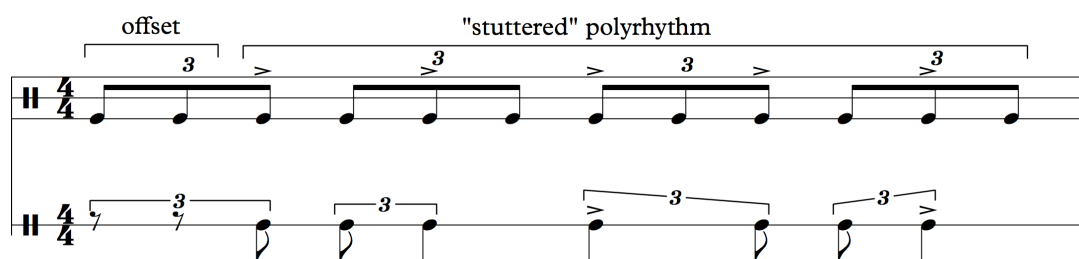


Figure 15. *A1(variation) structural component and corresponding responsorial improvisation: pair I.*

Note the “stuttered” polyrhythm in the figure above. I use this term to describe a rhythmic phrase that implies a duple/quadruple organization appearing in a non-duple/quadruple metric context, with the first note often being syncopated or “offset” from the first note of the ostinato. This technique is one of the most frequent ways in which Ghanaba manipulates the melody-ostinato relationship in “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” and was a characteristic trope of his playing throughout his career (see Figures 16 and 21 below).



(Similar examples seen in “Lady Marie: II,” measures 23, 28, 42, 120, 187-188, 189-190)

Figure 16. “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” m. 193. Example of “stuttered” polyrhythm, offset by two time units.

The second “South Africa ’76” pair, seen below, contains an example of “true” independence in the melody/ostinato relationship—that is, a complete detachment of the hands from the feet through an extension of the single stroke roll technique, where one sounded note is produced through one motion on either the left or right hand (“left-right-left-right” etc., as opposed to “left-left-right-right,” etc.). This detachment eschews a clear metric relationship between the melody/ostinato strata. While experiments with “stuttered” polyrhythm manipulate the aural impact of the melody/ostinato relationship by implying multiple meters in the same temporal framework, their relationship is still readily quantifiable. In the example below, we see that, while there is a quantifiable ratio between the number of sounded notes to the number of time units that they occupy, this is purely a descriptive relationship: At the tempo of “South Africa ’76,” as in “The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” it is unrealistic to assume that either Ghanaba or Roach are able to compute ratios as complex as these “in the moment” of improvisation. Rather, the wrists are truly “freed” from the feet, sounding not in metric relationship to one another, but rather appearing concurrently in the same broader temporal space. Simply, the hands are moving *independently* from the feet in these “roar”-like bursts of a-metrical rolls.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> A similar approach to the single stroke roll, where the exact number of component notes in the roll was subordinate to the roll’s general temporal length, existed well before Ghanaba’s development of the “Lady Marie: II” ostinato. However, these rolls (of which the greatest proponent was perhaps Art Blakey, who used this sort of non-metric roll so regularly that it became an identifiable characteristic of his “sound” as a musician) were performed independent of an ostinato, or over “simple” ostinatos such as the standard “four on the floor” pattern that permeated jazz during the swing era and onward. The innovation of Ghanaba’s usage is that the roll appears in conjunction with the metric context of a complex ostinato, but, due to the roll’s non-metric nature, bears no relationship to that context. This fundamental disposal of the metric relationship between the melody and ostinato provides evidence of extremely advanced, even “acrobatic” experimentations with “independence” (as manipulations of the hands-feet relationship in modern drumming parlance has come to be termed) in Ghanaba’s playing. Chapter Five devotes a considerable amount of space to the discussion of this technique and the correspondences between Roach and Ghanaba’s usage.

Figure 17 consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'A1(variation) structural component' and 'Improvisation'. It shows a sequence of notes in 11/16 time, followed by a bracketed section labeled '8 : 7' and 'true independence'. The bottom staff shows a single note in 11/16 time, followed by a bracketed section labeled 'Eight sounded notes in the space of seven 16th-note time units'.

Figure 17. *A1(variation) structural component and corresponding responsorial improvisation: pair II.*

Figure 18 shows two staves in 4/4 time. The top staff features a sequence of notes with triplets (3) and a quintuplet (5). The bottom staff features a sequence of notes with triplets (3). A bracketed section labeled '5' is shown above the top staff, indicating a five-over-three ratio.

(Similar examples are seen in measures 47, 87, and 89 of "Lady Marie: II")

Figure 18. "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II," m. 49. Example of "true" independence in a metrically detached single stroke roll.<sup>68</sup>

The third "South Africa '76" pair shows another instance of "Ghanaba-esque" "stuttered" polyrhythm as a means of manipulating the melody-ostinato relationship. The transcription of the pair and another correspondence from "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" are included below.

<sup>68</sup> While the five-over-three ratio can sometimes be heard in the lexicon of modern jazz rhythmic vocabulary, both the aural result of the sounded roll, as well as the consideration of tempo per the discussion above clearly indicate this and similar instances in "Lady Marie: II" as being "non-metric" rolls: that is, I posit that Ghanaba was not thinking "five sounded notes in the space of three triplet time units." To my ears, this is abundantly clear when listening to the original recording, and, as with all of the examples in this thesis, I strongly encourage the reader to listen to the actual music, as the descriptive limits of the Western notational system can often distract from the "truth" of the music at hand.

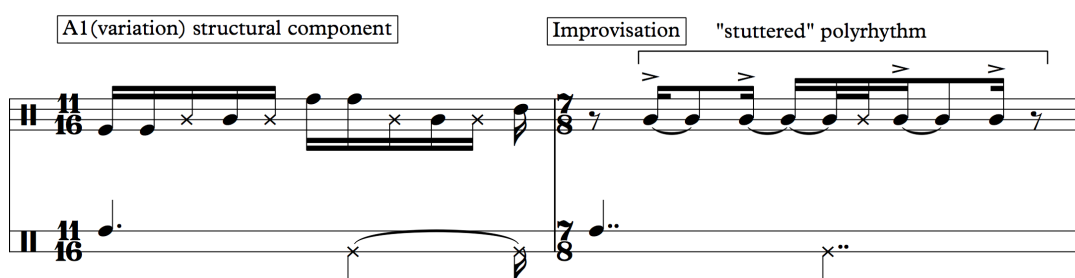


Figure 19. *A1(variation) structural component and corresponding responsorial improvisation: pair III.*

Note here the significant complexity of the “stuttered” polyrhythm, which organizes three-note groupings of the 16th-note time unit grid into a quadruple structure, as implied by the accents.

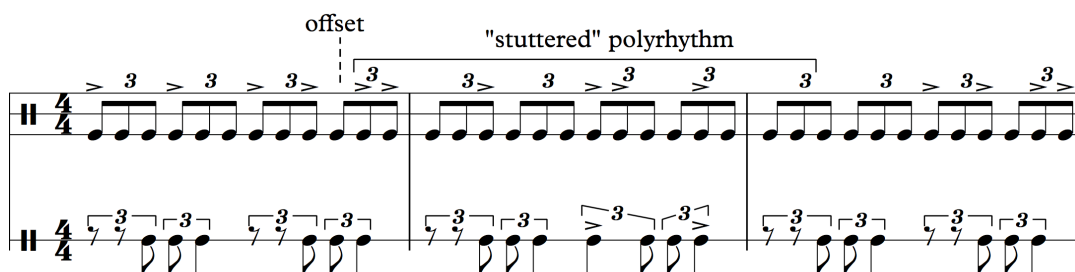


Figure 20. “*The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,*” mm. 78-80. Example of “broader” stuttered polyrhythm, implying quadruple grouping of triplet time units. Offset of one time unit.

The above examples should help illustrate both the connection between Roach’s prior experimentation with additive rhythms (i.e., “Un Poco Loco”) to his work in the late 1970s, as well as offer a visual representation of “sufficiently complex” melody/ostinato



strata showing conceptional and aural similarity between Roach and Ghanaba's exploration of manipulating the melody-ostinato relationship. We've seen above that after 1974's trip to seek out Kofi Ghanaba in Ghana, Roach began to experiment with much more complex relationships between the hands and feet, leading to significant aural similarities to the approach that Ghanaba's developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

While the question of whether or not the complex ostinato heard in "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: II" was played by Kofi Ghanaba himself is a valid one, "true" independence seen in the separation of hands and feet in his use of non-metric single stroke rolls (examined in Figure 18) is thoroughly documentable on a wide range of audio and video recordings throughout Ghanaba's career. The "roar"-like effect of this technique stands out from the surrounding rhythmic textures and had become an identifiable trademark of Ghanaba's playing by the late 1950s. It continued to be so up until his passing on December 22, 2008.

Three particularly dramatic instances of this technique can be heard in "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II," appearing in mm. 111-112, mm. 114-115, and mm. 156-160. These rolls, while exhibiting the same metric detachment from the ostinato as the example discussed in Figure 20, are significantly longer than the other "independent" single stroke rolls seen in "Lady Marie: II" (m. 47, m. 49, m. 87, m. 89). The difference in aural impact resulting from this discrepancy in phrase length is severe enough for me to group these "long-form" rolls in a category unto themselves. Furthermore, Roach's extension of and subsequent experimentation with this technique in his own playing led

in a much different direction than his use of shorter non-metric rolls, which correspond directly with Ghanaba's (see Figure 18).<sup>69</sup>

There are inherent difficulties in notating this technique. The first two examples are described below using a fairly specific note-for-note representation of what is sounded. However, as stated before, this notation can be somewhat misleading if they suggest that either Ghanaba or Roach were consciously planning for specific ratios between the rolls and the underlying ostinato. Due to considerations of tempo and aural impact, I find it unpalatable that either drummer was considering the complex vertical relationships of such rapid notes against the ostinato. This is important to keep in mind while comparing the transcriptions here to the recorded audio. My third example opts for the use of a standard "roll" notation, that leaves slightly more flexibility in the realm of transcription but is still (unavoidably) imprecise.<sup>70</sup>

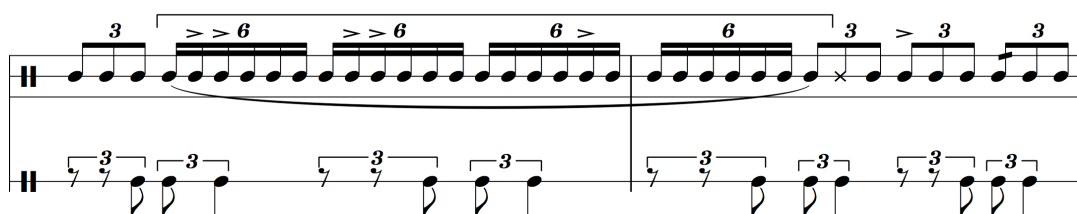


Figure 21. "Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II," mm. 111-112.

While the melody and ostinato above appear to relate to each other metrically, the recording exhibits a significant amount of temporal "stretching" in the ostinato, so much

<sup>69</sup> In addition to the discussion below, Roach's use and extension of both short and "long form" non-metric single stroke rolls are discussed at length in Chapter Five.

<sup>70</sup> While the following figures alternate between specific tuplet notations and the more imprecise standard roll notation, examples in Chapter Five use the ratio between sounded notes and the underlying grid of "time units" (described as either triplet or 16th-note) to both accurately describe the played content and highlight metric detachment in the melody-ostinato relationship.

so that it becomes meaningless to attempt to line up the individual notes of the roll in direct relation to the feet. With this in mind, the ratio of 25 sounded notes to 13 triplet time units perhaps better describes the aural reality of the above passage. Problematically, if we assume the phrase is played according to common metric relationships (i.e. the expected two-to-one ratio of sextuplets to triplets) as indicated by the Western notation of Figure 21, then the accents of the roll should not align vertically with the ostinato. However, the *aural reality* of the recording is that the accents of the roll do in fact approximate the sounded notes of the ostinato, meaning that the non-accented notes of the roll must vary significantly in speed.<sup>71</sup> Despite the initially apparent relationship between the melody/ostinato strata resulting from our notation above, the malleability of the speed at which the 25 sounded notes of the roll are played firmly identifies this passage as an example of metric detachment between the hands and feet.

Similarly, the notation of the melody-ostinato relationship in Figure 22 (below) seems to describe a concrete metric relationship, in this case the ratio of 20:12, which reduces to the fairly common polyrhythm of five-over-three. However, as we've discussed in earlier examples, the processes of temporal "stretching" heard in the recording makes such a reduction meaningless, as the rapidity of sounded notes in both the melody and the ostinato is malleable within the original ratio. Additionally, the fast tempo renders the assumption that Ghanaba was able to consciously organize such a complex metric relationship "in the moment" untenable. Instead, the recorded music, to which we should always defer, suggests that this is another example of metric detachment between the melody and the ostinato.

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<sup>71</sup> It is due to the problematic nature of sufficiently notating such malleability that later examples opt for a combination of standard "roll" notation and a ratio of sounded notes to underlying time units when describing instances of a-metric rolls.

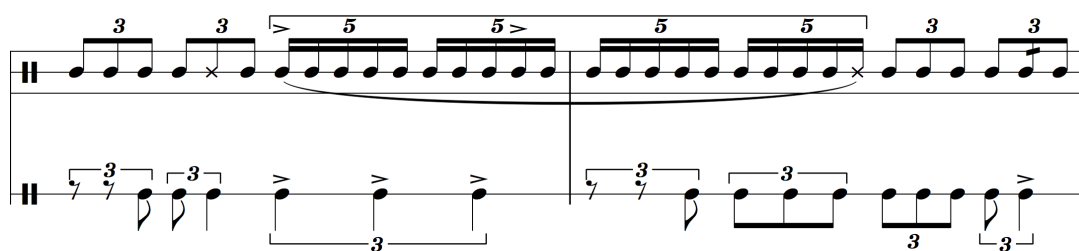


Figure 22. “Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II,” mm. 114-115.

In our last example, I’ve opted for the standard drum roll notation, using a ratio to describe the relationship between sounded notes and the ostinato’s triplet time unit grid (81:48). As the roll ends slightly before the last triplet time unit of the first beat of m. 159, the note colored “red” is not included in the ratio and appears in this figure simply to maintain the integrity of the original transcription and the metric quality of the triplet grid. The ratio of 81 sounded notes to 48 triplet time units shows the metric detachment between the melody/ostinato strata.

Expression marks denote changes in volume in Ghanaba's phrasing. Location of accents is approximate.

Figure 23. "Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II," mm. 156-160.

In addition to shorter "metrically detached" rolls, such as that seen in Figure 17, Roach uses long-form non-metric single stroke rolls frequently on *Solos*, the 1977 record which I posit is the specific moment when Ghanaba's influence on Roach really peaked in Roach's playing. There are numerous examples of single stroke rolls in which the strata of melody and ostinato momentarily cease to relate to one another in a clearly metric sense, returning to a common time-line upon completion of the roll. Notable examples include :58-1:01 and 4:01-4:10 from "South Africa '76," where the second instance is an extension of the non-metric roll that builds a melody around the drumset, merging Ghanaba's non-metric usage with Roach's own characteristic melodic approach: where Ghanaba would typically eschew using multiple sound sources while executing a non-metric roll (implying melodic phrases instead through the placement of accents and

changes in phrasing), Roach often moves up and down the different pitch-levels of the drumset throughout the course of one uninterrupted roll. Interestingly, this extension of a “pre-existing” technique (pre-existing in the sense that Ghanaba had already been layering non-metric rolls against ostinatos since the 1950s) to include a sense of melodic motion around the drumset is arguably one of the characteristics of Roach’s playing that cemented him as one of the great soloistic innovators in 20<sup>th</sup>-century jazz drumming. For instance, his expansion of the standard drum rudiments into melodic schema (i.e., voicing paradiddles—the “right-left-right-right-left-right-left-left” sticking pattern—on different sound sources to create melodic phrases) was innovative principally in the addition of melodic contour to a well-established rhythmic building block already used for generations of concert and popular drummers who had almost exclusively played them on a single sound source. Similarly, where part of Ghanaba’s innovation lies in his ability to obscure the relationships between hands and feet through non-metric single-stroke rolls on a single sound source, Roach furthers that innovation by utilizing the same concept but moving melodically around the drumset.

There is another variation on this technique frequently employed by Roach on *Solos* (1977): a brief abandonment of the ostinato during which the feet also sound a series of rapidly repeated notes that bear no metric relationship to the hands. In essence, the feet and the hands are operating independently, both strata creating non-related roll-like textures. Interestingly, while the hands alternate in sticking (i.e. right-left-right-left and so-on), the feet do not: the relationship between the left and right foot in these passages is decidedly more “independent” than between the left and right hand, and in

some cases even briefly displays a sounded polyrhythm of its own.<sup>72</sup> This multi-strata non-metric roll functions as a repeated structural component in Roach's "J.C. Mose-Is," appearing at 1:40-1:53, 3:08-3:30, and 4:59-5:03, as well as three instances between 6:49 and 7:30 of "South Africa '76," which are separated by brief returns to the original ostinato. Ghanaba's usage of the same technique is well documented on video recordings in the early 2000s but is decidedly absent from his earlier US-based recordings.

Roach's path to the long-form non-metric single stroke roll lines up chronologically with his documented exposure to Ghanaba's music. In the following chapter, we see how material from two of Roach's famous solos in 3/4 meter, "Blues Waltz" (1957) and "The Drum Also Waltzes" (1966), illustrate Roach's approach to improvising over a relatively complex ostinato, and how that approach drastically changed after coming into contact with the "Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II."

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<sup>72</sup> It is important to temper this last point, however, with the observation that the foot-to-foot polyrhythm in roll-like passages generally only becomes audible for brief moments at extremely reduced tempos using software to manipulate the sounded tempo of the recording. When heard at the original tempo, it becomes somewhat untenable to posit a conscious "phasing" in and out of polyrhythmic relationships in this manner.

## CHAPTER 5: COMPARISON OF “BLUES WALTZ” AND “THE DRUM ALSO WALTZES”

Roach’s solo on “Blues Waltz” from the March 18, 1957 recording *Jazz in 3/4 Time* is perhaps the most famous early instance of an extended drum improvisation in the bebop idiom executed in a non-4/4 time signature. Roach, who had clearly mastered the ability of soloing over the continuous typical 4/4 swing and bebop ostinato (four quarter notes played in the bass drum, with the addition of beats two and four on the hihat) by the time he began appearing on records as a sideman, jumped into relatively unexplored territory on “Blues Waltz” by not only soloing in an odd meter, but by doing so over a continuous ostinato in 3/4. While this ostinato is not particularly complex or innovative in itself, the technical and mental dexterity required to execute the relatively angular phrases already characteristic of Roach’s playing remains impressive, and this recording is still used by young drummers today to develop the specific facility required to retain an ostinato in an odd time signature while soloing. The solo in its entirety, adapted from Daniel Harding Israelsen’s fine *Max Roach Solo Book* (2017), is included below. I’ve altered Israelsen’s layout to more prominently display the odd-meter ostinato, as well as changing a few details to better suit our specific descriptive goals.

The concept of the “drum waltz,” in title and in content, traces an interesting line through both Roach and Ghanaba’s careers over the decade after Roach’s “Blues Waltz.” Ghanaba, deeply appreciative of Roach’s bebop playing (referring to Roach as “the King” multiple times in interviews and his own autobiographical writing, recorded his own composition “Waltzing Drums” on *Themes for African Drums* (1959), which is an



example of an extended drum improvisation over a *multi-person* ostinato—that is, where the melody/ostinato strata are delegated to separate performers, in this case with two other drummers establishing a continuous ostinato, over which Ghanaba (at this time still known as Guy Warren) weaves a solo improvisation. While aurally dissimilar to “Blues Waltz,” there is a possible connection between the two pieces, considering the (thus far) relatively uncommon extended drum soloing in a 3/4 time signature, the title, and numerous statements of (sometimes veiled) admiration of Roach from Ghanaba.<sup>73</sup> As discussed throughout this thesis, Roach was aware of *Themes for African Drums*, and present during at least a portion of the October 17, 1961 session for Ghanaba’s subsequent record *African Rhythms*, where one of Ghanaba’s most strikingly virtuosic compositions in compound quadruple meter, “The Third Phase,” was recorded.

The “drum waltz” thread continues with one of Roach’s first “drum-centric” records as a leader post- “Lady Marie” and “Third Phase,” on the release of *Themes for African Drums* (1959) and then the release of *African Rhythms* (1962) respectively, the two Ghanaba recordings that he would have been most familiar with. On *Drums*

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<sup>73</sup> It’s important to note that Ghanaba had already recorded in a 3/4 context before 1957, as can be heard on “My Minuet” from Ghanaba’s first record as leader *Africa Speaks, America Answers* (1956). However, this recording is significantly detached in style and approach from Roach’s bebop oriented “waltz” recordings, as well as from both Roach and Ghanaba’s drum-centric recordings of later years. While the strict triple-meter “waltz” was not a specific trademark of Ghanaba’s playing, he extensively used compound quadruple meter from his earliest recordings onward. These meters are easily relatable to the triple-meter jazz waltz through the use of simple polyrhythms and fairly straight forward metric modulations, perhaps suggesting a greater improvisational facility within the triple meter than typically exhibited by jazz drummers in the 1950s and early 60s. The primacy of compound meters in Ghanaba’s playing, and the extremely advanced use thereof, might provide another interesting “jumping off point” for further research concerning Ghanaba’s possible influence on the jazz community, directly or indirectly. Musically, Ghanaba’s improvisations on “Waltzing Drums,” which alternate with statements of a melodic theme from Lawrence Brown’s trombone, are an almost complete departure from “bebop” drumming vocabulary, with an abundance of polyrhythmic and non-metric phrasing from Ghanaba, who solos on what appears to be a conga drum. While featuring a multi-person instead of a self-contained ostinato, and bearing little aural resemblance to Roach’s playing, a comprehensive transcription and comparison with Roach’s work in 3/4 might be useful as a direction for further research at a later date (more “sand” for our “sandbox,” as it were).

*Unlimited*, with the extended drum improvisation “The Drum Also Waltzes,” recorded April 25, 1966, Roach revisited the “Blues Waltz” concept, but this time with a sonic palette significantly similar to techniques used by Ghanaba throughout his late 1950s and early 1960s recordings, most notably the separation of the hands and the feet to create metrically unrelated, and thus “truly independent,” roll-like melodic passages superimposed onto an ostinato—a technique that we examined in a more complex context with Roach’s *Solos* (1977). First, however, it’s important to identify the concrete parallels between Roach’s “The Drum Also Waltzes” (1966) and “Blues Waltz” (1957), which I posit are variations of the same thematic concept—most broadly defined, perhaps, as soloing over an ostinato in 3/4 meter. Israelsen’s transcription of Roach’s solo on “Blues Waltz” (with my own adjustments) appears below, followed by a structural analysis.

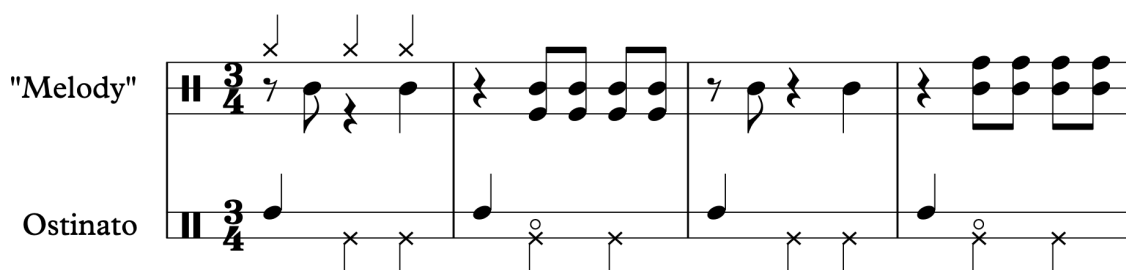
# "Blues Waltz" - Max Roach's Solo

Max Roach

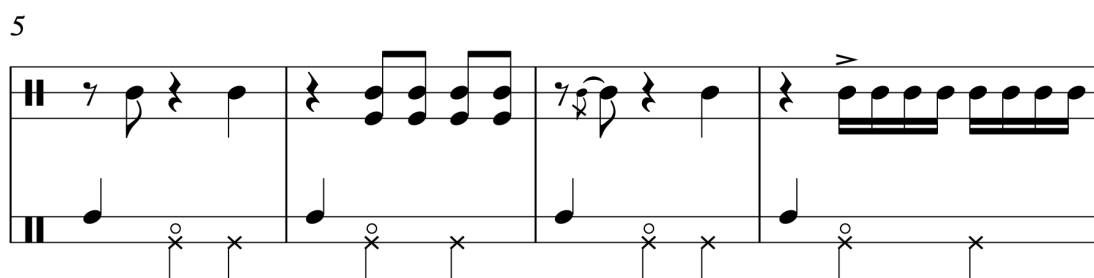
Recorded March 18, 1957, Capital Tower, Los Angeles

"Melody"

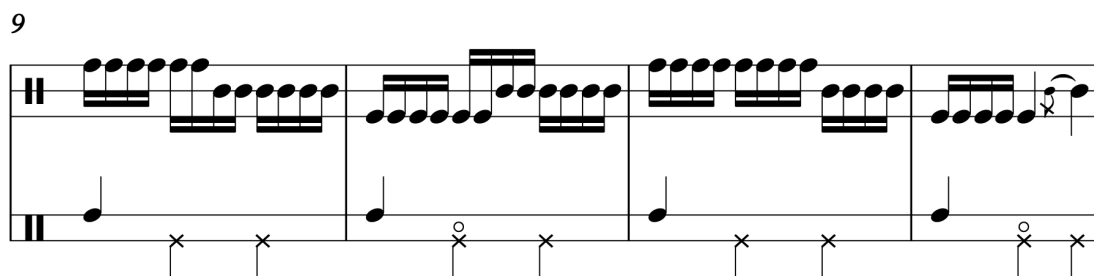
Ostinato



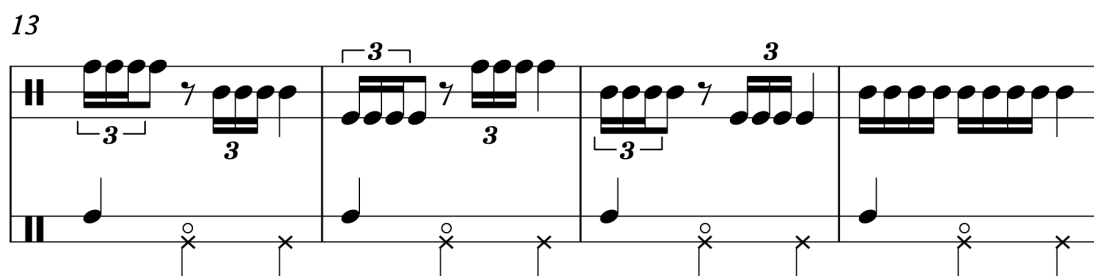
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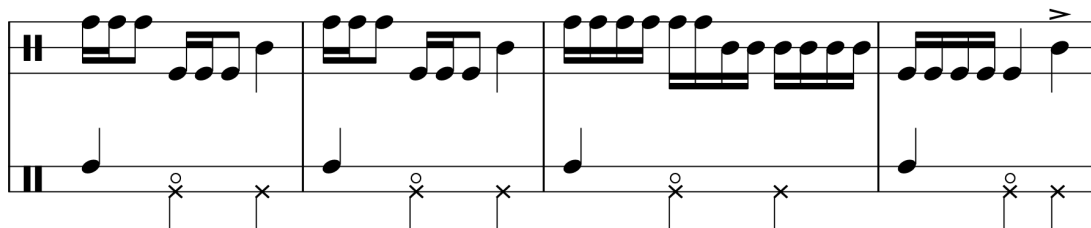
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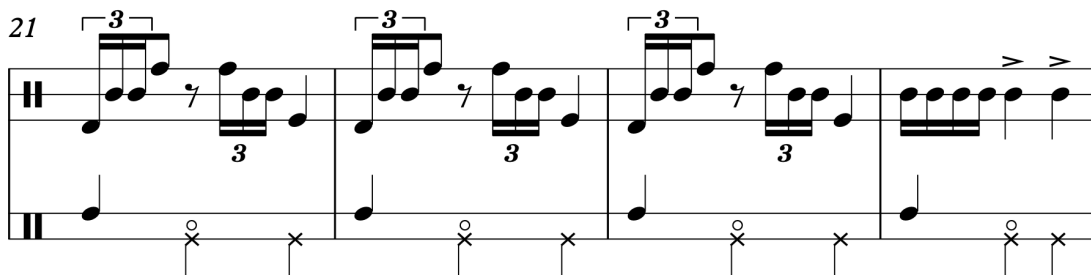
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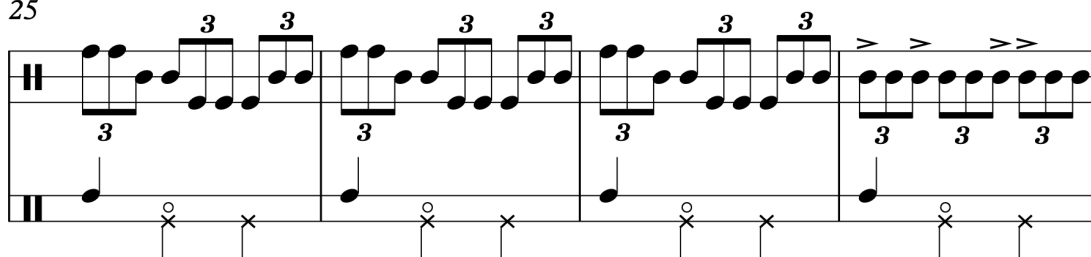
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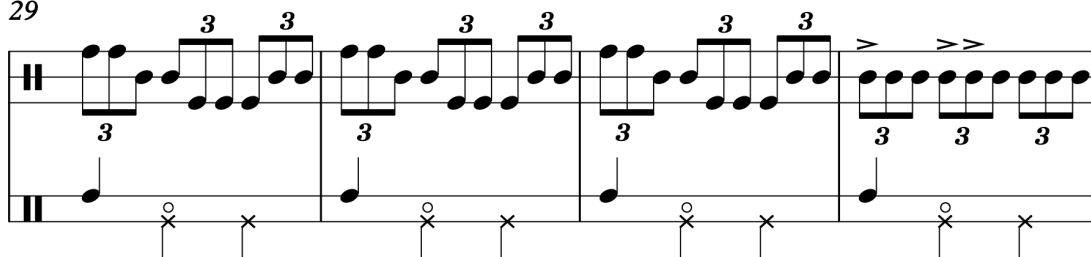
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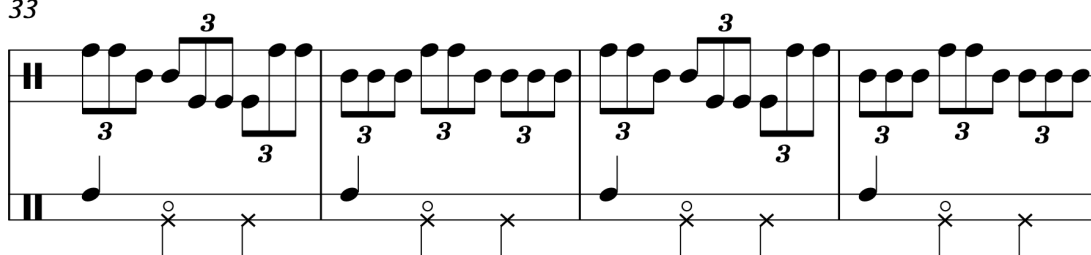
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29



33



37

Measures 37-40. The top staff contains a sequence of eighth-note triplets with accents, followed by a sixteenth-note triplet. The bottom staff shows a single eighth note followed by rests marked with 'x' and 'o'.

41

Measures 41-42. The top staff shows eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows a single eighth note followed by rests marked with 'x' and 'o'.

43

Measures 43-44. The top staff shows eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows a single eighth note followed by rests marked with 'x' and 'o'.

45

Measures 45-48. The top staff features a sequence of sixteenth-note patterns, ending with a quarter note and a half note. The bottom staff shows a single eighth note followed by rests marked with 'x' and 'o'.

“Blues Waltz,” written by Roach, fits the rubric of the “blues” structure frequently used in jazz composition: An A “call” on the tonic, repeated at the subdominant and moving to the tonic, with a B “response” moving from dominant to subdominant to tonic. In “Blues Waltz,” this harmonic cycle is expressed in the space of 24 bars of 3/4 time, with each A and B section occupying eight bars. Roach’s drum solo follows this structural framework, playing over a total of two 24-bar choruses.

The first “A” of the first chorus is built almost entirely on a smaller two-bar responsorial structure of a syncopated figure in bar one followed by Roach playing two sound sources simultaneously to create a “chord”-like response in bar two. This structure is repeated, but with a different chord “voicing” in the second iteration.

syncopation | chord<sup>(high)</sup> | syncopation | chord<sup>(low)</sup>

This four-bar structure is then repeated in its entirety, with the last bar replaced by material that anticipates the material central to the second “A.” In A<sup>1</sup>, a continuous stretch of 16th notes moves through the different pitch levels of the drumset, with pitch levels changing at a relatively slow rate. The fourth bar of A<sup>1</sup> provides a resolution, breaking the 16th notes with two quarter notes on beats two and three. This cell, with slight variations, is reiterated at the end of the next three four bar phrases. The second half of A<sup>1</sup> consists of a 16th-note triplet figure that cycles through pitch levels at a rate of two pitch levels per bar, implying a 2:3 polyrhythm. This is repeated for three bars and then concluded with the A<sup>1a</sup> resolution cell. The B section speeds up the cycling seen in A<sup>1b</sup> to the rate of the original meter (that is, three pitch levels to one bar). This is repeated

for a total of two bars and followed by a 16th-note run that mirrors the exact melodic motion of the first four beats of A<sup>1a</sup>. This is remarkable in that the underlying harmony of both of these passages (the subdominant) is the same. Roach is “playing changes,” as it were. The second half of the B section returns to the 2:3 speed of A<sup>1b</sup>, but with a more linear melodic cell. As before, the fourth bar resolves.

### CHORUS I

A: sync | chord<sup>(h)</sup> | sync | chord<sup>(l)</sup> | sync | chord<sup>(h)</sup> | sync | (anticipation) |

A<sup>1a</sup>: 16ths down | 16ths up | 16ths down | (resolution) |

A<sup>1b</sup>: pitch cycling at 2:3 | sim | sim | (resolution) |

B<sup>a</sup>: pitch cycling at 3:3 | sim | 16ths down | (resolution) |

B<sup>b</sup>: melody at 2:3 | sim | sim | (resolution) ||

The second chorus is organized similarly, with two distinct one-bar triplet melodies and a two-bar triplet melody providing the material for A and A<sup>1</sup>. Common resolutions occur at every fourth bar, with the final bar of A<sup>1</sup> anticipating the B material. The B section restates the pitch cycling at 2:3 seen in A<sup>1b</sup>, but in 16th notes as opposed to 16th-note triplets. The second half of B consists of a continuous, non-syncopated 16th-note run downwards, moving at the rate of one pitch level per bar, and resolving on the downbeat of the final measure, providing a clear resolution to the solo.

## CHORUS II

A: ||: melody<sup>1</sup> | sim | sim | (resolution) :||

A<sup>1a</sup>: ||: melody<sup>2</sup> | (continued) :||

A<sup>1b</sup>: melody<sup>3</sup> | sim | sim | (anticipation) |

B<sup>a</sup>: Chorus I A<sup>1b</sup> pitch cycling (variation) | sim | sim | (anticipation) |

B<sup>b</sup>: 16ths at pitch level 1 | ...at pitch level 2 | ...at pitch level 3 | (resolution) ||

“The Drum Also Waltzes” is organized around the same “chord”-like cells seen at the beginning of “Blues Waltz,” and uses a similar 3/4 ostinato continuously throughout the entire piece. Here, they function independently of any syncopated statement—that is, the two-part responsorial structure is now built entirely using the chord<sup>low</sup> and chord<sup>high</sup> cells. These two (and in one instance, three) chord structures, appearing nine times throughout the piece, are followed by short melodic cells. While characteristic of Roach’s playing, these cells have been transmuted through a process of “demetricization” seen in Ghanaba’s improvisations. This will be discussed later on. Melodic cells are usually followed by non-metric roll-like passages, which grow in intensity both within their immediate structure (which always begins with the multi-chord responsorial motive) and throughout the piece as a whole. The roll-like passage in the penultimate structure, sounded on the hihat, releases this intensity, placing the climax of the piece at the non-metric roll of structure VI. A two-bar “cymbal” motive with one note per bar punctuates the piece. The two notes are sounded at different pitch levels, with the second level



providing a responsorial feeling that often times has the function of releasing musical tension within each structure.

“THE DRUM ALSO WALTZES”<sup>74</sup>

I: [chord<sup>low</sup> - chord<sup>high</sup>]<sup>i</sup> | cell<sup>A</sup> cell<sup>B</sup> cell<sup>(roll)A</sup> | roll | cymbal structure |

II: [chord<sup>low</sup> - chord<sup>high</sup>]<sup>ii</sup> | cell<sup>D</sup> cell<sup>E</sup> | melodic roll |

III: [chord<sup>low</sup> - chord<sup>high</sup>]<sup>ii</sup> | snare drum pitch level: cell<sup>(roll)B</sup> cell<sup>(roll)C</sup> roll, roll |

IV: [c<sup>l</sup> - c<sup>h</sup>]<sup>iii</sup> | long 16th note phrase → resolution | flam motive | cymbal structure |

V: c<sup>l</sup> - c<sup>h</sup> - c<sup>l</sup>c<sup>h</sup> | “7:6” cells | melodic rolls A, B, C | cymbal structure |

VI: c<sup>l</sup> - c<sup>h</sup>c<sup>l</sup> | cymbal structure (extended) roll (climax) → resolution (crash) |

VII: c<sup>l</sup> - c<sup>h</sup> - c<sup>l</sup>c<sup>h</sup> | cell<sup>hihat</sup> |

VIII: : [c<sup>l</sup> - c<sup>h</sup>]<sup>ii</sup> | hihat roll (space) |

IX: : c<sup>l</sup> - c<sup>h</sup> - c<sup>l</sup>c<sup>h</sup> | (space) |

While Roach’s soloistic material is legendarily consistent and identifiable, with individual “vocabulary” cells being present across the entirety of his recorded output, there are several melodic instances that specifically connect the two solos, generally organizable into three topics: direct correspondence, fragmentation, and adaptation. We shall examine each of these in turn.

#### A) Direct Correspondence

<sup>74</sup> For an abridged transcription of the solo, which describes material up until the chord structure at VI, see Appendix C.

The first eight bars of “Blues Waltz” are based on a melodic phrase utilizing two sound sources played in conjunction to create a two-note “chord,” and then repeated for four “swung” eighth notes starting on beat two of the measure. The snare drum always occupies one voice, well the other voice alternates between lower and higher pitch levels of the drumset (in this case the high tom and the floor tom). When played over the 3/4 ostinato, the bass drum sounds on beat one of each measure, providing a definite release to the preceding four eighth-note “chords.” The “chords” themselves alternate in “quality,” usually with a statement of the lower pitch-level voicing being answered with the higher-pitch level, as seen below:

The musical notation is in 3/4 time. The 'Melody' staff begins with a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a series of eighth notes. The 'Ostinato' staff shows a repeating pattern of notes and rests, with 'x' marks indicating specific rhythmic points. The notation is divided into four measures, with 'Chord A' (lower voicing) and 'Chord B' (higher voicing) indicated by brackets.

Figure 24. “Blues Waltz,” mm. 1-4.

This two- “chord” responsorial construction becomes a structural component of “The Drum Also Waltzes,” opening the piece and returning throughout for a total of twelve pairs, with an additional one instance of the low chord “A” appearing without the typical chord “B” response. These pairs vary from those in “Blues Waltz” in their compositional function, returning as a thematic motif between periods of higher-intensity improvisation. Additionally, Roach experiments more fluidly with temporal space between the “A” and “B” components of each pair, with instances of “B” immediately

following “A”, and “A” and “B” being separated by either one or three measures of ostinato sans- “melodic” content. There is one instance of chord “A” immediately following chord “B.” Note that the temporal space following the responsorial chord is not necessarily congruent with that following the initial chord, as in Figure 25 below.

Figure 25 shows musical notation for measures 1-7 of "The Drum Also Waltzes". It consists of two systems. The first system is labeled "A" and the second "B". Each system has a "Melody" staff and an "Ostinato" staff. The "A" system shows a melody of four eighth notes and an ostinato of a single eighth note. The "B" system shows a melody of a quarter note followed by two eighth notes, and an ostinato of a single eighth note. The "B" system also includes a triplet of eighth notes in the melody and a triplet of eighth notes in the ostinato.

Figure 25. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 1-7. A-B pairing with three measure separation. Note non-congruent temporal space following initial and responsorial chord.

Figure 26 shows musical notation for measures 40-41 of "The Drum Also Waltzes". It consists of two systems. The first system is labeled "A" and the second "B". Each system has a "Melody" staff and an "Ostinato" staff. The "A" system shows a melody of four eighth notes and an ostinato of a single eighth note. The "B" system shows a melody of a quarter note followed by two eighth notes, and an ostinato of a single eighth note.

Figure 26. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 40-41. A-B “immediate” pairing.

Figure 26 shows musical notation for measures 40-41 of "The Drum Also Waltzes". It consists of two systems. The first system is labeled "A" and the second "B". Each system has a "Melody" staff and an "Ostinato" staff. The "A" system shows a melody of four eighth notes and an ostinato of a single eighth note. The "B" system shows a melody of a quarter note followed by two eighth notes, and an ostinato of a single eighth note.

Figure 27. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 82-85. A-B pairing with one measure separation.

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The top system is labeled "A" and the bottom system is labeled "B". Each system has two staves: a piano staff on the left and a drum staff on the right. The piano staff contains eighth notes, and the drum staff contains eighth notes. The A and B sections are separated by one measure.

Figure 28. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 111-116. A-B-A pairing with varying temporal separation.

Figure 28 above shows the one “rogue” non-connected “A” chord (m. 114) of the entire piece.<sup>75</sup>

## B) Fragmentation and (Re)Elaboration

In “The Drum Also Waltzes,” Roach takes fragments of melodic phrases from “Blues Waltz” and recreates them as individual, complete musical statements, usually followed by a period of ostinato sans melody. Notable instances of this

<sup>75</sup> I posit that these pairings might outline an actual underlying harmonic structure to the composition. Roach, rumored as a competent pianist, typically demonstrates a clear connection between the underlying harmonic fabric of the song and his drum improvisations when performing in more typical “bebop” settings. An exploration of his specific melodic-rhythmic responses to harmony (chord changes) might prove an interesting direction for further research.

fragmentation/elaboration from “Blues Waltz” into “The Drum Also Waltzes” are displayed below.<sup>76</sup>

"Blues Waltz," mm. 37-39.

The notation for "Blues Waltz" mm. 37-39 consists of two staves. The top staff contains a melody of eighth notes, with several groups of three notes beamed together and marked with a '3' (triplets). Some of these triplet groups have an accent (>) above them. The bottom staff shows a bass line with quarter notes and rests. There are 'x' marks below the rests and 'o' marks below some of the notes.

\_\_\_\_\_ restated as \_\_\_\_\_

"The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 7-10.

The notation for "The Drum Also Waltzes" mm. 7-10 consists of two staves. The top staff shows a melody of eighth notes, with some groups of three notes beamed together and marked with a '3' (triplets). The bottom staff shows a bass line with quarter notes and rests, marked with 'x' and 'o' symbols.

Figure 29. “Blues Waltz,” mm. 37-39 → “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 7-10.

<sup>76</sup> Please note that in these examples I’ve slightly altered Israelsen’s notation to match my own, perhaps most prominently in my decision to write the final note of each cell in a way that preserves its consistency with other rhythmically identical cells in the phrase, where Israelsen tends to write the last note of a cell according to where it falls in the measure—for instance, writing an eighth note as a quarter note if the cell in question ends on beat four.

"Blues Waltz," mm. 13-14.

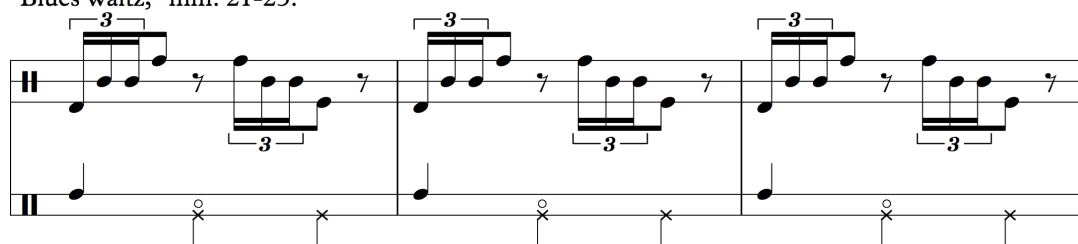
restated as

"The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 11-14.

Figure 30. "Blues Waltz," mm. 13-14 → "The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 11-14.

Note Figure 30's transposition, as it were, of cell B and C of "Blues Waltz" to different pitch levels in "The Drum Also Waltzes." Two more examples of the fragmentation/elaboration process are shown below.

"Blues Waltz," mm. 21-23.



restated as

"The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 32-35.

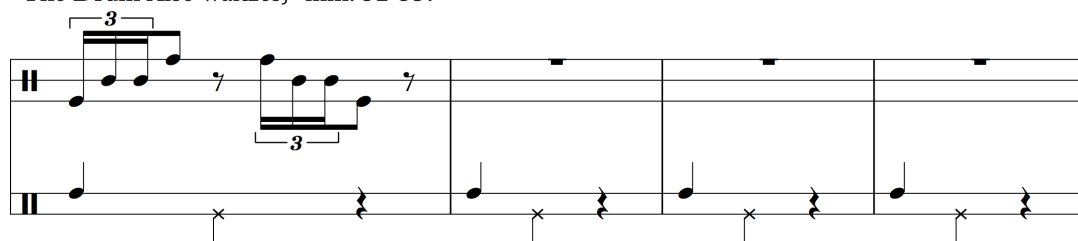
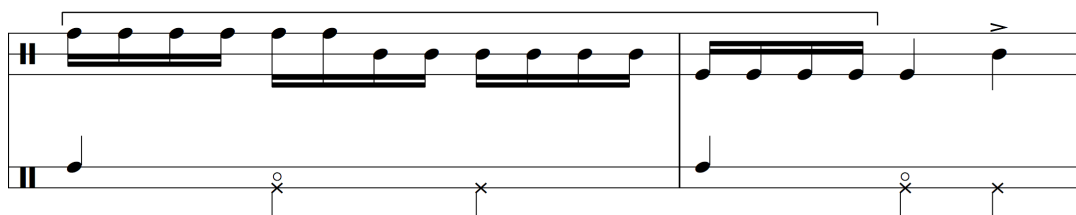


Figure 31. "Blues Waltz," mm. 21-23 → "The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 32-35.

"Blues Waltz," mm. 19-20.



\_\_\_\_\_ restated as \_\_\_\_\_

"The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 68-71.

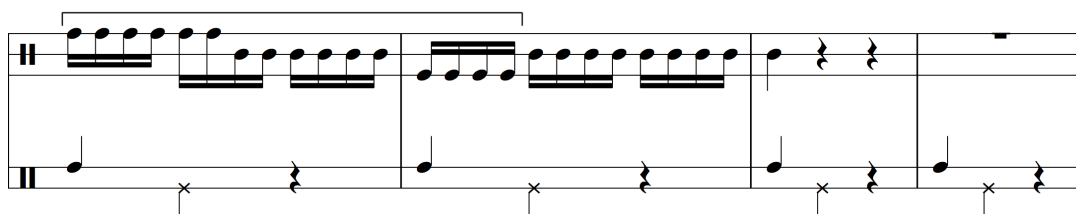


Figure 32. "Blues Waltz," mm. 19-20 → "The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 68-71.

### C) Adaptation

This is where we begin to see concrete examples of how Ghanaba's playing might have had a significant effect on Roach's music between 1957 and 1966. The following examples show how melodic cells from "Blues Waltz" are reinvented in "The Drum Also Waltzes" through the lens of the "independent" non-metric single stroke roll, a technique discussed in the previous chapters and possibly inspired by "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" (1958), as well as Ghanaba's playing observed by Roach at the October 1961 *African Rhythms* session in New York.

The first instance of this adaptation is seen at m. 36 of "The Drum Also Waltzes." Here we have a melodic cell from "Blues Waltz" (the cell being the primary constituent

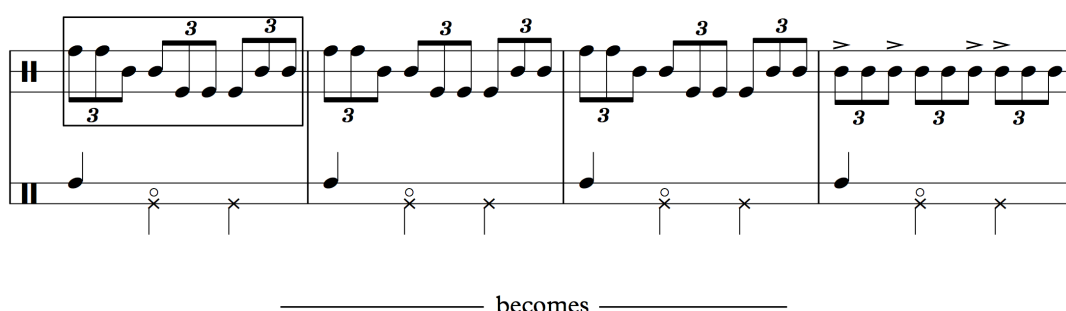


of mm. 25-40 of that piece) appearing in a non-metric form, completely independent from the underlying ostinato. To say that the cell is “modulated” from the original “Blues Waltz” cell is a misnomer: there is no mathematically viable solution to arrive at the temporal reality of the new cell, as seen in the ratio described in the example below.<sup>77</sup> This is truly a non-metric interpretation of the cell, a quality which, while notable in itself, takes on greater import when we consider that it is played over a consistent ostinato. The resulting non-metric/metric contrast, as we saw in Ghanaba’s “Lady Marie: Part II,” is a clear departure from Roach’s use of these cells in the original 1957 “Blues Waltz” recording, and is what I believe to be a direct extension of Ghanaba’s independent non-metric single stroke roll.

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<sup>77</sup> There is, however, a process of modulation, or perhaps “expansion” would be a more appropriate term, at work within the non-metric cell itself. The return to the middle pitch-level after the first complete execution of the downward motion of the melodic fragment appears in the original “Blues Waltz” cell as two triplets. (See the ninth and tenth notes of “Blues Waltz,” m. 25—these two triplets are expanded according to a 3:2 ratio within the new, non-metric phrase seen in “The Drum Also Waltzes,” m. 36. Simply put, there are now three notes sounding in the space of two. However, it is important to note that this triple-duple relationship is valid *only within the melodic cell itself*, as the temporal length of the new phrase is unrelated to the meter of the corresponding ostinato, and the metric “grid” thereof.)

Original "Blues Waltz" cell, repeated three times then resolved, mm. 25-28.



Non-metric melodic cell, "The Drum Also Waltzes," m. 36.

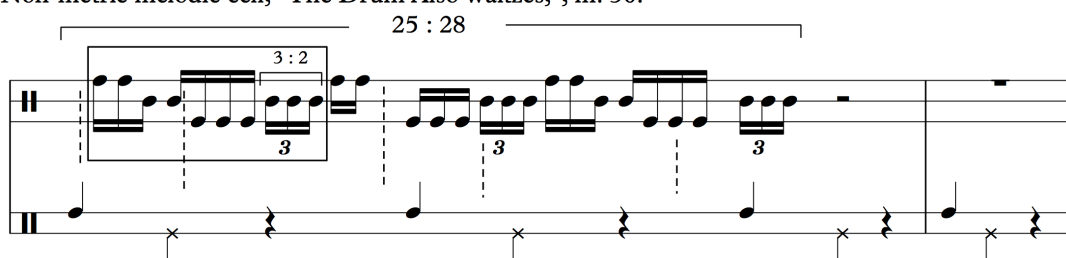


Figure 33. "Blues Waltz," m. 25 cell → "The Drum Also Waltzes," m. 36.

Dashed lines indicated the actual placement of the individual notes of the ostinato in relation to the melody. The ratio denotes 25 "duple" time units in the space of 28 16th-note time units, while the 16th-note triplets above indicate a 3:2 relationship *within* the 25 time unit phrase. Dashed lines indicate the actual location of ostinato notes in relationship to the melodic phrase.<sup>78</sup>

A fragment of the "Blues Waltz" m. 25 cell appears again in mm. 90-93 of "The Drum Also Waltzes," where it is then slightly altered and inverted with the original cell's downward motion reversing upwards. The symmetrical effect of this paired motion corresponds to that of the "Blues Waltz" mm. 21-23 cells discussed in Figure 31. The

<sup>78</sup> Measure lines have been removed in this and subsequent similar examples, as they distract from the descriptive nature of the transcriptions. Instead, one should refer to the first note of the ostinato (each bass drum note) when locating the beginning of a "measure" (or, more precisely, a three-beat metric grouping in the ostinato).

entire passage is transmuted through the processes of metric detachment as discussed in the previous examples. Notably, this phrase, while metrically unrelated to the underlying ostinato, displays a remarkable consistency in the temporal duration of each note across the separate non-metric cells contained in the melody. This observation can serve to deepen our understanding of Roach's work with "true" independence in the early post-"Lady Marie" years of his career (if I may be so bold as to suggest such an organization of his recorded output in the first place). Not only is Roach able to metrically detach his hands from his feet as Ghanaba had done in the late '50s and early '60s, but he retains a sense of internal metric coherence between melodic cells that are metrically detached from the stable ostinato. In essence, the following example suggests the ability to organize an entirely separate yet consistent additional metric structure above the existing structure of the ostinato. While sharing the same conceptual route of Ghanaba's independent non-metric single stroke rolls, this shows a significantly more advanced capacity for independence than exhibited by Ghanaba in 1958.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> While the sheer complexity of the "Lady Marie: Part II" ostinato, if we cede to Ghanaba that the entire piece was in fact performed by himself without the application of overdubbing techniques, is still far and beyond the most acrobatic instance of soloing over an ostinato for years to come, at the time of this writing I have not found evidence that Ghanaba had clearly displayed multiple strata of *consistent* metric frameworks in his 1950s and '60s recordings. In Ghanaba's liner notes to *Themes for African Drums*, Ghanaba states in reference to "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II" that "at one point I create a tempo within a tempo by letting my hands chase each other. This gives the illusion that the whole rhythmic structure is falling apart, but the steady bass drum beat—firmly, and almost stubbornly, kept up—knits the pattern rather nicely." That could almost *more* accurately describe Roach's playing in this passage (Figure 35) then his own playing on "Lady Marie: II"!

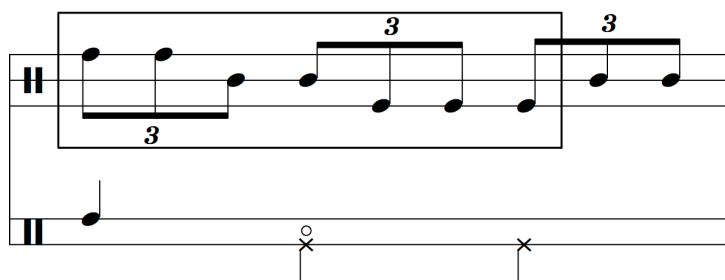


Figure 34. "Blues Waltz," m. 25 cell, isolated.

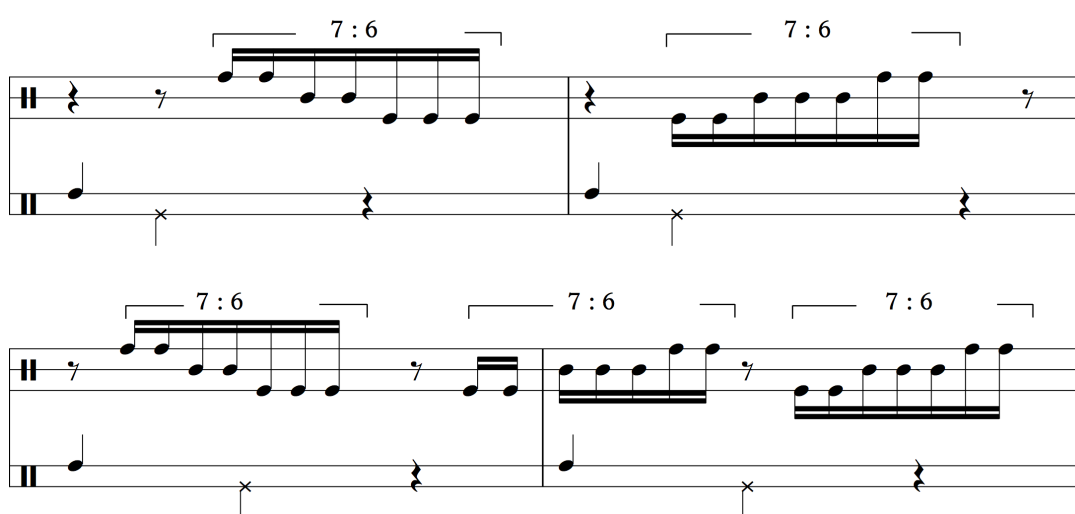


Figure 35. "The Drum Also Waltzes," mm. 90-93.

The ratio in Figure 35 indicates seven sounded notes in the space of six 16th-note time units. The fact that the temporal quality of the septuplet remains constant across the separate melody cells, but in non-metric relation to the 16th-note grid of the ostinato, is not only indicative of "true" independence, but also suggests the ability to establish two separate and unrelated metric strata concurrently.

The “Blues Waltz” m. 25 cell fragment (Figure 34) continues to appear throughout “The Drum Also Waltzes” in non-metric “rolling” passages, joined with other thematic material, as seen below.

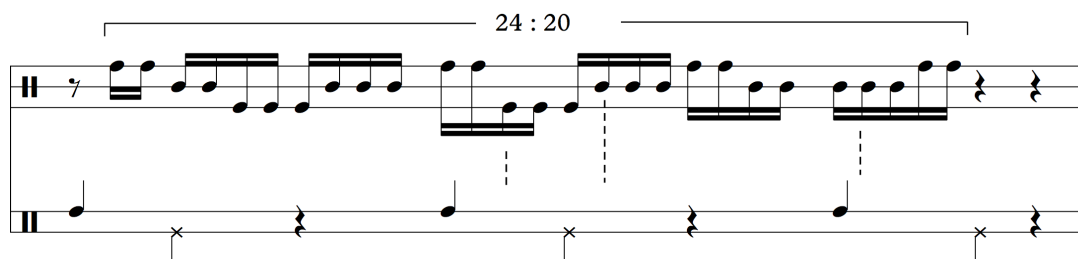


Figure 36. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” m. 94. Previous cell fragment appearing in a non-metric “roll-like” passage with other material. Ratio indicates 24 sounded notes in the space of 20 16th-note time units.

Passages of 16th notes grouped in sets of four or more and sounded on a single pitch level are a characteristic feature of Max Roach’s playing, especially during his “developed” bebop years (broadly the early 1950s to the mid- to late 1960s—one of these passages has already been discussed in Figure 32, “Blues Waltz” mm. 19-20). Roach applies the interpolative/elaborative processes we’ve discussed above to these passages, morphing “metric” 16th-note stretches from “Blues Waltz” into non-metric “roll-like” passages in “The Drum Also Waltzes,” as seen below.

"Blues Waltz," mm. 10-12.

\_\_\_\_\_ becomes \_\_\_\_\_

"The Drum Also Waltzes," m. 97.

41 : 34

(7)

Figure 37. "Blues Waltz," mm. 10-12 → "The Drum Also Waltzes," m. 97.

The ratio above indicates 41 sounded notes in the space of 34 16th-note time units.<sup>80</sup> While the correspondence in melodic contour is what most obviously connects these two passages, there is a more concrete, quantifiable relationship between the number of sounded notes of each pitch level across the two pieces.

<sup>80</sup> Note that the final rest of this "measure" is approximate, meaning that the exact ratio of sounded notes to 16th-note time units may vary slightly.

|                  | “Blues Waltz” | “The Drum Also Waltzes” |
|------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Snare Drum Level | 6; 4          | 11; 7                   |
| High Tom Level   | 8             | 16                      |
| Floor Tom Level  | 4             | 7                       |

*Table 1. Number of sounded notes at each pitch level in “Blues Waltz,” mm. 10-12 and “The Drum Also Waltzes,” m. 97.*

Note that the number of sounded notes of the “Blues Waltz” cells are roughly doubled in “The Drum Also Waltzes.” Perhaps most notable is the observation that groups of four sounded notes are consistently altered by a factor of 1.75, becoming groups of seven in “The Drum Also Waltzes.”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> While I’m all but certain that Roach didn’t “do the math,” as it were, at the moment of recording, I do find the semi-constant relationships between each pitch level in these examples remarkable. If nothing else, it reveals a clear connection between the two “waltz”-based pieces, and a notably high level of sensitivity and awareness in the adaptations thereof.

|                  |                                                |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------|
|                  | “Blues Waltz” → “The Drum Also Waltzes” Factor |
| Snare Drum level | 1.83; 1.75                                     |
| High Tom level   | 2                                              |
| Floor Tom Level  | 1.75                                           |

*Table 2. Relationship between numbers of sounded notes at each pitch level in “Blues Waltz,” mm. 10-12 and “The Drum Also Waltzes,” m. 97 expressed as a factor.*

Probably the most prominent non-metric melodic passage in “The Drum Also Waltzes” is an amalgamation of the “Blues Waltz” m. 25 cell, an extension of that cell appearing in “Blues Walk” mm. 33-34, and an expanded version of Roach’s closing “Blues Waltz” 16th-note phrase. All of these phrases are altered according to the processes of “non-metricization” characteristic of Ghanaba and discussed earlier in this thesis, yielding a ratio of 117 sounded notes to 96 16th-note time units. The m. 25 cell has already been discussed in Figures 33-35. Other cells are illustrated below, followed by “The Drum Also Waltzes” passage in question, which begins at m. 100. Remarkably, almost all of the melodic material in this passage directly corresponds to material from “Blues Waltz.”



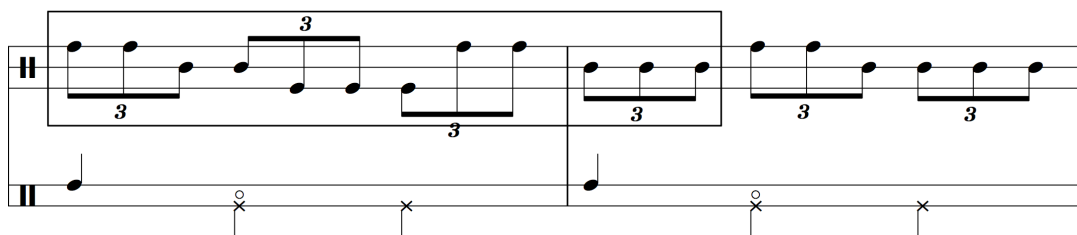


Figure 38. "Blues Waltz," mm. 33-34.<sup>82</sup>

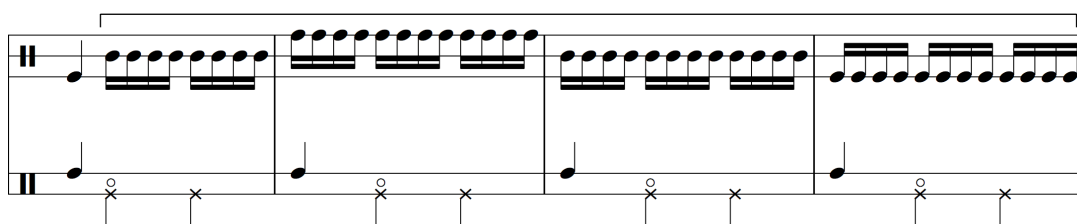


Figure 39. "Blues Waltz," mm. 44-47.

<sup>82</sup> This passage can also be understood as an extension of the m. 25 cell.

The figure consists of three musical staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The first staff shows a rhythmic pattern in the bass clef with 'x' marks and a melodic line in the treble clef. The second staff shows a similar pattern with a time signature of 117 : 96. The third staff shows a continuous melodic line in the treble clef. Labels above the staves indicate specific musical cells and variations.

"Blues Waltz" m. 25 cell

variation + inversion

117 : 96

"Blues Waltz" mm. 33-34 cell (variation)

"Blues Waltz" mm. 44-47

Figure 40. "The Drum Also Waltzes," m. 100.

Note that the "Blues Waltz" mm. 44-47 correspondence, while not demonstrating a consistent quantifiable relationship to the number of sounded notes in "The Drum Also Waltzes," is "close enough" in melodic contour and general concept (moving sets of four-or-more rapidly sounding notes through different pitch levels of the drumset while preserving the melodic integrity of each set) to result in significant aural similarity between to the two passages.

In addition to the above examples of melodic cells transmuted into non-metric “roll-like” phrases, we have numerous instances of Roach playing non-metric single stroke rolls on a single sound source, a usage that directly corresponds with Ghanaba’s playing on “Lady Marie: Part II.” The next five examples examine Roach’s usage of this technique in “The Drum Also Waltzes.”

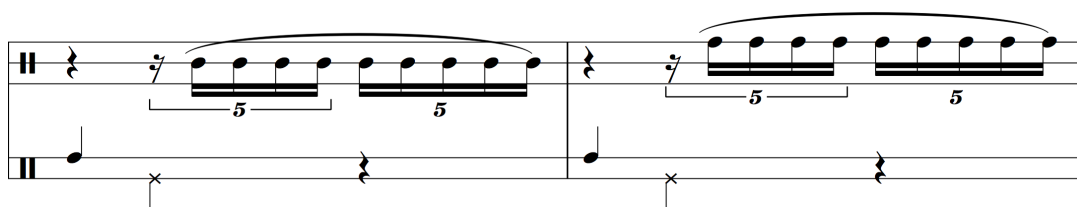


Figure 41. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 15-16.

Note that while the typical quintuplet 5:4 ratio is present in the examples above, I posit that Roach’s usage here corresponds to a non-metric intention via Ghanaba’s technique, rather than a decision to play two sets of nine quintuplets.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> While this is primarily due to my own aural considerations, there could also be a historical precedent (or rather lack of precedent) uncovered in the general absence of intentional usage of non-standard tuplets in the jazz drumming of this era. Regardless, the notation here, while accurate, should be interpreted as strictly descriptive: in other words, if Roach were to write out how to play these two bars, I think he would prescribe a “roll” of sorts rather than a specific tuplet.

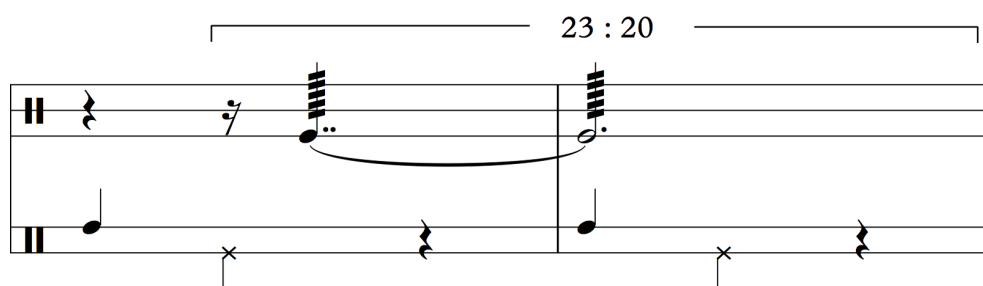


Figure 42. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 15-16.

Note here that the standard interpretations of “roll” notation do *not* apply in this and in all other examples in this thesis. Instead, slashes across the stem are loosely descriptive of the rapidity of Roach’s playing, but do not denote a specific number of sounded notes and bear no correlation to the number of “wrist motions” per roll.<sup>84</sup> For the specific number of sounded notes contained within the roll, the reader should always refer to the corresponding ratio appearing above the notation (in this case 23 sounded notes in the space of 20 16th-note time units).

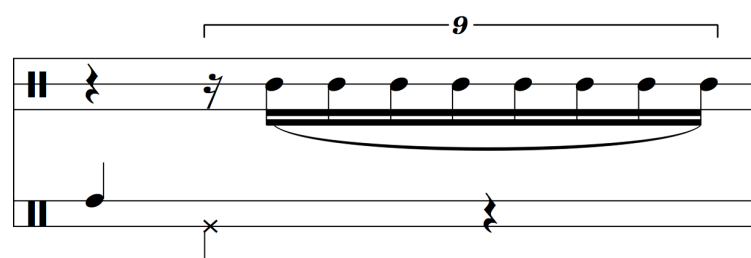


Figure 43. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” m. 44.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Unless marked otherwise, all of these rolls should be considered to be of the “single stroke” variety.

<sup>85</sup> See comments following Figure 41 (including the footnote) concerning my use of tuplet notation.

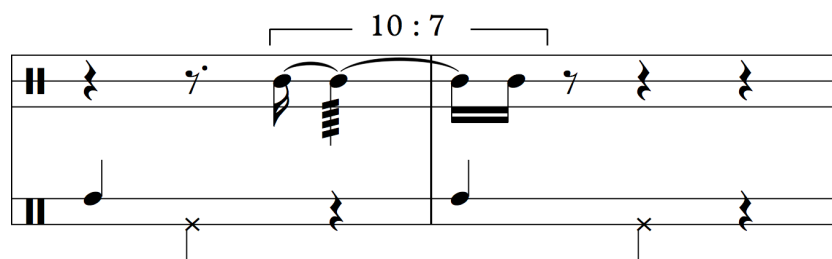


Figure 44. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 46-47. Ratio denotes ten sounded notes in the space of seven 16th-note time units.

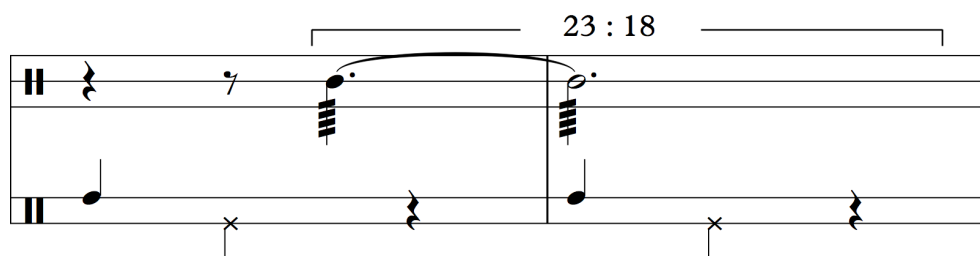


Figure 45. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 48-49. 23 sounded notes in the space of 18 16th-note time units.

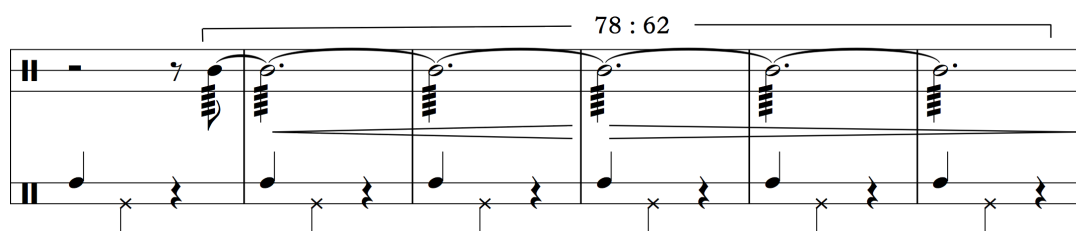


Figure 46. “The Drum Also Waltzes,” mm. 50-55. 78 sounded notes in the space of 62 16th-note time units.

In conclusion, there is ample musical evidence connecting the content of Max Roach’s 1957 “Blues Waltz” with the 1966 recording of “The Drum Also Waltzes,” so much so that the later piece could be considered an “expansion” of the former. Between

the dates of these two recordings, Roach became significantly interested in Ghanaba's playing, to the degree that he was present in the studio during the October 17, 1961 recording of Ghanaba's *African Rhythms*, his next session as leader directly following the 1959 release of *Themes for African Drums*, which presented "The Lady Marie Drum Suite, Part II," a piece that Ghanaba describes as inspiring incredulity in Roach concerning the sheer virtuosic nature of Ghanaba's ostinato/melody relationship. The analysis in this chapter has shown how material from "Blues Waltz" is adapted and transmuted in "The Drum Also Waltzes" through a process of "non-metricization," with "melodic" material being played independent from the metric grid of the ostinato, thus demanding a complete nullification of the metric relationship of "feet" to "hands," a technique that I posit Roach became interested in due to his contact with Ghanaba, who had already developed non-metric single stroke rolls over an ostinato during the late 1950s and early 1960s.

While there are numerous instances in "The Drum Also Waltzes" of Roach playing non-metric "roll-like" passages on a single sound source, a usage that directly corresponds with Ghanaba's playing on "The Lady Marie Drum Suite: Part II," I believe that the influence of Ghanaba on Roach is more fundamental: The virtuosic juxtaposition of soloistic material over a complex ostinato, something that had come to define Roach's playing since the 1957 release of "Blues Waltz," was elevated to another plane in Ghanaba's recorded output of the late 1950s and early 1960s, which was in turn expanded by Roach in his 1960s and 1970s "drum-centric" records. Both drummers, inspired by the other, would repeatedly return to the idea of layering melodic material over an ostinato in increasingly complex ways throughout their careers.

### Appendix A: Kofi Ghanaba Chronology

|              |                                                                                                       |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1905         | Susana Awula Abba Moore born to Hanna Ahiefor and British mining engineer “Mr. Moorie.” <sup>86</sup> |
| 1923 (May 4) | Ghanaba born “Kpako Warren Gamaliel Akwei” to Susana Moore and Richard Mabuo Akwei. <sup>87</sup>     |
| 1928-1939    | Attends Government elementary boy’s school, leading school band from ‘37-39. <sup>88</sup>            |
| 1940         | Enters Odorgonno Secondary School. <sup>89</sup>                                                      |
| 1940         | Auditions and is accepted to the Accra Rhythmic Orchestra, directed by Yebuah Mensah. <sup>90</sup>   |
| 1941-1943    | Attends Achimota College under a Teacher Training Scholarship. <sup>91</sup>                          |
| 1943         | Susan Moore dies. <sup>92</sup>                                                                       |
| 1943         | Ghanaba changes name from “Kpako Warren Gamaliel Akwei” to Guy Warren. <sup>93</sup>                  |
| 1943         | Leaves college, enlists in United States “Office of Strategic Services.” (“O.S.S.”) <sup>94</sup>     |

<sup>86</sup> Robin D.G. Kelley, “The Drum Wars of Guy Warren,” in *Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press: 2012), 17.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 18.

<sup>89</sup> royal hartigan, “Ghanaba and the Heritage of African Jazz,” *Annual Review of Jazz Studies* (1997): 146.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. Kelley offers that this is in 1938 or ’39, at the age of 15 [Kelley, 18].

<sup>91</sup> hartigan, 146.

<sup>92</sup> Kelley, 19.

<sup>93</sup> Kristofer W. Olsen, *Molten Steel: The Sound Traffic of the Steelpan* (Ph.D. diss., College of Fine Arts of Ohio University, 2016), 123.

<sup>94</sup> hartigan, 146. For an account of Ghanaba entering the O.S.S. as a personal assistant and then becoming an intelligence agent see Kelly, 19.

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1943         | First trip to US — visits Peru, Mexico, Florida, New York City w/ O.S.S. <sup>95</sup>                                                                                                                            |
| 1943         | Returns to Accra, working for a newspaper undercover for O.S.S. <sup>96</sup>                                                                                                                                     |
| 1944         | Discharged from US military. <sup>97</sup>                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1944         | Jazz DJ for Gold Coast Radio Broadcasting Service. <sup>98</sup>                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1944         | Forms the Tempos w/ other Ghanaians. <sup>99</sup>                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1949 or 1950 | Punches a white Canadian at the European Club in Accra, becoming “something of a local hero” but losing the Tempos gig. <sup>100</sup>                                                                            |
| 1950-52      | Editor of Daily Echo, Gold Coast Independent, and Star of West Africa newspapers. <sup>101</sup>                                                                                                                  |
| 1950         | Reporting in London for Daily Echo. Does series of jazz programs for BBC. Plays drums with Kenny Graham’s Afro-Cubists. <sup>102</sup>                                                                            |
| 1951         | Returns to Accra, bringing Cuban percussion and “a deeper knowledge of diaspora music.” <sup>103</sup>                                                                                                            |
| 1953         | Forms own Afro-Cubists, plays at Tubman’s Presidential Inauguration in Liberia. Stays on in Monrovia as DJ/admin with Eternal Love Broadcasting Corporation. Stays for “two years or three years.” <sup>104</sup> |

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<sup>95</sup> Kelley, 19-20.

<sup>96</sup> hartigan, 146.

<sup>97</sup> Kelley, 20.

<sup>98</sup> hartigan, 146.

<sup>99</sup> Kelley, 20.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 20-21.

<sup>101</sup> hartigan, 146. Kelley states that these are west African newspapers, and that Ghanaba is in London as a correspondent [Kelley, 21].

<sup>102</sup> hartigan, 146; Kelley, 21.

<sup>103</sup> Quote is from Kelley, 21. See also Markus Coester, “Localising African Popular Music Transnationally: ‘Highlife-Travellers’ in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s,” *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 20(2) (December 2008): 138. An obituary in *The Times* also notes the carrying of “Caribbean calypso forms and instruments that Ghanaba encountered in London” to Accra but that this happened in “late 1950.” [Not Credited, “Kofi Ghanaba; Eccentric Ghanaian Drummer Whose African Approach to Percussion Gave Fresh Stimulus to Many a British and American Jazz Group,” *The Times*, 14 February 2009, p. 1.]



|                           |                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1954<br>(December)        | Arrives in Chicago. <sup>105</sup>                                                                                  |
| 1954                      | Olatunji moves to New York, working semi-professionally as a musician. <sup>106</sup>                               |
| 1955 or '56               | Ghanaba meets Roach in Chicago. <sup>107</sup>                                                                      |
| 1956 (by<br>September)    | <i>Africa Speaks, America Answers</i> released by Decca. <sup>108</sup>                                             |
| 1956<br>(~December<br>28) | Ghanaba plays following Candido at the De Paul University Auditorium in Chicago. <sup>109</sup>                     |
| 1957                      | Joins ASCAP as a composer. <sup>110</sup>                                                                           |
| 1957                      | Moves to NYC, forms Zoundz w/ Ollie Shearer, Ray McKinney. <sup>111</sup>                                           |
| 1957                      | changes name to “Guy Warren of Ghana.” <sup>112</sup>                                                               |
| 1958                      | Ghanaba begins affair with Marie Wilson Howells. <sup>113</sup>                                                     |
| 1958 (by<br>April 13)     | Leads group at the African Room. <sup>114</sup>                                                                     |
| 1958 (May<br>22-23)       | Records <i>Themes for African Drums</i> . <sup>115</sup>                                                            |
| 1958 (by fall)            | Olatunji is a huge success with Radio City symphony “African drum fantasy,” rapidly becoming a star. <sup>116</sup> |

<sup>104</sup> hartigan, 147; Kelley, 21-22. A 1951 trip to Liberia is noted in Val Wilmer and Graeme Ewens, “Obituary: Kofi Ghanaba: Influential Ghanaian Drummer Who Emphasized the African Origins of Jazz,” *The Guardian*, 7 February 2009, p. 1.

<sup>105</sup> Wilmer and Ewens, 1. Kelley notes that at least part of Ghanaba’s decision to move to Chicago was his relationship with Justina Alexander, listing his arrival as December 1954 [Kelley, 17, 22]. Steven Feld notes 1953 as Ghanaba’s arrival in Chicago [Steven Feld, “Guy Warren/Ghanaba,” in *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra: Five Musical Years in Ghana* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012), 57].

<sup>106</sup> Kelley, 33.

<sup>107</sup> Guy Warren, *I Have a Story to Tell...* (Accra, Ghana: Guinea Press, 1962), 54. Feld lists 1956 as the year Ghanaba and Roach met, and that Ghanaba had encouraged Roach from this date to explore African music [Feld, 71]. There is a possible implication here that this encouragement culminated in Max Roach recording “All Africa” on 1960’s *We Insist! The Freedom Now Suite*.

<sup>108</sup> hartigan, 147.

<sup>109</sup> 1956 Newspaper clipping from an “Ed. Veen” of the *Daily Graphic*. Retyped in Warren, 81.

<sup>110</sup> hartigan, 147.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Kelley, 33-34.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>114</sup> Wilmer and Ewens, 1; Retyped 1958 clippings from *New York Post* and *New York Mirror* in Warren, 87.

<sup>115</sup> Kelley, 29.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, 34.

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1958<br>(August-October) | Ghanaba's 3 month stay in Ghana. <sup>117</sup>                                                                                                                    |
| 1958                     | Changes name to "Guy Warren of Ghana." <sup>118</sup>                                                                                                              |
| 1959                     | Records <i>Voices of Africa</i> on his own. <sup>119</sup>                                                                                                         |
| 1959                     | Takes vacation in Ghana, developing "The Third Phase." Still in Ghana by July 10, 1959. <sup>120</sup>                                                             |
| 1959                     | Olatunji's <i>Drums of Passion</i> recorded in Summer/fall of 1959, released in the US 1960. <sup>121</sup>                                                        |
| 1960                     | Ghanaba in Accra in May, possibly back in the Africa Room by mid/late August. <sup>122</sup>                                                                       |
| 1960                     | Premiers <i>Voices of Africa</i> drum suite at Ghana jazz festival in Accra. Marie Wilson Howells and Ghanaba move back to Ghana. <sup>123</sup>                   |
| 1960                     | Max Roach records <i>We Insist! Max Roach's Freedom Now Suite</i> with Olatunji, "mak[ing] the move toward Africa." <sup>124</sup>                                 |
| 1962                     | <i>Voices of Africa</i> finally released by Decca under the title <i>African Rhythms: The Exciting Soundz of Guy Warren and His Talking Drums</i> . <sup>125</sup> |
| 1962                     | Ghanaba publishes <i>I Have a Story to Tell</i> ... <sup>126</sup>                                                                                                 |

<sup>117</sup> 1958 *Ghana Times* clipping, retyped in Warren, 94-95.

<sup>118</sup> Feld, 73. Wilmer and Ewens list 1959 [Wilmer and Ewens, 2].

<sup>119</sup> Kelley, 35.

<sup>120</sup> Date extrapolated from retyped newspaper clippings in Warren, 101.

<sup>121</sup> Release information from <https://www.discogs.com/Olatunji-Drums-Of-Passion/master/65013>; Session information from the Tom Lord Jazz Discography, session #: O556.30.

<sup>122</sup> Warren, 118.

<sup>123</sup> Accra performance listed in Wilmer and Ewens, 2. Kelley states that Marie Wilson Howells followed Ghanaba back to Ghana in 1960 "after he decided to return permanently" [Kelley, 31]. 1965 appears in different sources as the year Ghanaba returns to Ghana. [Kwasi Ampene, "One on One: Max Roach in Conversation with Kofi Ghanaba," *American Music Research Center Journal* 20 (2011): 1; John Fordham, "Obituary: Steve Reid: American Free Jazz Drummer Whose Work Ranged from Motown to Electronic," *The Guardian*, 1 June 2010, p. 1.]

<sup>124</sup> Feld, 70. Note: Feld lists the release date as '61 in the text and '60 in the footnotes. Session information from the Tom Lord Jazz Discography lists the recording dates as August 31, 1960 for "Driva' Man" and "Freedom Day," with September 6, 1960 for the rest of the album (see session #: R4273 and R4274.)

<sup>125</sup> Kelley, 37.

<sup>126</sup> Kelley, 11. hartigan lists 1966 [hartigan, 148].

|                |                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1960s (Early)  | “Spiritual quest to Benares, India.” Returns to London and performs with Joe Harriott. <sup>127</sup>                                |
| 1963           | <i>Emergent Drums: The Voice of Africa Speaks through the Soundz of Guy Warren of Ghana</i> recorded in London. <sup>128</sup>       |
| 1968           | Ghanaba in London recording several albums for Denis Preston, still using Guy Warren of Ghana moniker. <sup>129</sup>                |
| 1969           | Ghanaba's <i>Afro-Jazz</i> recorded in London, returning to efforts to fuse highlife and jazz. <sup>130</sup>                        |
| 1970s          | Replaces African American jazz drums with <i>fontomfrom</i> drums, attaching bass drum pedals. <sup>131</sup>                        |
| 1970           | Performs with Ginger Baker at Accra schoolroom concert. <sup>132</sup>                                                               |
| 1971 (March 6) | Performs in “Soul to Soul” concert in Accra’s Black Star Square. <sup>133</sup>                                                      |
| 1972           | Ghanaba records on Ginger Baker’s <i>Stratavarious</i> . <sup>134</sup>                                                              |
| 1974 (July 1)  | On “Ghana’s Republic Day” changes name to Ghanaba “in a total embrace of African identity.” <sup>135</sup>                           |
| 1974           | Roach travels to Ghana to find Ghanaba, who “expose[s] Roach to live performances of traditional drumming and dance.” <sup>136</sup> |
| 1980           | Appears w/ son Glenn Warren on <i>Rhythms of Happy Feelings</i> . <sup>137</sup>                                                     |

<sup>127</sup> Wilmer and Ewens, 2. The *Times* obituary notes that after Ghanaba left the States for Ghana he went to India to study local percussion, then London where he was based for a few years, returning again to Ghana at some point before 1971 [*The Times*, “Kofi Ghanaba,” 2].

<sup>128</sup> Kelley, 37.

<sup>129</sup> *The Times*, “Kofi Ghanaba,” 2.

<sup>130</sup> Kelley, 40.

<sup>131</sup> hartigan, 154.

<sup>132</sup> Wilmer and Ewens, 2.

<sup>133</sup> Sionne Rameah Neely, *Sensing the Sonic and Mnemonic: Digging through Grooves, Afro-Feelings and Black Markets in Ghana, 1966-Present* (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2010), 129-134.

<sup>134</sup> Feld, 74.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>136</sup> Ampene, 1. Feld offers that this trip happened in 1973.

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1981               | Performs talking drum interpretation of Handel's "Hallelujah" chorus, "leading to his being honored...as an <i>Odomankoma Kyrema</i> ["Divine Drummer"], by <i>Aklowa</i> , the African Heritage village based at Takeley, near London." <sup>138</sup> |
| 1986               | Performs "Hallelujah" chorus at Royal Albert Hall. <sup>139</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1986 or '87        | Performs, along with Max Roach, at proto-black history month lectures/performances at either Wembley arena or Royal Albert Hall. <sup>140</sup>                                                                                                         |
| 1990s              | Opens Center for the Awareness of African Spirituality in Accra. <sup>141</sup>                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1993               | Plays starring role in <i>Sankofa</i> . <sup>142</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1998               | Plays with Randy Weston at New York's Panasonic Jazz Festival. <sup>143</sup>                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 2002               | Performs in Margaret Busby's <i>Yaa Asantewaa</i> . <sup>144</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2008               | Last public performance at Goethe Institute in Accra. <sup>145</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2008 (December 22) | Ghanaba passes away. <sup>146</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2009 (June 21)     | Randy Weston performs tribute concert to Ghanaba at Jazzmobile in New York. <sup>147</sup>                                                                                                                                                              |

<sup>137</sup> Release information from <https://www.discogs.com/Glenn-Ghanababa-Warren-Rhythms-Of-Happy-Feelings/release/2170189>. I believe hartigan is referring to this recording but using a different name ("*That Happy Feeling*") and date (1979). [hartigan, 148.]

<sup>138</sup> hartigan, 148.

<sup>139</sup> Wilmer and Ewens, 2.

<sup>140</sup> Kubara Zamani, "No Matter Where You Come From, So Long as You Are a Black Man, You Are an African," *New African* 433 (October 2004): 33.

<sup>141</sup> Albert Kafui Wuaku, "*Tapping into Hindu Powers*": *The Local Factor in Krishna and Shiva Worship in Ghana* (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2004), 80.

<sup>142</sup> hartigan, 147.

<sup>143</sup> Clarence Atkins, "Panasonic Jazz Festival Features Extraordinary Performers," *New York Amsterdam News*, 3 September 1998: 21; Ben Ratliff, "Freedom, One Way or Another," *The New York Times*, 27 August 1998, p. E5.

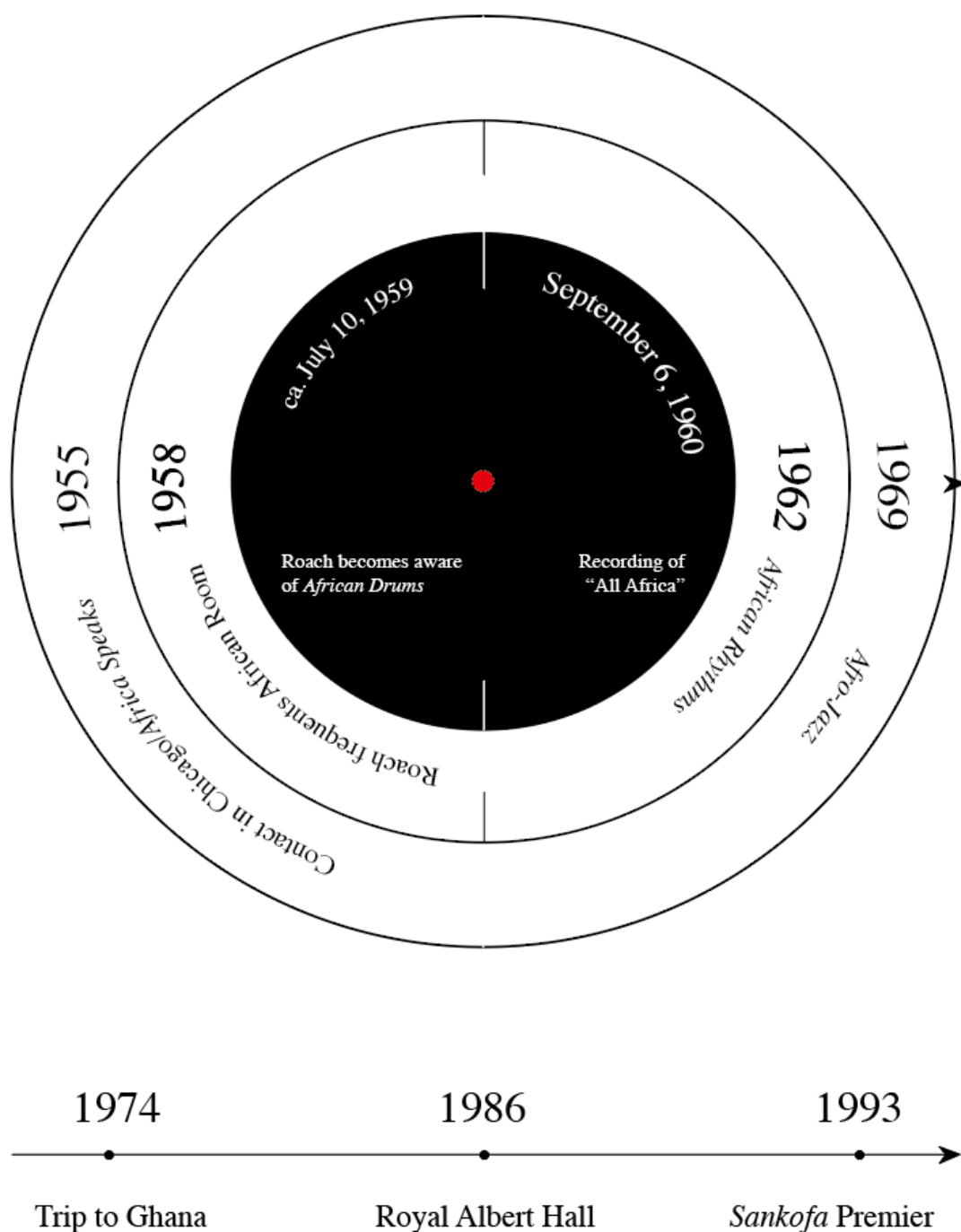
<sup>144</sup> Wilmer and Ewens, 2.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> *The Times*, "Kofi Ghanaba," 2.

<sup>147</sup> Ron Scott, "Jazzmobile Ready to Rocket," *New York Amsterdam News*, 18 June 2009, p. 20.

## Appendix B: Creating “Temporal Ripples” to Define Discographic Area<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Theoretically, each “ripple” and “node” has its own discography, contained by the temporal brackets represented in the above graphic. The discography of the central “ripple” contains records occurring between July 10, 1959 and September 6, 1960. Roach recorded material appearing on at least 13 records in that period, including *We Insist!*. A comprehensive “drag of the comb” would examine all of this material.

# Appendix C: "The Drum Also Waltzes" (Abridged Transcription)

From Roach's *Drums Unlimited* (1966)

Recorded April 25, 1966

I

"Melody" 

Ostinato 

7 

11 

15 Example of single stroke "independent" rolls 

17 23 : 20 

Ratio denotes 23 sounded notes in the space of 20 16th-note time units

20

24

28 "Un Poco Loco" cell

32

Ratio denotes 25 "duple" time units in the space of 28 16th-note time units.  
 "Triplet" notation indicates a 3:2 relationship in the 25 time unit phrase. Dashed lines indicate actual location of ostinato notes in relationship to the melodic phrase.

36

25 : 28

40 III

44

9

10 : 7

Ten sounded notes in the space of  
seven 16th-note time units

48

23 : 18

23 sounded notes in the space of  
18 16th-note time units.

51

78 : 62

78 sounded notes in the space of  
62 16th-note time units.

58 IV



63

Measures 63-66: The upper staff features a continuous eighth-note melody. The lower staff has a simple bass line with quarter notes and rests, marked with 'x' and a fermata.

67

Measures 67-71: The upper staff continues with eighth-note patterns. The lower staff maintains its simple bass line with quarter notes and rests, marked with 'x' and a fermata.

72

Measures 72-75: The upper staff introduces sixteenth-note patterns and rests. The lower staff continues with quarter notes and rests, marked with 'x' and a fermata.

76

Measures 76-81: Measures 76-77 show sixteenth-note patterns in the upper staff. Measures 78-81 feature whole rests in the upper staff and a whole note in the lower staff, marked with a fermata. Measure 78 includes a circled 'x' symbol.

V  
82

Measures 82-85: The upper staff has a whole rest in measure 82, followed by eighth-note patterns in measures 83-84, and another whole rest in measure 85. The lower staff continues with quarter notes and rests, marked with 'x' and a fermata.

86

90

Above: seven sounded notes in the space of six 16th-note time units. That the temporal quality of the septuplet remains constant, but in fluid relationship to the 16th-note grid of the ostinato, is not only indicative of "true" independence but also of a mastery of odd-subdivisions.

94

Note that the final rest of this "measure" (m. 97) is approximate, meaning that the exact ratio of sounded notes to 16th-note time units may vary slightly.

97

100

103 117 : 96

103 117 : 96

106

106

109

109

113 (abridged)

113 (abridged)

### Appendix D: Interview with royal hartigan

royal hartigan, a Ph.D. ethnomusicologist, two-time Fulbright scholar, and professional drummer with a decades-long career, was a professor in the music department at UMass Dartmouth from 1999-2018. He is an expert on the intersection of African culture and African American music. hartigan is a unique asset to this thesis in that he is one of the few surviving people to have personally known both Max Roach and Kofi Ghanaba. His career as a scholar as well as an accomplished drummer have given him valuable insights into the music of Roach and Ghanaba, the later of whom he visited in Ghana and performed with. hartigan's article "Ghanaba and the Heritage of African Jazz" in the *Annual Review of Jazz Studies* (1997) was a major inspiration for my own research.

The following interview was conducted electronically February 12, 2018 between Beijing and hartigan's residence in Massachusetts. The transcription is entirely of hartigan speaking in response to the original prompt to discuss the musical, personal, and cultural relationship between Max Roach and Kofi Ghanaba. It has been edited for relevance and ease of reading.

Okay, one of the things we can talk about is the parallels between African and African American music, which has some implications for any culture. Like in China, there's a way that there could be...Afro-Chinese-American, or Chinese-American jazz. Just like there's African and African-American jazz. Nobody's really gone into that too much, but, I've thought about it and done a few things...but anyway, some of the parallels between

African and African-American musics, especially jazz, that I personally feel is the highest artform of African American music, highest in sense of depth, sophistication, spirituality, a lot of features, technical things.

First, music is a way of life and a path through life. They both share that. And because of that, not a commodified, capitalist product that can be sold, bought, quantified and all that. And Fixed, as a controllable, interestingly...object that the ruling class can use to get over. Which they are. That you and I and all the jazz players are still being ripped off by the gate keepers of the establishment. So there's many many, but I'll just mention a few.

The essential relation[ship] between vocalized sounds, either singing, melodies, or what you could call "drum-language" in Africa, and in African-American traditions singing, scat singing, tap dance rhythms or just rhythmic patterns that you vocalize, those things. Secondly, instrumental music that reflects that and dance movements that reflect that. For example, the African master drummer and ensemble interacting with vocals or drum-language known as "ugba" among the Ewe, and the instrumental drums and sometimes flutes or whatever and the actual dance movements of Africans, similarly paralleled in African American traditions as: scat singing, sometimes actual singing, but scat singing especially; Instrumental playing, anybody in the group, not just the drummer but the drummer too, you know, playing phrases or whatever, that can reflect dance movements, whether they be tap dance or, up until around the bebop era, actual dancing, you know like, people did the lindy and all that. And there's a way I think you could even make the case that even the most contemporary jazz, like freer things, [inaudible] Sun Ra, Ornette

Coleman, Sonny Murray all that, you could dance to that, if you've got the openness.

Like Baraka said, Amiri Baraka.

So, anyway, another thing: A percussive attitude towards music making, but that extends to acting in life, in yourself in your psychology and in the world, a percussive attitude towards embracing, enhancing life thru a...what would be a percussive attitude I think expresses a drive, an inner drive, a drive towards, not profits, but a drive towards self-realization, fuller consciousness, contributing to the world, globalization, planetary things. So many things.

Well, individual rhythmic correspondence and adaptation. You know like if I heard this x..x..x.|x..x..x.|x..x..x.|x. Well, you find that everywhere in African American music, you find it in West African music, or another pattern, 12/8 x.x.xx.x.x.x | x.x.xx.x.x. You can find that in African American music coming from there, but interestingly the rhythmic sensibility of that 12/8 being felt as an actual...and again all these 12/8 things, forget that, that's just a way to make it obviously, or easily understandable, but that sensibility of that x..x..x..x (..) expressed as a 12/8 feeling in either culture, or as swing, in African American music. Elvin [Jones]! Elvin was, that's what Elvin did a lot.<sup>149</sup> It was a triple feel inside it, grooving around, and even if it wasn't literally a triple feel, it was something like that and it was moving forward. So there's many, I mean there's hundreds of rhythms you can talk about. In some of my books I do include, you know, those rhythms are part of it. But I try to relate those to a deeper rhythmic sensibility, rather than

---

<sup>149</sup> Elvin Jones was an influential jazz drummer, perhaps best known for his work with John Coltrane in the early and mid-1960s.

just “Well that’s a cool rhythm, here it is here and here it is here.” Well, yeah, that’s true, but it refers to something deeper.

In a percussive attitude, the peak thing is that at the moment of attack, if you’re thinking acoustically, and there’s a quick decay which allows for a lot of events to go on. And that lot of events can be a lot of things simultaneously, or a lot of levels of hearing simultaneously. Like if you have a bell pattern, you can hear it, or a rhythm... [hartigan pauses to connect computer to battery] Ok, so those multiple layers of time and energy and accent and rhythm and tone, are in both west African music, where you can hear an ensemble or even an individual rhythm like six ways, you know? And in what we call jazz, where you can hear a lot of different things going on. But in both cases, the drum ensemble, with dancers and singers, comes together to make [a] composite statement that expresses individual and collective meaning, history, genealogy, or the feeling of a moment, say sadness at a funeral, that expresses that communal voice of the village in it’s history and life. And over here in jazz, yes, that [jazz] ensemble, which has saxophone, piano, bass, drums, whatever, tap dancer, singer, whatever, any of the above all of the above, comes together with multiple layers of time and accent to make a composite statement that expresses that moment. And in our film, as Arohirohara [?] says, both of them, because, [and] there are other cultures in the world that do this too, but as African arts they have that intimate connection of being a simultaneous expression of the reality of that place, people, who it’s for, occasion, meaning, and goal of the performers in the village that it’s in. And that village could be the Village Vanguard, or my back yard if we’re playing from the heart, or a closet somewhere, you know what I mean? It doesn’t

have to be some big auditorium at Lincoln Center. And that coming together, that composite statement, is the essence of what the music is. [hartigan pauses to help with the laundry]. So, that communal voice is truth in the moment. In other words, if you do the same African drumming piece or play “Oleo” the next day, the next hour, ten minutes later, it won’t be the same. And it shouldn’t! And it always takes the materials that you have, the different drummers, the people you’re playing with, who it’s for, what the occasion is, when it is, where it is, how you feel...all that...over here, with the jazz ensemble, same thing. And it’s only of that moment. Truth in the moment. Because in both cases there’s a [...] tradition back here that is recognizable and part of it, no matter what you’re doing, but it’s equally new and fresh, something that’s never been done before, and of you. [...] It’s a personal artform. [...] In both cases the individual can express them[selves] and tell, in a certain way, who they are. That’s the beauty of it. And that for me is, sometimes when I want to jump off a bridge when I see all this insanity in the world, the one thing I can express and feel like who I am, even though honestly, to be straight up, you don’t even know me, I don’t even know who I am, I don’t know *if* I am. As crazy as that may sound. I don’t even know if I exist sometimes. But, when I’m playing...alright, at least there’s *something* there. And I can [laughs], even if I don’t exist, there’s something cool going on. And that’s worth it. I won’t jump off the bridge.

[Laughs] [pause to change internet connection]

Ok, you can hear me ok? Good, and you’re recording? Great. Ok, so these are just a few examples of things that I think are an important background for the topic that you want to talk about, the connection between the two artists but in a deeper way between those two



traditions. So, as soon as I went to Wesleyan and the first time I heard Ghanaian drumming... I had heard some African drumming before, but not like really close up...I was in the room and I heard this drumming and I said...and it didn't at all connect me with jazz. You know, like on a literal level of rhythm, at all. Nothing about it, you know. But there was an intensity in it, and a power and a beauty in what I *did* hear that said A) I don't know if I'll ever do this good, but this is what I want to do with my life, B) It is somehow connected to what I do in jazz. I don't even know, but I know it is and I want to give my life to that. And, as I found out over the years, in addition to these literal thymic things and approaches, there's a connection of intensity, and meaning, and in this communal thing that I described where the individual can...sort of like the best of both worlds, you're part of an egalitarian community, but the individual can stand out, but never in a hierarchical way, like "Well I'm [the] hot stuff, I know more lead drum patterns than you do, so I'm really Mr. Africa," you know, or something like that. It's a communal individuality. That sounds like a contradiction, but somehow it's true. In other words, you're standing out as an individual, but never out as opposed to the others, but still as part of the others. And that, for me, is the beautiful marvel of what life in the human family on the planet is supposed to be. You know? It's "we're all *really* equal." Not equal like in some political sense of the theory that never gets worked out in real life cause there's ruling class, you know, rigs everything, but an equality of outcomes that matter. Like, you know, on the political level, economic, you know, everybody on the planet can eat, have shelter, clothing, food, meaningful work, education and all that, which nobody does, except a few people, but a *real* equality, a *real* social justice, [it's] a model for humanity really. And in that, there's a beauty to it. But there's always this

sense of taking what you got, whether you're an individual and you've got all these horrible things facing you and you don't know where to go, or a group, a society is facing all these things in life, you know, difficulties, horrible, you know...death, betrayal, loss, failure, all that stuff. Whatever you get. But you take those things, in the moment, in the truth in the moment, and you recreate things with your own heart, towards transcendence. And it's usually an intensification of elements that make a transcendence towards another place and time. Which, I would submit, is not a physical place, or a quantifiable, knowable place. It's a thing that you can sense...maybe you know it in a certain way, but it's not like intellectually knowing. It's another place where Sun Ra...and why I think Sun Ra said "I'm from Saturn. I'm not from the Earth. It's too hard to be a citizen here. I'm from another place."<sup>150</sup> That place, which isn't just one place, something where you take what you got, even if it sucks, you take it and you make it your own and with others you connect and make this beautiful, deep statement that, through intensification and the truth in that moment only, tomorrow it will be a different moment but the same idea, you will go to some place where you see life and existence and yourself in the deepest possible way as a member of the human whatever-we-are. So that's for me what the connection is.

Now, back to your original question. Art Blakey, possibly yes, true. Kofi Ghanaba. Max Roach. I was really lucky to be with them. [I] hung around with Max when I was at UMass Amherst, and with Kofi Ghanaba two or three times when I went to Ghana. The most recent time was...well, I went first and met him in '96, and then I think we recorded

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<sup>150</sup> Sun Ra, born May 22, 1914, was an influential and innovative American jazz musician active in the avant-garde and known for his experimental performances and "cosmic" philosophy. He died May 30, 1993 and had an extremely prolific career spanning from the 1930s until the time of his death.

a video of his big African drumset and my little drumset next [to his]. It was like an 18-wheeler truck next to a Volkswagen! But anyway...I even tap-danced, and he...it was really crazy. I still [have] the video. Anyway, we did that on a really hot day in July, 1996. Then I saw him again in 1997, I think I interviewed him then. Then in 2002 I met him with a colleague from my school here, Asidi Mashangi [?] at the National Arts Center in Accra, in Ghana. We did a long interview. I think I saw him a couple times after that, 2007 where our students played for him and he was freaked out, and that I went to his house a couple times...and that was it. So four or five times I hung out with him, quite...for quite a while, and talked to him, interviewed him a few times. Max Roach I knew at UMass Amherst and saw subsequently when he was alive. There aren't a lot of rhythmic correspondences between them. And Max I don't believe ever intensively studied the drumming. I think he might have mentioned he studied the geoxylophone [?]. He might have done some drumming, I don't know. But I don't know if he ever really did a lot of that. Kofi Ghanaba, actually, grew up around the drumming, but I don't know to what extent he ever did it himself. Probably to some extent. But he would not...I don't believe he was a master drummer. Because when we would play on that video that I mentioned he would have three or four associates play with him, and one of the associates played the lead drum, with a little small ensemble...I think it was three or four guys, but then he would play the big drums, which are actually themselves lead drums, along with it but in a free way. He didn't play, replicate actual patterns. Now maybe he could've, I don't know that, but I sensed that maybe he didn't. But that was by choice. I think his background, from what I remember, I did a couple of articles on him in the *Annual Review of Jazz Studies*...no, one. I did another article on something else. I think it

was 1997, it came out in 2002. If you look at the Rutgers...well, yeah! Henry Martin actually got me in there. I did two articles, one was on...on something, and then the other one was on Kofi Ghanaba. And there's pictures in there and there's an interview part, I don't know if you saw that, but it's in there...[pauses for interviewer]. Yea, I'd love to get those videos out, somehow, somewhere, but I don't...I even wrote to a number of people, like Wynton Marsalis...you know, I would think that at the Lincoln Center, you know, they talk about the history, like they'd want to know that, but [I've] not even had a response, so...many times, I said, alright I'll give up on that one. But Henry was very very supportive while I was at the New School, and I'd love to go back there again, but he's over at Rutgers now, so...

A guy that was a Wesleyan alumnus named Dale Fitzgerald, who was also a booking agent in New York, brought Ghanaba over here a couple of times with his drums believe it or not, huge drums, you saw them, and...I believe he did a concert with Randy Weston. Sometime in 1997 maybe or '98, in Union Square near the New School. I wasn't there for it, but from what I heard it didn't somehow jive, but maybe it did, I don't know. I'd love to see footage if there's any video of it, but I don't know. [Pauses for interviewer.] And there's a little connection: Randy Weston had made a lot of connections with African music and jazz, and I actually knew Randy. When I was 19 in 1966, playing my way through school, I played in Lenox, Massachusetts, near my home in Pittsfield in the Berkshires, western Mass. And I played piano with a little trio in another part of the inn, but in the main place, called the Five Reasons performance court, he held court all summers 6-7 nights a week with his trio, with Lenny McBrowne on drums, who I studied with and got to know quite well, and Vishnu Wood on bass. And [at] the end of the

summer for two or three weeks he'd bring up his whole group, with trumpeter Ray Copeland, tenor player Booker Irvine, Baritone player Cecil Payne, and percussionist Big Black. And they did all those, African Cookbook, Highfly, the Little Nile, great stuff. And I'd see them all summer, I mean it was great. So I got to know him quite well, and I gave him some of my books and my CDs and all that back when I last saw him, maybe 10 years ago or more? And I just, you know, sad that he just passed. I'm trying to get his photo for my new CD, but...Anyway, he's another person that made a connection.

But with Max and Kofi Ghanaba, I don't really see a lot of individual rhythmic correspondence and adaptation. Now, very likely there was some. I mean like Max knew that pattern x.x.xx.x.x.xx.x and, I mean, he used it sometimes. But it wasn't like he used it for the basis of a groove for a whole piece, pretty much. Kofi Ghanaba would know patterns like that, but he didn't always play them as a ground for a whole piece. Yet, both of their sensibilities were the same. Creation of int—, Through intensification, through some process, creating a new truth in the moment, a new space, where the music could live to express something, and go towards another place.

Now, for both of them, I think they had similar, or at least parallel, approaches. Kofi Ghanaba supported Nkrumah, I believe, and a more socialist vision of the world. Nkrumah, of course, was deposed by the US CIA led coup in 1966. But he supported a more egalitarian approach, let's say, to politics and government. When, what I know of his history, in that article, he started out...he lived in Accra, of course, but he got interested during World War II, in radio whatever-it-was-called, the...not the BBC but American, what was the name of that...it later became, after World War II, Radio Free Europe. But it was like the American radio stations in Europe that gave, I guess

[Interviewer suggests Voice of America], Yea, maybe it was like that, yea. But he started out, I think ,with the BBC, because Ghana was an English colony during World War II. So in Accra...and then I think he went to some other...I'd have to look at the article, but he went to a couple other places in West Africa, and then he went to London and broadcast. In that process he got to know many musicians, he already knew a lot in Ghana, but he met other ones [in] London, and so he became acutely aware of jazz. Because he, on those recordings, he would play, you know, records of African music, Highlife at the time, which interestingly used acoustic bass. It didn't use all these electrified instruments, and it sounds so much better, so beautiful. We have a group [sort of] like that once in a while, and we use acoustic bass, it's really nice. So he got familiar with that. And I think he had a real affinity for the jazz sensibility, even though he hadn't been at that point to America. Later he did come to America and he lived there for a number of years if not the late 40s by the 50s and I think he stayed until the late 60s. And he made associations in a few places, maybe ones in Canada even, because I tracked down a few people that knew him, a woman that knew him, a family he had in Chicago I think. And then in the Bay Area, I knew a woman, oh what's her name...I got it somewhere...anyway, he had some establishments in addition to New York. And then I saw a picture where he was at the African Room, I think in the lower East side of New York City, and the photo is probably 1958. Maybe it's even in my article. And it was with a vibist Ray McKinney...or was that the bass player? Yea, well, there was a trio, it was vibes, him, and bass. And in that picture it shows that instead of a floor tom he had a, like an Uprankte [?] or an Apenteme [?] drum that he used. I think later he probably added a bell and some other things. And that was the beginning of his Africanization

which you could call, of the drum set. And from what I know he did play with a few jazz players or people who were very well-known... I'm not sure if much came of that. I don't know why, but whatever it was...he did play, eventually though by the late '60s he went back to Ghana. The reason I don't know. But he continued, from what I know, this re-Africanization of the drumset till gradually it developed into an entirely African-instrument-drum set. There was no hihat. He had two huge Boma [?] drums, which are used in Asante [?] fontom [?] drum, with pedals. Infact one time [we went over] he said "can you bring me some pedals?" So I did, I brought them and he was so happy. Put the pedals on the two...bass drum pedals, so there was no hihat. I think he had at least two other, very large drums, Asante drums, called atum bang [?], they're the official ones know as talking drums. Not the hourglass drum, which is nicknamed that, but they're the real drums that are known as taking drums, they're called atumpan [spells], and bomaa are spelled b-o-m-a-a. So, yea, two bomaa as bass drums, giant drums. Two atumpan. And he might have had two other drums sometimes that are like lead hand drums, oprenten [spells]. But in front of him he had usually an apenteme, which is a smaller version of oprenten, right as a snare in effect. And he had that all set up and he would play with these v-shaped sticks called kotokro [spells] that you would pla on bomaa and atumpan, so that was what you would play [?] and that's what he did. And when I played with him and when I heard what he did, very often and the drum ensemble he played with, like in that video or in the picture you saw, they would set the traditional feel, traditional groove if you will, and then he would play over it, on top. Almost as if they were like a jazz group, and he was playing drum set interacting with the jazz group. Really cool. Beautiful stuff. So, that's what I sensed and felt and understood from Ghanaba. He died I

believe in 2011...In fact, his daughter even called me in the US to see if I could come to the funeral but I couldn't, it was just very short notice. But the last time that I had seen him that I remember was 2007. That's when our group played for him and people at a school for degara [?] northern music that's right outside of accra in midie village. [spells midie.] And that school is still there, and that was a mile away from where he lived just by chance. So I don't know if he had ever even been there, and I said "wait a minute, this is where Kofi Ghanaba lives," and I asked the teacher and he said "oh yea, I heard he's around here," and I said "well I know where he is, he's right there!" And I'm not even from there, right? So I arranged for him to come to the school and they...it was cool, they had big like kings throne, you know, that they put out for him, and they honored him, he came in his car, it was really cool, like a [grand entrance?] But then we all played for him, and he was so [inaudible], "I've never seen white people play African music, this is so cool!" He was so [enthused?] and he gave us, like [approval?], and we all hugged him and everything and my students loved him and all that. They all wanted to do research on him but then we never could, so...he went back and drove off in this big, you know, fancy car, and he was so happy and we were happy, so that was cool, that was the last time I saw him. 11 years ago, jeez.

Anyway, so he played his African drum set as if it were a freer...he played a freer style, that was not in itself traditional, but he was creating along with the traditional drummers that he worked with, or, if it's Handel's *Messiah*, the choir, or whatever else, he played it as if it was a "jazz," freer, instrumental style. And perhaps he was saying, "I'm using African drums, but I'm playing this in a new way that I feel is my aesthetic, my truth in the moment." Now I can't speak for him, no, but that's what I sensed. In a similar way,



Max Roach also committed to, I believe, in my opinion, a socialist perspective, an egalitarian perspective of social justice that came out of all his life of being oppressed as a black musician. And culminating in things like the *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite* of 1960, the haunting and powerful “Tryptech: Prayer, Protest, Peace” duet with Abbey Lincoln, at the time...just incredible, the protest section where she screams and he comes, you know, really wailing. And then another piece like “Drivah Man,” all those things. All those really wonderful pieces that he recorded. Is coming from a similar egalitarian social justice sensibility...both of them, as Malcom said, not just in Ghana or in America, but globally, international. It’s an international aesthetic and international message. So Max also, interestingly... in most of his playing within what you would call a traditional African American jazz sensibility, even though the musical meaning was revolutionary, he was pretty much in that sensibility. But if you really look at what he does, I sense, in a way, even though he doesn’t play like Andrew Cyril or Sonny Murray, free players, he related to it. For example when he did the thing with Cecil Taylor, the recording that was “Melodic Drummer and Percussive Pianist,” you know, like playing together. It worked, beautifully. So I think, while he played...if you listen to it literally it’s something recognizable as jazz, I think if he wanted to he could have played totally away from that, if he wanted to. But for whatever reason he stayed within it. But his feeling and his message were decidedly revolutionary. That for me is the place where I think they connect at the deepest level. I don’t believe, from what I heard, now, there might be other things, that there is a lot of rhythmic correspondence in their playing styles that would express both African rhythms and African American [rhythms]. They, for example, like in Ghanaba, when he played in New York, yea, he had a cymbal and a drumset and he

had a...but when he played in Ghana there was no cymbals. He did have a ride cymbal or a crash cymbal or a hihat, it was just all drums. SO I could see my little function on that tiny little Volkswagen drumset, I had cymbals and a hihat, okay, I'll keep the time. I hear what he's doing, I'm going to support him, let him do what he wants, and I'm just gonna play, and I'll hit with him, yea, but like I'm [another] drummer, right? Like so there's two drumset players in this group that are playing with the sax bass and piano translated into the traditional drum ensemble, and I'll keep the time on the cymbal. Play the west African 12/8 if that's what we do, you know. [We went through] a number of sections. I don't know, 40 minutes we played or something like that. So, I don't see a lot of individual rhythmic correspondence and adaptation between the two but in terms of their approach to the instrument, and their Philosophy and meaning, both, you know, if you want to use the word spiritual or personal, psychological, social, political, economic...all of that, I think they're in very close paths. Very close parallels.

Beyond that, let's see, anything else...I think both of them didn't at least espouse a method or a single style of playing. I think they were both very open to new ways of expression, both with their groups and in their instrument [and] their own personal playing. Like the Handel's *Messiah*, who would ever connect that to his...I mean that's, Jesus, that's like...how in the world would you do that? But then he did it pretty cool, you know? [Laughs] And you know, that has implications for everything. Like why not do the same process with Chinese music? Traditional, like Beijing opera...I've tried to do a little bit with that. But you're right there in the middle...although it's hard to find it, you have to look for people. But...you know, one of the obvious things is the percussion ensemble[s] for the opera, or for [parades] or whatever, like that. Because the other

instruments, the erhu, the fiddle, and the pipa (lute), and the guqin and the guzheng are beautifully sensitive instruments. Now, I've always wanted, I have a good friend WuWangGuan [?] who lives outside right near Beijing, and he's retired I think from the China conservatory, is it? Yea, I think it's the China Conservatory. He's a master of guqin, which is soft and delicate...but I can hear when he plays like free floating things with brushes and bass, you know, I've always wanted to do that. I don't know if we'll ever get to do that, but that's something I really feel.

I think every culture has these potentials, but it hasn't been fleshed out yet...but I do believe that there is a connection between the two, but it's not literal. It's not just at the level of the technical side. Although both of them had wonderful technique. They had an excellent technique. But the technique and materials you hear aren't easily connected. Well no, I guess you...I don't know if I could say that, but...they don't play the same things. They don't play like, similar rhythmic patterns. But they play in a way that I can see is similar, even though you wouldn't know it looking at it, like there's this drumset and there's this giant African drumset...yeah, there's not a lot of similarities, but the way they both played to some extent freely over the time...For Ghanaba, the time is with the drum ensemble. For Max, it might be his bass drum [and] hi hat, but then he's going to play all this nice stuff over it. So in a way, Kofi Ghanaba has having his ensemble be the rhythmic foundation, the bass drum and hihat. And he's riffing off of that. For Max, his ensemble, or maybe his bass drum like "The Drum Also Waltzes," [sings ostinato], or the thing in five, that's his ground. That's *his* drum ensemble. But he's floating over that. So both of them you could say, as Ed Blackwell, a lot like Kofi Ghanaba, started using a double bell on his set when I studied with him while I was at Wesleyan. A gankogui

double bell [spells]. And other things, he used a rattle sometimes, and he would Africanize the set, because he went with Randy to North Africa. I don't know if he ever got to Ghana, he might've, but I don't know. But anyway, he heard the music, and he heard it at Wesleyan, because it was there all the time. And in my dissertation we connected Ed and Frena Donkor [?] and Abrahim Izinia [?] every week for a year, and doing pieces, and he heard it, and he played in the ensemble, and he played drum set with it, and then I play drum set with it. So we did three levels — pure traditional with Ed and I playing, then we played, the drum ensemble, and he just soloed over it, Beautiful stuff, and then I would play more literally with the drum ensemble, as opposed to his more soloistic, freer style. And that dissertation is available through dissertations abstracts, but it's in the Percussive Arts Society online archives now. And I'm hoping to have a chapter out in the... I don't know if you get the PAS magazine, percussive arts society?

[Interviewer responds]. Oh, good, good, because that's an online thing—because if you're a member of it they'll let you have access to the stuff. That is hopefully, well it already is there. I'm hoping they have an article in there, one of the chapters to let people know that. The only sad thing is that there are video, [I mean] audio tapes to go with. There's 30 of them! The last four or five are India, native America and Javanese gamelan with drumset. Sounds crazy, but yeah. But the first 24 or five are all with Ed and traditional drumming. [Oh my!] And a guy called me, about a year and a half ago, and said I'd really like to get a copy of all those, and I'd be willing to turn them [inaudible]... well, they're all in, you know audio cassette because in '85-'86 when we did it that's, like, the only technology...[he said] I'll be willing to transfer them to CD for you. And I was going to say Jesus, yes! Well, just, I was leaving for the philippines with my quartet, so I says “look,

I'm getting ready to go in a day or two, I just can't get access to them and send them to you, but please call me like in September when I'm back and we'll do it. In fact, you can, I'll let you...you don't even have to pay! If you'll do that much, great! You know, because then if somebody wanted it, because people had called me, one of them was even Keith Jarrett, he asked me for it and I just, you know I said "Jesus, I can't transfer them." So anyway...but then the guy never called me back! And I forgot his name, I don't know how to reach him! [Inaudible] [And] Now over a year, going out of mind because now, this is in the Percussive Arts Society, people are going to want to have the...the things, I've got them all in CD [?] but I can't send out CDs, or, you know...Jesus! I wonder why he never called me back. I think he was from Virginia or North Carolina, and I can't think of his name. I scoured everywhere, I looked at my email, and nothing. So if you happen to know anybody that would be willing to [laughs] transfer the stuff [laughs] that'd be great. Because that's some valuable stuff that should be archived! And I asked PAS but I think they only due written materials, they don't Do like the audio stuff. It would be great though. I mean it's just wonderful. Each one is one piece, like, say "the warrior [?] music aduka [?] from the Ewe people," so you got that, we talk about it, and then he plays with it, boom boom boom, and then after that I just play the literal...which are okay, they're interesting. But his stuff is like a solo, he's basically soloing over it. Jesus. And in my dissertation I would just take one or two examples of his solos and transcribe it. But just, they were basic little tiny, you know, they weren't much...they weren't much. Ok, so let's see. That's pretty much it that I can think of between Kofi Ghanaba and Max Roach.

Both of them... They also shared the fact that they refused to by into the jazz “industry.” Now they had to sur--, Max especially had to survive in it, so he, you know had an agent and they did all the things that you have to do. But he had a name so he didn’t have to kowtow to it. But in that sense I know they both didn’t approve of it, didn’t respect it at all. In fact, Max I think and Charles Mingus tried to start a musicians’ record company in 1952 called [Debut?] records, pretty sure, and...They had to survive in it but didn’t respect it at all. And Kofi Ghanaba just...when he went back to Ghana I think he just [said] “to hell with it, I’m not going to be part of this rat race, and just...I’ll do it on my terms.” Which a lot of people do, they just say “You know, so what? I’ll just do it on my terms. It means I won’t play all over the world all the time, but...” And I know players that feel that way, in fact, sometimes I do. You know? Why...I can’t pimp myself. I can’t do it. You know? I don’t have gold chains and muscles with...you know, I mean, I’m not...smoke machines, I just...I’m not going to do it. I just, I can’t. So if that means I fail, then alright I’ll fail but I’ll keep playing. [Laughs] So these things I think are really important. I’d wish anything Wynton Marsalis would call up and say “You know, we want to get all these things archived with you and Blackwell”... I’ve got so much stuff about Blackwell, ideas about Max, the stuff with Kofi Ghanaba, the African—you know my books, I have three books, they’re all about African music and jazz, and jazz independence, and I got another one coming out, and all that. And I don’t want to do it for any, you know, I don’t want to make money or have a name, I just want that information to be there for people like you! You know, people need to know this stuff! And it’s no good in my living room. I mean, I...I love it, but...the world should know about this. So, the dissertation’s good, on the...but as again I’m trying to get my...people

know my one book, which is *West African Rhythms for Drumset*. You might know that book, I don't know. But there's—[Interviewer responds] Yea, there's two others since then that [are] three times as big and have much more depth in them, although that's good, and they have video instead of audio. But because they're put out by Tap Space in Oregon, nobody knows about them! People say, "Oh yea, I got your book from 1995, it's really...I love it!" I say, "well yea, that's cool, have you ever heard of the other ones?" No! Nobody's ever heard of [that]! Because it doesn't have distribution. So I'm trying to get Alfred to pick them up but I don't know if they're interested or not. Anyway, but, you know, it's just like we all face this, how do we get the music *we* do available to people, not for ego or money or status, just to be real with it and let people know what we're doing. You know, and then if you get some money, great, you can live and pay your rent. But it's not like that's why we do it. That's the other thing. Max and Kofi Ghanaba in that sense had a purity of doing the music for its own sake, and expressing their beliefs that were real, and for its own sake. Not to get over, not to fill [the] seats [?], not to make money, not for status, not for ego, not for me, not for anything, because...they did it because it mattered. Life mattered and music mattered. It's an expression of their deepest being. Now, that doesn't mean that they didn't have times when they had to have an ego. I'm not saying they're like, saints. No! Everybody's got good and bad, they all had problems, they all had...need to be egotistical to survive, whatever, sure. If heard in New York you've got to have some ego to get over, I don't know. But, in any case... they did it for its own sake, which I really admire. And that's a model for me to tr—, and same with Blackwell. You know Blackwell was...they were all...well, Max had a good life. Kofi was able to have a decent life in the village, but he wasn't rich. Ed Blackwell was

never rich or well off, he lived in a house, but it wasn't anything fancy, you know, when I knew him at Wesleyan. So, he had a tough life, but...he got through. But barely. Not according to the status that he should have had. So...anyway, that's pretty much everything I can think of, unless you've got some questions. That's my background on, you know, Max, Kofi Ghanaba, by extension Blackwell and Randy Weston, and the connections between African, West African, here Ghanaian mostly, and African American traditions like jazz—how they combine, both for those two players, and how they live out [?] among the two traditions. I hope that helps, I don't know. [Laughs]

[Interviewer responds about some of Ghanaba's discography] You know, I'm not familiar with some of those recordings, so if you have any sound files, or any research... [hartigan finds a DVD that might have some of their videos inside the CD cover of *The Divine Drummer*. Mentions that he knows ZhangFan at midi and plays at midi festival, and will be in Philippines in February. Comments on the importance of this kind of work.]

END.



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<sup>151</sup> Organized chronologically by session date. Note that this discography does not attempt to create a comprehensive list of Guy Warren/Ghanaba and Max Roach's recorded material, but rather focuses on records specifically relevant to this thesis. Release information is taken from discogs.com, while session information is generally taken from the Tom Lord Jazz Discography.

<sup>152</sup> I use Robin Kelley's date here (see Appendix A). The Tom Lord Jazz Discography lists October 17, 1961 (see session #: W1295).

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