

Note

A stylistic analysis and evaluation of a drum performance of Chris Dave, unpacking his innovative and conceptual reinvention of drum-set performance.

The format of this paper was designed in response to a number of musicologists and critics' views on academic writing on music. Kofi Agawu, for example, has stated on numerous occasions that 'there is a disjunction between the practise of African music and its scholarly representation' and that 'the spirit of African music is not always manifest in the scholarship about it'.¹ Far from claiming my subject epitomises 'African' music as Agawu defines, I posit that the clarification of Agawu's that it is solely 'African' music which suffers from this scholarly disjunction is superfluous. Evan Parker's statement that 'music is not what you hear in analysis, it's what is there in the real time of performance' was also one of the keys in the development of my thinking.² Thus, I attempted to analyse Dave and his performances in his own idiom, drawing on arrays of disparate material on which to comment and from which to create a new autonomous work. The fundamental aspects of Dave's approach is epitomised in this paper's form. Footnotes are collected at the end of the paper, before the bibliography.

This paper is entitled 'A Live Analysis' and, symbiotic to its use of form, this paper was written to be read as the subject was playing. I attempted to analyse and examine Dave's playing in real-time; I wished to match the academia to the music – as a process from which audiences are invited to draw their own conclusions. The performance used was from Košické Kultúrne Centrá in Košice, Slovakia on May 11 2014. A video of the performance is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92Kr2sIc5ss> and the audio is attached to this paper. It is widely accepted that transcription, especially of improvised music, holds inherent limitations.³ Endeavouring to define music synaesthetically naturally falls short, since it is impossible to illustrate the nuances of one means of perception through another.⁴ Thus, in this paper I have let the music speak for itself.

¹ Kofi Agawu, *Representing African Music* (London: Routledge, 2014), xv, xii.

² Evan Parker, quoted in *Sync or Swarm: Improvising Music in a Complex Age*, by David Borgo (London: Continuum, 2007), 54.

³ Robert Linden, *A Practical Approach to Harmony of Jazz* (London: Garant/Central Books, 2015), 99; Scott DeVeaux, *The Birth of Bebop* (London: University of California, 1997), 263-4.

⁴ Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz* (London: University of Chicago, 2009), 510.