

PLAYING MY OWN TIME



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The CD

First Master recital

1. Magic Box
2. Mr. Dodo

Getz/Peterson experiment

3. Pennies From Heaven take 1
4. Pennies From Heaven take 2
5. Pennies from Heaven take 3
6. I Was Doing Alright take 1
7. I Was Doing Alright take 2
8. I Was Doing Alright take 3
9. I Want to Be Happy take 1
10. I Want to Be Happy take 2

Library recordings

11. There Will Never Be Another You
12. Alone Together
13. Nobody Else But Me

14. Alone Together

15. Fly Me to the Moon

Codarts Master Ensemble

16. What is this thing called anti...
17. Uptempo
18. Evidence
- 'But Not For Me' experiment
19. But Not For Me

The DVD

1. Yump at first master recital
2. Excerpt from lesson with Ari Hoenig
3. Excerpt from lesson with John Riley
4. Trying John Riley's throwing motion
5. Trying Joost Patocka's exercise
6. Recording 'But Not For Me'
7. Trying various ways of time playing

2. Preface

This research is about time playing. Time is maybe not the best way to describe the subject of this research. You can say that time is already there and it's about what drummers do with it. However, when drummers are playing in a jazz situation they refer to it as time playing. The Dutch say "tsjinketsjing", Americans refer to it as "spang a lang" and the French Daniel Humair said to me I had to work on my "shabada".

This research is about *my* time playing. It's not an overview of the way jazz drummers played time (I'd love to do this research one time) but it's about me. I wanted to finish this research not only with more knowledge but also and especially as a better player.

2.1 Question

How can I create my own way of playing time by studying the possibilities there are, in order to create a more personal way, which I can use when playing with a jazz ensemble.

2.2 Goal

Creating my own way of playing time by studying and trying various ways of playing time with a rhythm section.

2.3 Methods

I started the research by analysing the playing of some of the drummers I admire. For this I created a format that includes what I think are the most important questions about time playing. Next I used the format to analyse my own playing in several situations. Together with feedback of my teachers and the people I play with I find out which elements in my playing work or feel good and which don't. The next time I try to do them different or better. While recording, analysing, changing and refining will form my own way of time playing.

3. Analyzing

When I try to create my own way of playing time, it's good to look at how other people did it and are doing it. Because there are so many drummers who play time in so many different ways, I will probably not come up with something completely new. This is not because I want to copy other players. It is just because almost every way of time playing has already been tried in the history of jazz. More likely my way of playing time will be a mix that consists of 10 percent of drummer X's way, 20 percent of drummer Y's way and so on. This mix will form my own way that works for me, and where out you can hear my own personality.

Therefore I have to check a lot of drummers and find out if their way works for me and if it's worth adding some percentage of their way into my playing. I will compare all drummers using the same format. This can be a problem because the reason I like their playing is mostly because they don't fit in boxes. By putting them in graphs and tables I will maybe disregard the soul they put in their playing.

However, I believe that comparing the drummers can give you more sight in the different ways of time playing. Doing this is OK, as long as you don't forget that there are also other elements in their playing that are difficult to measure.

3.1 Analyzing Format

I found that there are four basic ingredients that create a way of time playing: timing, cymbal playing, comping and equipment. Around these four elements I created a format that I use to analyze the playing of some drummers I admire, and to analyze my own playing. While listening to every drummer I asked myself the following questions:

Timing

- *Tempo: Does the drummer speed up or slow down?*

I measured this by tapping the tempo of the beginning of the song into the metronome. In the end of the song I did the same and then it was very simple to see if a drummer speeded up, slowed down, or played the same tempo the whole time. Sometimes I also looked at how the tempo is behaving in the middle of the song for instance in drum solos or bass solos where there is a different intensity.

If you divide the difference in beats per minute (bpm) by the length of the song, you can find the bpm/min ('beats per minute per minute') that the drummer is changing the tempo. For instance: if drummer A speeds up a 15-minute song with 6bpm and drummer B speeds up a 5-minute song with 4bpm I would definitely go for drummer A. Drummer A speeded up with 0.4bpm/min and drummer B with 0.8bpm/min

Like every drummer it is my goal to play as steady as possible. In jazz music you want to keep the tempo the same to not change the energy. When playing a jazz tune with people having their ears wide open, during the song you can change almost everything: the feel, the key, dynamics or even the time signature. But in order to do this the tempo cannot change. However, one other important element of jazz music is that it sounds human. I'd rather have a drummer that sounds great and speeds up a little than a drummer that is perfectly capable of keeping the tempo, but sounds like a machine.

- *Beat: Does the drummer play in front, in the back, or on top of the beat?*

When you play for instance with a trio there is always a fourth member. This member is called Mr. Beat and is giving the exact time. Mr. Beat is in everybody's head and each

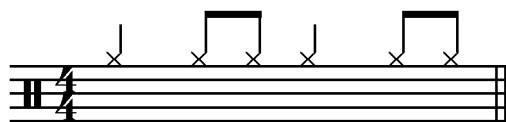
band member can decide what to do with him. You can play exactly on the beat, play a little earlier (in front) or later (in the back). As a drummer you can also decide to play your cymbal for instance on the beat and your snare drum in the back.

As a listener it can be sometimes hard to tell if a drummer is playing on top, in front or in the back because you can't hear the Mr. Beat in his head. For instance: if the drummer plays everything in front it may sound like he is playing on top, just because you have a different Mr. Beat in your head.

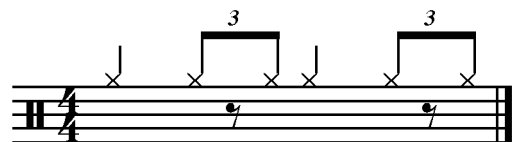
So you can only speak of playing in front, in the back or on top if you relate this to something else, for instance a metronome or better: the other band members. This last thing is what I did for this research.

- *Subdivision: How is the triplet subdivision played? Straight, swing, super swing?*

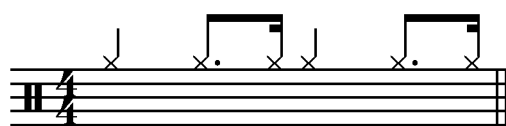
One of the reasons why it much more fun listening to a real drummer than to a machine is the subdivision. The basic subdivision of swing music is triplets but you can change this a little. You can decide to play the eight notes a bit more to the front or to the back to create a straighter or more swinging feel. Here you find the basic swing pattern in four different feels:



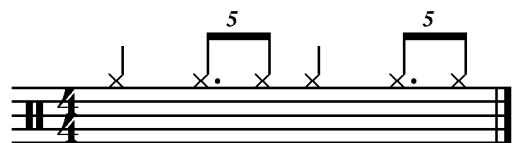
Straight feel



Triplet feel



Sixteenth feel ("super swinging" or "Dixieland")

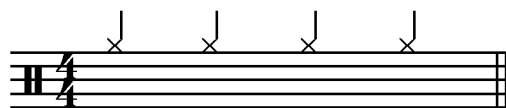


Feel between straight and triplets.

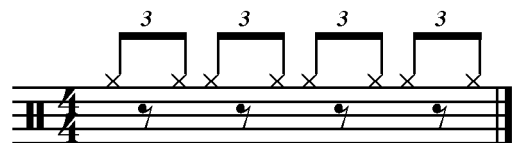
Cymbal playing

- *Pattern: Which basic pattern does the drummer use for his cymbal playing?*

Besides the swing pattern as mentioned above there are also other basic patterns:



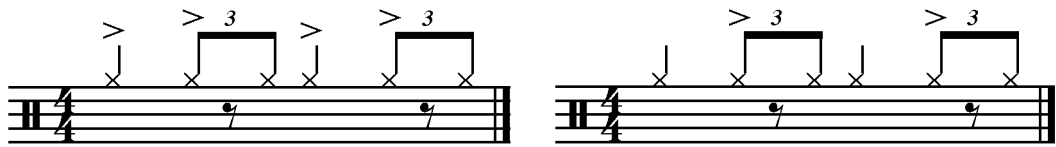
Quarter notes



Shuffle pattern

- *Accents: Are there accents played in the pattern?*

A drummer can decide to play every three notes of the swing pattern at the same volume or choose to play accents:



Accent on every quarter

Accent on beat two and four

Of course there are more possibilities. For instance, Elvin Jones sometimes played accents on the eighth notes between the quarters.

- *Variations: Does the drummer play many variations on the swing pattern or does he stick to the basic pattern?*

Comping

- *Left hand: What does the drummer play with his left hand?*

With his left hand a drummer can decide to comp (respond to the soloist). He can also play a steady pattern (a riff) or play nothing.

- *Feet: What does the drummer play with his feet?*

In this case there is the option of feathering the bass (playing soft quarter notes on the bass drum) or involve the bass drum in the comping. The hi-hat is often played on the two and four. Other options are playing it on every quarter or also involve the hi-hat in the comping.

- *Interaction: How does the drummer respond to the soloist?*

There are several ways. Some drummers react to the soloist by playing short figures on their snare drum (like saying “Hmhm” in a conversation). On step further is to also come up with new material for the soloist. Another option is not thinking of one person soloing and another accompanying but to think of it as a group interaction.

Equipment

- *Cymbals: Which Cymbals does the drummer use?*

Since jazz drummers play their cymbals so much. Their sound is very much depending on it. For this research I separated heavy and light cymbals. In short they produce a dry or wet sound.

- *Tuning: How are the snare, bass drum and tom toms tuned? Any special sizes?*

You can think of much more questions to ask. When you are able to see drummers play live or on video you can for instance compare them by the motion they use to play the cymbal or the way they hold the stick. Also looking at the way they set up their drum set can be interesting. In order to keep this research compact I decided to stick to these questions.

4. Drummers

Choosing the drummers I want to analyze is the next problem. There are just so many great players and I like almost all of them. During the research process people came up with more and more drummers that are interesting to analyze. The list got bigger and bigger until it turned out to be undoable to check them all out.

Then the solution was very simple. Because I like almost every jazz record I asked myself the question: which records do you listen to when dish washing? These are the records that I like the most and are the closest to me.

This is for instance the reason I didn't analyze Roy Haynes. I find him an amazing player and when he visits the Netherlands for a concert, I will definitely be there but I don't often listen to one of his records. There will come a time that I do it, but for this research I decided to stick to the drummers that I like the most at this moment. This will help me also developing this other part; call it feeling or soul, which is sometimes more important than technique or equipment.

Next you will find an analysis of the playing of Louis Hayes, Jimmy Cobb, Kenny Washington, Ali Jackson Jr., Ari Hoenig and John Riley. As sources I used the records that are considered to be the most important for their playing, videos, interviews and reports of lessons I was able to get with some of them when I visited New York in February 2011. I will shortly summarize their playing and then tell what I like about it and which elements in their playing can be worth trying for me. Also I wrote down some exercises they gave me.

4.1 Louis Hayes

Sources

- Interview: NPS interview for Radio 4 by Vincent van Engelen and Hans Mantel, 2001
- Concert: with Javon Jackson & George Cables at Creole Restaurant, Harlem NYC, February 27th 2011
- CD: Horace Silver – Six Pieces Of Silver, Blue Note Records 1958
- CD: Cannonball Adderley & Ernie Andrews – Live Session, Blue Note Records 1964
- CD: Cannonball Adderley and Nancy Wilson, Blue Note Records 1962
- CD: Louis Hayes - Ichi Ban, Timeless 1989
- CD: Cannonball Adderley Sextet – Nippon Soul, 1963
- CD: Louis Hayes – The Real Thing, 32. Jazz Records, 1999
- CD: Louis Hayes/Woody Shaw Quintet – Lausanne 1977
- CD: Louis Hayes Sextet – The Crawl, Candid Records 1990

About his playing

Louis Hayes is considered one of the masters of time playing. Kenny Washington called him (together with Ben Riley, Roy Haynes and Jimmy Cobb) one of the 'living holy four'. The playing of Louis Hayes made a very clear progress. When he started his career with Horace Silver and later with the quintet of Cannonball Adderley he played a clear ride cymbal pattern with almost no variations. His driving time, played on a dark cymbal was a nice carpet for the soloist to solo on. He played very simple comping ideas with his bass and snare drum. His playing sounded simple, but he played just the right things.

Later on, when playing with Woody Shaw and his own quintet he started using heavier cymbals and lower tuned drums. Playing more in front of the beat, more broken time and

more notes he sounded much more aggressive. You could hear his hardbop roots but he used it to create something more modern. When I got the chance to see him at a concert in February 2011 he played again a little bit more traditional but he still played very loud on heavy cymbals.

What can I learn from him?

- Clarity in his playing in his early career.
- Simple but effective comping ideas when playing with Cannonball.
- Dynamic playing.
- The way he interacts in his later work is amazing. However, I find it rather difficult to listen to for long times. The tempo stays the same but sometimes it sounds like it's rushing to me.

4.2 Jimmy Cobb

Sources

- Lesson: February 25th at Drummers World Inc. NYC
- CD: Miles Davis – Kind of Blue, Sony 1959
- CD: Jimmy Cobb Quartet – Cobb's Corner, Milestone 2003
- CD: Wynton Kelly & Wes Montgomery – Smokin' at the Half Note, Verve 1965
- CD: John Coltrane – Coltrane Jazz, Atlantic 1960

About his playing

As I saw in my lesson with Jimmy Cobb, he has a remarkable ride cymbal technique. He plays with the back of his hand up and makes twisting motions with his wrist. In this way he achieves an accent on every quarter note. This is perhaps most notable on Miles Davis record 'Kind of Blue'. The eighth note between the two quarter notes is almost inaudible. This particular right hand technique works for him but since every hand is different it doesn't have to work for every drummer. As John Riley told me, lots of drummers trying it, ended up messing up their wrist completely.

In his later work, with his own quartet, his playing sounds sometimes a bit clumsy but it is swinging very hard. One notable thing is that doesn't play a lot of drum solos nor fours.

What can I learn from him?

- Again the clarity is his playing.
- The forward motion created by the accent on every quarter note.

4.3 Mel Lewis

Sources

- CD: Mel Lewis – Mel Lewis and Friends, A&M 1976
- CD: Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra – Live at the Village Vanguard, Blue Note 1976
- CD: Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra – Soft Light and Hot Music, Music Masters 1988
- CD: Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra – Central Park North, Blue Note 1967
- CD: Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra – Consummation, Blue Note 1970
- CD: The Skymasters and Mel Lewis – Radio broadcast TROS Sesjun, 1984

About his playing

Worshipping players does not help you doing research. But in this case I find this very difficult. When listening to Mel Lewis it is impossible not to tap your feet along. I am a very big fan of his playing.

He uses very dark cymbals and low tuned drums. He holds his sticks very loose, sometimes even not using his right index finger and thumb. While with most players this will result in a lack of control and a sloppy cymbal beat, with Mel Lewis it swings.

He was very good at phrasing. He had the ability to sound like a horn player on his drum set. He could also swing very hard on the hi-hat.

What can I learn from him?

- Playing in front in the beat, swinging, playing loose, phrasing and much more.

4.4 Kenny Washington

Sources

- CD: Hod O'Brien, Ray Drummond, Kenny Washington – Ridin' High, Criss Cross Jazz 1990
- CD: Bill Charlap Trio – Live at the Village Vanguard, Blue Note Records 2007
- CD: John Swana – Bright Moments, Criss Cross Jazz 2008
- Lesson: February 26th 2011 in Brooklyn, NYC
- Concert: Benny Green at Dizzy's Club Coca Cola, NYC, February 23rd 2011

About his playing

Kenny Washington doesn't make records of his own name but he is one of the most asked session drummers in the New York City area. This means there has to be something in his playing that makes other people sound good. His playing is very clear. He has a lot of respect for the tradition, which can be heard in his playing. In faster tempos he plays all three cymbal notes on the same volume. He places the ride cymbal pattern in very much in front of the beat. It's all wrist and fingers Kenny Washington told me in the lesson I had with him. There is almost no arm motion involved when he is playing time on the ride cymbal. Kenny Washington uses a high tuning. His comping patterns are very traditional and he plays them loud and clear. Within his comping he alternates between eighth, triplet and sixteenth notes, all played with a lot of articulation in his phrasing.

What can I learn from him?

- Playing in front of the beat.
- Comping.

Exercises

- Listen to the 'holy four'. Play along with their records and try copying their cymbal beat. As Kenny Washington said: "You have to get the sound in your head."

- “Gig or no gig, get up every morning at 6.30 (just like me) and practice your rudiments on the snare drum for about two hours. Do it very slowly. This will help you developing your sound on the whole drum set.”

4.5 Ali Jackson Jr

Sources

- Lesson: February 27th 2011 in West Orange NJ
- CD: Wynton Marsalis – From the Plantation to the Penitentiary, Blue Note 2007
- CD: Dee Dee Bridgewater – Live at Yoshi’s, Emarcy 2010
- DVD: Wynton Marsalis & Willie Nelson – Two Man with the Blues, Blue Note 2008
- DVD: Jazz at Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra – Congo Square, 2007
- Concert: Jazz at Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra at Umbria Jazz 2009, July 14th 2009
- Concert: Wynton Marsalis quintet at North Sea Jazz, Rotterdam, July 15th 2007

About his playing

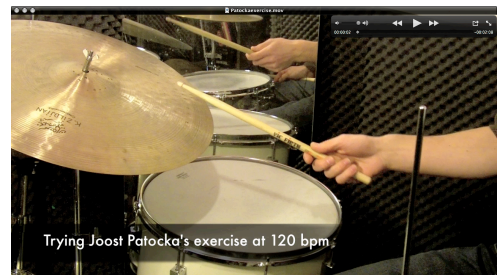
Drummer (and tambourine player!) Ali Jackson was asked to be Wynton Marsalis drummer, perhaps because of the New Orleans flavor in his playing. This results in some hip New Orleans grooves on the ‘From the Plantation to the Penitentiary’ record but also in a very driving ride cymbal beat. I like him the most when he plays just quarter notes in medium tempo pieces. “You got to play less to say more.” he said in the lesson I had with him. He is able to play very little notes soft but very pushing and with a lot of conviction.

What can I learn from him?

- Concise playing.
- Pushing.

Exercise

- The following exercise I got from Joost Patocka. It is designed to make yourself able to play with a more concise sound, and this is just what I like about Ali Jackson. Because your stick approaches the cymbal from different angles the sound can change. However you want to keep the intensity of the sound more or less the same when playing time. With the exercise you practice keeping the stick low and hitting the cymbal from left or right and keeping the sound the same. You can see me trying this exercise on the [DVD chapter 5](#).



4.6 Ari Hoenig

Sources

- Lesson: February 28th in Brooklyn, NYC
- DVD: Ari Hoenig & Johannes Weidenmueller- Intro to Polyrythms, Mel Bay 2009
- CD: Ari Hoenig – Inversation, Dreyfus, 2007

- CD: Ari Hoenig – The Painter, Smalls Records, 2004
- CD: Ari Hoenig Punkbop – Live at Smalls, Smalls Live 2010
- Concert: Ari Hoenig & Joris Roelofs at Jazzy Jam, Zwolle 2008

About his playing

You can say Ari Hoenig is a great player, just because of all the discussion he provides drummers with. His technique is very unorthodox. Most conservatory teachers have the opinion that he will not reach the age of 60 playing just because by that time he will have messed up his muscles by playing so stressed.

In the lesson I had with Ari Hoenig, he made me understand his way of playing a little bit more. He was listening to great drummers like Bill Stewart and the most important thing for him was to reach that same sound and he would do whatever movement it took to reach it. He was totally focusing on the sound, not on the movement.

I also asked him about how he managed to keep the tempo within all the polyrhythmic motives and groove displacement he plays. He told me that this was just a matter of concentration. Of course practicing with a metronome and recording and checking yourself will help but he thinks that even all the great players are in every song all the time concentrating on the tempo. This never becomes automatic.

What can I learn from him?

- Move the focus from the motion to the sound.
- Use your concentration for the tempo.
- In my lesson with Ari Hoenig (*DVD chapter 2*) he talked about being able to play what you can hear and being able to hear what you can play. He noticed that I was able to hear a lot. This is a good thing to start with because it means you are musical. However, I was not able to play everything I could hear. This is relatively easy to work on but still needs some work.

Exercises

- First play time on the ride cymbal for a few minutes on the same tempo. Then try comping with just your snare drum for a few minutes while keeping up the intensity and tempo on the ride cymbal. Then try comping with just your bass drum for a while. Then comp with just your hi-hat. Then try your bass drum and snare drum together, then hi-hat and snare drum together. This exercise is designed to improve your ride cymbal sound. It can be helpful when comping on the whole drum set is too much. The exercise will help you keeping the intensity on the ride cymbal up while comping.
- Take the first three pages of the 'Stick Control' book by G.L. Stone. Use the R for Right foot and the L for left hand. Play time on your cymbal and practice all combinations with your bass and snare drum. Practice this at every tempo.

4.7 John Riley

Sources

- Lesson: February 28th 2011 at the Manhattan School of Music
- Book: John Riley – The Art Of Bop Drumming
- Book: John Riley – Beyond Bop Drumming
- Book: John Riley – The Jazz Workshop

- DVD: John Riley – The Master Drummer
- Concert: Vanguard Orchestra at the Village Vanguard, NYC, February 28th 2011
- CD: Bob Mintzer Big Band: Live at MCG, MCG jazz, 2004

About his playing

John Riley plays in The Vanguard Orchestra and the Bob Mitzer Big Band but to most drummers he is more famous for his teaching skills. He plays in a very clean and clear swinging way. John has an amazing technique, which gives him a lot of control. You can hear this in his playing.

Feedback

John Riley about my time playing: *“I think it’s pretty clear and I don’t hear too much accent on the two and four like you said but it does sound a little bit casual too me because it’s not perfectly consistent like the way Kenny Washington or Jimmy Cobb play. They are very different, but every time Kenny plays it’s exactly the same. There is a little bit of variation in the dynamics and in the spacing of the notes that sounds casual. And it can be more straight. It can be more tight but it can’t be both. It has to be something.”*

What can I learn from him?

- John’s idea of ‘headroom’: If you are able to play very complicated stuff, playing simpler things will not take all your brainpower. The energy that’s left can be used for other things such as finding a deeper groove, dynamics or group interplay. Perhaps he makes this most clear with the following analogy in his book ‘The Jazz Drummers Workshop’: *“You buy a sports car that is capable of going 150 mph, but the maximum speed that you are allowed to driver is 65 mph. Car manufacturers describe the car’s easy ability to exceed 65 mph as ‘headroom’. The power available from 65 mph to 150 mph, which you will very rarely need to use, nonetheless translates to effortless functioning under normal conditions.”*

Exercise

- In my lesson with John Riley ([DVD chapter 3](#)) he gave me a nice exercise to practice playing a clearer one and three. He asked me to make a motion like I throw a ball to the high tom and then snap my fingers at one and three to get the stick back. If you practice this for a while your fingers will get more power, which gives you a clearer one and three. This technique is very usable for up-tempo playing. *“In the beginning it’s going to feel like you are giving up control. But that’s where the speed comes from.”* he said to me. You can see me trying this exercise on the DVD. ([DVD chapter 4](#))



4.8 Drummers table

In the table on the next page you find the drummers I just talked about together with some other interesting drummers. Some drummers had a change in their playing. In fact, every drummer has this, but with some of the older players it is clearer. In this case I decided to make a difference between their old and new 'version' in the table. For instance: according to this table Philly Joe Jones started playing more with his left hand, on a louder volume, while using heavier wet cymbals and lower drum tuning. The table also tells you that John Engels did not change his playing. He plays in the same super swinging way for years.

None of the drummers in the table are playing always the same. Depending on the gig or the song they choose to play more in front or in the back, to play accents or not or to use another cymbal. This makes it difficult to put them in boxes. Also you can say that the reason they are so great is that you cannot put them in boxes. Still you can say something about what they usually do. In the table you will find their 'habits' in pieces from medium to up-tempo.

In the column 'subdivision' you find the numbers one to five. One means straight, three is perfect triplets and five is sixteenth swing. In the column pattern I don't mean the literal pattern, this is more about the amount of notes played on the ride cymbal. For instance 'swing/shuffle' in the row of Mel Lewis doesn't say that he sticks to this pattern, but it means that the patterns he plays consist of quite a lot of notes.

	timing tempo	beat	subdivision	cymbal playing			comping			equipment			
				pattern	accents	variations	left hand	feet	volume comping	interaction	cymbal	cymbal2 tuning drums	
Kenny Clarke	steady	on top	3	swing	quarter	few	average	little	average	average	light	dry	low
	steady	in the back	3	swing/quarter	quarter	very little	little	little	soft	average	light	dry	low
Jimmy Cobb	old new	in the back	3	swing	quarter	average	average	average	loud	much	light	dry	low
John Engels	speed up	superfront	5	swing/shuffle	2 and 4	much	much	average	loud	much	light	dry	low
	speed up	superfront	5	swing/shuffle	2 and 4	much	much	average	loud	much	light	dry	low
Jeff Hamilton	steady	in front	3	swing/shuffle	no	little	average	little	average	little	light	wet	low
Louis Hayes	steady	in front	3	swing	no	few	average	average	loud	little	light	dry	high
	steady	superfront	2	swing/shuffle	2 and 4	very much	much	much	loud	much	heavy	wet	low
Ari Hoenig	steady	in front	2	swing/quarter	no	much	much	much	loud	very much	heavy	dry	high
	steady	on top	3	swing/quarter	quarter	little	average	much	average	much	light	dry	high
Philly Joe Jones	steady	on top	3	swing	no	little	little	little	average	average	light	dry	high
	steady	on top	3	swing	no	much	average	little	average	much	heavy	wet	low
Kees Krannenburg	steady	in front	4	swing	no	much	average	average	loud	average	heavy	wet	low
Mel Lewis	steady	in front	4	swing/shuffle	no	much	much	much	loud	much	light	dry	low
Lewis Nash	steady	in front	3	swing	no	much	average	average	average	much	light	wet	high
Joost Patocka	steady	superfront	3	swing	no	average	much	average	loud	much	light	dry	high
John Riley	steady	on top	3	swing	no	average	average	average	average	average	light	dry	average
Max Roach	steady	on top	3	swing	no	little	average	average	average	average	light	dry	high
Joost van Schaik	steady	in front	3	swing	no	little	average	average	soft	much	light	dry	high
Kenny Washington	steady	in front	3	swing	no	little	average	average	loud	average	light	dry	high
Tony Williams	steady	in front	1	swing/shuffle	no	much	much	much	loud	very much	light	dry	average
possibilities:													
	speed up	superfront	1	shuffle	2 and 4	very much	much	much	loud	very much	light	dry	high
	steady	in front	2	swing/shuffle	no	much	average	average	average	much	heavy	wet	average
	slow down	on top	3	swing	quarter	average	little	little	soft	average			low
		in the back	4	swing/quarter		little				little			
		laid back	5	quarter		very little				very little			

5. Analyzing my own playing

After having a look at other peoples playing and discovering the possibilities there are, it is time to look at my own playing. Therefore I used several sources. I did two recording experiments:

- September 2010, the Getz/Peterson experiment: I recorded myself while playing along with a record of Stan Getz and Oscar Peterson without drums.
- March 2011, the 'But Not For Me' experiment: later on in the process I did the second experiment to record myself while playing along with the tune 'But not for me', played by Monty Alexander.

These experiments are very helpful. However, the situation is a little bit artificial. You can hear that they are experiments. For this reason I chose to incorporate also a lot of recordings of live situations. These are harder to compare but are more honest and are giving some information you don't get from experiments. I used the following live recordings:

- Recordings of my first master recital in Rotterdam on June 30th 2010.
- The library recordings: a series of recordings from a monthly gig in the library of Zwolle, each time with another guest. I made recordings in October, November, December 2010, January and February 2011. The recording conditions were always the same so I should be able to compare them.
- Recordings of the Codarts Master Ensemble, playing in Café JW in Rotterdam on January 14th 2011.

The last source I used was 'the Feedback collection', a document in which I wrote down all the feedback I got from teachers, conductors, and the guests in the library. You will find their quotes throughout this report. Sometimes they are very flattering, sometimes almost painful.

5.1 First master recital June 30th 2010

I made my first recordings for this project at my first master recital. I will analyze them en use them as starting point. I was one of the last people of the school season to do an exam, most people were already on holiday. The piano player had bruised his arm. In the room it was about 30 degrees. The trumpet player made a mistake in the first song (he forgot a repeat and went straight to the end) and wasn't able to play very well after this, so the conditions were far from perfect. There was absolutely no 'flow'. I played six songs. I will analyze three of them.

1. Blues March – Art Blakey
Duration: 4:23, tempo start: 128bpm, tempo end: 130bpm, speed up 2bpm, : 0.47 bpm/min.
2. Magic Box – Bert Joris
Duration: 5:10, tempo start: 216bpm, tempo end 216bpm, no speeding up or slowing down (CD track 1).
3. Mr. Dodo – Bert Joris
Duration: 7:30, tempo start: 234bpm, tempo end 228bpm, slow down 6 bpm, 0.80 bpm/min (CD track 2).

An excerpt of a fourth song, 'Yump' by Kenny Werner, is on the DVD chapter 1.

Timing

The overall tempo of the songs was pretty steady. When changing groove within a song most times I didn't manage to keep the tempo the same. Also in drum solos I was rushing a little

bit. The songs are swinging but I could make them sound more active by playing more in front of the beat. The triplet subdivision sounds very natural; triplets in 'Blues March' and a little more straight feel in the faster songs.

Cymbal playing

In 'Blues March' I am playing a shuffle pattern on the ride. This sounds OK. In Magic Box and Mr. Dodo I use a lot of broken time figures. I play lots of accents. This sounds good but I play the cymbal at one dynamic level so after a while you hear that I couldn't keep the tension up.

Comping

In the shuffle the bass drum and snare are a bit too loud in comparison to the ride cymbal. In the other tunes I comp a lot with my snare drum and bass drum but I end up playing the same figures all the time. It can be a good idea to expand my vocabulary in this area to make it sound more interesting. You can hear that I'm trying to interact a lot. I am not getting enough information from the soloists so it's difficult to respond. I am putting a lot of energy in my playing but I don't get energy back.

Equipment

I wasn't playing on my own drum set. I used my own cymbals and snare drum and a drum set from the school. Except for my snare drum, the drums were tuned nice but I didn't feel 'at home' behind the drum set. I discussed with Hans van Oosterhout that it is a good thing to never get too comfortable behind your own set. Good players are able to get a good sound out of every drum set. No matter if it costs €2000,- or if it's bought at the toy store. However, I was not able to sound well behind the drum set. I will work on making my sound less depending on the set of drums, but on the other hand, since conditions can better be perfect, I will surely take my own set of drums to the next exam.

Conclusions and decisions

- I have to work on keeping the tempo while changing the groove. E.g. going from swing to latin or going from "two feel" to "four feel". This is not so artistic but very important.
- I can try playing more in front of the beat in the next experiments to keep the energy up.
- There is not much dynamics in both my cymbal playing and comping. Let's do something about that.
- I play the same comping figures all the time so it's a good idea to expand my vocabulary.
- My playing is very much depending on the ambiance and the energy that's in the air.

Feedback

- Jarmo Hoogendijk:

"You passed the exam. It was amply sufficient but you can do much better. This was nice as a bachelor exam, but really not good enough for the master."

- Hans van Oosterhout:

"The dynamics were weak, too much at one level. Try playing very soft and very loud. Also dare to make mistakes. Watch out for playing too tense! Because of this, you ended playing the same things on and on."

- Joost Patocka:

“The level of your band was too low. This is the master. Try to hang out more on sessions in the Randstad and at school.”

- Joost Kroon:

“The tempo of every song went up and down. Furthermore, it is unacceptable to read during your exam. Play everything by heart so you can use your energy for other things. If people from the ensemble you normally play in can not make it, you must have a backup plan.”

- Arnoud Gerritse:

“Your sound is good but be careful with the bass drum. When comping now and then it is too loud.”

- Sound engineer:

“I never had the chance too mix such nice cymbals.”

5.2 The Getz/Peterson experiment

In September 2010 I recorded myself while playing along with the record ‘Stan Getz and the Oscar Peterson Trio’ from 1957. This record features Stan Getz on tenor saxophone, Oscar Peterson on piano, Herb Ellis on guitar and Ray Brown on the double bass. I recorded several takes of the following three songs: ‘Pennies from Heaven’ (185 bpm), ‘I Was Doing All Right’ (118bpm) and ‘I Want to Be Happy’ (266bpm) (CD tracks 3 to 10). Together with my teachers I made an analysis of the recordings:

Timing

Since I’m playing along, the overall tempo is of course very steady. I tried to play in front and on top of the beat. It turned out that it’s no use trying to play more in front than Ray Brown. This take sounded very restless. With Ray Brown as a bass player, the best is probably just to follow. Playing in front sounded better than on top. Sometimes you could hear that for three beats I lost concentration and did not ‘lock’ with the bass. This is a thing to work on. The triplet subdivision is played a bit “Dixieland” (the opposite of straight) but this sounds naturally with the record.

Cymbal playing

On all takes I play a traditional swing pattern with little variations, which suits the situation very well. There is a little bit too much accent on the two and four. Maybe it will sound better when I play the one and three more clear.

Comping

While focusing on the ride cymbal beat, I play very little comping figures with my left hand and bass. Also I play them very soft. Because I’m playing along, there is no interaction. I’m responding to the soloists but no matter how hard I try; they don’t respond...

Equipment

The drum set sounds great. Though, the bass drum is a bit indefinable. The cymbals blend nice with the original recordings. The sound is a little bit old. In one recording I used my vintage 18" Zildjian K Constantinople Turkish ride cymbal which I just bought. Unfortunately on the recording this cymbal sounds too high to me and I don't like that it doesn't blend as good with the rest of the band as my 18" Zildjian A cymbal.

Conclusions and decisions

The experiment turned out well. Some important elements of time playing like keeping tempo and interaction cannot be measured by it because I'm playing along with a record.

- Playing in front of the beat works good. I will try to keep this.
- The cymbal work could be more clear. I have to work on playing a clearer one and three.
- The left hand has to make more sense.

Feedback

- Hans van Oosterhout about the Stan Getz recordings on September 29th 2010:

{Enters the room while the music is playing} "Who is this playing? Oh, it's you. Nice old sound! I can hear that sometimes you are not there with your thoughts. It never takes more than two or three beats but it should not happen. This is just a matter of concentration. It is of course very difficult because you can only follow Ray Brown. So in this case, try not to play too much in front."

- Joost Kroon about the Stan Getz recordings on October 5th 2010:

"It is just like the one and three are disappearing by focusing on the two and four. I would like to hear more quarter notes. Try to think more with control as a starting point. I would always try to play all three notes of the swing figure. Elvin Jones and Mel Lewis did this much less clear. This was great, but it was in the context of more modern music."

5.3 The library recordings

In the months October 2010 to February 2011 I recorded in total 52 songs that I played on my monthly gig in the Zwolle Library. The band consists of Jacco van Santen (alto saxophone), Loran Witteveen (piano) and Luc van Ruler (double bass). In the October concert Thomas Pol was replacing Luc van Ruler.

I analyzed three songs from every concert. I took the first song of every concert and two other songs with a swing feel in different tempos. Since the bass player is a little less experienced than me, this is a nice situation to see whether I am capable of taking the lead and keep the tempo up. Therefore, in this experiment I will take a close look at the tempos of the songs. I will tell something about every concert and analyze my playing.

October 2010, guest Herman Nijkamp (trumpet/vocals)

One nice thing about this concert was that we all already knew Herman Nijkamp very well. We had played with him before and we were familiar with all the songs he wanted to play.

Despite the fact that there was almost no rehearsal time, like in every concert at the library, Herman managed to create a very relaxed atmosphere.

1. There Will Never Be Another You (*CD track 11*)
Duration: 11:24, tempo start: 194bpm, tempo end: 198bpm, speed up: 4 bpm, 0,35bpm/min.
 2. Funk in Deep Freeze
Duration: 13:58 tempo start: 109bpm, tempo end: 113, speed up 4 bpm, 0,29bpm/min.
 3. The Days of Wine and Roses
Duration: 12:08 tempo start: 220bpm, tempo end: 216, slow down 4bpm, 0,33bpm/min.
- + Quite steady, swinging, very clear time in 'Funk in Deep Freeze'.
- Bass drum generally too loud, cymbal sound is a bit thin, not much interaction in 'There Will Never Be Another You'.

November 2010, guest Martijn Sohier (trombone)

This was the first time we played with Martijn Sohier, this made the ambiance a bit more tense. It also made us very concentrated. I think you can hear that in this concert I was paying more attention to the soloist as my comping patterns make more sense.

1. Alone Together (*CD track 12*)
Duration: 14:48, tempo start: 152bpm, tempo end 154bpm, speed up 2bpm, 013bpm/min.
 2. Invitation
Duration: 16:10, tempo start 131bpm, tempo 131bpm, no speeding up or slowing down.
 3. The Days of Wine and Roses
Duration: 10:11, tempo start 195bpm, tempo end 202 bpm, speed up 7bpm, 0,70bpm/min.
- + Lots of interaction in 'Invitation', in 16 minutes of exact the same tempo (!).
- Comping could be more dynamic, 'The Days of Wine and Roses' sounds restless and is speeding up.

December 2010, guest Ronald Douglas (vocals)

The concert with Ronald Douglas was the only one that we had rehearsed. This led to a pressure in the band. There was a lot written stuff and it turned out that one rehearsal maybe wasn't enough. In a situation like this you can better choose to not rehearse at all. In this case, the rehearsal gave me a false sense of security. Ronald was swinging very hard and with his loud voice he made us play very energetic, but I was maybe paying too much attention to the parts and not to the rest of the band. It made me sound restless and tempos were going up and down.

1. Nobody Else But Me (*CD track 13*)
Duration: 4:24, tempo start 178bpm, tempo end 188bpm, speed up 10bpm, 2,22bpm/min.

2. Day By Day
Duration: 5:16, tempo start 216bpm, tempo end 211bpm, slow down 5bpm, 1,00bpm/min.
 3. Weaver of Dreams
Duration: 6:03, tempo start 120bpm, tempo end 125bpm, speed up 5bpm, 0,83bpm/min.
- + Energetic playing, clear quarter note on Chinese cymbal.
- Sounds restless, not together with bass player, tempos are going up and down.

January 2010, guest Ruud Breuls (trumpet)

We were all very excited (and a bit nervous) to have the chance to play with Ruud Breuls, to whom we all very much looked up to. It turned out that he was not only an amazing player but also a very nice guy. He made me willing to perform at my very best. Musically this was for me probably the best concert out of the series.

1. On The Trail
Duration: 10:41, tempo start 128bpm, tempo end 144bpm, speed up 16bpm, 1,45bpm/min.
 2. Yardbird Suite
Duration: 6:27, tempo start 201bpm, tempo end 203bpm, speed up 2bpm, 0,31bpm/min.
 3. Alone Together (*CD track 14*)
Duration: 7:47, tempo start 222bpm, tempo end 209bpm, slow down 7bpm, 0,88bpm/min.
- + Creative playing and taking more risks than before results in some nice moments but also...
- ...some big tempo differences.

February 2010, guest Lils Mackintosh (vocals)

Lils Mackintosh didn't want me to read ("Because you are a drummer and they don't read!"). We had to play songs that we hadn't played before. This together with my lack of sleep and the fact that Lils started making mistakes during the concert didn't help to make the concert work for me. The audience liked it because of her presentation but I wasn't satisfied.

1. What is this thing called love
Duration: 7:19, tempo start 203bpm, tempo end 206bpm, speed up 3bpm, 0,40bpm/min.
 2. You Know I Would
Duration: 6:08, tempo start 136, tempo end 143, speed up 7bpm, 1,17bpm/min.
 3. Fly Me to the Moon (*CD track 15*)
Duration: 5:00, tempo start 159bpm, tempo end 161bpm, 0,40bpm/min.
- + Nice comping, swinging very hard.
- Some songs speeding up.

Conclusions

Timing

In October Thomas Pol replaced Luc van Ruler. In this concert we played very steady. In the other concerts the steadiness wasn't always good. Now I'm listening to all the recordings I think it is really a matter of concentration. I didn't change the triplet subdivision because I didn't want the concerts sound like experiments. I just played what felt right, which turned out good.

Cymbal playing

In the first concerts I played with more accents on the two and four. In the later concerts, the one and three became clearer.

Comping

During the concerts I started comping more balanced in the last concerts. I play the bassdrum softer and with more dynamics on the snare drum.

Equipment

The drum set and cymbals sound great. Sometimes I used some other cymbals (Chinese cymbal with Ronald Douglas and a 'K special Dry ride' with Herman Nijkamp). These choices turned out good.

Conclusions and decisions

- Still, my playing is very much depending on the ambiance. When I play with nice people I play much more concentrated and then I play everything better.
- The cymbal work became more clear every concert.
- If I am able to interact like I did with Ruud Breuls, it will take my playing to another level.

Feedback

- Jan Menu following the library concert on January 8th 2010:

"Well played. You sound like Joost van Schaik. I can hear you were one of his students."

- Adrienne West following the library concert on September 3rd 2011:

"Imre, you have great ears."

- Ruud Breuls in an email following the library concert on January 8th 2011:

"You are a great talent, Imre. I think you play great. Go on, whatever happens. Try developing yourself in all styles! (Also pop and big band!)"

5.4 Codarts Master Ensemble at café JW, January 14th 2011

On January 14th I played a concert at a very small café in Rotterdam with the master ensemble, led by Kris Koessens. The concert featured Sandro Savino (piano), Jon Bittman (alto saxophone) and Giorgos Galopoulos (bass). We played own compositions. These were difficult to play but we rehearsed them so much that I was able to play them by head.

1. What is this thing called Antidisestablishmentarianism – Jon Bittman (*CD track 16*)
Duration: 9:31, tempo start: 195bpm, tempo end: 196bpm, speed up: 1bpm, 0,1bpm/min.
2. Uptempo – Giorgos Galopoulos (*CD track 17*)
Duration: 10:10, tempo start 278bpm, tempo end: 276bpm, slow down 2 bpm, 0,2bpm/min.
3. Evidence – Thelonious Monk/Arr. Imre Kruis (*CD track 18*)
Duration: 9:06, tempo start: 242bpm, tempo end: 250bpm, speed up 8bpm, 0,9bpm/min.

Timing

Except for 'Evidence', which was speeding up, Giorgos and I managed to play in front of the beat and yet keep the tempo very steady. I play the subdivisions that suit the songs.

Cymbal playing

In some parts of the songs I play the swing pattern and there are also moments that I play just quarters. Also I play more broken time figures than on any of the other recordings I made for the research. Where on previous concerts this sounded restless in this case it sounds energetic. The variation in patterns keeps the attention of the listeners. Other than when playing the same figure for the whole evening, it keeps their attention.

Comping

I comp a lot. Rather than playing lots of ideas I sometimes keep messing with the same idea for a while before going to the next. For instance, I play some polyrhythmic figures over the bar lines for a while. In this way, my comping is not only a reaction on the soloists playing but it is also new material for the soloist. As a result the solos sound more like a group interaction and the music is much more interesting.

Equipment

Good, no comments.

Conclusions

I was satisfied about my playing at this concert. Some things went wrong but at least we were in a flow that let us interact and really make music. Also I felt that the way I played time this concert was 'mine': swinging clear cymbal work with a lot of comping. Now I just have to polish the things that I am playing a little bit.

Feedback

- Sandro Savino, after the concert:

“It was a lot of bullshit, but there where some nice things happening”

- Kris Goessens, during a rehearsal of the Codarts Master Ensemble, October 13th 2010 (This one is in Dutch, just because it is nice to read this out loud with Kris’ Flemish accent.):

“Het klinkt goed. Alles klopt. De swing draait rond en het bekoort mij. Maar beste Imre, ik wil meer! Je mag van mij meer de randen opzoeken en de beest uitgangen. Ik zou graag het moment bereiken dat ik tegen je moet zeggen: ‘Nou mag het wel efkes wat minder’. Je klinkt nu als een voorbeeldige student maar het mag wat minder gereformeerd graag.”

5.5 ‘But Not For Me’ experiment

In a lesson with Hans van Oosterhout I discussed the difficulty of playing quarters within the swing pattern. When I play only quarters on the ride cymbal for a while and then play the swing pattern, the quarters within the pattern sound very different and less ‘pushing’. To practice playing a clear quarter note within the swing pattern Hans came up with recordings of Monty Alexander with Ray Brown and Herb Ellis. He asked me to accentuate every quarter note and play with a swing subdivision that’s almost sixteenth notes. The notes between the quarters should be almost inaudible. Because I am not used to it, this is very difficult for me, especially to play like this for a whole song. When doing this I got the feeling of playing in a Dixieland band. I play very tense and my shoulders are going up.



We agreed that you should not always play like this, but the exercise can help you developing a clearer quarter note and playing in front of the beat, which is very useable in other situations. I recorded myself while playing along with the tune ‘But not for me’, played by Monty Alexanders trio on the record Triple Treat Vol. 1. ([DVD chapter 6](#))

Take 1 (CD track 19)

In this take I try to not think too much when playing. I was curious what would happen If I just played with the arm motion that I most often use. It’s clear that it doesn’t work in this case. The eighth note between the quarters is almost louder than the quarter notes. While listening to this take you got the feeling that the drummer and the other musicians are not in the same band.

Takes 2 and 3

In this take I tried to play a clearer quarter note. This works better than the previous take, but because the motion is still too big I play beat one and three often too late. Snapping the stick to the one and three cost me too much time so it sounds ‘sloppy’. Also the eighth note is still too loud. Because I am struggling with the motion I am sometimes not together with the bass.

Take 4

In take 4 it starts to get better. When I make the motion small and just use the fingers to snap on the one and three you get the right effect of an accented quarter note. Also I am playing more consistent.

Conclusions

This experiment I focused on the ride cymbal so this time I will not evaluate comping or the equipment. The exercise is not so much about making music but it can help you get a better feeling of the quarter note, which is useable in many musical situations. In some situations this way of time playing can work. However, since this way of playing is rather new for me, It's going to need some practice.

6. Conclusions

I made a table about my own playing. In this table you can find the different ways I used during my research. Some turned out well, some not. This is the way that feels best for me:

6.1 My own way of time playing

- I play steady in order to bring rest. I play in front of the beat to keep the sound fresh and I play with a triplet subdivision because this feels the most natural for me.
- I use all kind of patterns. I play no accents in the cymbal pattern to establish a clear sound and keep the tension up. I play a lot of variations in the cymbal pattern to keep the music interesting.
- I comp a lot with my left hand, little with my bass drum, on a loud volume to interact more because interacting can take music to a higher level.
- I use light and dry cymbals because of their blending with the rest of the band and high tuned drums to be able to sound light and think melodically.

Some of the above things I already do. Other things like steadiness and the clarity of the cymbal playing still need some work. On the less technical approach there are some other things I found during this research:

- Concentration is much more important than I thought. I found that playing good or bad is very much depending on whether I am totally concentrated or not.
- And when concentrated, I should use this concentration less for the motion and more for the sound.
- As a side effect of checking out the time playing of some great drummers I am now able to play time in more ways. On the *DVD chapter 7* you see me trying various ways of playing time. These ways I all consider part of my 'time toolkit'.

date	concert	timing			cymbal playing			comping			equipment		
		tempo	beat	subdivision	pattern	accents	variations	left hand	feet	volume	comp	interaction	cymbal
30-06-10	Master recital	speed up	on top		3 swing/shuffle	2 and 4	little	average	much	average	little	little	light
16-09-10	Getz/Peterson experiment	steady	in front		3 swing	2 and 4	very little	little	little	soft	very little	very little	light
01-10-10	Library: Herman Nijkamp	steady	on top		3 swing	2 and 4	little	average	little	average	much	much	light
12-11-10	Library: Martijn Sohler	steady	on top		2 swing	2 and 4	much	much	much	loud	much	much	light
03-12-10	Library: Ronald Douglas	speed up	superfront		3 swing/shuffle	2 and 4	little	average	little	loud	much	much	light
07-01-11	Library: Ruud Breuls	speed up	in front		3 swing/shuffle	no	much	much	much	loud	very much	very much	light
14-01-11	Master ensemble	speed up	in front		3 swing/shuffle	no	very much	much	much	loud	very much	very much	light
04-02-11	Library: Lils Mackintosh	speed up	on top		3 swing/shuffle	no	much	average	little	loud	little	little	light
10-03-11	But Not For Me experiment	steady	in front		4 swing/quarter	quarter	little	little	little	soft	very little	very little	light

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- The people that are on the recordings: Laurens Knoop, Jan-Willem te Kiefte, Marius v/d Brink, Jelmer van der Sluis, Thomas Pol, Luc van Ruler, Loran Witteveen, Jacco van Santen, Sandro Savino, Jon Bittman, Giorgos Galopoulos.
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- My research supervisor Jarmo Hoogendijk and the other people who helped me with the research by asking questions: Rob Broek, Christiaan van Hemert and Henrice Vonck.

8. Attachments

8.1 More feedback

- Johan Reinders following a concert with the Millennium Jazz Orchestra with Peter Tiehuis, February 3rd 2010:

“You play very well. You have a good sound and I hear great creativity. Time playing can improve. This is not so much about keeping the tempo (this went well) but about keeping it interesting for the soloist. Tonight it did not always work to keep the tension there.”

- Loet van der Lee following the concert of Big Band Allotria at the Hoofddorp Big Band Concours, May 29th 2010.

“Your playing in Zwolle was okay but very uncertain in terms of keeping the tempo I can remember. That’s so important. To me it seemed a matter of concentration and focus that perhaps fails in the spur of the moment. During the show at the Big Band concours you made a good impression. Your playing was solid when it’s about the groove in shuffle style. Subtle swing and making sound can improve. The drummer in a big band should focus on making it comfortable for fellow musicians through proper preparation of accents and steady time. My advice would be to improve these elements and so integrate the role of bandleader into your playing. This can be reached by practice but also by watching how other people are doing it. So, visit concerts, listen to recordings and watch DVD’s. Furthermore It seems to me that drummers like Martijn Vink and Marcel Serierse use a lower tuning on their floor tom. Also Hays Jellema uses very special cymbals that sound different. In the Finale several pieces (the first three) were played too fast.”

- Peter Ypma following a concert of the Codarts Big Band in Schiedam, June 13th 2010:

“Try to read less while playing. Do this only when you need it. You played a nice shuffle on ‘Mr. Nelson’, but try pushing your left stick in the skin of the snare drum on the two and four I’ve seen Art Blakey doing it. He even had a hole in his skin. If you play an accent with the trumpets, do it much softer. Your sound has to blend with the trumpets. Don’t try to break through.”

8.2 Summary of lesson with Eric Ineke, Royal Conservatory the Hague, January 11th 2011 11.00

Er zijn geen drummers die je goed ‘moet’ vinden. Maar jij luistert zeker niet naar de verkeerde. Luister wel altijd eerst naar de bron. Bv. Eerst naar Tony Williams luisteren, daarna naar Bill Stewart.

Bekken: vingers doen mee, maar de beweging komt bij mij (Eric) voor een heel groot deel uit de hand. ‘Het is net karate’ zeg ik wel eens. Tony Williams en Louis Hayes speelden ook zo. Door de beweging in je hand (itt. vingers) gaat het meer swingen. Iedere noot van het timepatroon speel ik op het bekken even hard. Hou het licht.

Time: één keer werd je iets langzamer. Probeer daarnaast – en dat is net zo belangrijk – (zonder te versnellen) de ‘forward motion’ er in te houden. Dat is waarom ik van Jazzmuziek houd. De swing, de time, en dat het maar doorgaat. Dit bereik je door je te concentreren op de kwartnoot.

Compen: volume linkerhand mag sterker. Je mag best aan de solist laten weten dat je er bent. Daarna kun je hem muzikaal aanvullen. Als je je maar niet te veel opdringt. De Upbeat is daarbij belangrijk. Speel veel upbeats. Door je stok af en toe op de tel in het snarevel te drukken geef je je spel wat meer bodem.

Viertjes: Je speelt goede dingen, kan beter door meer dynamiek te gebruiken binnen de frasering. Daardoor gaat het veel meer swingen en wordt het smeuïger.

Liedjes spelen: probeer jezelf eens op te nemen terwijl je in je eentje een liedje speelt. Bv. Thema – 2 chorussen begeleiden – 4 om 4 – solo – thema. Daar leer je superveel van. Het helpt je muzikaler te spelen.

Brushes: Swingt, maar klinkt een beetje dun. Probeer meer sound te maken door je brush dieper in het vel te drukken. Ken je de plaat 'Overseas' van Tommy Flannagan met Elvin Jones?

Tot slot: je moet onder het spelen niet te veel over de time nadenken. Het is in wezen niet belangrijk welke manier van time spelen je gebruikt. Als de kwartnoot maar goed is en het goed voelt.

8.3 Summary of lesson with Kenny Washington, February 26th 2011 13.00

Practice your rudiments out of the Wilcoxon book. I get up every morning at 6.30 (gig or no gig), just to practice on the snare drum. There's absolutely no magic involved. It's just hard working. I'm not as talented as Max Roach or Philly Joe Jones so I just have to practice a lot.

The accent makes the five stroke roll. You have to articulate way more. Not by banging the accents, but by playing the unaccented notes softer, softer, softer! Practice every rudiment this way and be very precise.

When you practice the Wilcoxon solo's, practice bar by bar and take it real slow. First practice bar one, then practice bar two, then try them together. Then go to the next metronome marking.

Nothing beats the snare drum, but a pad can be a helpful tool. As long as you keep listening to what you are playing.

Grip

Right hand: when you play on the snare drum, the back of your hand should always be up. Your index finger is always on the stick. If it's not, you'll lose control and you'll be lost.

Left hand: Your middle finger and index finger should always be on the stick. Especially when you play soft. This will help you keep control. The turning motion of your underarm is important. Never forget to use it.

Playing time

Listen to the holy four: Roy Haynes, Jimmy Cobb, Ben Riley and Louis Hayes. Listen and practice along with the record. Try to copy their cymbal beat.

When playing the rode cymbal I use my fingers and my wrist. There is almost no underarm motion. This will also help you playing fast and prevent you from banging the cymbal like a mitrailleur when playing fast.

It's good to focus on the motion, but more important is to get the sound in your head. The sound is your starting point. I started playing and practicing time because I wanted to have the same strong cymbalbeat as the holy four I mentioned before.

Do you always play these (5A) sticks? They sound hollow. You might want to try sticks with round tips. I never liked wooden tips, because the sound is never the same. There are only few drummers who play with plastic tips.

A lot of young drummers everybody is talking about don't really bother me. They often play too loud. But because of their lack of definition you can not hear them when you are in the back of the club. This is because they didn't practice their rudiments. Practicing rudiments – and I can not stress this enough – is extremely important. It will help you get a better sound on the whole drumset.

8.4 Summary of lesson with Ali Jackson, West Orange NJ, February 27th 11.00

You sound nice, but “You got to play less to say more.” It can be scary to leave silence. Although the effect of leaving silence can be very good. Also it's a matter of being very concise.

Normally I don't play loud. It's difficult to play soft. You have to have a lot of control.

When playing time I use my fingers and wrist. The quarter note is very clear. You might want to snap your fingers so the 1 and 3 are clearer. If the quarter note is OK you can start messing around with the timing of the notes in between, as long as you don't mess with the time.

Playing time on the hi-hat

You should open it more and use more attack. When playing the hi-hat you'll need to play with way more attack than on the ride to achieve the same effect.

Brushes

Push the brushes more into the skin so you get more sound. The sound will be fat.

Don't cheat in superfast tempos. Keep playing all three notes with your right hand. This is not hard. You just need to practice it.