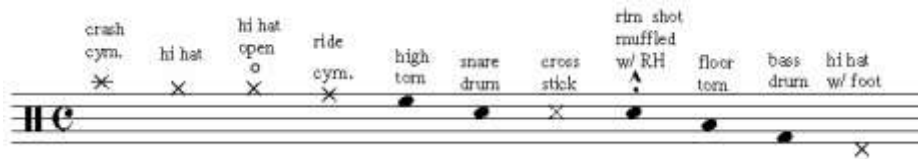


## Lewis Nash on “Sounds of Joy”

by Jeremy Brown



Lewis Nash is a modern drummer with a deep knowledge of the common language of jazz drumming. Like “Philly Joe” Jones, most of Lewis’ solos consist of his own expanded bebop phrases, which he combines with linking material to form a coherent piece. “Sounds of Joy” comes from Joe Lovano’s 1995 live album, *Quartets*, which was recorded live at the Village Vanguard. Lewis plays eight twelve-measure solos in “Sounds of Joy”—one chorus after each repetition of the opening and closing melody, between the piano and sax solos, and in trade with Lovano. Lewis’ eight twelve-measure solos are dispersed throughout the arrangement at key points: after every repetition of the opening and closing melody, between the piano and saxophone solos, and in trade with Lovano. These eight solo choruses show Nash’s mastery and expansion of bebop drumming common language. His solos have clarity and order due to his use of orchestration: notice that in every solo he moves back-and-forth between two instrument groups—snare/cymbals and snare/bass/toms. He flaunts his athleticism with lightning-fast rudimental ideas and cross-stick gimmicks. In all of “Sounds of Joy,” Nash displays his thorough knowledge of traditional jazz drumming and expands that vocabulary with orchestration and technical wizardry.

Lewis’ choice of orchestration is one common thread that runs through almost every solo. He divides the drum set into two basic sets of instruments that he focuses on at different times in each solo—(1) snare drum and cymbals, and (2) four drums (snare drum, bass drum, and two tom-toms). The first set that appears at the beginning of most choruses is the snare drum versus the cymbals (usually ride cymbal). In the first four bars of chorus number one, Lewis plays a swinging triplet figure that involves only snare drum and ride cymbal played against each other. The next four bars are similar except the two instruments sound in unison a few times. Finally, in bar nine the snare and cymbals are completely in unison, followed by three bars of four-drum material. This movement from single-line to unison, may not occur on purpose, nevertheless it provides dynamic motion out of the solo. Also, the movement from cymbals and snare drum to four-drum material will become the running theme of these solos. The next chorus begins with a hemiola figure involving unison snare drum and ride cymbal played against the hi-hat. Like the first chorus, the second chorus ends with four-drum material. (By the way, measure seventeen may be Lewis’ only quote of the original melody, matching

up with the “and” of beat one and beat three of this interrupted fifth bar.) The third chorus catches Lewis by surprise coming out of the piano solo, so Lewis is regaining his footing during the first two bars (mm. 25-6). During this time of rhythmic “skating,” Lewis develops another cymbal versus snare idea that gradually moves down to four-drum ideas. Lewis continues in the same manner through most of the following solos.

The aforementioned four-drum material is important because it displays Lewis’ well-grounded bebop ideas. Common stickings include paradiddles, right/left/bass, and variations of both. Lewis plays paradiddles between the snare drum and high tom (much like “Philly” Joe Jones played them) in measure eight. At the end of the first chorus (m. 10), Lewis plays a short phrase down the drums, then some bass/right/left/bass work in measure eleven, ending with another short triplet phrase (m. 12). In the third chorus, beginning at measure thirty-one, Lewis’ four-drum phrase also comes from the right/left/bass sticking. Following in measure thirty-four, Lewis probably played paradiddle-diddles to execute the flurry of sixteenth notes, due to the accented notes. Measures sixty-eight through seventy-two contain an impressive combination of paradiddles and right/left/bass patterns. In the seventh chorus, beginning in measure seventy-nine, Lewis constructs a phrase by alternating one drum with the bass drum, then, combined with snare/high tom/floor tom/bass, he plays a hemiola that becomes a left/right/bass sticking, then returns to alternating snare and bass drum. That one phrase is a good example of Lewis’ ability to link phrases. The final chorus (mm. 85-96) is another example of his linking ability. After some unison snare, cymbal, and bass work, Lewis plays “Philly” Joe Jones’ most famous invention, the RLLRRLRRL sticking. Next, (m. 89) Lewis plays his own motive in hemiola, linked by right/left/bass and other material to a few five-stroke rolls (m. 95) and repeated notes on the snare drum (one stick played on the other).

Athleticism and gimmicks are part of many of the best drum solos. Lewis Nash plays a couple of outstanding choruses that begin with a kind of drum trick. The first gimmick occurs in the sixth chorus (mm. 61-72), when Lewis opens with a snare drum followed by a string of fast eighth notes doubled by bass drum and ride cymbal. Lewis varies the phrase at each repeat to keep it interesting. The second time he plays the lick, Lewis adds a pickup note and begins in the middle of the bar. Continuing the hemiola effect the third time, he adds more snare notes to the beginning of the phrase. The fourth time Lewis takes it farther by doubling the number of consecutive eighth notes in the bass and ride cymbal, and immediately launches into a rudimental show (mm. 68-72).

The other gimmick is a bebop trick that Lewis uses at measure seventy-three. Lewis turns his left stick over to a cross stick position, then, using only single-stroke triplets, he moves back and forth between the snare drum and ride cymbal in the right

hand. This trick is effective because Lewis varies the rhythm after three bars and, again, uses a hemiola to arrive at exit material for the chorus.

Lewis Nash's last chorus is a kind of summary of what came before it. Like most of the other choruses, it begins with snare drum versus cymbals (adding the bass drum) and moves on to his own versions of common language drumming, played on four drums. All of the phrases are surrounded with linking material that sets up clear statements.

The image displays three distinct drum solos, each labeled with a number (1, 2, or 3) at the beginning of its first staff. Each solo is composed of three staves of music. The notation includes various rhythmic elements such as eighth and sixteenth notes, triplets, and rests. Dynamic markings like accents (^) and hairpins (>) are used throughout. Solo 1 includes a specific drum pattern notation: RL RR L R LL R L RR L R. The solos are presented in a clear, organized layout, allowing for detailed study of the rhythmic patterns and phrasing.

**4**

LL RLRLLRLRRLRLRR LLRLRLLRLRLLRL RRLRLRLLRLRL

R L

**5**

**6**

7

Musical staff 1 for exercise 7, featuring a series of triplets of eighth notes on a single line.

Musical staff 2 for exercise 7, featuring a series of triplets of eighth notes with accents and slurs.

Musical staff 3 for exercise 7, featuring a series of triplets of eighth notes with slurs and accents.

8

Musical staff 1 for exercise 8, featuring a series of triplets of eighth notes with slurs and accents.

Musical staff 2 for exercise 8, featuring a series of triplets of eighth notes with slurs and accents.

Musical staff 3 for exercise 8, featuring a series of triplets of eighth notes with slurs and accents.