

Kicking Shadows

David Rosenboom

2007

In memory, James Brown, with variations on an unstated theme.

Though written as a piano solo, *Kicking Shadows* may also be arranged or orchestrated.

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Kicking Shadows is intended to immerse young (as well as some older) musicians in a mélange of inspirations linking my relationship to rhythm and blues, which emphasizes its roots in the American south, from the Mississippi Delta to the driving energy of soul in Atlanta, Detroit and other places—all of which inspired the later fashions of *R&B*—, to some of the open forms of gradual process music that emerged in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. All of this music requires freedom from pre-conceptions, recalling for me these verses written in relation to the Buddhist *Diamond Sutra* by Chi-fo (a.k.a. Feng-seng ca. 1938) from which the title is taken.

*“...that created is of the world,
that uncreated is of no thing...
practicing as if the uncreated refers
to emptiness or stillness is like
chasing wind and kicking shadows...”*

The score contains a series of modular patterns bracketed by repeat signs, with connecting material in between some of the patterns. These are to be played as many times as desired, while allowing the rhythmic and tonal feel of each one to settle and grow before moving on. Crescendi and diminuendi apply continuously over the repetitions. Eventually, cycling melodic patterns are superimposed over the rhythms leading to a central ostinato, surrounded on either side by a continuous circle of harmonic shifts in 9/8 and 5/8 patterns. Once the ostinato is established with a settled sense of moving stillness, several simple variations on an unstated tune appear. These are in memory of the late, James Brown, as are the Zen-soul words I've attached to the first and last bars,

Do not de-part from your na-ture and grasp no form, ain't it fun-ky now.

The score can also be arranged for keyboard with other instruments, perhaps a band. The patterns might be reorganized in modular fashion and improvisations added.

(DR 27 March 2007)

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Repeat signs bracket patterns that may be played as many times as desired. They may also be rearranged in modular fashion and improvisations added. Crescendi or dimuendi apply continuously over repetitions.

Use pedal freely throughout to enhance resonances, bearing in mind the nature of articulations shown.

Accidentals carry through the bar only in the octave in which originally introduced.

For piano, may be arranged.

In memory, James Brown, with variations on an unstated theme.

...that created is of the world,
that uncreated is of no thing...
practicing as if the uncreated refers
to emptiness or stillness is like
chasing wind and kicking shadows...
(after Chi-fo a.k.a. Feng-seng ca. 1938)

Medium funk

Optional, whisper with subtle sense of pitch.

Piano

Do not de-part from your na-ture and grasp no form, ain't it fun-ky now.
clap repeat at will

mp mf pp f fff ff-p alternate dynamics

repeat at will

8va 8vb

19 *mp* *cresc.*

22 *ff*

25 *mf* *f*

28 *molto rit.* *a tempo* *Ostinato*

sempre legato *slow crescendo and diminuendo over many repetitions* *repeat at will*

mp *f* *mp*

Leg. *(sustain continuously)*

Continue repeating pattern A, making expressive dynamics, for a long time. When ready and at will, LH or RH departs from pattern A to play events B, C, D, E, F and G in any order and as many times as desired while the other hand keeps going with pattern A. Whichever hand leaves pattern A to play another event returns to pattern A as soon as is technically possible. Continue pattern A as long as desired, at least several times, before choosing another event. When finished, continue on through the rest of the piece at event H.

B *let ring* C *let ring* D *let ring* E *let ring* F *let ring* G

(also 8vb) *(free pedaling)* *(free pedaling)*

36 H

mf *f*

* *pedal freely*

8va-----
(8va on second time through)
-----8vb

39 *ff*

41 *molto rit.*
decresc.

8va-----

44 *a tempo*
ff

allargando -----

meno mosso
mf

47 *a tempo*
Optional, whisper with subtle sense of pitch.

mp

Do not de - part from your na - ture and grasp no form, ain't it fun - ky now.

repeat at will and fade out

Fine

Repeat signs bracket patterns that may be played as many times as desired. They may also be rearranged in modular fashion and improvisations added. Crescendi or diminuendi apply continuously over repetitions.

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Medium funk
Whisper with subtle sense of pitch.

Trumpets in Bb

Do not de-part from your na-ture and grasp no form, ain't it fun-ky now.
repeat at will

mp

clap

clap

repeat at will

f

repeat at will

pp

ff

repeat at will

repeat at will

f

ff-p alternate dynamics

repeat at will

ff

mp

26

f

molto rit.

a tempo

A

See instruction at end.

repeat at will

Kicking Shadows

30

36

40

45

47

a tempo
Whisper with subtle sense of pitch.

mp

Do not de - part from your na - ture and grasp no form, ain't it fun - ky now.

repeat at will and fade out

Fine

Piano repeats ostinato pattern A, making expressive dynamics, for a long time. Trumpets may solo starting with restricted pitch set of ostinato and expanding. When ready and at will, piano plays B, C, D, and F, each of which signals a solo by one of the trumpets. Other trumpets play E and G in chosen places. Piano finally cues continuation at H. Piano solo may be inserted in between bars 38 and 39 if desired. Experimenting with various arrangements is acceptable.

Repeat signs bracket patterns that may be played as many times as desired. They may also be rearranged in modular fashion and improvisations added. Crescendi or diminuendi apply continuously over repetitions.

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Medium funk
Whisper with subtle sense of pitch.

Trumpets in C

Do not de-part from your na-ture and grasp no form, ain't it fun-ky now. repeat at will

clap

p

mp

5

clap

repeat at will

f

repeat at will

pp

ff

12

repeat at will

repeat at will

f

17

ff-p alternate dynamics

repeat at will

ff

mp

26

f

molto rit.

a tempo

A

See instruction at end.

repeat at will

30

36

40

45

47

a tempo
Whisper with subtle sense of pitch.

repeat at will and fade out

Do not de - part from your na - ture and grasp no form, ain't it fun - ky now.

mp

Fine

Piano repeats ostinato pattern A, making expressive dynamics, for a long time. Trumpets may solo starting with restricted pitch set of ostinato and expanding. When ready and at will, piano plays B, C, D, and F, each of which signals a solo by one of the trumpets. Other trumpets play E and G in chosen places. Piano finally cues continuation at H. Piano solo may be inserted in between bars 38 and 39 if desired. Experimenting with various arrangements is acceptable.