

Brian O'Neill: versatile percussionist, composer, bandleader

Cambridge, MA / New York, NY
347.482.1775

brian@crashandboom.com Twitter: @orchestrotica

Notable Performances

- **Guest artist, Northern Arizona University Percussion Ensemble.**
Premiered Chris Vennel's "Losing the Shackles" for percussion soloist (vibes, snare drum, riq, pandeiro) and percussion ensemble.
April 2011.
- **Percussionist with Donna Summer's *Crayons* Tour**
Performances in Gilford, NH and Boston, MA. 2008.
- **The Festival de México**
Led my 22-pc big band, Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica at Mexico's most prestigious arts festival presenting my transcriptions of the lost arrangements of Juan Garcia Esquivel. 2006.
- **Boston Pops "WGBH Orchestra"**
Section percussionist in freelance orchestra led by Pat Hollenbeck (Boston Pops) at the opening ceremonies of WGBH TV's new studios. 2007.
- **Hawaii International Jazz Festival**
Martin Denny tribute concert with WAITIKI and Gabe Baltazar (Stan Kenton Orchestra). 2005.
- **Carnegie Hall, NYC**
Performance of "*Yellow River Cantata*" with Newton Symphony Orchestra. 2002.
- **Solo appearances: Sun Cities Symphony of the West Valley (Sun City, AZ) & Northern Arizona University Orchestra (Flagstaff, AZ)**
Winner of the Jennings Butterfield Young Artist Competition and NAU Orchestra Competition with Ney Rosaura's *Concerto for Vibraphone and Orchestra*. 1999.
- **Additional notable performances:**
Northern soul artists: Archie Bell and the Drells, The Del-Larks, Laura Lee. Ernesto Diaz (percussionist, various). Peter Erskine (drummer). Wallace Roney (trumpet). Arizona Opera Orchestra, Flagstaff Symphony, Flagstaff Festival of the Arts Orchestra.

"2011 Rising Star Big Band...incredible arrangements, musicianship and artistic direction..."

—Frank Alyer, *DOWNBEAT*

"...If John Zorn is an exotica Picasso, O'Neill is his Georges-Braque counterpart in cubism's transposition to music...and may be...a stronger exoticist than Zorn..."

—Gordon Marshall, *AllAboutJazz*

Recent ensembles and performances

Notable festivals

- 2011 B.O.M.B Festival w/ David Wax Museum
- 2010 Boston Jewish Music Festival w/ Klezwoods
- 2008 Festival Internacional de Los Nuevos Vientos Ecatepec
- 2006 Festival de México
- 2004 Marblehead Arts Festival w/ Steven Spungin (Flamenco Guitarist)

Orchestral percussion freelancing:

- Boston Festival Orchestra (featuring members of the Boston Pops)
- Mercury Orchestra, Cambridge, MA
- Hillyer July 4th Festival Orchestra, Salem, MA
- Merrimack Valley Philharmonic Orchestra (North Andover, MA)
- Charles River Sinfonietta Orchestra (MA)
- Brahms Society Orchestra (Cambridge, MA)
- Concord Orchestra (Concord, MA)
- New Bedford Symphony (New Bedford, MA)

- Quincy Symphony (Quincy, MA)
- Cape Ann Symphony (Gloucester, MA)
- Newton Symphony (Newton, MA)
- Longy School of Opera (Cambridge, MA)
- New England Philharmonic (Boston, MA)
- Longwood Symphony (Boston, MA)
- Wellesley Symphony (Wellesley, MA)
- Melrose Symphony (Melrose, MA)
- Summer MIT Symphony Orchestra (Cambridge, MA): Eastern European tour, 1999

Musical Theater (drumset & percussion)

- Merrimack Valley Players (Methuen, MA): *An Evening of Gershwin* (Spring, 2008)
- Arlington Friends of the Drama (Arlington, MA): *Carousel* (April, 2007)
- Weston Friendly Society (Weston, MA): *Annie* (Winter, 2006)
- Maverick Productions, (Boston, MA): *Company* (2005)
- Footlight Club (Jamaica Plain, MA): *A Very Carol Christmas* (2003, 2004)
- Longwood Players (Boston, MA): *Pippen* (2002), and *Cabaret* (2003)
- Quannapowitt Players (Reading, MA): *Cabaret* (2003)

Jazz, world, chamber, eclectic, pop ensembles

- Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica - The 22pc Esquivel big band (2011 *DOWNBEAT* Rising Star Big Band) (arranger, artistic director, percussionist, pianist. 2005-present)
- Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica - Third-stream exotica quartet (composer, artistic director, vibraphonist. 2009-present)
- CORDIS: Modern chamber music/post-rock (piano, 2011-present)
- David Wax Museum (percussionist, 2009-present)
- Birdsong at Morning - occasional performances
- Aljashu: (Sephardic music ensemble) (percussionist, 2009-present)
- Klezwoods (klezmer ensemble) (percussionist, 2009-present)
- Fa Diyeh Ensemble: (Ottoman Classical ensemble) (percussion, 2009-present)
- Choros Com Chocolate: (Brazilian choro ensemble) (pandeiro, 2009-2010)
- Newpoli: Southern Italian Folk Music (percussionist, 2009-2010)
- KAFANA: (Balkan-inspired jazz) (percussionist, 2009-present)
- Juanito Pascual (flamenco guitarist) - occasional performances
- La Tuza: Mexican Roots Music (*son jarocho, huasteco, calentano*) (percussionist, vocalist, 2007-present)
- Jazz Factory Orchestra: vibraphone (full-time) and drum set (substitute). (2008-present)
- Orchestra of This (progressive global jazz) led by Matthew Joy on guitars. (2007-2009)
- Gato Malo Orchestra: Drumset, organ, percussion in this NOLA-style RnB, soul, blues band. (2005-2008)
- WAITIKI: Jazz/exotica quartet. Vibraphone & percussionist, composer. (2003-2007)
- Steven Spungin Flamenco Group (2004)
- See my bands page for a list of groups I play with.

About my group (Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica)

"...[brian is] a jazz world polymath...borrowing themes from Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich, Mr. Ho [Brian] has created his own rigorous classical-jazz hybrid. Are you listening, Keith Lockhart?"
—*Boston Phoenix*

"...serious jazz and chamber music writing..."
—*Bob Young, Boston Herald*

"...Brian O'Neill's group...may be one of the most inventive jazz groups running..."
—*BlogCritics Music (I Hear Sparks)*

Discography

- Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica: *The Unforgettable Sounds of Esquivel* (2010, independent)
- Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica: *Third River Rangoon* (2011, independent)
- David Wax Museum *Everything Is Saved* (2011, independent)
- Klezwoods: *Oy Yea!* (2010, Accurate Records)
- La Tuza: *Son del Otro Lado* (2009, Independent)
- WAITIKI: *Rendezvous in Okonkuluku* - 2007 (Independent)
- *Paradise Lost and Found: Songs of Hawaii Old and New* - 2007 (FMM-R-144)
- WAITIKI: *Charred Mammal Flesh, Exotic Music for BBQ* - 2005 (Independent)
- See my Compositions page and Projects page

About *The Unforgettable Sounds of Esquivel*

"...4 stars...exquisite attention to details"
—*Sunday Times London*

"...deliciously demented and entertaining in equal parts..."
—*Wall Street Journal*

TV & Radio Performances

- June 2010: Klezwoods live performance on WUMB's Folk Odyssey w/ Dana Westover
- April 2006: WAITIKI *Orchestrotica's* show for the Festival de Mexico is recorded and produced for Canal 11 TV (Mexico City, Mexico)
- June 2005: WAITIKI performs a taste of our 2005 HI Jazz Festival program on KHON TV morning news (Honolulu, HI)
- April 2005: WAITIKI performs on the *Overnight Freeform Show* on Pittsburgh's NPR Affiliate WYEP, 91.3FM
- February 2005: Gato Malo performs on *Boston Emissions*, WBCN, 104.1 FM
- May 2004: Leah Callahan performs on *Sunday Nights with Carmelita* on Boston's WAAF, 107.3

Electronics/Digital Music Production

- Intermediate experience with MIDI instruments, hardware synthesizers and soft-synths (primarily keyboard synthesizers from the 1990s)
- Intermediate experience with MIDI sequencing (electronic music production and composition) on MasterTracks Pro, Studio Vision Pro, Garage Band
- Managed a MIDI lab for Music Works Academy (Phoenix, AZ) for 2 years (1993-1995)

Awards

- 2011 Boston Music Award's Best Song of the Year, David Wax Museum's "Born With a Broken Heart" (recorded percussion on the album *Everything Is Saved*)

Teaching

- New England Conservatory: World Rhythms class (2010)
- Somerville High School Drumline (2007,2008)

Education

- Intermittent study with: Raquy Danziger (doubek), Glen Velez (frame drum), Jamey Haddad (frame drum, rhythmic systems), Rusty Scott (jazz theory and comping), Jerry Leake and Jon Singer (tabla).
- 2002: Brazilian Percussion Tour. With a group of various collegiate professors and students from Long Beach, CA, studied Brazilian folkloric music, samba, capoeira, and candomble for two weeks in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil.
- 1999: Graduated *Summa Cum Laude* from Northern Arizona University with a Bachelor's of Music in Percussion Performance.
- 11 years of formal piano studies (age 6-17)

Professional Affiliations

- Member, American Federation of Musicians / Boston Musicians' Association (BMA)
- Member, Percussive Arts Society (PAS)

References

Available on request.