

Inside and outside: The variable nature of a Sri Lankan low-country drummer

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This paper will focus on how a Sri Lankan low-country drummer's performance will vary according to place, occasion, and the drummer's own sensibilities. Three disciplinary areas of ethnomusicology, anthropology, and performance studies will be used to investigate the low country drummer's performance in two different performative contexts and how that variation is evident in the drum sound. Musicologist Frank Desmet (2012) explains the musicianship is a high-level skill, which involves different characteristics of mental processing and corporeal control. Predominantly, he focuses on the musician's mental focus on musical targets or intentions and the expressive body movements. The key factor in a ritual drummer's performance is his own interpretation, which, in term may vary according to space, perception, and self-awareness. Merleau-Ponty (1968) argues that our perception makes the performer both the object and the subject simultaneously. In addition, the dual state of mind and its reversibility enhances the quality of musical expression develops the nature of the traditional drummer's performance. He expresses his idea in terms of vision, that is, in terms of the performer. However, his argument extended to include sound, which is the result of both hearing and being heard.

Keywords: Place, Occasion, Musical sensibility, Dual nature of the drummer