

We Insist! Freedom Now Suite (Candid Records, 1960)

written by Max Roach, Oscar Brown Jr.

Featuring:

Max Roach, drums

Abbey Lincoln, vocals

Booker Little: trumpet

Julien Priester: trombone

Walter Benton: tenor sax

Coleman Hawkins: tenor sax

James Schenk: bass

Michael Olatunji: congas, vocals

Raymond Mantilla: percussion

Tomas du Vall: percussion

I. Driva' Man

transformation of blues form: 5/4 instead of 4/4; 6 bar choruses instead of 12 bars

Abbey Lincoln acapella in C minor at opening, accompanied by tambourine

lyrics concern the brutality of slavery

some word/tone painting: the tambourine and rimshot meant to evoke a whip

Some interplay between C minor and Ab major: Coleman Hawkins comes in in Ab major on the melody (accompanied by trumpet, trombone, and 2nd tenor sax in parallel whole-tone chords)

II. Freedom Day

III. Triptych: Prayer/Protest/Peace

legacy of the spiritual: duet between Lincoln's voice and Roach's drumming

Prayer: wordless spiritual on E minor pentatonic, voice engages in call & response with drums, Roach tunes drum set to match Lincoln's voice

Protest: most avant-garde moment of the recording. 1:20 of stylized screaming, with continuous rolling figures in the drums.

Peace: wordless spiritual in 5/4

IV. All Africa

points to Africa through use of percussion ensemble, rhythmic ostinatos, open-ended frameworks

recites names of dozens of African ethnic groups

Olatunji accompanies Lincoln on a drum and responds in Yoruba

7 stroke Afro-Caribbean bell pattern

V. Johannesburg: piece dedicated to Sharpeville massacre of non-violent protests against apartheid in South Africa

vehicle for open blowing, 5/4 ostinato in Bb minor

open-ended solos over vamp

most direct statement of the melody comes at the end of the piece