

drummer & bandleader

**FRANKLIN KIERYMYER**



**SCATTER  
THE  
ATOMS  
THAT  
REMAIN**

**Spirit and Magic** - what lies beyond mere intellect. The soul, the heart, the qualities that set us free ... this transformative power of music is what drummer, composer & bandleader Franklin Kiermyer is all about. Known mostly for the expansive style, distinct sound and intense passionate energy of his drumming and the spiritual focus of his music, Kiermyer originally came to prominence following the release of his album Solomon's Daughter, featuring saxophonist Pharaoh Sanders. Since then, his many albums and performances have garnered international accolades.

*"Drummer Franklin Kiermyer is that rare jazzman - blessed with the ecstatic quality of his free-bop attack." Rolling Stone Magazine ... "Kiermyer plays (and composes) with an almost evangelical belief in jazz as a form of pure inspiration." Entertainment Weekly ... Kiermyer supercharges spiritual modality...he plays with volcanic authority." Down Beat ... "His writing is fiercely primal and his drumming ferocious, unbridled... a journey in the Sun Ship to heights of spiritual experience through music...captures that mystical ecstasy with magnificent aplomb" Jazziz*

Growing up in the last part of the hippie days, in the environment of the revolution, Kiermyer was inspired by the incredible freedom music of the 60's and 70's. The psychedelic sounds of Jimi Hendrix and the ritual music of many of the world's indigenous cultures surrounded him, but it was his encounter with the ecstatic music of John Coltrane and his quartet of McCoy Tyner, Elvin Jones and Jimmy Garrison that brought all these influences together and focused his intentions.

*"As a child, I was dissatisfied with much of the ways I was taught to experience reality. For example, it was explained that everything was made of matter as distinct from mind and spirit and this struck me as false. At the same time, I had a strong feeling that we were here to do something important, but I didn't really know what. Amidst all this somewhat uncomfortable doubt and questioning, I was hearing music and felt safe there. Music made sense because I felt it. Especially rhythm. When I was 8, my grandfather got me a set of bongos. By the time I was 12, I was hooked on the drums. At 14, I had my first encounters with Tibetan Buddhist meditation. When I was 15, two significant things happened to me: I decided that I wanted to be a full-time musician and I heard John Coltrane's Sun Ship album for the first time. I didn't understand how or why, but Sun Ship blew me away more than anything had up to that point and I knew that I needed to find my own way to experience that.*

*At that time, being an artist in the medium of music and being a professional musician seemed to be one and the same thing. I soon learned that I had to choose my priorities. By the time I was 18 I had chosen the path of going as far as I could into the spirit of the music no matter how long it would take. I'm still on that path. Although it has led me into some unexpected places, my eyes are set on the same destination as when I began. It's the simple heart of the melody – the chant in the middle – that we melt into. Don't let the thoughts distract you, but open up to the feeling and trust the openness. That's the way to practice."*

Over the course of his life, this pursuit has compelled Kiermyer to develop his own way of drumming and composing music. His focus always on the feeling, his technique grew out of that.

Legendary producer Michael Cuscuna has described Kiermyer's music like this: *"What really distinguishes this music from whatever else is going on at this time is that this is a more kinetic energy oriented space. It's part of the urgency that you feel when you're listening to his music. Franklin Kiermyer got beyond his influences and comes through with him as an original player - his feel, his rhythmic patterns, his own way to play drums, his own time concept. By using that to create the Arc of a performance he is giving direction and yet letting the musicians feel free creatively. Franklin conducts the music from the drums. He has his own way of organizing music. His own way of unfolding a performance. This music always swings in its own way, on its own terms."*

Along with his musical life, spiritual practice and meditation has always been a constant. Over the years, opportunities to meet and learn from some of the greatest teachers of Vajrayana Buddhism helped inform and motivate Kiermyer's development, but it was at age 42 that he met an older Tibetan master from Kham who would be his main teacher. In him, he perceived the depth and openness at the source of all great music. As the relation deepened, he would ask for instructions on how to practice. As he progressed, the instructions became more and more direct and challenging. Following this path, Franklin Kiermyer would spend most of the next ten years focused mainly on meditation and practice, much of this in remote solitary retreats in the Himalayas and other parts of Southeast Asia.

*"It was the coming together of my spiritual practice, my life in music and becoming a father in my 50's that finally unified and focused my vision allowing me to reach these goals."*

SCATTER THE ATOMS THAT REMAIN is Kiermyer's present band, performing widely from Jazz at Lincoln Center, New York to Java Jazz, Jakarta and many points in between. His vision and leadership is mobilized by pianist and musical director Davis Whitfield.

*"Through devotion, we become the instruments of the music. Davis Whitfield has become a main agent in the actualization of my musical vision. What we do together and with the other musicians we play with is Scatter The Atoms That Remain."*

*"Drummer Franklin Kiermyer offers a sense of shared catharsis through music that is at once majestic, ferocious, and relatable. When music writers are tasked with describing Kiermyer, the words "ecstasy" and "ecstatic" appear almost predictably, but sometimes a word is just right. Kiermyer's "Scatter The Atoms That Remain" quartet channels the kind of beautiful, disciplined intensity exemplified by late John Coltrane. This type of universal, non-denominational spirituality simply feels good." Jazz At Lincoln Center*

Scatter's latest album, Emancipation Suite, was voted one of the best albums of 2022 by Down Beat Magazine. Their new album, One Is Love, will be released in early 2025 and features a surprising and wide-ranging roster of guest artists.

*“Drummer Kiermyer thunders and clatters, generating multiple simultaneous pools of percussive activity that bubble and burst like lava pits. His parts heard without the others’ would be symphonic. Here they dominate, his skins perhaps a touch tighter than Elvin’s, his cymbals slightly brighter, his demands of heroic response just as dramatic. Scatter the Atoms That Remain calls for universal freedoms such as it enacts.” – Howard Mandel - Downbeat Magazine*

*“The transformative energy of Scatter The Atoms That Remain - A phenomenon on the current jazz scene. Drummer, composer and leader Franklin Kiermyer and pianist Davis Whitfield are the soul of this formation, two artists who imprint spirit, magic, soul and heart on the band, and who have been critically acclaimed in their many performances.” Levante + Valencia Plaza Spain*

*“love your new album ... obviously...wow! Played a track on my last show!” Gilles Peterson Worldwide*

*“Spiritualism, Magic and Soul - An astonishingly rounded, flowing performance that focuses on spiritualism, magic and soul and lets the transformative power of the quartet’s music shine brightly.” - Gaesteliste Germany*

*“There may not be a quartet out there that best picks up where the Coltrane Quartet left off than drummer Franklin Kiermyer’s Scatter The Atoms That Remain.” New York City Jazz Record*

*“Drummer Franklin Kiermyer’s Further ... the intensity of John Coltrane’s A Love Supreme. There’s a big sense of space in this live recording and a thrilling sense of ambience.” Soundstage Experience (UK)*

*“Imagine if drummer Elvin Jones and Pianist McCoy Tyner had not left the John Coltrane Quartet in early 1966 and had spent another year with the great saxophonist; it might have sounded something like this.” L.A. Jazz Scene*

*“A relentless pulse that conveys incredible strength ... a sublime spirituality that envelops the entire album” Jazz Colours (Italy)*

*“Few musicians approach the music from the same spiritual wellspring that Trane did. Fiery, the musical equivalent of a perfect storm: It explodes and takes you for a ride. The playing is superb.” MTV / VH1*

*“By its fervor and its sincerity, by the vibration that runs through all its music with an intense thrill, the quartet commands respect. Not only is Franklin Kiermyer a drummer with a very strong presence, a technician of expansion, but he is surrounded by musicians who speak the same language and share the same spiritual impulse. Their choral song deserves attention: it proves that, failing to clear unknown lands, the spirit that inhabits it continues to produce magnetic effects.” Citizen Jazz (France)*

*“Invokes the passionate intensity of Coltrane’s Sunship... textures drawn from traditions as diverse as Mbuti singing and Native American chants balanced by Kiermyer’s ecstatic drumming.” Raru (South Africa)*

*“5-Stars! Immediately from the first song I was hit by the immediate and raw energy ... this album has everything ... Closer To the Sun is an excellent album full of honest music from a fantastic, acoustic jazz quartet.” SKJazz (Slovakia)*