Benjamin Shannon is making a serious indent into the Australian and International music scene as a percussionist, educator, curator and composer. Hailing from Nambour on the Sunshine Coast, Ben has studied with world renowned percussionists Mark Guiliana, Dave Elitch, Ian Chang, Jeff Friedl, Danny Heifitz, Tim Firth, Andrew Gander, Simon Barker, John Parker and Paul Hudson.

He has performed alongside Pulitzer, ARIA and Grammy award winning artists in Raven Chacon, Jane Sibbery, Scott Tinkler, Marc Ducret, Eiichi Hayashi, Robin Eubanks, Francois Salque, Yitzhak Yedid, Kristin Berardi, Toby Wren, and Martin Kay , summarising an extensive list. Ben and his projects have supported the likes of the Sun Ra Arkestra, Ryosuke Kiyasu, The Contortionist, Leprous, Voyager, COG, We Lost The Sea, Delta Sleep, The Black Sorrows, Katatonia, Troy Cassar-Daley and more.

Ben's compositions have received critical acclaim (Bell Award's Young Jazz Award Finalist 2019, Queensland Music Awards Finalist 2020, 2022, 2024, Art Music Awards 2022, 2023) and his work has received support from Creative Australia, Arts Queensland and Moreton Bay Regional Council. Ben was also nominated for the Freedman Jazz Award in 2020 and 2023 and was awarded the APRA AMCOS Art Music Fund award in 2026.

Original projects of Ben's include Milton Man Gogh, Shamin, Kodiak Empire, Brisbane Conduction Orchestra, Open Sky, Bon Pour Bruler, Dropbear Lodge, Big Dead, Milk Buttons, Spirit Lights, Soul Mechanics, and more. Since 2013 he has released over 25 albums of original music and toured nationally and internationally with a multitude of groups.

Ben took part in the Banff International Jazz Workshop, in Banff, Canada, in August 2017, August 2024, and the Banff Musicians In Residence Program in January 2024. He also was accepted into the Australian Art Orchestra Creative Intensive Music Program in August of 2018 where he engaged in cross-cultural workshops, performances and rehearsals with musicians from Arnhem Land, Korea, England and across Australia and learnt from some of Australia's most reputable Art/Experimental Music artists.

In early 2017, Ben was asked to join iconic Sydney based label, Art As Catharsis, to help with bookings and administration for the Brisbane side of things. His other roles include meeting with potential clients, discussing and contributing to general label plans, online exposure and promotion.

Ben also conducts and directs an improvised orchestra, The Brisbane Conduction Orchestra, from methods and practices he learned from his time in Banff, from Tyshawn Sorey. This is a community oriented Orchestra that champions diversity, inclusion and a safe improvisational environment.

Ben is heavily involved in the Australian contemporary jazz and experimental scene promoting gigs and tours for Qais Essar, Michel Gasco, KNOWER, Rafiq Bhatia, Hubris. and many other Australian and International acts since 2014. He has booked countless gigs and tours for classical, jazz, rock, experimental and world outfits since 2011 across all parts of

Australia. He has generated a strong network of venues/musicians/publicists/radio from the ground up through his relentless appetite to foster original exciting projects in Australia.

He also began studying the Tabla in 2016 under the direction of guru ji Shen Flindell and looks to incorporate new found eastern styles and techniques to the drum kit, composition and teaching.

Since 2018 Ben has featured in a number of television commercials and movies both drumming and acting. He is represented by Howell Management.

Ben recently graduated Honours (1st Class) at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, and has commenced his PhD in 2025, oriented around The Art of Conduction. He currently holds a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Drums and a Graduate Diploma of Secondary Education. Ben is devoted to the Australian experimental/improvised scene and seeks to push and nurture the sound of Australian improvised music. Ben also runs a teaching studio out of Brisbane and is available for lessons in drum kit, percussion and composition.

'Ben is a devoted member of the Australian Contemporary Arts Scene and is committed to making music in his community that builds community and blurs lines between genres and disciplines.'

Peter Knight - Australian Art Orchestra, 2013-2022

'His playing can be described as highly developed, mature, disciplined and above all, passionate. My impression is that he will have a strong impact on live and recorded music in Australia and beyond and on young musicians through his playing, composition, mentoring and administration. His composition trajectory is something he is pursuing with great enthusiasm. His confidence, ability and tertiary training in composition will find avenues for expression, influence and profound leadership.'

Peter Breen - The Stairwell Project

Benjamin Shannon
Awards, Discography, Collaborations, Film/Television, Qualifications, Biography (2026)

Awards/Grants

APRA AMCOS - Australian Art Music Fund Recipient (2026)

Arts Queensland - Performing Arts Market Development Fund - Milton Man Gogh, Banff Jazz Program (2024)

Creative Australia - Music Export Grant - Milton Man Gogh, Banff Jazz Program (2024)

Contemporary Classical Work of the Year - Finalist, Queensland Music Awards (2024)

Jazz Performance of the Year - Finalist APRA AMCOS Austrlian Art Music Awards (2023)

Freedman Fellowship Award (Jazz) - nominee (2023)

Jazz Work of the Year - Finalist, APRA AMCOS Australian Art Music Awards (2022)

Apra Amcos Art Music Awards – Finalist, Jazz Work of The year Category, See You Round The Traps (Composition, Performance W/Milton Man Gogh) (2022)

Queensland Music Awards – Finalist, Jazz Category, See You You Round The Traps (Composition, Performance W/Milton Man Gogh) (2022)

Australian Art Orchestra Mentor Program #2 (W/ Samuel Pankhurst) - (2021)

Freedman Fellowship Award (Jazz) – nominee (2020)

Queensland Music Awards – Finalist, Jazz Category, T.V Was Better When I was Younger (Composition, Performance W/Milton Man Gogh) (2020)

Australia Council – Arts Resilience Fund -Milton Man Gogh European Tour Cancellation Support (2020)

Australian Art Orchestra Creative Intensive Program – Tarraleah (2018)

Moreton Bay Regional Council (RADF Development Grant, 2018)

Australian Jazz Bell Awards, Finalist, Young Jazz Artist, Milton Man Gogh - (2017)

Banff International Jazz Program - (Participant & Scholarship, 2017)

Moreton Bay Regional Council (RADF Development Grant, 2017)

So You Think You Can Blast? – Drum Solo Competition Winner (2016)

Academic Excellence, Queensland Conservatorium of Music (2015)

Performing Arts Scholarship, Caloundra Events Centre (2013)

Discography

Milton Man Gogh (Jazz/Experimental/Progressive/Improvised)

Fully Stretched - Album (2025)
The Great Reset – Album (2021)
Pub With No Ear – Single (2020)
How To Be Big And Small At The Same Time – Album (2019)
XXXX Bitter Irony – EP (2018)
Stress To Impress – Album (2017)

SHAMIN (Jazz/Duo/Experimental/Improvised)

Barefaced - Album (2025)
Live @ Zac hurren's Rainbow Room // Australian Digital Concert hall (2022)
Fine Gnaw – Album (2019)

Open Sky (Experimental/Improvised, Drum/Pipa duo)

Debut Album - (2026)

Brisbane Conduction Orchestra (Classical/Jazz/Experimental)

BCO Live - Honours Performance (2023)
BCO Live @ The Old Museum Building W/SHAMIN (Freedman Award Submission) (2020)
Volume 1. (2018)
BCO Live @ Black Bear lodge (2018)

Now2Now (Jazz/Experimental/Improvised)

Axiom - 2026

Valtozash BigBand (Jazz/Experimental/Metal)

Boiling Solitude – Album (2021)
Fighting The Wizard Bird – Album (2017)
Iron Maiden Voyage – EP (2016)

Kodiak Empire (Progressive/Rock/Experimental)

TBC Third LP - 2026
The Great Acceleration - Album (2023)
Silent Bodies – EP (2016)
Urashima – EP (2014)

Milk Buttons (Folk/Alternative)

We Loved You Like Rain - (2025)
Milk Buttons – The Ornamental Poppies Blow – EP (2021)

The Simns 2 (Free Improv/Microtonal/Experimental)

Apartment Life – Album (2021)
Pets Album (2020)

Martin Kay's Forage (Experimental/Avant-Garde/Jazz)

Move To The Bleat – Album (2018)

Sophie Min Orchestra (Experimental/Big-Band/Avant-Garde)

Your Wings - Album (2022)

Flightless Birds Take Flight x Benjamin Shannon

Ruffled Feathers (2023)

Spirit Lights x Benjamin Shannon

Spirit Lights - (2025)

Strangely Enough (Alternative/Rock)

Stories You Tell Yourself – EP (2021)
Are You More – Single (2021)

Long Time Coming – Single (2020)
Graceville – Single (2018)
Change – Single (2017)

Cowbird (Folk/Alternative/Experimental)

Debut Album - (2023)

Dropbear Lodge (Experimental/Jazz/Rock)

Vicious Twee - (2025)

Big Dead (Experimental/Jazz/Rock)

Memoryslip - (2024/2025)

Studio/Session Work

Alex Fletcher – Airlock Sessions (2020)
Alastair Cannon – It Goes On (Song For P.M.) (2019)
Kieran T. Stevenson – Standing In The Way of You (2017)
Fresco – Fool Me Once (2017)
Susanna O'Learly – Tabla (Master's Research, 2015)
Fresco – Separate (2016)
Found In Trees – White Flag (2016)
Found in Trees – The Arbiter (2014)
Half Human – Mysterious Teenage Killer (2014)
James Walker – Umbrella (2010)

Podcasts/Tutorials

Introduction to Conduction – Queensland Conservatorium of Music – Project Week Trimester 1, 2021
Musician's Unmuted – Episode 30: Follow Your Path (2021)
Dots + Loops – tutorial series (Composing on the Fly, The art of Conduction) (2020)
Dots + Loops Podcast (2020)
Sundowner Drum Talks – Benjamin Shannon (2018)

Other

How To Spell Love W/ Anisa Nandaula & Pru Wilson (2021, 2019)
Kate Moore's Fatal Strangers, Dots + Loops Festival (2018)
Functional Nudity Live @ The Club, Banff Performing Arts Centre (2017)
Cave Live @ The Club, Banff Performing Arts Centre (2017)
Benjamin Shannon Trio Live @ Green Jam (2016)
Ravi Welsh Trio – Long Way Around Live @ Balcony TV (2015)

Film/Television

ABC 90th Year Television Commercial (2022)

God's Favourite Idiot (Netflix Series) (Extra, Season 1, 2022)

Drumming Orangutan - Darrel Lea: Palm Oil Free Campaign/Advertisement (Lead Role, 2020)

Joy Boy #4 - Danger Close: The Battle of Long Tan (Featured Extra, 2019)

Qualifications

Doctor of Philosophy - Griffith University, 2025-current

Bachelor of Music (Honours Program) Conduction (Improvisational Practice through Spontaneous Composition) (2021-2023 6.7 GPA) - Griffith University

Graduate Diploma of Secondary Education, Music/English
2016-2018 - University of the Sunshine Coast

Bachelor of Music (Academic Excellence, 6.3 GPA) Jazz/Jazz Studies
2012-2015 - Griffith University

Certificate of Music Studies - 2012-2021 - Griffith University