

2009 Guelph Jazz Festival Colloquium
Improvisation, the Arts, and Social Policy
September 9-11, 2009
University of Guelph

Abstracts and biographies

Gaelyn Aguilar and Gustavo Aguilar

Abstract

"Ah, Raza! Making Ideas and Revelations Matter"

What is the relationship of the 'Self that improvises' to the body politic? Can creative music making practices foster what José Limón would refer to as "an archaeology of subjugated knowledges and practices"? What if the essentially social and purposeful relationship between the Self and the Collective, engendered through improvisation, could also facilitate coherency between the Self and the Collective out in society *writ large*?

In 1996, performer/composer, Gustavo Aguilar, experienced a moment of psychic disequilibrium that prompted him, ten years later, to create a work that addressed what it meant to identify himself as an American artist of Mexican descent. During that span of time, improvisation would become the critical means by which Aguilar would work out how to fluidly situate himself vis-à-vis the Other, and learn to listen for resonance in multiple sources of knowledge.

Our paper aims to share with audience members both the conceptual and practical grounding of that work (*Ah, Raza! The Making of an American Artist*), and how it – and, by extension, improvisation – can create what Guillermo Gomez-Peña would characterize as "free zones for intercultural dialogue" while also opening frames for raising questions about the ways that we curate creativity. As performing artists, we have witnessed over the years a disturbing trend in the way culturally inflected ways of being have become marketing tools in the arts. How can we connect artists with the body politic in ways that do not end up incarcerating them in place and time by teaching them, sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly, that they must craft themselves and their art either to fit the contours of iconic images or to placate to the trends and agendas set by cultural policy makers? If "the self is always a subject-in-progress," as Ajay Heble has pointed out with respect to what it is that improvisation can teach us, than how do we assure that this essential quality of improvisation is germane in the sphere of public policy?

In conjunction with our paper presentation, we will perform *Ah, Raza! The Making of an American Artist* (a 45-minute, multi-media performative ethnography) as part of the Colloquium.

Biographies

Gaelyn Aguilar (PhD) is a cultural anthropologist whose work falls under the broad heading of performative anthropology, a dialogic area of interest that

looks to performance both as the way in which people experience the quotidian aspects of their cultural universe, and the method by which the ethnographer produces knowledge about those experiences. Gaelyn has carried out fieldwork in Ventura, California, the Río Grande Valley of South Texas, Florina, Greece, and the Republic of Macedonia, where she spent the 2000-2001 academic year as a Fulbright Fellow conducting research on dance and the cultural politics of national identity. Her latest projects include *Maravatío ReSounding* (a site-specific, multi-media remapping of Maravatío, México), and *Architecturalized Sound Events* (a documentation of works and performances by sound installation innovators Maryanne Amacher, Liz Phillips, and Miya Masaoka at Brooklyn's Issue Project Room). A recent recipient of a Theater for Development Fellowship to teach at the Guapamacátaro Art + Ecology Residency program in Michoacán, México, Gaelyn complements her identity with ongoing work as a live performing and studio-recording artist.

Gustavo Aguilar (DMA) percussionist, composer, and improviser, has been honing his craft as a music artisan for almost two decades. His commitment to combining pre-composed (notated) and present-composed (improvised) musical elements has earned him the reputation as an "intuitive, methodical mystic." His music has been called "beautiful, introspective and passionate," "thought-provoking and thoroughly fresh." A champion of contemporary creative new music, Gustavo has performed at major festivals throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, and the Pacific, and has worked closely with some of the most innovative creative artists of our time, including John Bergamo, Anthony Braxton, Nels Cline, Anthony Davis, Mark Dresser, Lisle Ellis, Vinny Golia, Charlie Haden, Earl Howard, Tim Hodgkinson, Kang Tae Hwan, Anne LeBaron, George Lewis, Mary Oliver, Park Jae Chun, J.D. Parran, and Wadada Leo Smith among others.

Website: www.gustavoaguilar.com

Fabien Barontini

Abstract

Improvised music and the French cultural establishment

The relationship between the French cultural and political establishment and improvised music could be summarized in three steps. The first one began with the introduction of jazz in France, when this music was played in clubs and music halls only, and was still quite autonomous in front of the power that be. Eventually, it gave birth in France to another original music: gypsy jazz, as created by Django Reinhardt and his folks. A second stage happened in the '60s and the '70s when jazz, free jazz and improvised music were tied to revolutionary socio-cultural movements and organizations. A third stage was reached in the '80s when French public administrations and policies recognized the value of improvised music and started to support the field. From now on, the world of improvised music, in France, had to face a centralized and homogenizing state. We do benefit from institutional support, but we also have to deal with repeated attempts to alienate or quell the creativity in the music.

Biography

Fabien Barontini was born in 1954 in Paris. He became a French teacher, then started to work around jazz and creative music in the 1980s, until he created the Sons d'hiver Festival in 1991. He still works as the director of the festival today.

Website: www.sonsdhiver.org

Patrick Boyle

Abstract

Improvisation and the Politics of Error

Negotiating error is a critical component to improvisation, and life at large. Error and failure are unfairly identified as 'surprises.' Shifting this mindset is imperative. It would involve viewing errors in the course of performance [i.e. life] as "transient flaws that will make sense as events unfold" (Weick 1995). Errors ought to be observed as experiments that will lead us to new solutions. I posit that errors may become accepted as an "inevitable property" of improvisation, if we can reframe its aesthetic qualities and reduce some of the stigma that goes along with making them.

In this paper, I will present an original approach to jazz education that is holistic and inclusive. I contend that more responsible educational practices regarding error and improvisation will create a culture of confidence in which students should be able to:

- a) engage complex organizational problems with versatility and poise
- b) consider alternative responses during moments of extreme tension
- c) assuage fear of unknown variables, both musical and non-musical
- d) cultivate and sustain a sympathetic practice in collaborative situations.

I constantly field questions from younger improvisers that stem from preoccupations of sounding 'right' – "What is the 'right' way to swing eighth notes? Which scale will 'work' over a particular chord? Why is my time so 'bad'? Can you just write down what I'm 'supposed' to play?" I feel that students will only make meaningful creative musical statements by abandoning the need to sound 'right' all the time. In order to truly master musical improvisation, students must engage the reflexivity that exists in collaborative performance. In particular, they must acknowledge that negotiating uncertainty, whether it is manifested within themselves and their own abilities or created by the entire group over the course of performance, is the ideal situation. I will also articulate my theory that a jazz performance is essentially a reflexive argument in which performers flex the muscles of their humanity and attune themselves to many alternate points of view.

Biography

Newfoundland trumpeter **Patrick Boyle** (www.patrickboyle.ca) embodies the jazz spirit by synthesizing a range of influences into a compelling original voice. An in-demand session player never bound by genre, Patrick can be heard on over forty recordings and two critically acclaimed solo albums: "Still No Word"

(2008) and "Hold Out" (2005). He has performed with Zakir Hussain, Mike Murley, Bill Frisell, Mickey Dolenz, Great Big Sea, and many others. Patrick is a doctoral student in performance at the University of Toronto and a junior fellow at Massey College. His primary research interest is investigating how improvisation can help students negotiate situations of tension and anxiety, within and without music.

Website: www.patrickboyle.ca

Gregor Campbell

Abstract

Improvisation and Systems Theory

This year's conference theme on "Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice" has many utopian aims not the least of which is finding a place for music in government policy. But what if we call these aims into question from both the far left and the far right at the same time? The different trajectories of right and left meet in Margaret Thatcher's claim that "society does not exist" – is this claim not echoed in the major ideas of Lyotard that metanarratives no longer orient contemporary discourses or that postmodern science studies not the known but the unknown through the study of language games? Who could actually deny that we are living in a postmodern condition? Certainly not Adorno, who opened his *Aesthetic Theory* in 1970 with the thesis that "it is self-evident that nothing concerning art is self-evident anymore, not its inner life, not its relation to the world, not even its right to exist." There is no longer any ground under our feet. In what I see as a decisive event in the history of contemporary philosophy, nineteen different French philosophers agreed in 1988 that the era of the subject was at an end and thus the pressing question to ask was "Who Comes After the Subject?"

Answers to the question of who or what comes after the subject have emerged since 1988 within the confines of each discipline. Computer science emerged as the truly revolutionary discipline. The Soviet Union collapsed in 1989 and ever since consumer society has lost its demonic other, it has come to seem more and more trivial and not only to its countercultures. Globalization is our current system of improvisation through the network society that establishes a space of flows for information and for capital.

I think we can reach a consensus of sorts that every discipline of the University is in crisis as is the University itself. If risk serves as the ground of defining improvisation as an object of study, then surely we should note that risk is equally important as a concept in economics and many other disciplines. As an example, I note a journal such as *Games and Economic Behavior* which for twenty years has found ways of integrating game theory with economics, political science, biology, computer science, mathematics, and psychology. What theory of society can serve our postmodern condition? Has traditional sociology simply served the technocratic needs of the modern state? What theory of society will allow a genuine interdisciplinarity to emerge?

I shall suggest in this paper that Niklas Luhmann's work on social systems might be up to the task of understanding not only social change but the risk elements of improvisation. The power of Luhmann's theory is that it is a theory of self-referential systems, systems that are able to include themselves in their own systemic operations. Language is only one of many semiotic systems; music is clearly another. I will suggest that improvisation is self-referential aspect of music as a system, in other words there is an element of music that allows improvisation to take place as a specific event in the sense that event has become a privileged term in postmodern thought. Music performs many functions; it carries meaning; it is a system. A system, according to Luhmann stands in a unique relation to other systems: "one must distinguish between the *environment* of a system and *systems in the environment* of this system.... Thus one must distinguish the relations of dependence between environment and system from those among systems. This distinction blows apart the old thematic of domination / oppression." The autopoietic or self-referential element of the system maintains each system; monarchy falls when its self-sustaining systematic self-reference can no longer be sustained when facing challenges from the environment of essentially other systems. Monarchy, however, will survive if others systems cannot sustain themselves.

The paper will briefly discuss some of the elements that distinguish a system from its environment. Of particular interest within complex patterns of differentiation is how a system opens up a space for observation from a location that must be, logically, outside of the system. I hope that the complexity of systems theory might appeal to musicians who engage in the risks of improvisation: I conclude with Luhmann: "Complexity... means being forced to select; being forced to select means contingency; and contingency means risk."

Biography

Gregor Campbell teaches in the School of English and Theatre Studies at the University of Guelph and in Media Studies at the University of Guelph Humber. He has published on American literature and cultural theory.

Marcel Cobussen and Henrik Frisk

Abstract

Improvisation and Ethics

In our opinion, one of the most interesting and relevant questions with regard to music is what role, function, or position it has in contemporary society. Implied in this question is the idea that music exceeds the mere aesthetic realm: it also contributes to our thinking on social, religious, economic, political, and even ethical issues.

In our presentation – a combination of text and improvised computer music – we will shed light on the relation between musical improvisation and ethics. This will be done through one of the most critical features in the process of improvisation: listening. In improvised music the ability to listen carefully is pivotal as to whether a specific musical event is picked up on and developed (or

disregarded). Extraordinary aural attention is required in order to react immediately and creatively to changing musical events. In other words, the constant process of decision-making that takes place during an improvisation is for a large part based on the listening attitude of the musicians involved (Monson 43).

In contrast to Italian philosopher Gemma Corrida Fiumara, who in *The Other Side of Language* refers to listening in a passive sense, a kind of reticence, silent and reserved, musicians often regard listening in a primarily active sense, that is, as being able to respond to and participate in musical opportunities. Attentive listening to the ongoing improvisations acts as a stimulus to the other players involved in a performance, while the latter can spur the improvisers on to new inventions. (Arnold; Bailey)

Listening means being able to respond to and participate in musical opportunities. 'It assumes the responsibility [the response-ability, MC] of taking its place in the interplay of desire,' Roland Barthes writes. (Barthes, 259) Improvising musicians cannot listen without taking into themselves the sounds that they hear. Their listening always operates on both sides of the active-passive or productive-receptive dichotomy. (Connor 163) Listening means participating; it is a prerequisite for any significant musical action and contribution. However, cautious and attentive listening does not guarantee complaisance. It may induce oppositional reactions as well: rejection and destruction of proposed and already launched material.

Oddly enough, listening is largely absent as a research topic in musical discourses. Because of its utmost importance in improvisation, the question needs to be addressed as to what (attentive) listening is and how it works. Proceeding from this, the question emerges if and how listening (and thus improvising) can be related to a (poststructuralist) notion of ethics? Listening seems to refer to openness, to some kind of readiness to welcome the unknown, the uncanny, and the other. (Benson; Fiumara) This welcoming of the other and otherness is precisely that which poststructuralist philosophers are inclined to describe as an ethical relation (Derrida; Levinas; Bauman). Is improvisation (therefore) ethical?

Biographies

Marcel Cobussen studied jazz piano at the Conservatory of Rotterdam and Art and Cultural Studies at Erasmus University, Rotterdam. He currently teaches music philosophy and cultural theory at Leiden University (the Netherlands) and the Orpheus Institute in Ghent (Belgium). Cobussen is author of the book *Thresholds. Rethinking Spirituality Through Music* (Ashgate, 2008), and co-author of *Dionysos danst weer. Essays over hedendaagse muziekbeleving* (Kok Agora, 1996). He is contributing editor of two special issues of *the Dutch Journal of Music Theory*, one on music and ethics (AUP, 2002) and one on artistic research (AUP, 2007), and edited a special issue of *New Sound* on improvisation (Belgrade, 2009). His PhD dissertation *Deconstruction in Music* (2002) was presented as an online website located at www.cobussen.com.

Henrik Frisk is an active performer (saxophones and laptop) of improvised and contemporary music and composer of acoustic and computer music in Sweden and abroad. With a special interest in interactivity, most of the projects he engages in explore that topic in one way or another. Though his education from the Rhythmic Conservatory in Copenhagen, Denmark, is in music he also works with software development within the framework of his artistic practice. His artistic PhD Dissertation *Improvisation, Computers, and Interaction* was presented at Lund University, Malmö Academy of Music in October 2008.

Websites: www.cobussen.com
www.henrikfrisk.com

Roger Dean

Abstract

Erasure and Constructive Improvisation

Even in musical improvisation, in which no sound once performed can be removed from its audience, forms of erasure are important, and help retrospection to transform the impact of earlier events. In improvisatory logical discussion directed towards social policy formation, erasure can also have utility beyond the concepts of removal and correction. Errors¹ are part of this process, somewhat as they are essential tools for the production and maintenance of biological diversity and evolution. Dialogic community discussion tends to emphasize only the functions of removal and correction. But in improvisatory transaction even within language, reinterpretation, novel juxtaposition and other processes can enliven the impact of earlier thoughts that no longer appear at the verbal surface of a document or discourse. I will discuss such improvisatory erasure in the context of exploratory and generative models for the creation of ideas.

Biography

Roger Dean is a composer/improviser, and a research professor in music cognition and computation at the MARCS Auditory Laboratories, University of Western Sydney. He founded and directs the ensemble australYSIS. His creative work is on thirty commercial audio cds, and he has released many digital intermedia pieces. His 400 research publications include seven humanities books. Previously he was CEO of the Heart Research Institute, Sydney and then vice-chancellor and president of the University of Canberra.

Website: marcs.uws.edu.au/?q=people/professor-roger-dean
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Alain Derbez

Abstract

Biography

Alain Derbez is a writer, journalist, radio broadcaster, conductor and musician who studied history at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. His books are *El jazz en México, datos para una historia* (*Jazz in Mexico, Facts for a History*, 2001), *Datos para una historia aún no escrita* (*Facts for a not yet Written History*, 1993), *Hasta donde nos dé el tiempo, ensayos sobre blues, jazz y free-jazz* (*Until time allows, essays on blues, jazz and free jazz*, 1988) and the literature anthology *Todo se escucha en el silencio* (*Everything can be heard in silence, blues and jazz in Hispanoamerican literature*); he has published fiction books like *Los sesenta cumplen treinta*, *Los usos de la radio* and *Cuentos de la Región del Polvo y de la Región del Moho* (with stories such as "My nights with Carla Bley", "Lee Morgan", "The lack of concentration of X", "Last chance to listen to Gato", "Cecilia in the kitchen is like Dolphy") and poetry (*El jazz según don Juan*, *Amar en baños públicos*, *Desnudo con la idea de encontrarte*). He recently published his first novel: *Usted soy yo*, winner of the 2008 Jorge Ibaranguoitia's novel award. Derbez's recordings include *La cocina, música para bailar*; *Las cosas por algo son*; *Ya son horas con Sonora Onosón* and *El Código Postal: Privado-Público*. He collaborates as correspondent in Mexico with the Spanish magazine *Cuadernos de Jazz* and he conducts and writes the television program *Jazz Estacionario*. As a musician and as a conferencist, he has participated in Guelph's colloquium twice presenting his book and with jazz and poetry recitals. In 2007 he was invited as the only Hispano-American participant in the conference *Jazz in the Global Imagination: Music, Journalism and Culture*, organized by Columbia University and the Jazz Journalists Association. In 2008 Derbez played saxophone in Toronto with such Canadian musicians as Dave Clark, Rob Clutton, Steve Koven, Anthony Micheli, Tim Posgate, and Lewis Melville.

Website: <http://alainderbez.com/>

Tamas Dobozy

Abstract

Cecil Taylor Comes to Alice Tully Hall

On March 26, 1994, Cecil Taylor rented Alice Tully Hall, part of the Lincoln Centre complex in New York City, for his 65th Birthday concert, a solo show that cost him \$15,000 dollars to mount. The concert was controversial not only for the fact that Taylor himself underwrote the costs, but because of the jazz programming at Lincoln Centre that Taylor was pointedly defying. His exclusion from the Lincoln Centre up to that point in time was justified by the center's "artistic consultant," Stanley Crouch, who said, "Even though he [Cecil Taylor] improvises, he does not swing." Taylor's rebuttal was to wonder whether the Lincoln Centre even *had* a jazz department, suggesting that his definition of jazz was completely at odds with that of Crouch and the Lincoln Centre programmers. In this case, the divergent attitudes toward what does and does not constitute jazz were symptomatic of an even greater concern, namely, the way in which institutional codes, in this case the troublesome notion of "swing" as the essential generic feature of jazz, serve as barriers, transforming aesthetic considerations into political ones. It is not the aim of this essay to tackle the

history of programming at Jazz at the Lincoln Centre, but rather to consider the extra-musical implications of Taylor's challenge to the status quo in his performance at Alice Tully Hall – how his musical practice enacts a politics at odds with the premises upon which institutionalization depends. Taylor's challenge, then, is not just to the Lincoln Centre, or to codified notions of jazz, but to a way of organizing the arts, and, by extension, to the ways in which such organization impacts upon aesthetic exchange, access to institutional resources, and, ultimately, community. In undertaking this question – the point at which genre becomes law – the paper will consider the legacy of the "New Thing," "The Avant-Garde," "Black Classical Music," or any of the other titles under which the jazz of 1960s players such as Taylor, Coltrane, Dolphy, Coleman, and others came to be known. These musicians not only radically questioned the existing aesthetic structures of jazz but also *jazz as a structure*, as a codified form, and in doing so articulated a continually emergent notion of culture – where culture adapts itself to community need vis-a-vis material contingency, or the historical moment – that made their artistic practice incompatible with the preservationist doctrine of arts administrators such as Stanley Crouch. While critics such as Amiri Baraka, Frank Kofsky, and even more recently, Iain Anderson, have suggested that the most salient social characteristic of the music of avant-gardists such as Cecil Taylor was its protest against racial segregation, exploitation and discrimination, there is also a utopian aspect to the music – one that seeks a politics of *doing* (or process) over a politics of *being* (or definition), in which the notion of what Baraka calls "kinetic philosophy," or constant change, serves, paradoxically to preserve African American culture against the power of institutions that seek to conceptually contain, and ultimately arrest, artistic practice. It is precisely this conflict, and its implications for the relationship between a community and its historical moment, that Cecil Taylor played upon when he came to play at Alice Tully Hall.

Biography

Tamas Dobozy is an associate professor in the Department of English and Film Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University. He has published on John Coltrane, Toni Morrison, Philip Roth, Charles Bukowski, and Raymond Carver in journals such as *Modern Fiction Studies*, *Philip Roth Studies*, *Mosaic*, and *Canadian Literature*. He has also published two books of stories, *When X Equals Marylou* (Arsenal Pulp 2002), and *Last Notes* (HarperCollins 2005). He lives in Kitchener, Ont.

Aimé Dontigny

Abstract

Working in Pandora's Box

This presentation will outline the recent efforts made by the Music Section of the Canada Council for the Arts in revising their program architecture so that it fully reflects an inclusive definition of the discipline. Various examples will illustrate how it is possible for the organization to escape models of funding based on the perceived higher value of certain aesthetics or genres. I will also demonstrate how a holistic approach of the discipline, with a discourse focused on the *faktura* of the works and the context of their development, can help the institution

respond to non-hierarchical, highly specialized, and/or anti-establishment art practices such as improvised music.

Biography

Aimé Dontigny is an audio artist and composer whose practice focuses primarily on improvised electronic music. He is one of the founding members of the 'free noise' collective *Napalm Jazz*, and of the maximalist duet *morceaux_de_machines*. He also collaborated closely with artists such as Diane Labrosse, Chantal Dumas, Michel F. Côté, Paul Dolden, Francisco Lopez and Otomo Yoshihide.

He devotes himself eagerly to the numerous challenges offered by the new forms of improvised musics, and is particularly interested in their development and recognition. From 2003-07, he was actively involved in the creation of the Canadian New Music Network, a national, bilingual organization aiming at promoting and widening the horizons to 'new music'.

Since 2007, he is working as program officer for the Canada Council for the Arts, where he manages the New Music program, the Commissioning of Canadian Compositions program, and the Visiting Foreign Artists program.

Websites: www.notype.com/napalm/
www.notype.com/mdm/e/

Silvana Figueroa

Abstract

Translating Free Jazz Improvising Practices to the Field of Social Policy

Is it possible to deduce models of sociality from improvisational practices and to apply them to social policy practices, for instance, to improve creativity or cooperation within social policy organizations?

The dilemma we are confronted with, when we try to think of a possible 'translation' or application from the artistic improvisation sphere to the public policy sphere, is that practices within these spheres are fundamentally different in character: while practices within social policy spheres are oriented towards goals or results, improvising artistic practices concentrate on the process of improvising itself; while public policy practices focus on elaborating and implementing projects within specific social areas, improvising artistic practices evolve without implementing a previously designed project; while policy practices look for measurable improvement in specific cases, improvising practices are not measured to evaluate their success in achieving planned goals afterwards, but are judged regarding their value as aesthetic experiences; the target group of social policy practices are other social groups, while the 'target' group of improvisational practices is the improvising group itself in the first place, etc.

Nevertheless, both kinds of practices have a central, fundamental feature in common: if one can say that in social life, order is the child of disorder, then both

social policy and improvising practices stem from the same problem, that is, the 'production' of order. But they 'solve' this problem in fundamentally different ways.

Within my presentation, a particular musical improvisational practice, namely free jazz, will be reflected upon. Characterized as a radical improvisational genre, and historically seen as liberation from the musical traditional (jazz) conventions, free jazz improvising takes place under the refusal of harmonic-metrical binding patterns, the regulatory effect of the rhythm and the structuring principles of the "jazz-piece". As a result, the conventions regarding instrumental technique, ensemble playing and formal musical organisation in free jazz are not universally binding, as opposed to traditional jazz. Hence, interaction is not regulated by previously fixed rules. Musical form and structures emerge interactively within the playing process and not with recourse to composed works. In addition to this, interaction within free jazz takes place on the basis of flat hierarchies and decentralized self-coordination. In other words, interaction takes place on the basis of absence of a coordination instance, such as in the case of an orchestra. Each musician can play, or stop playing, at almost any time, resulting in a dialogic, constantly changing, and highly dynamic interaction. Moreover, improvising within free jazz takes place in the absence of fixed roles for each instrument – the drums, for instance, can generate "melodic" sounds, whereas the piano can contribute with rhythmic elements. Herein, interaction rules emerge within the process of playing. What makes free jazz worth reflecting upon as a sociality model is that experimentation and risk belong to this highly contingent interaction context, within which even 'mistakes' can be accepted and seen as an opportunity for the emergence of new forms of action and interaction. In this way, it can serve as a model for social organizations that seek to improve cooperation, creativity or participation. After defining the central features of free jazz as an action and interaction order, ways to apply them to the area of social policy will be proposed. Herein, the central argument will be that social policy practices can reflect and incorporate features of improvising practices that can improve the planning and realization of projects, adopting specific features of the improvising sociality model for particular stages of project designing and realisation.

Biography

Dr. Silvana K. Figueroa-Dreher studied sociology at the University of Buenos Aires (Argentina) and wrote her doctoral thesis at the University of Konstanz (Germany). Her current position is research fellow at the Section of Humanities of the University of Konstanz. She is conducting the research project *"Improvisation as a 'new' Type of Action: An Exploration of Musical Improvisation from the Point of View of Action Theory"* which is funded by the German Research Council. Her research areas are improvisation, free jazz, flamenco, tango, interdisciplinary action theory, interaction theory, theories of social order, creativity, identity, sociology of culture, sociology of music, sociology of knowledge, and ethnomusicology.

Sunelle Foché

Abstract

Crossing the divide: Music improvisation with a group of adolescent boys from communities fragmented by gang violence

The Music Therapy Community Clinic (MTCC) is a non-profit organization which provides music therapy sessions to children and young people in disadvantaged communities in Cape Town, South Africa. We believe that music is a social resource, a way to heal and strengthen individuals and communities. Our vision is to use active-music making – based on clinical musical improvisation – to have an impact on the psycho-social fabric of the communities in which we work.

This presentation focuses on music therapy work with a group of adolescent boys from two different cultural groups, brought together by their passion for music on the one hand, and their animosity towards each other on the other. The rivalry between the groups is based on assumptions and judgments passed on by the generations before them, which stems from South Africa's Apartheid Government and its legislation of segregation and isolation. Furthermore, these young boys are growing up in communities where gangsterism has been part of its social structure for many generations. The territorial thinking that stems from a gang mentality, the notion of 'us vs. them', is not only playing itself out on the streets of these communities, but also in the classrooms and in the after-school music groups run by the MTCC.

Music improvisation plays an essential role in this group's music therapy process. For these young boys, improvisation provides a neutral platform, a space stripped of preconceived identities relating to culture, background or musicianship. It provides an experience of coming together as an interactive entity that overcomes individual issues.

Biography

Sunelle Fouché graduated from the University of Pretoria's Masters in Music Therapy programme. After graduation she relocated to Cape Town where she worked as music therapist at a centre for babies with mental and physical disabilities and at the eating disorder unit of a private psychiatric clinic. In 2002, she and colleague Kerryn Torrance founded the Music Therapy Community Clinic (MTCC), a non-profit organisation aiming to offer music therapy services to underprivileged communities in Cape Town. Since 2007, she has served as the executive director of the Music Therapy Community Clinic. In 2008 she was appointed as the liaison for Africa on the council of the World Federation of Music Therapy.

Website: www.music-therapy.org.za

Milford Graves

Abstract

***TONO RHYTHMOLOGY and BIOCOSMOLOGY:
New paradigms for creating a unified all-pervasive music***

From a global perspective, it is imperative that humankind examine how we think, compose, and process music. The congregation of diversification among world cultures is in full momentum. The new and changing dynamics of the vast array of Cosmo-Bio-Social (CBS) affairs that we are confronting on a daily basis and the advanced discoveries in engineering and scientific methods, can no longer be ignored. Holistic globalization for a unified way of producing music should not be considered as an aggressive challenge to any particular cultural tradition. The principle and major objectives of a unified global music should focus on the natural invariant tono-rhythms that compose the human cerebro-cardiovascular system. The core human-genome factor that constitutes biological music functions as a Mind-Adhesive Agent (MAA). The biological music-MAA connection can serve as a unifying device to communicate with diverse people of the world whose music systems (extra bio-music) are different and complex.

Biography

Percussionist **Milford Graves** is one of only a handful of musicians in the history of creative music to articulate a radically original conception of time through his playing. For this reason, he is rightly regarded as a legendary figure in this history and Guelph audiences are fortunate to be able to welcome him to the Festival. He is best known as a key member of the free jazz movement of the 1960s in New York and a contributor to many of its canonical groups and recordings. Less known, perhaps, is Professor Graves's deep and disciplined study of percussion traditions from around the world that underpins his extraordinary performance technique and, notably, his work in the field of music and healing, which he teaches and researches at Bennington College, VT.

Website: www.milfordgraves.com/

Neil Guilding aka Zibz (Zibbs) Black Current

Biography

Poet, dub chanter, percussionist, and photographer, **Zibz's** spoken word uses the philosophy of word, sound and power throughout the heights of Rastafari with his own organic style he calls "rig-up" which translate reggae with funk attitude which taps into hip-hop, soul, blues, Afro-beat, punk and jazz. The different ancestors of black music, the focus is liberation and upliftment in truths, rights and justice, he is a member of Kalmunity Vibes Collective, an improv collective that just played The Montreal International Jazz Festival and has been performing weekly for the past six years at Kafe Sablo (Tuesday nights) and now a second night at Diese Onze Jazz Restaurant (Sunday nights), in Montreal. A community worker and presently the coordinator for Jeunesse 2000, a youth drop-in center for Head & Hands in Montreal, which has been working for social change in the society for nearly forty years in very creative and engaging ways.

Website: www.headandhands.ca

Devin Hurd

Abstract

A Glimpse of a World Beyond Worlds: The Voyage of Sun Ra Through Terrestrial Trials

The Jim Crow era of Birmingham, Alabama could not contain Herman Poole Blount. The segregation and prejudice that attempted to place the black jazz musician “in his place” may have played a small role in the emergence of Sun Ra. Sun Ra, the musician and persona that transcended the ugly realities of racism in America. Sun Ra, the messenger of Afro-Futurism that cut a path from swing to the post-bebop avant-garde. An identity so thoroughly embraced by the man once known as “Sonny Blount” that border crossings became complicated by the man claiming Saturn as his country of origin.

The story of the Arkestra itself is a story of persistence of a creative music realized communally despite the lack of public support for the astonishing body of work produced over decades. This lack of support continues to this day despite the loss of its leader and the clear sonic evidence of its historical value to the evolution of jazz. The ability to withstand almost universal indifference to bring a message “from the universe” continues to live on.

The effect of Sun Ra as a band leader on the musicians he literally housed is unusual. The almost monastic – often lifelong – dedication to this “jazz from the space age” continues to exert strong gravity upon its practitioners. His vision of “making music sublime enough to elevate humanity beyond Earth, to transcend reality” offered an alternative – and a separation from – the harsh realities of being black and limited by American society. The persona, the invented origins, the spectacle of costumes, light shows and dancers created a complete, alternative existence entirely unlike the big-band as business arrangement.

Some of the surviving members of the Sun Ra Arkestra continue to reside in the same Philadelphia house more than a decade after Sun Ra’s “ascension” in 1994. The Arkestra is now under the direction of Marshall Allen – now 85 years old – who manages to tour with this large ensemble while struggling to maintain both the legacy of Sun Ra and the crumbling three-story row house he left behind. Contained within this deteriorating abode is unfathomable treasure. Marshall Allen continues to actively compose and advance the aesthetic of Afro-Futurism and Space Jazz. Beyond these works are the many effects, memorabilia and possessions of Sun Ra. These include cabinets and suitcases filled with original manuscripts – many of them never performed.

While transcendent, this decaying state of Sun Ra’s legacy cannot continue indefinitely. Where is the will to house and study this vast archive? If there is no army of musicologists pouring over these scores and preserving them there certainly will be as the magnitude of this body of music becomes understood. The public and academic support needs to materialize while there is still time to preserve these original manuscripts.

Biography

Devin Hurd writes about intonation and improvisation at HurdAudio. He recently relocated to San Rafael, California where he is active in the free improvisation community in the Bay Area. Prior to that he has been a composer

and sound designer in the video game business for the past fifteen years in Seattle, Los Angeles, Baltimore and San Francisco.

Website: <http://hurdaudio.blogspot.com>

Robin Kelley

Abstract

Citizen Monk: Stories of Civic Engagement and Visionary Politics

I will talk broadly about Monk's political participation and vision, even when he insists that he's not interested in politics or policy or anything of that nature. Monk is merely a template for thinking about musicians as more than musicians but rather social and political beings in the world who may express their hopes and concerns in forums other than music. It is also about a much longer African American political tradition that I argue can inform the current administration, but has virtually been erased from public discourse in an effort to e-race President Obama and his administration.

Biography

Robin D. G. Kelley is professor of American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. He is the author of the prize-winning books *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (University of North Carolina Press, 1990); *Race Rebels: Culture Politics and the Black Working Class* (The Free Press, 1994); *Yo' Mama's DisFunktional!: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Beacon Press, 1997), which was selected one of the top ten books of 1998 by the *Village Voice*; *Three Strikes: Miners, Musicians, Salesgirls, and the Fighting Spirit of Labor's Last Century*, written collaboratively with Dana Frank and Howard Zinn (Beacon 2001); and *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Beacon Press, 2002). He also edited (with Earl Lewis), *To Make Our World Anew: A History of African Americans* (Oxford University Press, 2000), a Choice Outstanding Academic Title and a History Book Club Selection. *To Make Our World Anew* was an outgrowth of an earlier collaboration with Lewis, the eleven-volume *Young Oxford History of African Americans* (Oxford University Press, 1995-1998), of which he authored volume 10, titled *Into the Fire: African Americans Since 1970* (1996). Kelley also co-edited (with Sidney J. Lemelle) *Imagining Home: Class, Culture, and Nationalism in the African Diaspora* (Verso, 1994). His biography of pianist/composer Thelonious Monk, titled *Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original*, is due out in the fall of 2009 (Free Press). He is also completing *Speaking in Tongues: Jazz and Modern Africa* (Harvard University Press, forthcoming 2010), and a general survey of African American history co-authored with Tera Hunter and Earl Lewis to be published by Norton. Kelley's essays have appeared in several anthologies and journals, including *The Nation*, *Monthly Review*, *The Voice Literary Supplement*, *New York Times (Arts and Leisure)*, *New York Times Magazine*, *Rolling Stone*, *Color Lines*, *Code Magazine*, *Utne Reader*, *Lenox Avenue*, *African Studies Review*, *Black Music Research Journal*, *Callaloo*, *New Politics*, *Black Renaissance/Renaissance Noir*, *One World*, *Social Text*, *Metropolis*, *American Visions*, *Boston Review*, *Fashion Theory*, *American Historical Review*, *Journal of American History*, *New Labor Forum*, *Souls*, *Metropolis*, and *frieze: contemporary art and culture*, to name a few.

Gordon Knox

Abstract

Improvisation and Culture Building

"Where ever you have two women and duck, you have a market."

Vietnamese saying

The social and cultural challenges we currently face are immense and time is short. Meeting the challenges ahead requires a willingness to work together and under new circumstances. This undertaking is an enormous, collective cultural project. New and diverse approaches to each other, to community and to collective efforts are needed.

Diversity assures continuity. From a biological/evolutionary perspective this is an accepted fact; as conditions change some species survive while others fail, the more diverse the ecosystem, the more likely there will be a number of survivors able to adapt to their new surroundings. In the cultural sphere, recognition of the role of new ideas in the continuity of the species is less widely held; indeed cultural systems themselves will often stress homogeneity and single-mindedness in an attempt to secure continuity. A cultural system's drive for self-perpetuation will at times inhibit intellectual plasticity; cultural systems are a structure of beliefs and understandings and modifying those intellectual underpinnings may lead to a change of the *status quo ante*. The tension between a drive to maintain the *status quo* and the undeniable reality that change is constant forces the evolution of social processes that enable new ideas and perspectives to enter and modify cultural systems. The arts and experimentation serve this role. Like the exterior membrane of a cell, active cultural practice operates at the perimeter of what we know and acts as an interface between the familiar interior and the disturbing new questions required for adaptation. As with science for the physical world, the arts explore the perimeters of the cultural world. Through diversity of perspective artists enable social evolution.

Improvisation is the motor of artistic practice. Improvisation in the performance arts (music, dance and theater) provides a view into the actual systems of culture building. Improvisational artists approach a performative setting with a sense of the history of their discipline, a highly developed personal expertise on their instrument and a shared goal of collective expression. Improvisational artists engage in a real-time process of hearing and seeing and they operate in a radically focused moment of the present while incorporating and honoring the past and contemplating the future. In this sense artists engaged in improvisation can be seen as the nuclear center of social connectivity, of culture-building. Our meeting point of collectivity is crystallized in the improvisation of our interactions.

From the macro perspective, language is perhaps the best representation of the human species' collective effort; it is flexible, adaptive and communal. The vitality of language is its ability to absorb and accept the improvisation of

immediate engagement. A lot is said about economics as the model of cultural growth – transaction has been argued as our species' core quality and exchange as the basis of human collective intelligence. But the economic models of human action fail to explain the process of our history. Indeed concepts of collective – family, tribe, nation, religion – are perpetual ingredients in even the most materialistic versions of history. Perhaps our species' desire to be part of a collective should be recognized as the central force in our existence. To be part of a collective is as much a human drive as self interest is. In fact, if viewed not from economics, human history suggests that people care more about the collective than they do about individual self gain. This larger picture is brought into focus through an understanding of improvisation and insights gleaned can inform social policy and, perhaps more importantly, evaluate it.

From a micro analysis, the study of improvisation will reveal that improvisers understand their practice, they provide a contemplated methodology for their work and this self-awareness reveals a great deal about the process of immediate interaction and engagement that is 'culture-building'. By understanding how improvisers work we can begin to understand what goes on when the two women and the duck create their market. Knowing the process on a micro level will inform social policy on a larger scale.

Biography

Gordon Knox is a core collaborator at the Stanford Humanities Lab at Stanford University where he connects national and international artists with scientists and technologists to develop projects that advance social justice. Knox engages the critical, analytical capacities of committed artists and focuses their pragmatic and innovative line of inquiry onto issues of education, community up-lift and greater global inclusion. Knox's interest in the role of the arts in society and in the process of artistic inquiry stems from his training as a social anthropologist exploring the relationship between ideas and social action.

Website: www.stanford.edu/group/shl/cgi-bin/drupal/

David Lametti

Biography

Dr. Lametti teaches and writes in the areas of civil and common law property, intellectual property, and legal theory. His work to date has attempted to understand the parameters of traditional and intellectual resources in analytic terms, linking them to their underlying justifications and ethical goals. His most recent representative publications are "The Concept of Property: Relations through Objects of Social Wealth," found in the University of Toronto Law Journal (2003), and "Coming to Terms with Copyright," in a collection published by Irwin Law (2005). He is the director of research of the Centre for Intellectual Property Policy. Dr. Lametti obtained a BA in economics and political science (University of Toronto) and common and civil law degrees (McGill University). He received an LL.M. from the Yale Law School, and a doctorate in law at Oxford University; his thesis was entitled "Ethical Aspects of the Theory and

Practice of Private Property". He was a clerk to Justice Peter Cory of the Supreme Court of Canada in 1989-90.

Eric Lewis

Biography

Prof. Lewis' research focuses on the intersection of the aesthetics, metaphysics and ethics of improvised music. Recent publications include "Ontology, Originality and the Musical Work: Copyright Law and the Status of Samples" in *New Perspectives on Copyright* (2007), and "We Won't Get Fooled Again – Music and Politics in Paris and Woodstock the Summer of '69" in *Proceedings of the 12th Biennial International Association for the Study of Popular Music* (2003). He is presently completing two book manuscripts entitled, *Other Worlds – Towards a Philosophy of Jazz and Intents and Purposes – Improvisational Practices in the Arts*. He also plays trumpet in Montreal's flourishing improvised music scene. Dr. Lewis earned honours BAs in the history of philosophy and classical Greek literature at Cornell University and a PhD in the history of philosophy at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

Germaine Liu

Biography

Germaine Liu is a Toronto-based percussionist and composer. Her musical interests primarily involve collaborative improvisation and composition informed by sonic and gestural connections, as well as by the sense of touch and movement. Her recent work focuses on the relationships between human and instrumental bodies by developing environment-specific pieces which explore the sounds inherent in the materials and the space.

As a percussionist, Liu has performed as a soloist, as well as with many acclaimed musicians, such as Rémy Bélanger de Beauport, Anne Bourne, Matt Brubeck, Thomas Charmetant, Peggy Lee, John Oswald, Danielle Palardy Roger, Joe Sorbara, Scott Thomson, and many others. She has participated in the Sound Travels Festival, Supermusique 07/08, X-Avant festival, soundaXis 08 festival, Music(in)Galleries, NUMUS, and AIMToronto's Leftover Daylight and Interface Series. She performs regularly in a number of Toronto-based ensembles including the AIMToronto Orchestra, Wet Dog's Dream Dance, Open House, Rob's Collision, and Octopus.

Liu holds an undergraduate degree in music from the School of Fine Art and Music, University of Guelph, and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in music composition with David Mott at York University in Toronto.

Nicholas Loess

Biography

Nick Loess is a visual artist specializing in film, photography, and

multi-media works. As an artist, he explores the relationships between the visual, the aural, and the theoretical, particularly within improvised performances, natural spaces, and relational collaborations.

Throughout his career, Loess has produced both film and photo works. Most recently, he created a short film in which he attempted visually and theoretically to engage with the overlapping of the interval in and between improvised music and montage. Loess also collaborates with other performance artists, most recently and particularly with Germaine Liu. In addition to the graphic score produced for this exhibit, Loess and Liu are also working on a piece examining the relationship between the aural and the visual in improvised performance. Specifically, they are exploring the ways in which the collaborative process affects that relationship, as well as the idea of permanency in the production of a given work.

Loess has a Master's degree in Critical Theory from McMaster University. He is beginning a PhD in the School of English and Theatre Studies, University of Guelph in September 2009, where he hopes visually to experiment with the imaginative overlap between the practices of editing and improvising, and with tracking the movements of other species through particular spaces.

John Maclean

Abstract

The Open Council: What is the potential of a self-institution to provide alternative institutional framing devices to contextualise critical art practice?

Many artists believe that mainstream institutions for the exhibition and dissemination of art have lost the ability to perform a critical function and that new critical strategies and contexts are urgently needed (Heise & Jakobsen, 2001; Sheikh, 2004). My presentation will introduce an art project that seeks to develop such a context through investigating the potential of a self-institution to provide an alternative space to frame critical art practice. As part of this project the relationship between improvisatory practices in music and participatory practices in art that seek to develop and maintain critical spaces has been examined. Strategies drawn from the various structural developments in jazz music have been employed in practice to help create and maintain the self-institution while the socio-political history of jazz music as a site of opposition and resistance has informed the theoretical side of the project. The research attempts to build bridges between the points where improvisational and critical art practices have shared similar critical focus and practical strategy over the years, culminating in the contemporary situation where the social function of both art and music are being explored by artists and at an institutional level.

The project has been influenced by the strategies of self-institutionalisation as pioneered in the Copenhagen Free University project in which art activity is re-framed as knowledge production. My research involves a similar re-framing but rather than a university, art activities are presented as social policies through the

framework of a fictional local authority called the Open Council (www.opencouncil.co.uk) which is positioned to reflect the genuine local authority in the area which is Newcastle City Council. This positioning of self-institution to adjacent institution is the base upon which the critical context emerges and is sustained. By placing the emphasis on the framing of activity as opposed to individual works, self-institution is a strategy that provides a naturally experimental and multi-disciplinary space which has the ability to drift in and out of art and non-art contexts and in this respect has much in common with the idea of the 'counter public sphere'.

The Open Council aims to construct a critical space in which alternative dialogues and imaginings can be articulated. Once established, this space can then function as a framing device that puts a critical spin on the multi-disciplinary activities that occur within it. This is achieved in practice by developing 'experimental polices' that re-imagine the urban environment and social/power relations in society. These 'fictional' policies are featured on the Open Council website and exist as council leaflets which borrow the look and language of Newcastle City Council's leaflets and provide social comment on life, culture and the powers that be in Newcastle. In this way the Open Council employs strategies of humour and *detournment* to articulate a playful critique of power and ubiquitous notions of social participation that are particularly prevalent in U.K. culture, policy, and in the mass media.

Biography

John Maclean is an artist from Newcastle, England. He is currently on the third year of a practice-led PhD project at Newcastle University which investigates the potential of musical improvisation strategies to be used in critical art practice. John's interests are in projects that explore the social function of art and music from the perspectives of both artists and institutions. John is the founding member of the Open Council self institution and author of *Open Council – "Pretend the World is Different."* He is also a wildly enthusiastic amateur musician.

Website: www.opencouncil.co.uk

Desmond Manderson

Biography

Dr. Manderson holds the Canada Research Chair in Law and Discourse (Tier I) in the Faculty of Law at McGill. He is the author of *Songs Without Music: Aesthetic Dimensions of Law and Justice* (2000), *Courting Death: The Legal Constitution of Mortality* (1999), and *Proximity, Levinas, and the Soul of Law* (2007). He has an international reputation as a leading interdisciplinary scholar and theorist of law and justice, and has particular interests in the application of continental philosophy, literature, and the arts, to legal issues, as well as to specific aspects of contemporary social policy. He has pioneered the study of the history and theory of music as a way of exploring and thinking about legal history and ideology, and was the convenor of the first international conference held to broadly address these. The current project develops Dr. Manderson's

expertise and interest in these issues, as well as advancing them more precisely towards the specific social and legal implications of aesthetic practices. He holds honours BAs in law and history from Australian National University and a doctorate in civil laws from McGill University.

John Philip (JP) Melville

Biography

Since 2003, **JP Melville** has been supporting The Woodchoppers Association and diverse artists in Canada, with a focus on new immigrant professional artists. This work has included logistics for the documentary film, *The Road to Baleya*, the international exchange of musicians between Mali and Canada. He organized the details for Jah Youssouf's first tour in Canada in 2007 and again in 2009, with guest artist Abdoulaye Koné. He has also supported Mansa Sissoko who has gone on to successfully tour across Canada and in the US with Jayme Stone. Most recently, he has co-founded a non-profit organization that promotes new immigrant artists and arts professionals, the Coalition of New Canadians for Arts and Culture (www.cncac.ca). With the CNCAC, JP makes every possible effort to bring together new immigrant artists and young people in rural and remote areas across Canada. He has cooperated extensively with Stellula Music in Schools (www.stellulamusic.com) in developing an institutional and sustainable framework for achieving this vision.

JP Melville has thirty years of extensive program and project management experience. This includes ten years of work in developing countries around the world. His expertise includes developing and presenting new projects, networking in coalitions, and cooperating with partner organizations both in Canada and internationally. He works in both English and French.

JP currently coordinates a unique community development program in Ottawa with the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (www.ociso.org). His work engages him with organizations like the Portrait Gallery of Canada and the City of Ottawa Arts Program. His employment background in Canada includes fifteen years of mixed farming and construction. He currently resides in Ottawa with his family, where he gardens and avidly bakes bread.

Websites: www.cncac.ca
www.stellulamusic.com

Brad Muirhead

Biography

Brad Muirhead (Bass Trombone) is well known to audiences across Canada and Europe for his powerful sound and inventive improvising and has been actively contributing to the Vancouver music scene since 1980. He has recorded and toured extensively with his own groups Primal Orbit and Brass Roots as well as Vancouver's three most important large jazz ensembles: the NOW Orchestra, Hugh Fraser's VEJI, and the Hard Rubber Orchestra. He has been heavily involved with the Vancouver improvised music scene, composing for, recording and performing with numerous small and large ensembles, both as a leader and sideman. As a leader he is currently focusing on two new projects – a group

called Koan, that mixes elements of jazz and traditional Chinese music, and the East Van Jazz Orchestra which he co-leads with Jared Burrows. He is an active music educator teaching individual and class brass lessons, and in capacities ranging from school band teacher, clinician & adjudicator to coordinating, producing or directing a variety of programs such as the Banff Jazz Workshop, the Vancouver & Victoria International Jazz Orchestra Workshops and more recently, the Renfrew Community Performance Project.

Richard Newirth

Biography

Richard Newirth is the acting managing director for the Cultural Services Department in Vancouver, BC. Previously, he served as director of Cultural Affairs at the San Francisco Arts Commission from 1995-2007. He holds a BA from Brown University and an MBA from the Haas School of Business at U.C. Berkeley. He has been awarded the Public Managerial Efficiency Award from the San Francisco Planning and Research Association and received the Director's Award from the California Arts Council for exemplary local arts agency leadership. He has frequently spoken throughout North America on arts and cultural topics including Cultural Tourism, Public Art, and Artists in Community. In 2002, he was invited to be a guest of the U.S. consulate in St. Petersburg and lecture on arts management. He is a graduate of Leadership San Francisco, the Stanford University Executive Program for Non-Profit Leadership and the Royal Roads University Leadership Development Program.

Tracey Nicholls

Abstract

Strange Roots: The Liberatory Pedagogy of the Protest Song

I propose to explore the role that protest songs have played in challenging and changing people's understanding of their society. I want to begin my exploration with a song widely recognized as paradigmatic of the genre, Billie Holliday's *Strange Fruit*. My analysis of the song and the circumstances of its performance will stress its value as a telling of popular history, a schooling of Holliday's audiences about the realities of African-American lives (and deaths) in the parts of the United States that practiced lynching. Indeed I shall argue that protest songs as a locus of knowledge are a "strange telling" – they disrupt what we think we know about our societies and our histories by making aspects that are otherwise unacknowledged appear uncanny (in the Freudian sense of making the familiar appear strange).

My opening example might seem to demonstrate my point about 'strange tellings' but fail to tell us anything of interest about musical improvisation. However, I shall argue that *Strange Fruit* occupies space on a spectrum of protest music that also includes the Civil Rights Movement anthem, *We Shall Overcome*, Jimi Hendrix's legendary performance of the American anthem at Woodstock, and, most recently, Matt Rogalsky's *2 minutes and 50 seconds silence (for the USA)*. Each of these musical works has an improvisatory element that is the core of its protest message, and each accomplishes a retelling of history and the citizen's

relation to social forces. *We Shall Overcome* was an adaptation of an old African-American hymn (*We Shall Overcome*) that became the theme song of African-American demands for social equality, and eventually the world-wide musical expression of the desire for social justice, only after its slightly revised lyrics were set to a more emotionally resonant tune. Hendrix's performance of *The Star-Spangled Banner* was a masterful performance of an anthem whose lyrics valorize the resilience of a people under attack. Shifting between faithful rendition and strategic distortion, Hendrix forcefully showed his audience the moral inconsistency of a nation that sang this song as it dropped bombs on the people of other nations. Matt Rogalsky's piece takes a 2003 recording of a speech by George W. Bush, giving Saddam Hussein forty-eight hours to surrender to American forces, and removes all of the words. What is left are 'silences', thundering reverberations that conjure up thoughts of the drums of war. The piece is understated in its pedagogy; one has to know its provenance to understand it as a critique of the infamous "Bush doctrine" but its emotional message of aggression, terror, and pain is so clear that one listener, not knowing the context, speculated it was a composition about the collapse of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

All of these works unsettle their audiences, and offer us the opportunity to rethink the contributions we make to the rifts and reconciliations that punctuate our social contexts. In essence, they offer us moments through which we can reflect upon the citizens we are, and the citizens we want to be.

Biography:

Dr. Tracey Nicholls is an assistant professor of Philosophy at Lewis University, and co-director of the Women's Studies Program. She is currently on leave from Lewis in order to take up a postdoctoral fellowship with the Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice project. Her fellowship project brings together her interests in aesthetics and decolonization in an exploration of the ways that improvisatory musical practices can help to liberate and empower political communities deformed by imperialism. This is an extension of the work done in her doctoral dissertation, which explores connections between improvised music, human rights, and social justice, and considers how music-making can help build more responsive political communities.

Tina Piper

Biography

Professor Piper explores why artists, scientists, and inventors create and innovate through the lens of intellectual property law, legal history, and results from empirical investigations. She is currently conducting funded research into the role of patent pools in providing access to medicines, policy levers in Canadian patent law, and policies to promote open, collaborative scientific networks. She is co-project lead of Creative Commons Canada. Before joining McGill, she clerked for the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. She completed graduate work at the University of Oxford as a Canadian Rhodes Scholar and was a research associate to the Oxford Intellectual Property Research Centre and Oxford Centre for Socio-Legal Studies. Professor Piper graduated

from the University of Toronto's Engineering Science program as a National Scholar with a specialization in Electrical/Biomedical Engineering. She then graduated as the gold medallist at Dalhousie Law School in 2001.

Wasanti Paranjape

Abstract

Khyal and North Indian Classical Music

The emergence of Khyal, in the royal courts of 14th century Hindustan, marked an enormous shift in thinking and attitude in North Indian Classical Music, and at the same time facilitated important social changes. Before this time North Indian Classical music, which originated from the Hindu Saam Veda, was very strict and performers were required to adhere exactly to the music as passed down from guru to disciple. Although there had been some infusion of new ideas over the centuries from interaction with various other cultures such as Greek, Persio- Arabic, Turkic-Iranian, for the most part North Indian Classical Music retained its ancient heritage. There was no role for the exquisite and elaborate improvisation that characterizes Khyal, in the music of those times. Only one form of vocal music named Drupad permitted some minor improvisation: the compositions mostly consisted of several verses of lyrics and individual musicians were free to compose the melody. Also, a form of Muslim music, called "Quawwali," had a role in the development of Khyal.

At the time, Hindustan was divided into numerous kingdoms, some ruled by Muslim and some by Hindu rulers. With ongoing rivalry, fragile alliances and jockeying for power between the kingdoms, naturally there was some friction between the two religions, cultures and people. Patronage of artists, musicians, dancers and poets, by the rulers of Hindustan, was an enduring tradition. Accomplished young ladies, under the tutelage of master musicians would entertain the royal courts with music and dancing. This drew a strong interest in musical training from both Hindu and Muslim musicians. With the surge in popularity of music there was a natural movement toward experimentation with improvisation, and this was received with much enthusiasm by the audiences in the courts, who were keen for the new and unexpected. Over the next few centuries, Khyal gradually evolved into its present day grand improvisation that is free of form, unfettered by the underlying composition, and where the sophistication of the improvisation reveals the beauty of the raga and the virtuosity of the musician.

Although the earliest introduction of Khyal is attributed to Muslim musicians, it was wholeheartedly embraced by Hindus and Muslims alike. The ensuing cooperation and collaboration by musicians from the two faiths was the impetus for gradual social change. Miya Tansen, who was a Hindu but converted to Islam, attended the court of the Mughal King Akbhar, and was thought to be the greatest artist that has ever been. His rendition of the Khyal in Raga Darbari-Kanada, a raga that he himself originated, is legendary. At the Delhi Darbar (court) of the 18th century the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah, who ruled from 1720 -1748, the musicians Sadarang (Nyamat Khan, a direct descendant of Miya Tansen) and Adarang (Firoz Khan) composed many Khyals. In this way

there was a mingling of Hindus and Muslims in their admiration of Khyal music and the Khyal musicians.

Tensions between Muslims and Hindus peaked at the time of independence in 1947, when the nations of India and Pakistan were formed. During this turbulent phase, Khyal musicians provided leadership by steadily continuing their art, without any distraction by the political situation. In particular, Ravi Shankar, Allarakha, Ali Akhbar Khan, resided together to collaborate with their music, while respecting each other's religions and cultures. Such exemplary attitudes provided a role model for the general public, and laid down the necessary foundations for social change.

Biography

Wasanti Paranjape comes from a family with a tradition of generations of exceptional singers. She learned vocal music right from her childhood and went on to study music in her Matriculation, where she received the "Visharad" from the Ganharva Maha-Vidyalva, a famed Institution for Music in India. She completed her studies at the renowned Bhatkhande School of Music. Wasanti has been in Edmonton for forty-five years, giving private instruction in music. There, she performed bhajans regularly at traditional devotional functions. She taught Hindustani classical music in the Division of Ethnomusicology of the Department of Music at the University of Alberta and was named the director of the Indian Ensemble, which she initiated in 2001. She has authored two books with accompanying CDs on the art of Hindustani classical music. She has recently moved to Guelph and continues with her private lessons and regular performances.

Sara Ramshaw

Abstract

Giving Time to Social Policy: Improvisation and the Temporality of Justification

This paper explores social policy as judgment, as justification for certain societal action or change. Unlike the Western Common Law, which judges in the present based on what has happened in the past, social policy judges in the present based on what changes it hopes to bring about in the future. The problem with both these approaches is that one can never judge in the present because the present is always past before judgment can be passed. Social policy-makers are presented with unique problems for which judgment is needed or sought. Uniqueness is necessary for if neither original nor new no fresh judgment would be required. To be truly just, or *justified*, however, each policy decision would have to break with the past – as well as any future that is based on the past – and offer an absolutely unique interpretation which no existing approach could or ought to guarantee absolutely. This, of course, is impossible, especially in the time available for policy-making. Judgment thus entails both a (singular) act and a (general) process: the uniqueness of each problem can only be addressed or understood through pre-existing structures of language/ thought/etc. and the temporality of judgment rests on the paradoxical relation between the singular and the general.

Judgment as paradox means that no social policy can ever be completely just or justifiable; we can never have all the information or knowledge necessary to make a judgment that is fully faithful to the singularity of a particular situation; we can never have thought through an issue from every single different angle, perspective or viewpoint. There is always an element of justification that is beyond comprehension and knowledge. This deficiency, though, is not necessarily a bad thing. The unknown outside that is also inside the time of judgment is actually what keeps times a-changin'. In other words, if everything was always fully explainable and completely justified, there would be no call for change in society, no call for judgment. Eventually social policy would find itself redundant. The continued legitimacy of social policy thereby rests not on its having all the answers, but on uncertainty and incompleteness.

What musical improvisation offers to social policy is the opportunity to rethink the temporality of judgment and a chance to *just-ify* outside of linear time. Improvisation dances in the paradoxical space where the present meets the past meets the future. This is not to say that improvisation escapes this paradox or more generalized conceptions of time. However, thinking through the relationship between improvisation and time is useful to those interested in social policy for it enables us to view the temporality of justification as far less static and linear. Time in improvisation is a gift outside of time, outside of the economy of exchange and restitution. The timeline given by the jazz rhythm section to the improvising soloist may change in character in response to changes in the character of the improvising solo. Time responds to change and in so doing changes time. By giving time to social policy in this manner, a more nuanced conception of justification may be possible.

Biography

Dr. Sara Ramshaw is the 2008-2009 postdoctoral fellow with the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice project in conjunction with the Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal (CRÉUM). She is also a lecturer in Law at the School of Law, Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland. Having completed both a LL.B. and LL.M. from the University of British Columbia, she clerked at the Ontario Court of Justice (General Division) in 1998-1999 and was called to the Bar of the Law Society of Upper Canada in 2000. Sara then worked as a research lawyer at the Superior Court of Justice, Family Court in Ontario before commencing postgraduate studies at Birkbeck School of Law, University of London, England. Her doctoral thesis, completed in 2007, examined the legal regulation of jazz musicians in New York City (1940-1967) through the lens of poststructural theory informed by feminism, race theory and musicology.

Lorna Schwartzenruber

Biography

Lorna Schwartzenruber is the program director of Onward Willow Better Beginnings, Better Futures, a primary prevention program funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth, working to enhance the lives of families living

in the Onward Willow neighbourhood in Guelph. Programs include Peer Parent Home Visitation, a range of Children and Youth programs, and Community Development initiatives. The Onward Willow neighbourhood has the highest proportion of low-income residents, single-parent led families, and new immigrant families in Guelph. Onward Willow Better Beginnings and the Shelldale Centre are a dynamic model of community engagement and effective partnerships among a variety of services and opportunities, working together to strengthen the possibilities for children and families growing up in the neighbourhood.

Website: www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca/

Joe Sorbara

Biography

Joe Sorbara is a Toronto-based composer, percussionist, community organizer, and music educator. His practice deals equally with pre-composed and instantly-composed or freely improvised music, as well as the vast terrain between these extremes. Throughout his career, Sorbara has performed in Canada and internationally with numerous acclaimed musicians, including Anthony Braxton, Jean Derome, Dominic Duval, Lori Freedman, Malcolm Goldstein, Peggy Lee, Lee Pui Ming, Evan Parker, and William Parker.

Sorbara leads the '7-or-more-tet', Other Foot First, and co-leads a number of groups including the Remnants Trio (with Evan Shaw and Ken Aldcroft) and Duo Lassonde Sorbara (with corporeal mime, Julie Lassonde). Joe also performs regularly with the AIMToronto Orchestra, Ronda Rindone's Quorum, Ken Aldcroft's Convergence Ensemble, Nilan Perera's HolyBlueGhost. In addition, Sorbara serves as the director and co-curator of the weekly Leftover Daylight Series, now in its fifth season, and sits on the board of directors of the Association of Improvising Musicians Toronto, which he co-founded in 2003.

Sorbara has an undergraduate degree in music from York University. He currently teaches in the Music Department at the University of Guelph, where he directs the Contemporary Music Ensemble and teaches drums and percussion in the applied music program.

Website: www.ovalwindowmusic.org/joesorbara/

Alan Stanbridge

Abstract

A Nightmare on the Brains of the Living: Cultural Policy, Government Funding, and Contemporary Music

In sharp contrast to common practice in Western art music, which has seen the virtual eradication of the albeit modest improvised elements formerly present in baroque and classical music, the primarily improvisatory nature of jazz has

militated against its preservation and dissemination in the form of fixed scores. This emphasis on improvisation rather than a written score resulted in jazz, especially in its first half century, being neglected by the academy, given that the analytical tools of musicology and music analysis are primarily geared towards notation and notated works. Moreover, as the study of jazz began to be integrated into university programs and academic curricula in the 1960s, it often conformed to standard musicological techniques and approaches, which failed to address the specificities of the music – for example, in the transcription and analysis of improvised solos as notated texts, emphasizing characteristics such as thematic unity, often at the expense of any broader socio-historical contextualization. By the latter decades of the twentieth century, however, the academic study of jazz had expanded considerably, and the development of the field of Jazz Studies introduced a series of broader analytical perspectives, stressing the historical, cultural, social, and political contexts of the music's development. In parallel with these developments, programs in instrumental instruction and jazz performance become more common in universities and colleges on both sides of the Atlantic, and at least one improvisation-based research project received substantial financial support from the Canadian government.

Despite this new-found cultural legitimacy, however, and unlike the history of court patronage in Western art music and the subsequent patterns of arts funding adopted by many Western governments, the performance, presentation, and practice of jazz and improvised music have never enjoyed the levels of state support afforded classical music and opera. The Western art music canon remains irrefutably at the core of the music policies of the vast majority of arts funding agencies, perpetuating a conceptualization of 'music' that is far from inclusive or comprehensive. If, as I argued in a recent article, government funding of music continues to be dominated – to paraphrase Marx – by 'the tradition of all the dead generations,' then the current status quo in cultural policy does, indeed, weigh like 'a nightmare on the brains of the living' – and especially so on the brains of those committed to the future development of jazz and improvised music. Although the problem may be a relatively easy one to diagnose, the range of potential and realistic solutions is considerably more vexing. For decades now, the patterns of funding for music have been predicated not only on a narrow understanding of what constitutes 'music' – with its concomitant and limited models of performing ensembles, repertoire, and management – but also on particular, and often highly specialized, configurations of venues, promoters, and audiences. In this paper, I examine the ways in which current music funding patterns might begin to be challenged, exploring, for example, the possibilities for greater collaboration and cross-fertilization between the contemporary jazz and improvised music scene and the field of contemporary new music – two cultural sectors that, notwithstanding their often striking similarities, too often remain resolutely distinct.

Biography

Alan Stanbridge is an assistant professor in Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Toronto, cross-appointed in graduate programs in Music and Museum Studies. Dr. Stanbridge is the recipient of a Faculty Teaching Award for

his contribution to undergraduate teaching. Dr. Stanbridge's current research focuses on the discursive construction of musical meaning and cultural value, and is supported by a grant from SSHRC. He has published numerous articles on popular music, jazz history, and cultural policy, and he is currently working on a book entitled *Rhythm Changes: The Discourses of Jazz*, to be published by Routledge. He is a contributor to the *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, and a member of the Editorial Boards of the *International Journal of Cultural Policy* and the *Jazz Research Journal*. In a previous life, Dr. Stanbridge pursued a fifteen-year career in professional arts management and music promotion in Britain, during which time he held the post of director of the Glasgow International Jazz Festival, and promoted concerts and specially commissioned projects featuring Ray Charles, Cab Calloway, Stan Getz, Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan, Astor Piazzolla, Willem Breuker, Derek Bailey, John Stevens, the Brotherhood of Breath, Fred Frith, John Zorn, Tim Berne, Philip Glass, and John Cage, among many others.

Jesse Stewart

Biography

Jesse Stewart is an award-winning percussionist, composer, improviser, artist, instrument builder, educator, and writer, who explores the links between the visual and the sonic arts. He has performed with many internationally acclaimed musicians including George Lewis, Roswell Rudd, Bill Dixon, William Parker, Evan Parker, Carlo Actis Dato, Dominic Duval, Frank Gratkowski, Gerry Hemingway, Joe McPhee, Gordon Monahan, Maggie Nicols, Evan Ziporyn, Michael Snow, and many others. He is currently a member of the David Mott Quintet and Nonet and Tallboys. He also leads his own groups and performs regularly as a soloist at festivals across Canada and in Europe.

Throughout his career, Stewart has made numerous recordings, including his solo album *Music for Found Objects* (2006), as well as recorded collaborations with pianist Ajay Heble, violinist Jacques Israelievitch, and guitarist Kevin Breit. Stewart's solo and collaborative musical works can be heard on the C3R label.

Stewart has an undergraduate degree in visual art and music from the University of Guelph, two Master of Arts degrees in ethnomusicology and music composition from York University, and a PhD in English and Theatre Studies from the University of Guelph. He is now a professor of music composition in Carleton University's School for Studies in Art and Culture.

Rob Wallace

Abstract

"Space is the Place": Venues and other Vicissitudes of an Improvising Musician
As a performer and sometime-promoter of various genres of music not usually supported by major government institutions or broad public consumption – including free improvisation, post-bebop jazz, Hindustani classical music, Arab art music, and punk rock – I have been on both sides of an important barrier historically preventing music and musicians from thriving in North American

(and probably most other) culture(s): the barrier of money. I have struggled both to get paid as a musician and to fairly compensate performers in music series that I have booked and promoted. Part of the difficulty in fair compensation is due to the cost of renting the performance venue, either by the musicians/promoters themselves or by the entrepreneurs – barkeeps, restaurateurs, et. al. – who provisionally own the space but who are often themselves renters. This rental cost, which must be met before any musician gets paid for her labor, often gets passed on to musicians and audience members via minimum drink purchases, cover charges, or booking fees. Ironically, moving outside of brick-and-mortar venues can accrue similar costs, when even busking in some cities requires pay-permits. On a larger scale, if performances are allowed in the more institutionalized halls of culture, ticket prices often prohibit the deepest listeners of the music from attending shows. All of these matters are separate, too, from any aesthetic, spiritual, and acoustic concerns that might come into play when choosing whether or not to perform in a given venue. Thus, from all perspectives of music culture under capitalism – performer, promoter/owner, and audience member/listener – the space of performance can significantly alter the place of that performance within society, physically, psychically, financially, and otherwise. While this has been the case for arguably much of the last one hundred-plus years or more, it nevertheless remains a crucial and ubiquitous problem for music-making. Relying on ethnographic research, paired with historical and quantitative analysis, my presentation investigates some possible ways in which creative musicians can better deal with this day-to-day reality, recently exacerbated by the ongoing real-estate crisis.

Biography

Rob Wallace is an author, teacher, scholar, and musician. He writes about poetry, improvisation, modernism, globalization, and popular music and performs as a percussionist in a variety of musical genres. His forthcoming book, to be published by Continuum Press, is titled *Improvisation and the Making of American Modernism*. Some of his recordings can be found on the pfMentum label (). Dr. Wallace is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Guelph with the Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice project.

Website: www.pfmentum.com

Denise Watson

Biography

Denise Watson is program manager at KidsAbility, responsible for the services at the KidsAbility Guelph-Wellington Program. She has completed a BAsC at the University of Guelph and a Master of Health Sciences at the University of Toronto. She has worked in pediatric rehabilitation since 1987 in a variety of settings, including hospital, home, school and community, supporting children and youth with physical, developmental and/or communication disabilities to reach their full potential. She strives to develop services that are connected with the community, inclusive, functional and fun! She has worked at KidsAbility for twenty years, lives in Guelph with her husband, two teenagers and a dog. In her spare time she likes to run, swim and bike (but not in triathlons).

Website: www.kidsability.ca

Daniel Weinstock

Biography

Dr. Weinstock holds a Canada Research Chair in Ethics and Political Philosophy and is the founding director of the Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal. He is a prize fellow of the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation (2004), and a recipient of the André-Laurendeau Prize given by the Association canadienne-française pour l'avancement des sciences. His areas of expertise include the politics of language and identity, democracy, citizenship, and pluralism. He has also been an active participant in public policy in Québec, having been a member from 1997 to 1999 of a Ministry of Education working group on religion in public schools, and from 2003 to the present, the founding director of Quebec's Public Health Ethics Committee. Dr. Weinstock holds a PhD in philosophy (Oxford University), and an MA in political philosophy and a BA in French literature and political philosophy (McGill University).

Eitan Wilf

Abstract

Unexamined Forms of Cultural Dissemination and the Limits of Cultural Policy

French cultural policy, especially since the establishment of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1959 by de Gaulle, has served for many other countries – European and non-European – as a model of an explicitly and intentionally interventionist policy. It represented a belief in the right and duty of the French government to actively intervene in the arena of culture in order to further the goals it deemed important. Such a belief seemed natural among French policy makers on the background of the notion that French culture is an icon of French nationhood.

For example, in 1981, under the influence of the Minister of Culture at the time, Jack Lang, the emphasis in cultural policy shifted into a struggle against what was termed 'American Imperialism' in the cultural realm. At stake was a battle against the perceived infiltration into French culture of numerous standardized forms of American popular culture, which could threaten French cultural identity. The battle was to be fought by means of both actively supporting the production of French cultural forms through grants and subsidies, and the establishment of quotas and restrictions on the importation and dissemination of American cultural goods into France. In 1993, French policy makers succeeded in excluding audiovisual products from the anti-protectionist provisions of the 1993 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Known as the 'cultural exception,' the rationale for such a policy was that cultural forms cannot be treated as regular commodities such as cars and ovens, but must be protected against the forces of the market through subsidies to local production and restrictions on the importation of foreign cultural products. The alternative to this would be the erosion of cultural difference by a hegemonic American culture.

In this paper I argue that French cultural policy and similar initiatives in other countries have viewed cultural production and dissemination too narrowly. They have focused on traditional means of mass communication such as radio, television, film, printed press and literature, on the one hand, and on traditional notions of cultural producers such as media corporations and conglomerates, on the other hand. Other forms of cultural production and dissemination have been left completely unexamined. I explore the implications for cultural policy of one neglected dimension of cultural production and dissemination based on two-year ethnographic fieldwork in two post-secondary jazz programs on the East Coast in the US. Specifically, I focus on the training of European jazz musicians in post-secondary jazz programs in the US and the establishment of affiliate jazz programs in Europe by European graduates of the American programs. These European schools rely on curriculum material (such as method books) designed by the American programs and provide sites for the American schools to recruit foreign students on the background of dwindling American-domestic enrollment rates.

I suggest that a detailed analysis of this form of cultural dissemination can further our understanding of globalization, cultural standardization and homogenization, the limits of interventionist cultural policy, and the dynamics of what has been inadequately called 'American cultural imperialism.' More importantly, the paper explores the non-linear and rhizomic nature of cultural dissemination and suggests 'improvisation' as a useful trope with which to delineate the contours of this phenomenon and to rethink the potentialities and limits of interventionist cultural policy.

Biography

Eitan Wilf is completing his PhD in anthropology at the University of Chicago. His dissertation explores the emergence of post-secondary jazz education in the US with respect to the problem of cultural standardization. He is interested in the many challenges, paradoxes and ironies of the introduction of cultural practices from a bygone past – real and imagined – in which the socialization into jazz music was informed by specific and marginalized cultural sensibilities, into the highly different present of the mainstream institutional environment of higher education. His dissertation documents the ways in which ideologies of race, orality and literacy, cultural hierarchy, gender, and artistic autonomy / commodification have mediated this transition in modes of socialization. As his research explores the mediations of past, present, and future within the changing world of jazz music, it provides an ethnographic treatment of temporal imaginations not only in their verbal, visual, or written, but also in their sonic forms.