Being Free, Together

Instant Composition in a Contemporary
Multi-Instrumentalist Context

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Master of Music Artistic Research Report
May 2023

codarts
rotterdam

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music
May 2023

Main subject   Jazz Piano

Main subject teachers   Miguel Rodriguez
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Research domain   Jazz Improvisation

Research coach   Marc van Roon

Keywords   Instant Composition
                            Free Improvisation
                            Bandleading
                            Interplay

"[C]ommon assumptions of composition and improvisation treat freedom individualistically, as the space and ability of the musician to act free from imposed rules or restrictions. [H]owever, this agency is not the capacity of an isolated individual, but is developed in relation to their social and material environment." (Schuiling, 2019, p. 146)

"I was curious to know if we could finally do what we wanted to do in the seventies. That is, to improvise. To not be dependent on songs, pieces, or outside inspirations. You'd think we'd be able to do that by now. [...] Back then, there were no solutions, and nowadays there are, for some reason." (Misha Mengelberg in Dekker, 2005)

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my band members from *Epoxy Quartet.* This research would not have been possible without their invaluable input, time, and playing. I am also grateful to my research coach Marc van Roon for his guidance and feedback. I would like to recognize the contributions made to this research by all the expert improvisers, teachers, and other interviewees, who generously provided knowledge and expertise, and inspired me a lot. Lastly, I would like to mention my cohort members and thank them for their feedback and moral support during the past two years.

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1 Abstract and Keywords

This research investigates strategies for free improvisation, or "instant composition," from the 1960s onwards. Instant composition is defined in this research as "working with concepts, structures, and limitations that stimulate interplay, coherence, and creativity in free improvisational contexts." The research aim is to reemploy these strategies and find how they need to be adjusted to fit the contemporary jazz practice I share with *Epoxy Quartet*. Based on interviews, literature review, and practice-based experimentation, this research aims to develop exercises, instructions, or methods to co-create and co-evaluate expressive improvised performances. Although the strategies our quartet employs are rooted in an existing tradition of free improvisation – often atonal and cerebral music – we hold the artistic ambition to develop a musical idiom that is more lyrical and accessible. Therefore, the intended outcome of this research is a unique performance practice situated in the interstices between improvisation and composition, supported by well-developed methods to co-create and co-evaluate expressive improvised performances.

2   Introduction

2.1   Motivation and Goal

This research is designed to improve the performance practice I share with my quartet, *Epoxy Quartet*. The quartet consists of a slightly unconventional line-up: Martijn van Ditshuizen (sax), Tuomas Ruokonen (drums), Kim Jäger (cello), and me, Koen Gijsman (piano). The band also brings together three different nationalities: Finnish, Dutch, and German. *Epoxy Quartet* is a project initiated and led by me: I am the bandleader, pianist, and composer for our ensemble. In our music, we investigate techniques and strategies for free improvisation, or "instant composition," from the 1960s onwards. Instant composition is defined in this research as "working with concepts, structures, and limitations that stimulate interplay, coherence, and creativity in free improvisational contexts." The research aim is to reemploy these strategies and find how they need to be adjusted to fit the contemporary jazz practice I share with my quartet. Correspondingly, the intended outcome of this research is a performance practice situated in the interstices between improvisation and composition, supported by well-developed methods to co-create and co-evaluate expressive improvised performances.

In concrete, the research aims to develop exercises, instructions, or methods to co-create and co-evaluate our performances. Although the strategies for co-creation we employ are rooted in an existing tradition of free improvisation – often atonal and cerebral music – my quartet holds the artistic ambition to develop a musical idiom that is more lyrical and accessible. In our ensemble, we co-create our performances on the spot. Shaped in a continuous interplay of undermining and complementing each other, the band never plays the same performance twice and always looks for the unexpected. However, this does not necessarily result in a musical idiom similar to that of the free-improvised music of the past. Indeed, *Epoxy Quartet* often aims for a more melodic and narrative performance. Our awareness of the free-improvised music tradition notwithstanding, the music our quartet performs is inspired more by contemporary composition, images or scenes, and sound meditations. Bringing together instant composition and the resulting freedom to adjust to the performance context on the one hand, and the accessibility and power of musical narrativity on the other, leads to a strong relationship between the band, the audience, and the performance context. This unique performance practice we aspire to demands exercises and methods for co-creation designed specifically for it. This is the first goal of this research project.

In addition to the development of strategies for co-creation discussed above, this research aims to explore different ways in which *Epoxy Quartet* can co-evaluate our co-created performances in an efficient, effective, and structured way. As musicologist Floris Schuiling mentions in one of the first interviews done for this research, free improvisers very much rely on "documenting and listening back to improvised performances to create new ideas from them."[1] During this research, I have developed strategies to co-evaluate our performances based on data from interviews and literature related to "creative facilitation."[2] Thomas Heberer, trumpeter and member of the *Instant Composers Pool Orchestra* (ICP), which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, describes how the ICP performances "have not been invented by Misha [Mengelberg], they have developed. And the

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[1] Floris Schuiling, Interview on ICP and Misha Mengelberg, interview by Koen Gijsman, audio recording, February 25, 2022.

[2] Marc Tassoul, *Creative Facilitation*, 3rd ed. (Delft: VSSD, 2009).

development started forty years ago. So the way the ICP operates now is the result of thinking about certain musical problems for decades."[3] This indicates how, historically, reflection and evaluation have been essential for the development of free-improvisation-based performance practices. With this research, and within Epoxy Quartet's performance practice, I intend to further this development of instantly composed music and its problems and repurpose it in a contemporary instrumental performance practice.

Combined, the tools developed for both co-creation and co-evaluation facilitate *Epoxy Quartet* in the continuous development of our performance practice according to our artistic ambitions. In the first place, this makes this research a profoundly artistic project. Indeed, the methods and tools developed in this research are demanded by, implemented in, and developed through the practice I share with my quartet. Without Epoxy Quartet's artistic practice, there would have been no research. Therefore, this research is fundamentally practice-based. Although this research is based on a very unique performance practice, the knowledge and strategies developed in this research apply to other performance practices and can thus help other improvisers to overcome obstacles on the path to the realization of their artistic ambitions.

2.2   Research Question

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, this research is aimed to enrich the performance practice of the *Epoxy Quartet.* Our performance practice is characterised by the fact that it employs and experiments with instant composition and free improvisation. In other words, our performance practice is situated in the space between improvisation and composition. An appropriate research question should include this characterization of *Epoxy Quartet's* performance practice and direct the research towards developing tools and techniques to enrich this practice in two particular domains: co-creation and co-evaluation. Additionally, the research questions should point out the main methods for collecting the knowledge and data on which these tools will be based, i.e. interviews with expert improvisers, literature review, and experimentation and reflection within the quartet rehearsals. Accordingly, the research question for this research is:

> **How can I enrich Epoxy Quartet's instant-composition-based performance practice through the development of co-creation and co-evaluation tools based on interviews, literature review, and experimentation?**

2.3   Contextualisation and Critical Media Review

In the Netherlands, the 1960s saw the emergence of a unique and influential avant-garde music scene. This historical setting gave rise to a generation of defining composers, improvisers and performers who were strongly influenced by the culture of social-political engagement, activism, and action against the established musical institutions and funding infrastructure of the time.[4] Both composed and improvised music were involved in a combined effort to bring about the desired reform in this musical landscape. Music by notable performers of this scene, such as Misha Mengelberg, Han Bennink, Willem Breuker, and

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[3] Thomas Heberer, interview with Floris Schuiling, 20th February 2012 cited in Floris Schuiling, *The Instant Composers Pool and Improvisation beyond Jazz* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 121.
[4] Robert Adlington, *Composing Dissent: Avant-Garde Music in 1960s Amsterdam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Louis Andriessen, is sometimes referred to as "New Dutch Swing" or "New European Jazz" because of its relation to jazz tradition, including free jazz, free improvisation, and experimentalism.[5] Importantly, these musicians organised themselves together in a musical ensemble that also functioned as a music label and publisher called the *Instant Composers Pool Orchestra (ICP).* Part of the countercultural movement in which the ICP orchestra was situated aimed to abolish professionalised art in favour of 'non-idiomatic' collective creation referred to as "instant composition" or "real-time music-making."[6] In the first part of the following section, I discuss different views on what instant composition exactly entails and what kind of performance practice results from it. In the second part of this section, I specifically focus on co-creation and the role of written performance instructions, or scores, in this type of improvised music. Finally, I briefly touch on "creative facilitation," a design methodology that I apply in my quartet's experimentation sessions to co-evaluate effectively.

What is Instant Composition?
In his book *The Instant Composers Pool and Improvisation Beyond Jazz*, Floris Schuiling discusses various interviews with members of the ICP in which they reflect on their practice and how improvisation and instant composition are related to it.[7] Interestingly, a lot of the musicians mentioned by Schuiling have a slightly different view of what exactly instant composition entails. Michael Moore, an ICP member whom I have also interviewed, describes it as "just play, without having agreed upon anything."[8] Albeit true, this indicates primarily the close relationality between instant composition and free improvisation. While free improvised music is "just play," instant composition as we shall see, indicates more than just that. Misha Mengelberg, bandleader of the ICP, leads us in a good direction, in his book *Enkele Regels in de Dierentuin*:

> Think from moment to moment about what the previous fragment has to do with the present one and how it should continue. Be aware that while playing you are speaking a language. Notice that in your language, you can say anything. Respect your grammar and syntax. [...] Comment on other players. If you can't play your ideas, practice until you can. Or come up with something else that you can play. Realise what you have played.[9]

It becomes clear that in addition to the freedom described by Moore, instant composition requires a certain level of awareness of musical form and language so that the improvisation becomes structured and individual fragments relate to one another. According to Schuiling, the term instant composition is indeed "meant to stress the structural musical aspects of improvisation."[10] Although the term instant composition originally functioned as a slogan to explain and justify to a broader audience what improvisation is and why it is artistically relevant (as the structural aspects of composing were regarded

[5] Kevin Whitehead, *New Dutch Swing* (Watson-Guptill Publications, 1998).
[6] George E. Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives," *Black Music Research Journal* 16, no. 1 (1996): 91.
[7] Schuiling, *The Instant Composers Pool and Improvisation beyond Jazz*.
[8] Michael Moore, Interview on Instant Composition, interview by Koen Gijsman, April 21, 2023. Link to the recording.
[9] Misha Mengelberg, *Enkele Regels in de Dierentuin* (Oude Tonge: Huis Clos, 2012), 37. Originally in Dutch. Unless otherwise indicated, all following translations are by me.
[10] Floris Schuiling, "Compositions in Improvisation: The Instant Composers Pool Orchestra," *ACT: Zeitschrift Für Musik & Performance* 5 (2014): 9.

as a more serious musical pursuit than improvisation), instant composition later on developed to signify a particular style or idiom of improvised music and has influenced the Dutch improvisational scene greatly:

> "Instant composition" is not just a way to valorise improvisation, but rather implies a specific approach to improvisation in which compositions are an active part of the interactive improvisatory process. The responsibility of each musician is aesthetic, an awareness that all are collectively composing music, as well as that all have a responsibility to each other and the audience.[11]

This development of collective aesthetic responsibility is relevant in the context of this research, as *Epoxy Quartet* is interested in the awareness of and responsibility for the structural aspects of the improvisatory process. However, our band wishes to develop a different style of improvisation and draws on different musical idioms than the ones developed by the ICP.

In the above quote, Schuiling observes that compositions play an active part in the ICP improvisations. This seems to form a paradoxical situation, as instant composition according to Moore is based on free improvisation. Schuiling, like many of the ICP musicians, makes a very pragmatic distinction between composition and improvisation. They are the same kind of process, but composition allows for more time to edit and reiterate. Schuiling appropriately describes that the ICP "has committed to developing a performance practice exploring the interstices between improvisation and composition."[12] This is a critical addition to the definition of instant composition because it now transcends the first definition of structured improvisation. Instant composition is now about the grey area between improvisation and composition, and the definition has become two-sided: not only can improvisation approximate the structural aspects we usually associate with through-composed music, but compositions can be constructed to facilitate improvisation. In this context, Schuiling remarks regarding the compositions by Mengelberg:

> [H]e didn't want to just completely dismiss composition, and he has always been engaged with composition, so then the question becomes: How do you compose in a way that you don't determine everything in advance, and not just leave space for improvisation - but maybe even *create* space for improvisation?[13]

This is a question that a lot of ICP members have dealt with during their careers as improvisers and composers. In fact, Thomas Herberer and Ab Baars note how their generation of improvisers contained many trained composers, who were concerned with creating length with a restricted set of given ideas

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[11] Schuiling, 12.
[12] Schuiling, *The Instant Composers Pool and Improvisation beyond Jazz*, 119. Interestingly, Schuiling himself argues that the dichotomy between improvisation and composition is false, as the two have been historically and contingently intertwined. The conceptual tear between composition and improvisation can be traced to the 19th century, when there was placed a strong emphasis on the composer as the primary creator of music, and performance was no longer equally important; "there has always been improvisation, but it is only when performance becomes a reproduction of something that already exists, that improvisation becomes a separate category. [...] There are many music practices where it does not make much sense to think in terms of composition and improvisation." (Schuiling, see appendix 3.)
[13] Schuiling, Interview on ICP and Misha Mengelberg. Full annotated transcript, see appendix 3.

and are very conscious of form and structure.[14] Particularly this notion of restriction within improvisation aimed to cultivate the compositional and structural aspects is very relevant to my definition of instant composition as employed in this research. Indeed, a lot of ICP members mention limitation and aesthetic responsibility as essential elements in their performance practice. The first is made explicit in remarks by Han Bennink, drummer of the ICP, who explains how limitations reduce sonic possibilities but stimulate the creative abilities of improvisers:

> It's not just the restriction of a snare drum, it's also about what you have and what you do with it. It's rich enough in itself, do you know what I mean? [. . .] That is where you can find your freedom, in using those limitations.[15]

While the second is made explicit by Baars:

> Misha was looking for a new direction, in which we, as a band, could guide the material. Not as an individual, but that everyone would have a compositional mindset. Everyone could introduce new things, but with conviction, and also taking responsibility for the material that you introduce.[16]

The emphasis on the structural elements of improvisation, collective aesthetic responsibility, limitation, and the negotiation of given ideas are combined in the definition of instant composition as handled in Epoxy Quartet's performance practice and this research. Instant composition as employed in our performance practice thus amounts to *working with concepts, structures, and limitations that stimulate interplay, coherence, and creativity in free improvisational contexts.*

Co-Creation: Scores for Improvisation
Instant composition as defined above identifies improvisation as a kind of composition, but also implies that compositions play an active part in the interactive improvisational process. With the above definition of instant composition on paper, we can now turn towards a discussion of composition and scores. In a very broad sense of the word, a score is a performance instruction. In this research, the scores presented will mostly contain the concepts, structures, and limitations mentioned in the previous paragraph, and they will be negotiated by improvisers during the performance. Regardless, there are many ways in which to communicate these limitations, or structures for improvisation. In the coming chapters, there are relatively through-composed musical scores, as well as some graphical scores, some text scores, and hybrid forms. All scores discussed are assembled in Appendix 4.

How scores are effectively employed within the instant composition framework differs from how they function in other musical practices. Of course, the scores in this research are created with a different purpose in mind than, for example, would be the case in classical music, or even different from a lead sheet in straight-ahead jazz. The main difference lies in the role a score has in relation to the performance practice. As adequately described by Schuiling, a score is regarded not as an exhaustive instruction on how to perform a composition, but as a "tool used by musicians in the creative process."[17] Significantly,

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[14] Schuiling, *The Instant Composers Pool and Improvisation beyond Jazz*, 120.
[15] Schuiling, 145.
[16] Schuiling, "Compositions in Improvisation: The Instant Composers Pool Orchestra," 12.
[17] Schuiling, 16.

this tool functions more or less like an extra participant in the ensemble, because rather than impose uniformity on the music, a score contributes to the heterogeneity of creative and interactive possibilities:

> The score clearly has an active function [...] Its function in the musical process is akin to that of human actors – it suggests certain phrases, relations, and ways of playing, and these suggestions are negotiated just as if one of the musicians had done them.[18]

The musical material that a score suggests is processed similarly to how musical material brought in by improvisers is processed. Consequently, the material written in a score needs to be as clear and vivid as possible to effectively develop the originality of the improvisation. Schuiling remarks that all ICP musicians he spoke to mentioned clarity as an important part of the ICP scores. Precisely because the composition has to invite improvisation, it cannot be vague: "In order to develop a successful way of playing these compositions, it has to be quite clear what is expected."[19]

A Different Idiomatic Approach

As described at the start of this chapter, Epoxy Quartet is interested in combining these ideas about scores and instant composition with ideas from contemporary composition. We develop our own tools to build improvisations on different idioms, images or scenes, and films. Part of this research has been about finding ways to communicate these ideas clearly to the ensemble using scores, and to what extent is necessary to communicate via scores to obtain a satisfactory performance as a result. A good score should indicate where and how improvisation should take place in the compositions, and convey the "image" that I often have in mind during composing and performing to the rest of the band. In addition to the interviews with Floris Schuiling and Michael Moore, I have interviewed composer, arranger, and engraver Renard Aust specifically on this subject, and I will refer to this interview throughout this section.[20]

The concepts introduced by Aust in the interview are "boxes," "gestures," and "labels." Instead of working with a lead sheet as traditionally occurs a lot in jazz, Aust suggests working with these concepts to effectively indicate where and how improvisation should take place in the compositions, and successfully convey the images that I often have in mind during composing to the rest of the band. While lead sheets only partially show what and how the piece should be performed, the improvisation that results from working with lead sheets is based on the unspoken rules, traditions, and forms connected to straight-ahead jazz improvisation. Boxes and gestures, according to Aust, provide a different kind of freedom and will result in a different kind of improvisation:

> I call them Lego blocks, and you can construct a score with them. You're communicating to the band: I have no plan regarding how to assemble the piece, and when to play which part, but these are the Lego blocks and they're what we have to work with.[21]

A "box" is a well-delineated part of a performance score. Within a box, there are certain performance instructions, which could be written music, or an improvisation section for example. During a

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[18] Schuiling, 20.

[19] Schuiling, *The Instant Composers Pool and Improvisation beyond Jazz*, 143.

[20] Renard Aust, Interview on scores, interview by Koen Gijsman, audio recording, April 20, 2022. Full annotated transcript, see appendix 3. Link to the audio recording.

[21] Aust.

performance, improvisers move from box to box on cue. A "gesture" is a musical phrase or idea, boiled down to the essence. Improvisers can play it as written, but often paraphrase the content of a gesture and make it their own. This more or less functions similarly to how a lead sheet works in straight-ahead jazz. A gesture could be part of the instructions within a box. Regarding the issue of composing/performing with an image in mind, Renard introduced me to the concept of "labels":

> [A] label can be anything: a feeling, an image. For me, [it] is central to a piece that I write, and in some way, I try to convey [the label] as well. Sometimes simply in the title, sometimes subtly in the way I shape a score, and then you can also think about, for example, creating a sort of title page with the image literally on it. That is indeed where I think your creativity is truly challenged.[22]

Aust's concept of labels connects well to my composition process for Epoxy Quartet, as the images, narratives, or scenes that are often my inspiration can be regarded as a label in the sense Aust describes them. This quote marks the importance of integrating these labels into a composition or score and Aust suggests multiple ways of doing this. During the research cycles described in the next chapter, I have started to employ boxes, gestures, and labels in Epoxy Quartet's performance practice.

Co-Evaluation: Graphs & Creative Facilitation
Until now, most of the concepts present in the research question have been discussed in this contextualisation: instant composition, the basic concepts to inform the development of tools for co-creation and the artistic ambitions of Epoxy Quartet. In this last section of the contextualisation, I introduce the main ideas that have been resourced to develop the tools for co-evaluating our performances within the quartet during this research. The main source of these co-evaluation concepts and principles is industrial design engineering. Even though designers are not performers by nature, we share a desire to cultivate a safe, healthy, and constructive process to generate and evaluate creative and progressive ideas. Importantly, designers have been developing literature and sharing thoughts on their creative process for a reasonable amount of time now.

In his book *Creative Facilitation,* Marc Tassoul presents his ideas and experience as a design professor in guiding creative processes in the context of social and industrial design.[23] In this book, he lists a number of strategies for stimulating the creative group process during a phase of idea generation. Next, he identifies different strategies for the evaluation and selection of the ideas generated. As industrial designers often are faced with the challenge of finding a solution for a particular practical problem, Tassoul refers to the collection of possible solutions as the "solution space." During the idea-generation phase, a group works together to fill up and broaden the solution space to its maximum scope and size. Next, ideas in the solution space are selected and developed based on a process of group evaluation.

It is stunning to recognize the similarity between the performance practice we desire with my quartet and the "rules for creative interaction" as listed by Tassoul during the idea-generation process. The main attitude required to broaden the solution space, according to Tassoul, is one of open-mindedness, non-judgmentalism, and breaking through patterns. This is very similar to what Epoxy Quartet practices to do during free improvisation sessions:

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[22] Aust.
[23] Tassoul, *Creative Facilitation*.

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Rules for Creative Interaction
1. There is no ownership over ideas: ideas belong to everyone in the group and each can do whatever they want with them.
2. Postpone judgement: "There is no need to subject ideas to binary good/bad judgement. [...] Ideas as such are only words and pictures - they do not change anything in the real world. [...] We can explore them in a more gentle, open-minded way."[24]
3. Dare to freewheel, and use anything to free oneself from existing ideas or patterns.
4. Quality through quantity: by concentrating on quantity, any judgement in terms of quality that could result in self-awareness of group participants is moved to the background.

Although, admittedly, not every rule listed by Tassoul is as applicable to Epoxy Quartet's performances as such, they do apply to Epoxy's performance practice as a whole. During improvisations, ideas are shared and there is no ownership over them. We try not to dismiss ideas directly without developing an interest in them first. We try to be original, play differently than our previous performance, and we want to try new musical ideas all the time. Although we try to stick to one idea at a time during our improvisations, throughout all of our improvisations and experiments there is a sense of "quality through quantity." Every new improvisation will focus on a new idea, and we try not to judge or become self-aware based on one improvisation only.

Marking the similarities between creative facilitation and Epoxy Quartet's performance practice, it makes sense that the strategies for idea evaluation and selection listed by Tassoul can be beneficiary to our practice as well. In the strategies he developed, Tassoul focuses on grading ideas based on desired parameters or demands, and the visualisation of this grading. Accessible methods include (1) writing ideas on post-its, categorizing them, and putting them in order according to which ideas suit the demands best, (2) making tables/charts with all the ideas and demands, visualising which ideas are best, or (3) evaluating ideas in smaller groups/duos, or even solo, before coming back to the group session. This last strategy is intended to make space for individual opinions.

During the second and third cycles, the above ideas have led to the development of graphic questionnaires, or graphs, that have been employed in Epoxy Quartet's practice to evaluate recordings of improvisations and experiments. They are to be filled individually, following Tassoul in making space for individual opinions. The graphs required band members to evaluate performances along three axes for three different musical parameters that we find relevant to our performances. This follows Tassoul in the fact that visualisation is crucial to keep an overview in the evaluation process, and that evaluation only works if demands and parameters are clearly defined beforehand.

2.4   Specific Audiences and Readers Addressed

This research is about free improvisation, instant composition, and working with fellow musicians and improvisers to co-create and co-evaluate performances. Therefore, it may be relevant for anyone with an interest in one of these topics, musicians, composers, performers, improvisers, or even members of the audience with a great interest in the theoretical background of these kinds of musical practices.

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[24] Vincent Nolan, *The Innovator's Handbook: The Skills of Innovative Management: Problem Solving, Communication, and Teamwork* (Penguin Group USA, 1989) quoted in; Tassoul, *Creative Facilitation*, 38.
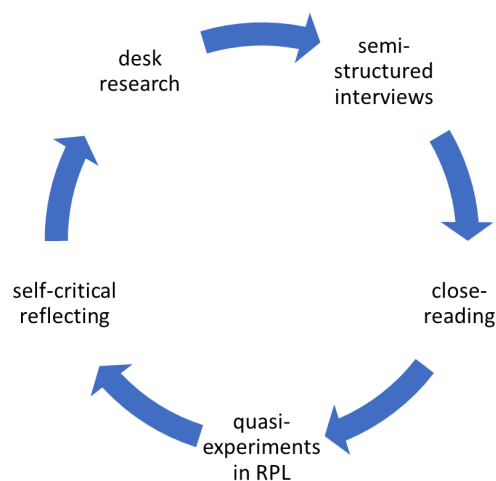
3   Research Process

This research process consists of three cycles. In the first cycle, I start to develop a repertoire based on instant composition and free improvisation. In the second cycle, I continue to develop and expand this repertoire while also focussing on my research question's co-evaluation aspects. I develop a tool for evaluating and reflecting on our performances and recordings. In the last cycle, I expand our repertoire to include film as an inspiration for our improvisations, I experiment with on-the-spot combinations of elements from our repertoire, and I develop another tool for evaluating ideas from improvised performances.

3.1 Research Cycle #1

I have formulated two goals for this cycle. On the one hand, this cycle is focused on my compositions for Epoxy Quartet. I have started to investigate the relationship between improvisation and composition, and how to use this to our benefit within the quartet. To familiarize myself with concepts such as instant composition, I performed desk research, that led to interviews with Floris Schuiling and Renard Aust. These have been transcribed, annotated, and close-read. Key insights from these interviews have already been discussed in the previous chapter (for the full transcriptions, see Appendix 3). The ideas and knowledge from the interviews have led me to compose new compositions for the Epoxy Quartet. These compositions are designed to incorporate specific strategies of improvisation in the band's performance practice. The compositions all have a particular musical parameter or idea with which the band can improvise.

Next, the most important part of the data collection consists of the experimentation with the band that has taken place during the RPL session. As a quartet, we worked on group improvising, co-developing my compositions, recording them, and reflecting on the recordings. I have recorded all of these sessions and worked out the valuable reflections of myself, the coaches, and the band in my RPL reflections.

The second goal for this cycle has been to improve the skills required for me to function well in this instant composition-based setting as a pianist, individually. This type of music is new for me and I have worked on becoming more free and intuitive in my playing. For this, I have gathered feedback from my RPL coaches and my main subject teachers. My practice has been to try out the advice given to me and reflect on what works best. This is written down mostly in the RPL reflections per session and the final RPL reflection. It is also discussed in the interview with Marc van Roon that I conducted.[25] In the following sections, you will find recordings of my playing where I am trying to play more and more freely.

3.1.2 Reference Recording #1: Arecibo

My reference recording to start the first cycle was my performance of "Arecibo", an original composition of mine, arranged by Rob Horsting and performed together with the Jazzorchestra of the Concertgebouw at the Conservatory Talent Award 2021, October 30th. You can find the recording of my 6-minute performance here.[26] The full score of the arrangement can be found here.[27]

I use this performance as a reference recording for two reasons. First of all, the composition is an original of mine and it has a lot of improvisation, including a substantial solo by myself. During the first research cycle, it has become increasingly clear that composition and improvisation are intertwined in my professional practice. Using this reference recording as a starting point for my first cycle enables me to collect feedback on my piano playing, interplay, improvising, composing, and thus my performance practice in the full sense of the word. It is important that my reference recording reflects all the different aspects of my professional practice so that I can directly compare this reference recording to the next on all the relevant points. My next reference recording is also one of my compositions with a lot of improvisation and interplay, recorded later this year with Epoxy Quartet.

Secondly, this recording was made as part of a competition. This means that I was focused and playing at my best, but also playing just one take. In a way, I like the fact that a reference recording is just one take because that way it reflects both parts of my professionalism that are strongly developed and parts that could use some improvement. This is both valuable in terms of research: it is important to recognize your strengths and preferences to direct the research towards relevant and interesting topics, but it is equally important to use the research to attend to difficulties in my professional practice. What exactly are the strengths and weaknesses in my performance practice becomes clear from the feedback and reflection, to which I now turn.

3.1.3 Feedback and Reflection: Arecibo

During the research process of FB1, I have gathered feedback from experts on my reference recording described above. Here I give a summary of the feedback given in FB1, focusing on the parts that have turned out to be relevant to the first research cycle.

From the feedback of the jury of the competition and my expert interview with Franz von Chossy, it appears that compositionally I am already familiar with important concepts and I am knowledgeable of

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[25] Marc van Roon, Interview on Epoxy Quartet Recordings, interview by Koen Gijsman, audio recording, March 22, 2022.

[26] Koen Gijsman and Jazzorchestra of the Concertgebouw, *Arecibo: Live at Conservatorium Talent Award* (Den Bosch, 2021).

[27] Koen Gijsman, "Arecibo (Score)," 2021.

how to use them.[28] However, the jury noted that I should not be afraid to show some more of my own musical identity in my performance. In addition, during both my interviews with Franz von Chossy and Kim Jäger, they mention that I should explore ways in which I can make my music freer, as it seems to them that this is what I am looking for.[29] They are right in thinking this, and it has been one of my main goals this research cycle to become more free and intuitive in my performances, improvisations, and in my composing process. Von Chossy mentioned something similar during our interview when we talked about innovation and originality:

> That's something, which I think most composers, who actually sound innovative and original, did not force into their music. As long as you stay true to your personal musical mind and keep digging deeper looking for the right ways/answers on your musical paths within your compositions, originality will show up by itself [...], and if you are lucky it will even sound innovative. [...] But then again, music should not be written for the sake of sounding innovative.[30]

I now understand this quote differently; to me being original, digging deeper, and staying true to my musical mind now connects to trusting my musical intuïtion in improvising and composing, reflecting actively on my music, and polishing my improvisations and compositions based on those reflections. In short, the above quote connects strongly to my goal of this cycle to play more intuïtively and to compose and improvise in a way that is close to my musical interest.

3.1.4 Data Collection & Analysis

From Interviews towards Compositions
During the first research cycle, I gathered data as planned by doing a literature review, interviewing experts, and composing new material for Epoxy Quartet based on the newly acquired knowledge. These new materials can be regarded as tools for the co-creation of improvised performances. Every composition discussed below is intended as an experiment in which Epoxy Quartet develops a practical understanding of the concepts that appeared as interesting in the literature/interviews that have been discussed in the contextualisation (section 2.3). In this section, I discuss the quasi-experiments we performed with this new material during the RPL sessions, rehearsals, and recording sessions with Epoxy Quartet. To conveniently arrange and structure this section, the data collection and analysis are organised per composition/experiment that I designed for Epoxy Quartet.

As described earlier, my work for Epoxy Quartet is often produced with a specific idea or musical parameter in mind to structure these experiments. Most scores have a specific musical parameter that is open to improvisation. For example, one song has no predefined form, tempo, or rhythm. During the rehearsals the band experiments by gradually increasing the freedom we take regarding this parameter. Since no tempo is defined, we start at a moderate tempo, but later on experiment with more extreme tempi, really fast or slow. We record, listen back, and reflect on our recordings together. This functions

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[28] Koen Gijsman, "The Sociomusical Intervention: Cultivating Social Awareness in a Professional Jazz Practice (Artistic Research Proposal)," 2021, 7.
[29] Franz von Chossy, Written interview with Franz von Chossy, interview by Koen Gijsman, digital writing, November 18, 2021; Kim Jäger, Online interview with Kim Jäger, interview by Koen Gijsman, audio recording, November 14, 2021. Link to the recording.
[30] Von Chossy, Written interview with Franz von Chossy.

directly as new input during the rehearsal or RPL. However, the collection and analysis of these reflections and recordings results in the interventions and the new reference recording at the end of this cycle.

Some of the compositions were composed before the interviews - just to get the band process going with a couple of tunes, however, we have altered the way we play the compositions through our practical research. Moreover, the old scores have been adapted to visually represent this change in our playing: based on the scores Aust presented to me during the interview, I designed new scores for the existing repertoire of Epoxy Quartet.[31] The interview was intended to specifically gather feedback on my compositions and scores. Next, I reiterated my scores and processed the feedback and ideas that Aust had provided. For example, a second version was made of the score for "Shelter," where the form of the song was no longer fixed, without a fixed beginning or end, and including graphical elements to indicate how the improvised section should be developed.[32] All the scores are available in Appendix 4. Both the old and new scores have been used during experiments in the RPL sessions which are recorded and discussed below under quasi-experiments.

Quasi-experiment: Co-Developing the Material during RPL Sessions

(1) The first score to experiment with was "Shelter," a composition that I had already made and recorded for my application at Codarts. This is the original recording, which is very structured and predefined.[33] As you can hear, the form is played as written in the sheet (appendix 4). The improvisation has a clear harmonic centre, and the tempo is fixed from the start. Already in the first RPL session with Stefan Lievestro on November 19th, the band played this song a lot more freely in terms of form, harmony, and pulse. Listen to the recording here. From my RPL reflection:

> Stefan discussed several ways and strategies to improvise collectively and focus on the different parameters that may play a role in an improvisation. The main parameters he mentioned were tempo, melody, harmony, and dynamics. Stefan encouraged us to make our own decisions with regards to which of these parameters we wanted to use in our improvisation, without communicating this explicitly to our band members. This resulted in a more chaotic improvisation because all the members of the band played more decisively and with more stubbornness. I felt like this was good because it gave a more clear idea of how far the boundaries of improvisation are and it made me get out of my comfort zone in terms of control, loudness, and expression. We were listening well and were also still a little bit unfamiliar with the composition and each other. Nevertheless, because we were listening so well to each other, the recording turned out great and I had the feeling that the narrative of the song had become even more clear, although the form and melody had been interpreted so freely. In conclusion, I think the strategies Stefan suggested during this RPL session are great to keep in

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[31] Graham Collier, *Interaction: Opening up the Jazz Ensemble* (Toronto: Advance Music, 1995).

[32] Additionally, there have been even more reïterations, as I sent Aust the new scores and requested another round of feedback, which was very positive and is included in appendix 3.

[33] Koen Gijsman et al., *Shelter - Koen Gijsman Quartet* (Zwolle, 2021).

mind in the future during the next RPL sessions and contributed significantly to our playing in such a short time.

"Shelter" has been the subject of experimentation during some other RPL sessions, including sessions with Marc van Roon and Nils Haften. There are multiple recordings, and I have selected this one from the RPL with Marc on the 21st of January, where we tried to play more by listening to each other during the improvisation and the effect that our sounds have on each other's playing. The form is a little more fixed again. From Marc's feedback:

> Each part/section in the music must be the logical consequence of what came before. Not sound like a 'new' (unrelated) section. Whenever and whatever you play, listen to it until the end. Listen to how what you play resonates with what the others do, and listen for how the others respond to it. Listen to how what you play fills the room and dissolves in space. Do not already think of the next thing while you are still playing your first idea.

This comment from Marc connects well to the instructions Mengelberg presented on how to instantly compose: comment on others, realise what you have played, and make sure different sections are related to each other. I think we were able to incorporate this in our playing slowly during further experimentation. During my piano exam halfway through the year, it was already better according to Marc and the other members of the committee. However, for me it only started to really get together during other recordings we did later this year. Of course, there is my reference recording of "Shelter" discussed below.

In terms of taking time, and listening to how the music fills the room, there are two takes of "Shelter" that are important to mention that in fact took place *after* the reference recording. These two takes represent the song in a good way to me: there is the recording of my master recital (02:15-11:20), and there is a recording of our concert in Bucharest (02:20-11:40). The recording of my master recital is interesting because it is the first recording based on the new scores I made inspired by the interview with Renard Aust. The new sheets helped a lot to bring across the amount of freedom there is in the song. Especially in the Bucharest recording, I find the piano intro from silence a great example of listening to the space and making sure that everything we play responds to what the others do, and how it resonates in the space. The moment the other band members join in feels so natural and coherent, even though I never played a piano intro to "Shelter" like this before; it was something that happened in the moment. Thus, after a year of work starting in the RPL with Stefan and ending in Bucharest, I am able to play more freely, less predefined, but not less coherent. This is because as a band, we have worked on our projection in space, our listening to each other and our ability to improvise more deliberately with the essence of the song in mind. We are, in fact, composing "Shelter" on the spot together. This all relates very well to my interventions listed below. "Shelter" has become a live composition, instead of a predefined composition with improvisational sections. This is very important for me because I feel like the essence of the song is not lost, but rather enhanced because we have space to adjust the song to every specific performance. I am able to play more intuitively without losing trust in my fellow band members, and the band is able to listen to the effect of our playing in the space that we work in.

(2) The next score I discuss is "Three Strikes Out" (score, appendix 4). The material is composed using an interval-cyle technique as described by Stefan during one of my RPL sessions with him. This means that there is no harmonic centre. The idea here was to already make the composition harmonically

ambiguous, and this way open it up more to improvisation in atonal idioms. The original score is only four bars, the rest is all improvised. The score presents a gesture and suggests a way of improvising, but it is not really a composition and defines no clear form. Every instrument part is written in a different meter. This means that it was already pretty tricky to get the musical material down in the first place during our rehearsals with Epoxy Quartet (recording). During our initial rehearsals (recording 21st of February) and our first sophisticated recording on the 24th of February with Epoxy Quartet, there is a saxophone solo because I did not yet feel free and comfortable playing atonal and in odd meter. During RPL sessions (recording RPL Marc 11th of March) and main subject lessons with Marc and Stefan, I worked on my improvisation, so that in our second recording on the 18th of March there is a piano solo. Nevertheless, the feedback from all of the RPL coaches when I played the recording for them, was that it sounded like a nice idea, but it started to get a little boring after a while. It was too repetitive (Stefan), it was maybe too slow and with too low energy (Marc), and it could have more interplay (Nils). Quoting from my RPL reflection on the session with Marc:

> We worked on "Three Strikes Out". Here, we focussed more on working with rules during the improvisation. Both shared and private. It worked well as a catalyst for interaction, especially with Tuomas (drums). The piece is still very difficult and the form is not yet clear. I want to keep it open, but then *it sometimes becomes boring*.

In other words, it could be more improvised in terms of orchestration, form, and arrangement, which I tried during my RPL with Nils Haften on the 14th of April (recording). There is a big difference between this recording and those before. "Three Strikes Out" started to become more convincing and interesting, even though it was even less predefined than before. I liked this approach that Nils had provided, quoting from my RPL reflection:

> We worked together jamming on "Three Strikes Out", trying to find a way that worked best for the band to improvise. We were happy about *exchanging* parts that I had written. It made the improvisation *way more dynamic*. The tune also worked better playing slightly faster, the energy was higher that way. Nils discussed different approaches to soloing and improvisation: we talked about playing with contrasts in parameters, playing with a lot of dominance, and holding on to your ideas slightly longer.

This approach is employed in the following recordings at my master recital (19:20-24:37 sax solo at 21:20, cello and drum take over at 23:10) and at the Bucharest concert (18:54-24:04), where, interestingly, the solo is mostly cello and/or drums. Especially the concert in Bucharest has a very interesting drum intro that works very well and was Tuomas his idea on the spot. The fact that we leave undefined who plays what part and when ensures that the performance as a whole is way more dynamic and interesting. The form is also open so that in Bucharest, Tuomas can start with a drum solo out of nowhere, whereas during my recital we start with the written melody. The saxophone solo (20:54-22:30) on the Bucharest recording is also one of the best so far because it sticks very well to the musical material presented in the score. After the saxophone solo, we leave the pulse, which is a great show of trusting our intuition that something needed to happen to keep things interesting.

I find "Three Strikes Out" a great addition to our repertoire because it is minimally defined by composition/gesture. By far most of the song is composed on the spot. It is tricky because the musical material that is defined is hard to play. It needs a lot of confidence to make any performance of this tune a success. The tune is one of my first attempts at co-developing material based on ideas of instant composition and needed a lot of time and work to work out with the band. We found, for example, that it helps a lot to hold on to certain musical parameters or compositional rules during the improvisation, but it also helps a lot to trust intuïtion to know when to change things to keep things interesting. Navigating these dynamics is central to the music we make and I'm happy these questions arise so soon already.

(3) The third composition for Epoxy Quartet that I did this year, is called "Out of Reach." I am more comfortable with calling this a composition, because it has a clear harmonic structure and form, a clear melody, and there is little melodic improvisation in that sense. I wrote it initially behind my piano, and it works solo piano as well. With the band, however, there is a lot of space for the band to fill in in terms of *sound and texture*. We mainly worked on playing together with a certain image in mind. This is something I discussed with Renard Aust in our interview because it is hard to communicate this to the band. Eventually, I ended up verbally describing the image to the band that I had in mind when composing the song. In the recording from my RPL with Marc 11th of March you can actually hear me describing the image to the band before we start to play (recording). From my RPL reflection:

> For "Out of Reach", Marc told me to play the chords more serenely, bringing them into space. No arpeggios. This was already my intention when composing, but good to be reminded of it. It worked really well. Marc told me to compose in more detail what I expected from the rest of the band. I think part of this process is to leave space to co-develop the parts of the rest of the band. We practised a lot with playing on the basis of an image but with *different* images. Sometimes we used one image for the whole band, and sometimes separate images for each of us.

This song was pretty clear from the beginning and I am really happy about the subtle developments in sounds from Tuomas and Kim throughout other recordings we have done. Kim, for example, introduced subtle arpeggio's during my master recital (27:55), which we then kept in at our Bucharest concert (27:50). A lot of people after our concerts mention this song as one of their highlights for some reason. One of my personal favourites is this recording in Enschede on the 21st of March, mainly because of the focus we have and the beautiful sound of the space where we recorded in. Marc was also very happy with this recording and how it turned out to work from an image together.

> Niet heel veel pedaal, maar veel sacraler met gewoon een akkoord wat dan mag klinken. Bij de repetitie was dat al een groot verschil, maar nu hoor ik het weer dat werkt heel erg goed. En ook gewoon het stuk: waar iedereen wel speelt en niet speelt en wat ze dan willen doen, daar heb je natuurlijk ook ideeën over. *Dat maakt het heel sterk en coherent, heel cd waardig voor mij*.[34]

In conclusion, "Out of Reach" does not seem very improvised, but nevertheless, there is a lot of freedom for the band in sound and texture. During the RPL sessions, we developed a way to handle that freedom. During performances, the exact sound and parts of the band are still unclear, but we now know

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[34] Van Roon, Interview on Epoxy Quartet Recordings.

what we need to focus on to achieve the result we want and that people appreciate. The composition is still 'alive' in this sense. It works really well to focus on the projection of our sound in space and to keep a particular image in mind when playing the song. This connects well to my third intervention below.

(4) The fourth and fifth compositions that I have experimented with, have not been worked on as much during the RPL sessions as the ones mentioned above. However, during my last two RPL sessions with Tineke Postma and my main subject lessons around the same time, I discussed how Postma and Van Roon work when composing new music. From my RPL reflection:

> [Postma] often just starts to improvise and records it. Then she selects passages she likes and starts to play (along) with them. This way, her ideas become more interesting and creative. Her compositions often don't have any clear vertical harmony, because she writes lines and then counterlines. The harmony often is filled in last, if ever, and then Tineke studies her improvisations with the colours that appear in the music from this process. Tineke's writing process is very playful, creative, and intuïtive, [b]ut Tineke also reflects on the material she writes: if any particular part is slow or rhythmical, she will try to make a contrast in the other part of the composition. In short, she is aware of the use of musical parameters to create contrast.

This is interesting because where I have up until now tried to invite improvisation into my composition, Postma describes that her compositions often follow *from* her improvisations. This is in a sense the other way around, and I find it incredible that I never thought of the relationship between composition and improvisation in this way explicitly. I directly applied Postma's composition process to a new composition of mine, called "Metta" (score appendix 4), which I brought to my last RPL session and rehearsed together with Tineke (recording, 8th of June). The tune is then performed and recorded by Epoxy Quartet at my recital (11:30) and in Bucharest (11:55), but my main interest here is the compositional process. Where I was first stuck with a certain idea, these insights from Postma helped compose the rest of the piece.

With her different approach to composition, Postma helped me to work towards my first intervention listed below, finding the grey area between composition and improvisation. Where beforehand I was bringing improvisation into composition, now I realised that I could also do it the other way around. This connects really well with what Schuiling writes about Mengelberg; that they always recorded their improvisations and listened back to select any good ideas, to make them into compositions. "Metta" may not be a composition that is co-developed during the RPL session, but I list it here because of how relevant this compositional approach appeared to me during the RPL with Postma.

(5) Finally, the last piece of data collected through rehearsing and recording with the Epoxy Quartet has to do with a composition called "Made". This is in fact an older composition of mine, and I have a recording of it from June 22nd, 2021. This enables me to compare it effectively a year later, when I played it at my master recital (start 32:23), and halfway through the year when we rehearsed it on the 21st of January 2022 (recording). I think the difference between the recordings is huge: the whole arrangement sounds a lot more developed, and the piano solos are more interesting, and more explorative in the colours and lines (recital from 37:20). At my recital, Tuomas takes the space to start with a drum intro, and at 40:39 I trust my intuïtion to drop the main vamp and start a direct dialogue with Martijn. All of these things are new in my playing and have resulted from a year of experimentation and

reflection. They indicate that I trust more on my intuïtion when performing, which is listed as an intervention below. In this sense, my relatively old composition "Made" functions in this research as a tool for assessing the progress and development of my personal skills as a pianist. As developing these skills is one of my main goals this cycle, "Made" is a crucial component to the research and shows a positive progress.

3.1.5 Interventions

In this section, I discuss the interventions that I have made based on (1) my experimentation during RPL sessions with Epoxy Quartet and coaches, (2) development of new compositions/materials for the quartet based on concepts that were introduced to me by experts during interviews, and (3) reflections by myself, coaches, and bandmembers during or after the RPL sessions. The above items have resulted in three interventions, that are reflected in the research outcome as well. In short, I have changed the way I compose and develop new music for and with Epoxy Quartet, based on the interviews and experiments performed, and I have identified and developed some of the skills necessary to function well as a pianist in this context. These changes are discussed in detail below, and are identifiable in the research outcome, that is, the new compositions and recordings with my quartet.

Intervention 1: New Compositional Process for Epoxy Quartet
During this cycle I have started to research instant composition and applied it in the five compositions discussed above. This practical employment of the ideas that appeared relevant during the analysis of the interviews at the start of the cycle has changed the way I work with Epoxy Quartet and the way I compose for them. Importantly, the compositions I write are unfinished, often based on previous improvisations, and are designed to invite improvisation and experimentation with certain musical parameters. This means they have to be co-developed during rehearslas with the band.

In general, the ideas behind Mengelberg's composition to actively invite improvisation into a composition is visible in "Three Strikes Out," which is a simple 4-bar melody or gesture, that functions as a starting point for a instant composition performance. We work on this material with the band until we find directions for it to develop in that we like. Similarly, "Out of Reach" needed co-development in terms of arangement and texture. Here the composition is more pre-defined in terms of harmony and melody, but the freedom to improvise is found along different musical parameters. Another song, "Shelter" started out as a very clear harmonic and melodic structure, but with a very particular meaning and intention behind it. We worked together with the band to open up this existing form, so that we can express the meaning and intention behind the song more freely and personally during performances. To reflect this, I made a new score, which is discussed below.

As Schuiling notes, often Mengelberg and Bennink compose tunes based on ideas they like in recordings. Similarly, Postma also describes that she often just starts to improvise and records it. Next, she selects passages she likes and starts to play (along) with them. This way, her ideas become more interesting and creative. At the end of the session, Postma referred to a section of Kenny Werner's *Effortless Mastery* on "the fear of composing."[35] Werner observes that composers often have fear of composing something bad, and that this pressure can influence your writing process in a negative way. Rather, according to Werner, you need to let go of the need to compose something beautiful. This will

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[35] Werner and Aebersold, *Effortless Mastery*.

make your composition process more creative and easy, and therefore you will probably write better material. This connected in a very clear way to what Postma described as her own improvisation-based composition process and what Schuiling described as a practice of recording and analyzing in Mengelberg's and Bennink's workflow. I applied this particular approach to composing in my newest composition called "Metta" ([recording](#) at 11:55, score appendix 4). I improvised and recorded myself, and played around with part of the recording that I liked. I then re-improvised the B-part of the composition in the same way.

Intervention 2: Working with graphic scores, labels, and gestures
From the interview with Renard Aust I have taken ideas how to reflect this new way of composing in a score. He introduced working with boxes, gestures, shared and individual rules, labels to communicate where and how improvisation should take place, and to bring across the sound or image I have in mind. Additionally, Aust and Postma instructed me to have more attention for the specific members of the band that perform a composition when composing and designing a score. The scores for Epoxy Quartet are designed with a specific musical parameter in mind along which we improvise. Some scores have been redesigned to get across more clearly how and where there is space for improvisation. This intervention is visible in the new score of "Shelter" in appendix 4, which includes graphic elements, has no defined ending or beginning, and rather works with boxes labeled A and B. This also resulted in new [recordings](#) (2:22 onwards) of "Shelter" using the new score. Additionally, these insights have led to the composition of "Three Strikes Out," which uses a simple 4-bar gesture that is used by the quartet to paraphrase and improvise with.

Intervention 3: Instant Composition During Improvisation
Lastly, because of this new way of composing, our improvisations have become more structured, have a better sense of direction, and we listen better to each other. Instant composition is more structured and coherent, but nevertheless invites a lot of interplay and listening to each other. Indeed, Tineke Postma and Nils Haften both mention that it is important to stick to compositional ideas during improvisation, working with rules, or parameters, as the improvisation then starts to become more deliberate and coherent. During the experiments in the RPL sessions Epoxy Quartet has started to research this gray area between improvisation and composition. During the rehearsals, we consistently stretch our improvisatory freedom until we notce that the essence of a song is lost. In the RPL reflections, I highlight the fact that a lot of our performances are minimally predefined and that this ensures that we are focussed on each other when performing.

The last interview that is part of this research cycle was with Marc van Roon. Van Roon's remarks on my recordings with Epoxy Quartet confirmed to me that different interventions had indeed taken place in my improvising and performing. Van Roon, for example, comments on the interplay in the recording that he thinks that "it's the feeling of doing something together. That's a nice feeling. Solidarity, meaning. It results in coherence - and I can hear that in the music."[36] This quote indicates that our improvisation with Epoxy Quartet is becoming more coherent and meaningful, and thus is moving more towards instant composition. Van Roon also noted that I trust my intuïtion more, apparent from the fact that I dared to react in the moment to what I heard was happening in the band.[37] This was in response to the [recording](#) of "Out of Reach" in Enschede and the piano intro of "Shelter" in Bucharest ([recording](#) at 2:25). Van Roon

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[36] Marc van Roon, Interview on Epoxy Quartet Recordings, interview by Koen Gijsman, audio recording, March 22, 2022. [Link](#) to the audio recording. Full annotated transcript, see appendix 3.
[37] Van Roon.

observes that this ability to respond in the moment has become part of my competency and affordances in my professional practice:

> [W]hat does it yield to discuss and practice certain matters in a company that you have created with people you admire and trust? Well, you now notice that it provides you with the courage to say, "I will now play the melody against the agreement, but I feel it so strongly intuitively that it needs to happen now." [...] Because you have structured the band in such a way, and you are in such a working process together, you can now relate to your own intuition in this way. This produces something very beautiful and has a transformative quality.[38]

Even though Van Roon is very happy about my courage to trust my intuïtion, both Van Roon and Stefan Lievestro mention that I can trust my intuition even more. During multiple RPL sessions, Stefan Lievestro and Marc van Roon have advised me to play more intuitively and to place more trust in the natural movements of my hands, "getting the mind in the body." Importantly, Van Roon mentioned in the quote above that the process I have with my band during the RPL sessions now enables me to trust more in my intuïtion, marking it as a sustainable change within the capabilities of my professional practice. This intervention is great to highlight, as it was part of what Franz von Chossy and Kim Jäger advised me to work on during their feedback on my first reference recording. According to Von Chossy, this is part of staying close to my own musical identity.[39] Moments where I trust my intuition are, among other things, the outro and piano solo of "Made" during my recital (40:39), where I drop out of the vamp, which is a big risk. The vamp is more or less the key element of the tune and my intuition is often not to let go of it as it brings structure and coherency. However, now it felt like a limitation and a little boring. It took a lot of courage to make that decision on the spot, but I like how it turned out. Similarly, in a different recording, I really trusted my hands to make decisions intuitively during the piano solo (01:51) and intro in "Three Strikes Out" in the recording of the 21st of March.

3.1.6 Outcomes

The outcomes for this research cycle fall apart into two categories: recordings and compositions/scores. I will continue by discussing these three categories separately.

Reference Recordings: Epoxy Quartet
Naturally, one of the outcomes of the first cycle is the reference recording of cycle #1, "Shelter". Alongside this recording, I did two recording sessions with Epoxy Quartet, recording a total of 5 original compositions and some free improvisation, some of which we recorded in both sessions so we could choose afterwards. The preparation for these recordings happened a lot during RPL sessions. In this particular recording, you can hear how the band has grown in their ability to "play with the space as the 5th player", and I think that in this particular recording, I really play a lot following my intuïtion, especially when accompanying Cosimo and taking over the lead near the end of the improvisation section. This performance as a whole conveys really well the narrative that the song represents for me. Further reflection and feedback are discussed below.

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[38] Van Roon.
[39] Von Chossy, Written interview with Franz von Chossy.

New Scores & Compositions

During my first research cycle I used the feedback of my teachers and coaches to compose three new compositions - "Metta", "Three Strikes Out", and "Out of Reach" - and one new score for "Shelter", a composition from a year ago which I rerecorded for my reference recording.[40] All scores are attached in Appendix 4. Recordings for all the songs except "Metta" are attached in Appendix 1.

The new score of "Shelter" represents in a better way how I want the quartet to perform the music. Renard Aust provided a lot of different feedback on how to achieve this in the interview during my data collection. The composition process of "Metta" was guided by Tineke Postma and Marc van Roon; during my RPL session and main subject lesson, I discussed that I often have trouble developing a single idea into a whole composition. Especially the feedback from Postma discussed above helped a lot to compose the B section of "Metta". "Three Strikes Out" was composed using interval cycles, one of the techniques discussed with Stefan Lievestro during one of the RPL sessions with him. I really like the fact that I am now composing material that I have to study myself. The composition process of "Out of Reach" was not discussed with any of my teachers, but developing the composition with the band happened entirely during RPL sessions, especially the coaching by Marc on playing with an image and projecting in space was very valuable.

3.1.7 Feedback, Reflection, and Conclusion

Feedback Reference Recording #2: Shelter

At the end of this research cycle, I have recorded (running time 6:38) one of my own compositions with Epoxy Quartet. The piece is called "Shelter", recorded 25th of February with Kim Jäger on the cello, Cosimo Genitili on the saxophone, and Tuomas Ruokonen on drums. The recording is mixed by myself, a sheet is attached in Appendix 4. In fact, I recorded the song a year ago as well with a different ensemble. This way I can make a direct comparison with my playing from a year ago, which I find an interesting aspect of this reference recording.[41] During three RPL sessions, I have collected feedback from my coaches, which I summarize below. Additionally, I played the recordings at the end of the three interviews to see if any relevant feedback would come from this. This is also summarised below.

Stefan Lievestro was really happy with the recording of "Shelter". He really liked how free it was, how we used the space, and how well the melodic material supported the feel of the tune. He told me to trust more in my intuïtion and to let go of what I have been studying. He mentioned that I should groove more because it is something I like to do - I should just start grooving if I feel like it would be nice during any free improvisation.

Nils Haften commented that the middle section felt too long and that we could have gone a little bit more far out during the improvisation. He thought the recording had a great sound, however, the space sounded nice and the piano and cello interfering with each other was a nice effect. Nils was happy about the fact that the free sections of the recordings were not too idiomatic. We talked about playing with contrasts in parameters, playing with a lot of dominance, and holding on to your ideas slightly longer. I

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[40] Koen Gijsman et al., *Out of Reach - Epoxy Quartet* (Rotterdam, 2022); Koen Gijsman et al., *Shelter - Koen Gijsman Quartet* (Zwolle, 2021); Koen Gijsman et al., *Shelter - Epoxy Quartet* (Rotterdam, 2022); Koen Gijsman et al., *Three Strikes Out - Epoxy Quartet* (Rotterdam, 2022).

[41] for the old version, see Gijsman et al., *Shelter - Koen Gijsman Quartet*; for the new version, see Gijsman et al., *Shelter - Epoxy Quartet*.

also brought in that we could play scores and contrasts negatively, or play more of a movement, or even something like a word or image.

Marc van Roon noted that I should let go of my urge to conduct the composition from behind my instrument, it makes my playing too full. I need to play more with the space and listen to all the effects my playing has in the space and with the other players. Also, I should use less pedal. I actually enjoyed very much focusing more on the other members of the band and listening to all the resonance of my playing. It was super nice to enjoy and receive the sound we produce as a band in the space. It also gave our performance more weight and more intention. Marc also noted that in the mayhem section, the band needs to focus on the parts of our instrument that resonate best in space. How can we make the most of our instruments? It's important to realise this if you want to make a lot of noise but still sound nice.

In the interview I did with Renard Aust, he told me that "if you put something very personal into your music, and you want to make your band respond to that, you should not only consider presenting your personal meaning to them, but consider finding something to trigger a feeling in *them*."[42] Later on in the interview he elaborated on this when we said that "this is something from your experience with someone, but something similar probably happened to your band members. They too can access and use their own experience and feelings."[43] This relates to something Marc said during one of the RPL sessions, namely that it doesn't really matter *what* the image is, as long as the whole band projects their playing in space through the use of an image.

Renard also gave me some feedback on how to present musical material in a written score so that it is more clear how the composition is intended to sound, and along which lines there is room for improvisation. I asked Renard to give feedback on my renewed score for Shelter, which he was very happy with. He suggested trying to leave out some more information to invite the musicians to improvise more. For both scores, see Appendix 4.

In comparing both the recordings of Shelter a lot of differences become clear to me. The new recording is way freer, has a better grasp of the centre of the song, the dynamics vary more, and the song feels overall a little more grown-up. Even so, a lot of the coaches comment that I need to (1) let go of my tendency to take on the role of bandleader while performing, (2) learn to rely even more on my intuïtion and stick with the ideas that come from it, and (3) work on how to convey my ideas more clearly through scores.
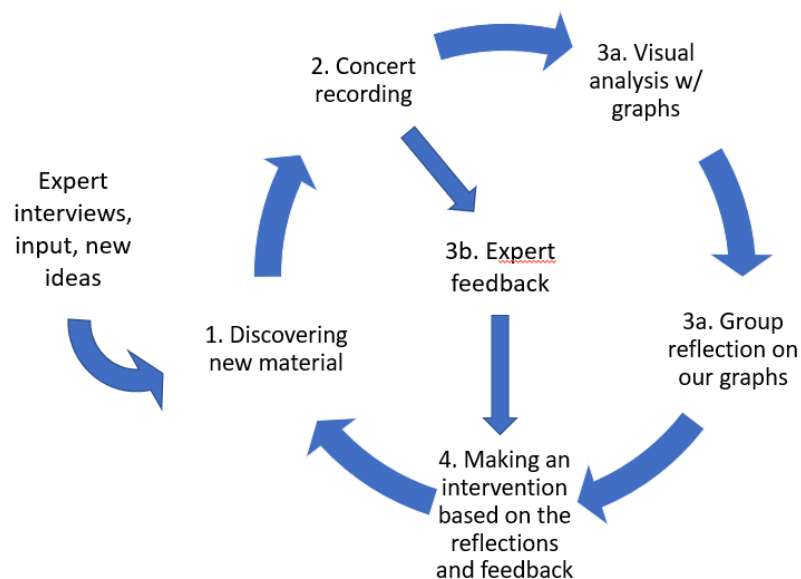
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[42] Aust, Interview on scores.
[43] Aust (quote rewritten for grammatical clarity).

3.2 Research Cycle #2

3.2.1 Overview

During the second cycle of my artistic research, I have developed a research methodology to analyse and reflect as a band on our recorded performances. The cycle is visually represented below. I started by gathering inspiration and new ideas on how to perform something that is in between composition and improvisation. This took place in an RPL session with Stefan Lievestro, and by doing an interview with improviser, composer, and saxophonist Kika Sprangers. Next, I selected one idea (that I describe more in depth below) and developed and rehearsed it with Epoxy Quartet. I decided to perform this new material in our upcoming concert and to record it. I gathered feedback on the recordings, again during an RPL with Stefan Lievestro, and proceeded to select three pieces of music from our concert to analyse with the band. Informed by two of the research clinics, literature on creative facilitation, and the feedback of AR1, I designed a visual questionnaire for the band members to partake in. I analysed the completed questionnaires by printing and annotating them, and by layering them digitally. In the next two RPL sessions with Nils Haften, I presented the annotated graphs to the band and we collectively reflected on the visual data. I recorded and transcribed these reflections, as we worked together to formulate conclusions, points of interest, or trends in our playing. In these critical reflections, we also discussed a lot of weak spots in our improvisations, and together with the band, I wrote down assignments, exercises, or musical ideas that improve our playing. These are listed as the interventions in this cycle. During the RPL sessions with Nils Haften, we recorded three improvisations where we implement a selection of the interventions directly in our playing. The last improvisation forms the reference recording at the end of this cycle.

3.2.2 Reference Recording #2

At the end of the previous research cycle, I [recorded](#) one of my own compositions with Epoxy Quartet (running time 6:38). The piece is called "Shelter", recorded on the 25th of February with Kim Jäger on cello, Cosimo Genitili on saxophone, and Tuomas Ruokonen on drums. The recording is mixed by myself, a sheet is attached in Appendix 4.

3.2.3 Feedback and Reflection: "Shelter"

The feedback I received from experts and bandmembers on my second reference recording is briefly summarized below. Next, I reflect on the given feedback.

Stefan Lievestro was really positive about the reference recording. He really liked how free it was, how the band used the space, and how well the melodic material supported the feel of the tune. He told me to trust more in my intuïtion. Nils Haften found the middle section felt too long and that we could have gone a little bit more far out during the improvisation. He was happy about the fact that the free sections of the recordings were not too idiomatic. Marc van Roon noted that I should let go of my urge to conduct the composition from behind my instrument, it makes my playing too full. I need to play more with the space and listen to all the effects my playing has in the space and with the other players.

I categorize the feedback in four main points: that I need to learn to (1) let go of my tendency to take on the role of bandleader while performing, (2) rely even more on my intuïtion and dare to go further out, (3) listen more to all the effects my playing has on other players, and (4) anticipate on and avert sections of the improvisation that become boring. I actually enjoy very much focusing more on the other members of the band and listening to all the resonance of my playing. It also gives our performance more weight and more intention.
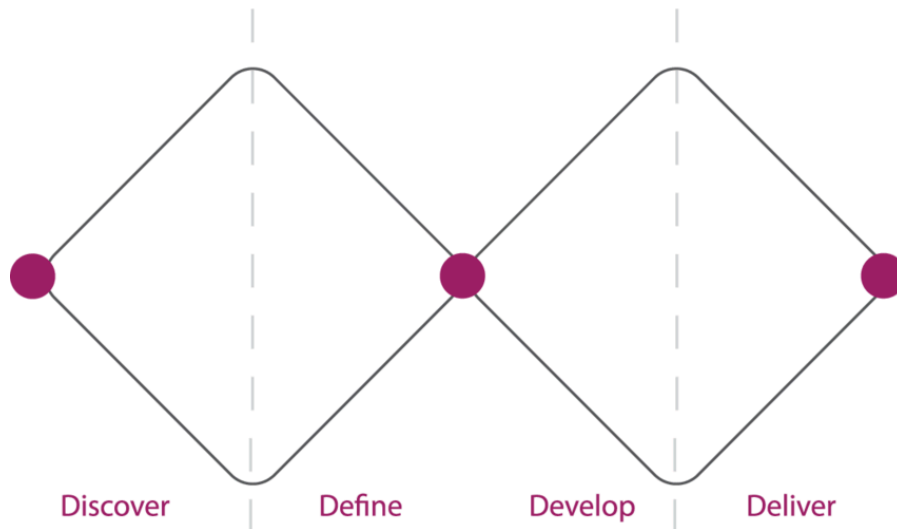
3.2.4 Data Collection & Analysis

1. Discovering New Material

The first phase of my second research cycle is a phase of discovery. Aside from gathering feedback from AR1 on September 22nd and the feedback on my reference recording, the start of a new research cycle is a moment where I gather new ideas and find new inspiration. This is a form of divergent thinking: my research aim is to find how it is possible to perform music where composition and improvisation are blended, and this can be done in a lot of different ways. This is illustrated below in the first section of the "double diamond" design model of the UK Design Council.[44]

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[44] *What Is the Framework for Innovation? Design Council's Evolved Double Diamond* (London: UK Design Council, 2021).

Discover   Define   Develop   Deliver

In the discovery phase, I collect new ways of combining improvisation and composition by doing interviews with experts. This cycle, I did a semi-structured interview with Kika Sprangers, and I did an RPL session with Stefan Lievestro discussing and trying two new concepts for improvisation based on "paraphrasing" and "density".[45] The concept based on paraphrasing works as follows: each band member selects one element from a jazz standard and uses this as a starting point for a group improvisation. In the improvisation based on density, all the band members try to play with a similar note density but avoid playing together in a groove or pulse. During the RPL session with Stefan, we did two improvisations based on the standard "You Don't Know What Love Is" (take 1, take 2), and one improvisation based on density.

The second phase of the double diamond is a phase of defining or convergent thinking, and selecting which idea is the best one to continue to work with, which has the most potential, and is the most feasible. I made this decision after the RPL session with Stefan based on his advice and the input from the band. Stefan strongly advised me to try the paraphrasing approach with the whole band again in the future, since he had had very good experiences with it. The band was also enthusiastic to give it a try and already mention two different standards to work with. Quoting from my written RPL reflection, "I decided to apply the paraphrasing experiment in the concert that was coming up with Epoxy in Brebl." Unfortunately, the interview with Kika Sprangers only took place the day before our concert with Epoxy Quartet - it had to be rescheduled due to her agenda. This is why I have decided to use the input from Stefan for this cycle and keep the interview with Kika Sprangers as an option for later.

2. Concert Recording

As part of the definition phase, I recorded the concert performed with Epoxy Quartet at Brebl on the 28th of September. We played two sets of 45 minutes, the audio was recorded by Nikki Rutten and mixed by myself. The full recording is available here. In the upcoming sections of this research cycle, I have worked with this recording in two different ways. Firstly, and most importantly, I extracted from the concert the recordings of the improvisations based on paraphrasing a standard as described above. There are three

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[45] Kika Sprangers, Interview on improvisation and composition in No Man's Land, interview by Koen Gijsman, audio recording, September 27, 2022.

recordings, namely "Brebl 1, I Mean You", "Brebl 2, Someday My Prince Will Come", and "Brebl 3, Honeywood".

To illustrate how this works, I have annotated the start of the score of "I Mean You", a jazz standard by Monk. In the recording, you can hear that every band member takes something different from the original musical material and bring it to the improvisation. Kim takes the chromatically moving fifths in the bass, marked in red. This is the first thing played in the recording. Next, I join in, paraphrasing the pentatonic line from the original piece marked in yellow. We both decided to start in the same key as the original tune, marked in blue. Then later in the piece (3:10), Tuomas starts to play a traditional jazz swing groove and Kim plays a walking bass line, something that is also related to the original musical material. Nevertheless, the improvisation we play does not at all sound like "I Mean You". This process is repeated in the other recordings. After taking these improvisations out from the whole concert, I sent them to my fellow band members together with a visual questionnaire. This process is represented as 3a and in the infographic at the start of the chapter, and I elaborate on this below.

Apart from this, represented as section 3b in the infographic above, I gathered feedback from Stefan Lievestro on the recordings of compositions we have been playing for a year now. They constitute the rest of the concert at Brebl and it made sense to me to also ask for feedback on this. However, this feedback turned out to be less relevant than the data from 3a in the process of making interventions, and I only mention it here for the sake of completeness.

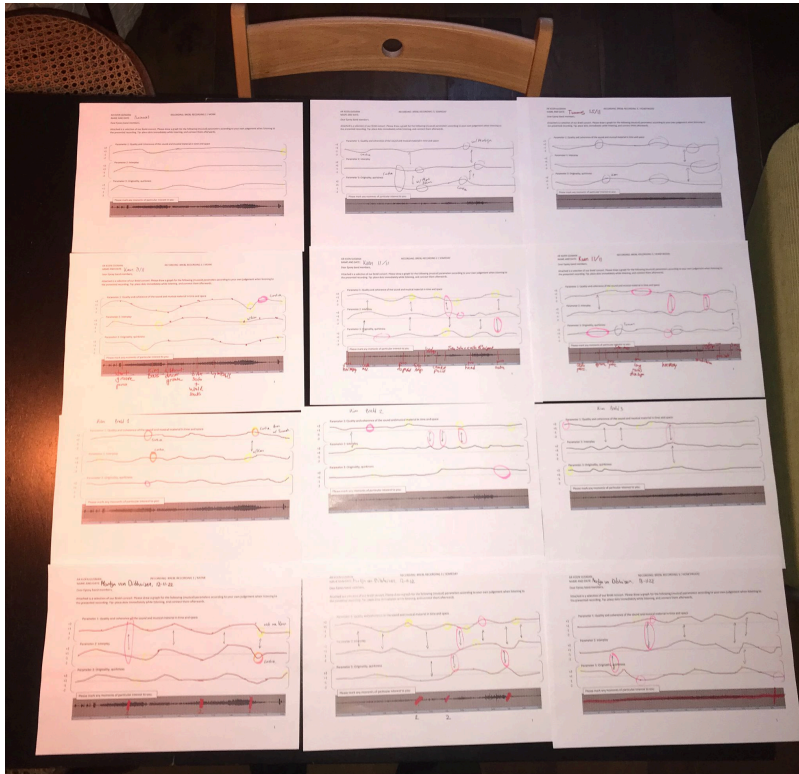### 3a. Visual Analysis with Graphs

Phase three in the double diamond model is development. In this section, I describe the development and analysis process of the recordings from the Epoxy Quartet concert in Brebl. During the clinic on score annotation, I had an interesting discussion with Chiel van Rijn, Minju Park, and Ned McGowen on how to make visual annotations on an improvised piece of music. In written music, it is more more obvious how to work with score annotations because there is a full score available, but because it is unrealistic to make a full note-by-note transcription of an improvised performance it is more complicated to make annotations in this context. Therefore, I decided to design a different way to visually represent a performance, which I

call a visual questionnaire. An empty visual questionnaire is pictured below. There is a timeline and a waveform representation of a recording, and on top, there are three (empty) graphs to be filled in by the respondents (in this particular case my fellow band members).
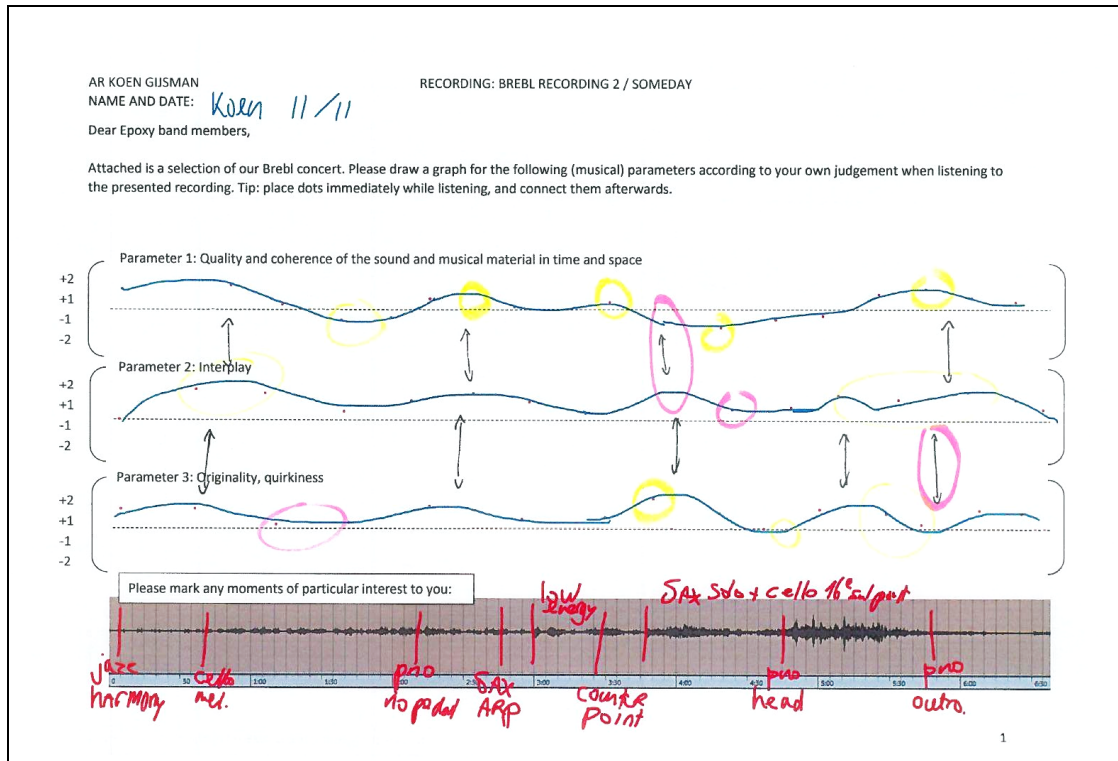

Each graph represents a certain musical parameter which I have selected based on expert feedback in the first cycle. The top graph represents the "quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space." This reflects the fact that instant composition implies that an improvisation should have a sense of coherence, and is about placing material in time and space. In the second graph, the interplay is scored by respondents. This is defined by Marc van Roon's feedback on my previous reference recording: I should listen more to the effect my playing has on other players. In the second RPL session with Nils Haften this year, I correspondingly define interplay as "if you can sense the band members are listening to each other," and Tuomas Ruokonen (drummer in Epoxy Quartet) adds to this in line with Van Roon that interplay can be defined as "playing something, and then it having a clear effect on other [players]." The third graph is for originality or quirkiness. This is defined by me as "whether the music is in any way surprising." This parameter is based on the feedback that I should learn to trust more on my intuïtion, which is mentioned by Nils, Stefan, and Marc in the RPL sessions of the previous cycle. The main idea here is that if we trust more in our intuïtion, more creative and original things can happen in the improvisation. Together, these parameters represent to me the most important goals we as a band have when improvising. We want to interact with each other, and play something original and surprising, but also coherent.

Marc van Roon feedbacked briefly on the layout and he noted that the time scale on the X-axis should be detailed enough to get interesting results. For the recordings, I therefore made sure that every 10 or 5 seconds are visibly indicated on the timeline. After checking with Marc, I sent out the questionnaires and corresponding recordings to my fellow band members. Upon receiving the completed graphs, I annotated them by laying them out in columns for every composition, and rows for every band member:
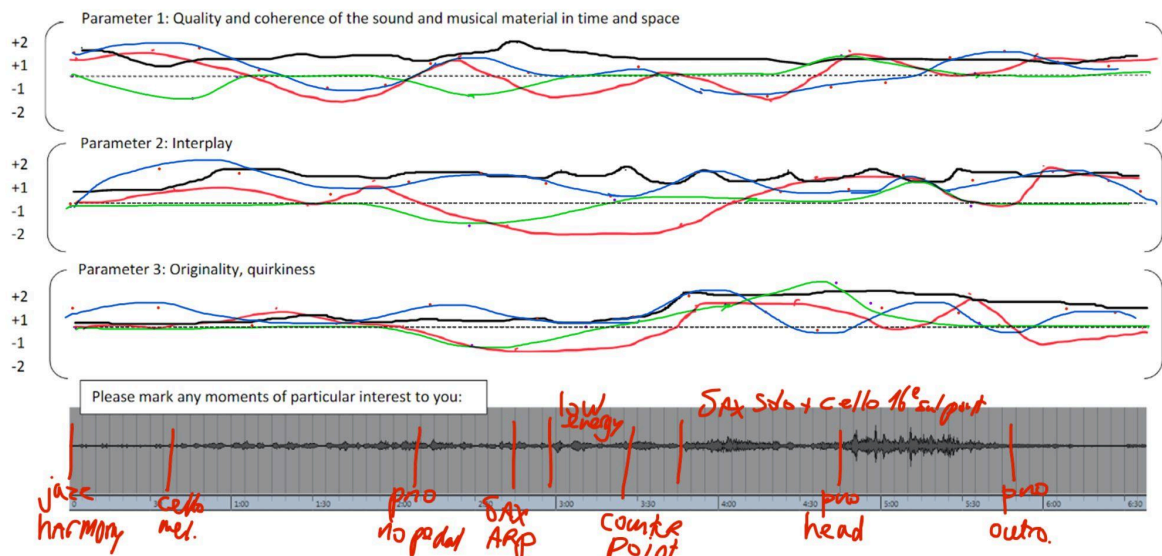

A scan of all the completed and annotated graphs is visible in Appendix 5. The annotation is colour-coded: I used a yellow marker to mark moments where the band has similar graphs in a certain parameter - note that these are of course subjective measurements, so I marked the moments where the direction and form of the graphs are similar, they do not necessarily have to represent the exact same value. I used pink to mark moments where three graphs would be in accordance, but interestingly one band member was in disagreement. Moreover, I used two-sided arrows to mark moments where within the graphs of one questionnaire, there was a correlation between two parameters. For example, if both interplay and originality started to go up together I would mark this with a bi-directional arrow. If two graphs within one questionnaire obviously were moving in opposite directions, I draw an arrow and circled it with pink. Here is one example of a completed and annotated graph:

From this annotated graph above we can now make certain observations, such as that parameter 1 and parameter 2 often correlate according to myself, except for when the saxophone solo starts, where my interplay is going up, but the quality is going down. Moreover, we can observe that everywhere where there is a yellow marking, the shape or direction of my graphs is in line with the rest of the band. This means that at least two other people have marked the originality going up when the saxophone solo starts.

A separate way in which I processed the graphs of the band members was to lay them over each other digitally, to have the ability to directly compare the graphs with each other in one document. Below one graph is pictured where all of the band members are layered over each other. Kim is black, Tuomas is green, Martijn is red, and I am blue. This makes for a chaotic image, but still, there are some trends visible. Note that I brought these graphs with me digitally to the RPL sessions so that we could interactively switch on and off certain layers to compare, for example, two or three people together. This graph is aimed to indicate to the reader what kind of overview this presents the band with. In the graph below, for example, it is easy to see that often lines will move in the same direction. Not all of them necessarily at the same rate, but nevertheless in the same direction. Moreover, it's easy to identify sets of lines that move identically if the graphs are layered in this way, indicating that two or more people from the band have the same evaluation of a certain parameter at that time in the music. For example, in the graph for parameter 1, Martijn and I (red and blue) were more in parallel motion, indicating that we both thought the coherence was good at the start, but got less after 1:30, and then got better again at 2:00. An interesting question here, is that Kim and Tuomas (black and green), seem to move in exactly opposite directions.

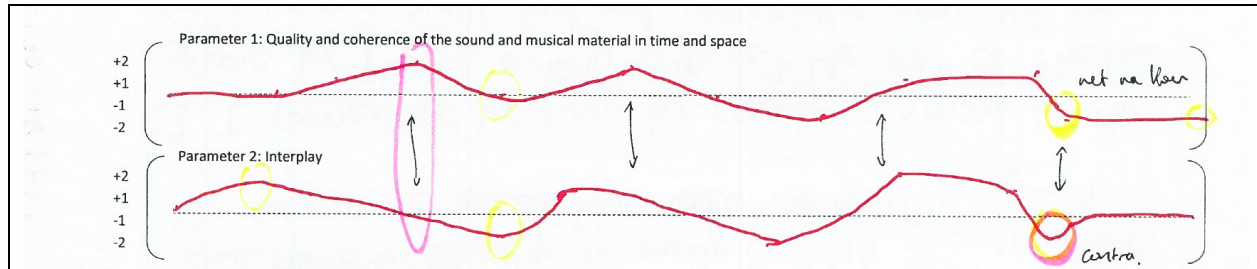### 3a. Reflecting on the Graphs During RPL Sessions

Annotating and presenting the graphs made by each band member facilitates the band and RPL coaches to make the kind of observations I have written above. These observations function as a point of departure for a reflective discussion within the band that I have led during RPL sessions. In other words, the analysis of our performance by employing these graphs is in fact a tool to enrich and improve our reflective, critical and artistic process as a band. The graphs by themselves cannot lead to any significant intervention or conclusion. It is necessary that we as a group interpret the data presented in the graphs and discuss their implications.

During the two RPL sessions in November with Nils Haften as my coach, I presented the graphs and led a group discussion. The aim of these discussions was to identify interesting patterns in the graphs, interpret the patterns, and discuss what in our performance had caused us to draw the graphs this way. Next, I worked with the band to find patterns that were indicative of aspects of our performance that we could improve. Afterwards, we formulated interventions based on these findings. To take you along in this process, I elaborate on a lot of citations from the RPL discussion I transcribed below. Both of these group discussions have been recorded (discussion 11 November, discussion 18 November). In my written RPL reflections I have transcribed them in full. As you can hear me explain to the band in the second recording at 12:30:

> I'm interested in how this visual representation affects our reflection on our performance. I like that all the band members first for themselves draw a line, and then afterwards you can reflect on it together. It changes how we reflect. You can see that we're not always in agreement, but it's interesting.
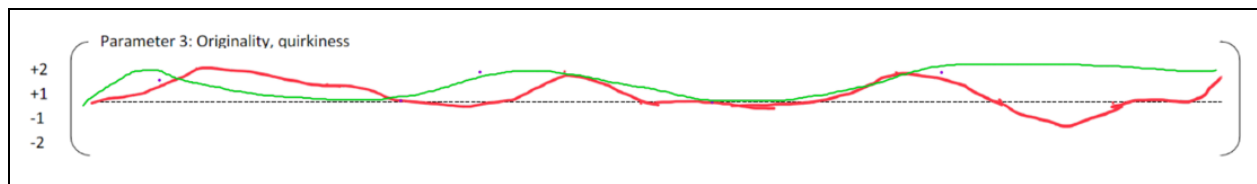
Note that there are no quotes by Kim in this section because she could not make it to both of the RPL sessions with Nils, unfortunately.

In one part of the discussion, we noticed that there are a lot of spots where parameter 1 and parameter 2 correlate. Here is one example of a graph in which there are three clear moments where the graph for interplay and quality coïncide:

Quoting from the RPL transcription, I say "Interestingly, often it is the case for all of us that interplay correlates with quality and coherence." Martijn also notes that "interplay and quality often go together for me." I hook onto that, mentioning that "it makes sense to me that interplay and quality relate. This could also mean that if we focus more on interplay, the quality will go up." This is interesting because it connects very well to the feedback already mentioned in section 3.2.3.

Martijn also noted about this graph, that at 1:00, at the pink double arrow, "there is a spot where my interplay is going down, but the quality is going up." Here, he said he liked the sound and coherence but felt like we did not develop the musical material as much as he would have liked, so he marked interplay going down. I noted that as well, but "I wrote this down as a lack of quality. If there is no development, this to me is something more of quality than of interplay. I think Tuomas marked it in the same way. At that moment in the music, Kim starts playing a bassline, and everyone goes up in quality. It's interesting to me you don't see this as interplay."

In the context of developing material, it is interesting to discuss a different part of the discussion. Here, we observed that in our graphs for originality (parameter 3), we often see a wavy pattern, such as in the combined graphs of Tuomas (green) and Martijn (red) for the recording of "I Mean You" pictured above. About this graph, Tuomas said "As you can see from my graph, things stayed pretty interesting for me. Then when things start to become boring, something happened. [...] We're more reactive players." I responded that I can see the same pattern from the graph but interpret it differently and focus on the fact that we are reactive in our playing, instead of proactive:

> [T]here are a couple of moments where it starts to get uninteresting and nobody makes a move. And then something happens. But it feels a lot to me like this should have happened 20 seconds earlier every time. As if

we need to realize it's uninteresting before we move, instead of anticipating more. [...] The moments I think are best, are when you feel music should go somewhere and it's going there. Then it's also not boring, because you're actively developing what you're playing.

This observation is recognized by Martijn and Nils during the session. Later on, Tuomas elaborated on his view, saying that "[m]aybe we should develop things faster. [...] For me, it sometimes lacked a sense of more drastic changes. I feel we stayed in a similar kind of material quite a lot during the [...] improvisations." I agree here with Tuomas, noting that "it's not that there are no ideas, it's just that they're there and nobody picks them up." Elsewhere I am more critical of Tuomas' desire for drastic changes because, in my opinion,

something happening [drastic changes] can be a good thing, but it can also be a disruption. I think we can try to focus more on the whole arch of an improvisation. If we focus more on the arch, it doesn't have to be a problem that you don't change the material because there's still room to develop and build up. [referring to the graphs] All of our arches are dynamically also a little bit similar. [...] We can mess with that.

Tuomas then agrees that "we often develop something and then get back to where we came from or come down dynamically or in density."

Martijn later on connects this to his own playing, because according to him, he sometimes has "a hard time listening to the band as a whole. If you're talking about the arch of something, you need to be aware of what others are doing. I think it's hard." Nils added to this that "Martijn is responding more than acting and bringing in new ideas." Nils said Martijn could make more decisions for himself. This could help with the general arch of the improvisation.

Based on these reflections, I suggest we can maybe do exercises where we already predefine our curve for intensity or other musical parameters, to get a feel of where we are in the piece, where we are going, and the general dynamic as a band. I also suggest we could do some more of the meditations we did the previous cycle since they were really good for getting in a space where you listen to the whole band and the effect of your own playing. At the end of the second RPL session with Nils, I wrote down the interventions I wanted to make in the improvising of the band and we directly brought them into practice by recording different improvisations. I turn directly to the interventions in the next section. The improvisations mentioned are listed as part of the outcomes of cycle #2.

3.2.5 Interventions

In this section I formulate three interventions that follow from the group reflections presented above. These interventions relate closely to the feedback discussed in section 2.2.3, as the interventions should form a direct and adequate response to the feedback given on my previous reference recording.

The first intervention I list here is based on the observation that the originality graphs often have a wavy pattern. As described in the previous section, this is because we get bored with what we're playing, before changing it. This means that as a band we either should pick up new ideas sooner, or we should

(1) focus more on the whole arch of an improvisation and make sure the musical material is constantly being developed. This intervention covers the fourth point of the feedback mentioned in 3.2.3, that we need to avert moments in the improvisation that become boring. In a slightly less clear way, it connects to the second point of feedback as well, which is that I should learn to rely more on my intuïtion and dare to go out further. The idea here is that if we rely more on intuition, we might pick up new ideas sooner because we have a more creative attitude. "Going further out", as Nils Haften calls it, is connected to the development of musical material. The longer we develop material, the more abstract we can get with it, while still remaining connected to the original material. This is what Nils means by "going further out". It is a natural progression when developing musical material in a free improvisation context.

The second intervention is mentioned by Martijn above. He noted that in order to connect to the whole arch of an improvisation, he has to listen to the whole band more carefully. Therefore, my second intervention is to (2) listen more to the whole band when improvising. This, of course, relates to our observation above, that interplay often correlates with the quality of the improvisations in the graphs. Listening more to the whole band facilitates in a very direct way the interplay between band members. This is also noted as the third item of the feedback on reference recording #2 in section 3.2.3, Marc's advice that I should listen more to the effect my playing has on my fellow musicians.

The third and final intervention for this cycle - and I am quoting myself from the RPL transcription here, is that (3) "the band has to be on the same page on the development of a common idea." This intervention is intended to meet the first point of feedback listed in section 3.2.3, namely that according to Marc and Stefan, I should let go of my tendency to take on the role of bandleader while improvising. The reasoning behind this is that if we listen better to each other, we can gravitate towards one musical idea that we develop in a democratic way and there is no longer a need for someone to take on the role of bandleader while improvising.
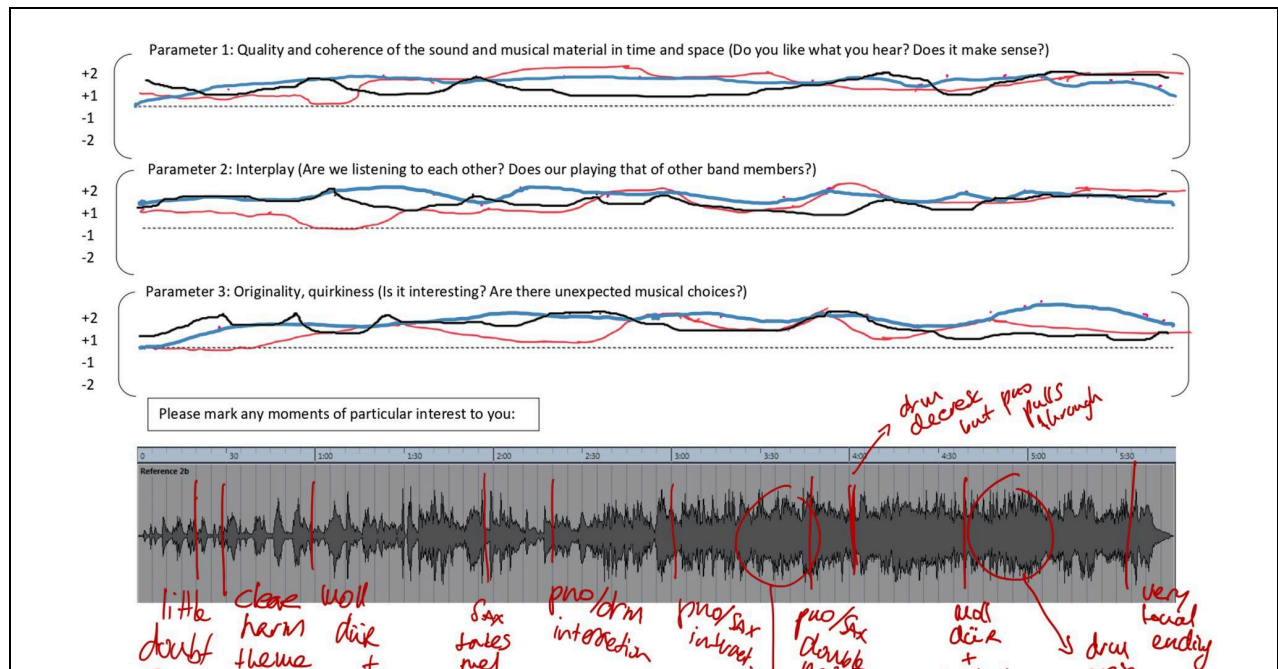
These interventions have been put into practice at the end of the two RPL sessions with Nils Haften. The recordings are discussed below, as they are part of the research outcome.

3.2.6 Outcomes

The last phase of the double diamond model is the deliverment phase. This phase is represented by the outcomes section in my research cycle. There are two main outcomes of this research cycle.

The first outcomes I discuss are the improvisations that I recorded after our discussions in the RPL sessions, where we try to incorporate our interventions directly into our performances. The recordings of the first and the second improvisation are part of the outcome of this cycle, but they are for now less relevant, as they are not my reference recording. I mention them here for completeness. I have selected the last one of these recordings as my reference recording #3. This recording features Tuomas Ruokonen on drums, Martijn van Ditshuizen on alto saxophone and myself on piano. It has a running time of 6m21s. It is a fully improvised instant composition, where our aim is to incorporate two of the listed interventions. (1) We aim to focus on the whole arch of the song in terms of dynamics and density, and we aim to make the arch different from the regular "wavy curve with a slow build-up and soft landing." (2) We aim to stick to one idea with the whole band and to all be aware of the fact that we develop this idea together. (3) As a prerequisite for the first two interventions, we aim to all listen to the band as a whole and the arch we make.

In the next section, I discuss the expert feedback on this recording. In addition to the feedback received from Daan Herweg, I asked the band again to make a new graph for the reference recording. It is pictured below. As becomes clear from the graph and waveform visualisation, we have a clear linear development in our density, which is different from other improvisations in this cycle. Furthermore, we have a very positive evaluation of the improvisation in terms of coherency, interplay and originality. Indeed, the graphs are a lot more aligned with each other than in previous visualizations. This indicates that the interventions have been successful and have had a positive impact on the artistic result. The direct response from the band after recording is discussed below.

The second outcome I would like to highlight is all the graphs and the concept of using visual questionnaires to enrich our artistic process as a band. This whole methodology is something that I have developed in this research cycle. I have actively asked for feedback from band members and experts on the design of the graphs, the definition and relevance of the parameters selected, and the value of the graphs once they are completed and annotated. This feedback is discussed in more detail below.

3.2.7 Feedback, Reflection, and Conclusion

In this section I discuss the expert feedback received on my reference recording, as well as the feedback and reflections collected on the research methodology more generally.

Feedback on Reference Recording #3
Daan Herweg observed that I can do more with my left hand and that he misses some low frequencies with the bass (and cello) missing. He is positive about the sensitivity of the interplay and how piano and saxophone develop certain ideas and stick to them. He thought it could have been more abstract at a certain point. With regards to drums, Herweg missed some concrete ideas and development. The drum part felt too much like a flow of consciousness. Finally, he liked the overall arch dynamically.

Kika Sprangers makes note of the open but assertive way of interacting together. According to her, we listen well to each other without waiting too much for one another. In contrast to Herweg, she likes the part of the drums. She warns that sometimes I tend to take on an accompanying role for the saxophone, which is not necessary. The different layers of solistic approaches are precisely what makes this kind of music interesting to Sprangers. In line with Herweg, she likes the dynamic arch and development of ideas.

Additionally, I directly asked Martijn and Tuomas for feedback on the recording during the RPL session and recorded their response. Even though they were happy about the improvisation, especially Tuomas feels with regards to intervention #2 that we could have trusted our intuïtion even more, by "grabbing more of each other's ideas." Together with Martijn, I reflected that concentrating on the arch of the whole improvisation gave me more self-confidence, and when Tuomas backed out in loudness and density, I was able to force him up again (this point is also marked in red at 4:00 in the graph above). Tuomas mentioned that he would have liked to disrupt more or hear more direct responses on his attempts to disrupt. I suggested that he should disrupt with more confidence if he wanted to elicit clear a response from us. All of us agreed that we should train our ability to stay more in the same energy and to build up incrementally for a longer period of time. I called this "stamina", but Tuomas preferred to name it "knowing how long ideas can last." Martijn especially liked "the contrast between the three of us, even though we stick to the same ideas." He regards this as an interesting form of interplay, and being aware of the sound as a whole. This indicates to me that, even though the band needs more practice with the listed interventions, the interventions themselves help to improve our artistic result a lot.

Reflections on the Research Methodology
As you may have noticed, there are merely three lines in the graph of my reference recording #3. The colour green for Tuomas is missing. This has a practical reason: in spite of the fact that the band likes the methodology and how it helps us to reflect on our improvisations, it is hard for Tuomas to make graphs on his own due to his visual impairment. This is one of the problems I have encountered during this research cycle.

Nevertheless, the use of visualisations in my research process is a great addition. Quoting myself from the RPL session transcription "now we know what we always do." When directly asked by me what the band think of the graphs and whether they are relevant, they answer that they "find these parameters clear and relevant. Quality is often a combination of originality and interplay. This makes sense." Tuomas has more difficulty with reading the graphs and is concerned that this might lead "to a bit forced improvisations." However, in the same RPL discussion, I convince Tuomas of the relevance of this approach "as an intervention in our process, to discover new ways of playing, to become more aware of other stuff, to train your intuïtion. We can find what kind of things, exercises, compositions, and attitude fits our band the best. What are weak points are, and how we can improve on them."

3.3 Research Cycle #3

3.3.1 Overview

In this last cycle of my artistic research, I continue along the lines of the previous cycles in developing new tools for the co-development and co-evaluation of instant composition-based performances. In this cycle specifically, together with my quartet, I focus on new ideas for creating a developmental arch in an improvised performance. As described in the previous cycle, one of the key interventions we would like to practice and incorporate more is the ability to develop our ideas along an arch. In the reference recording of the previous cycle, for example, this arch takes on the form of a slowly increasing density and loudness of musical material. In this cycle, however, I have steered Epoxy Quartet in the direction of narrative arches. As already mentioned in the RPL sessions of the first research cycle, stories, or sometimes even words or a simple sentence, can be very effective in directing and structuring an improvisation.

In this research cycle, however, the central tool for developing narrative arches in our improvisations is short films. During this cycle, Epoxy Quartet rehearsed by improvising live music to a selection of short films by Pixar. These films are great material because they have an incredibly strong narrative line, they only take a couple of minutes, and they often work great without original sound. Epoxy Quartet also performed this programme "Epoxy x Pixar" in a Codarts Yellowhouse concert on the 10th of March 2023. Unfortunately, the recordings of this concert have been lost due to a technical error.

A second tool for co-creation that is part of the research aim of this cycle, is to combine different pieces that are currently part of our repertoire in new and unexpected ways. As Schuiling writes about the ICP Orchestra, their "repertoire is not a stable set of objects, but a reciprocal process of negotiation between the musical material and the creative skills of musicians, as well as the social contexts in which these are performed."[46] Although there is a lot to say about the way in which the ICP developed this negotiation of their repertoire in their performance practice, the practical implications are pretty basic: ICP would create a setlist only minutes before going on stage, and they would use their compositions in a very open way, more like building blocks. For example, some compositions would blend into each other, or compositions that were not on the setlist would be played spontaneously. In a similar way, with Epoxy Quartet we have experimented with connecting our current repertoire to find new possibilities. My reference recording is a good example of this, where I combine a new composition of mine together with one of the narratives of the short films we worked on, to produce a new instantly composed performance.
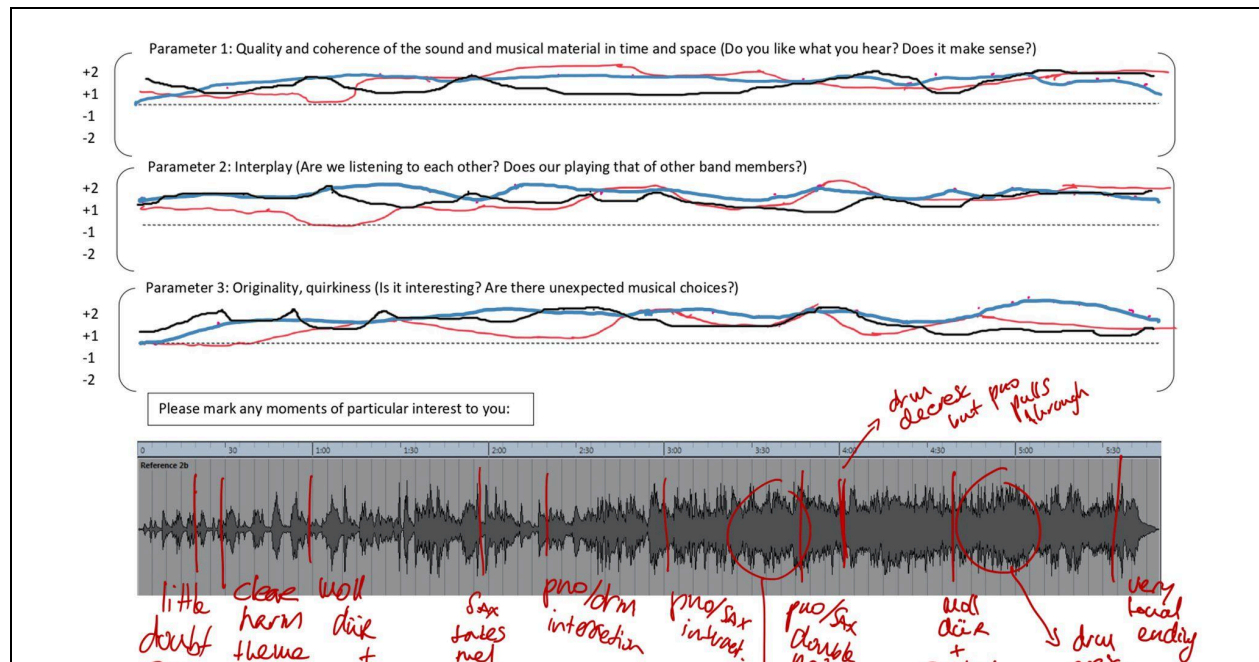
In addition to the tools for co-creation discussed above, Epoxy Quartet has incorporated a new tool for co-evaluation, based on the literature on creative facilitation. As described at the end of the previous cycle, the current evaluative methodology is appreciated by the band and RPL coaches and seems to have a positive effect on my artistic result. Furthermore, it is my aim to research if this methodology is also applicable to selecting ideas for compositions based on improvisations. In this cycle, I have done this by combining an exercise that Michael Moore suggested in a session to me with a tool for co-evaluation that I designed myself. Moore invited me to join him in an improvisation of five short pieces of less than a minute, aimed to quickly connect with each other and give birth to one idea. I combine this with a method of evaluating and selecting ideas based on grading individually, and later combining grades for group reflection. This is discussed in more detail under data collection and analysis.

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[46] Schuiling, *The Instant Composers Pool and Improvisation beyond Jazz*, 121.

3.3.2 Reference Recording #3

I have selected the last one of the improvisations that I recorded after our interventions in the RPL sessions of the previous cycle as my reference recording #3. This recording features Tuomas Ruokonen on drums, Martijn van Ditshuizen on alto saxophone and myself on piano. It has a running time of 6m21s. It is a fully improvised instant composition. I asked the band to complete a visual questionnaire for this particular recording (pictured below).

3.3.3 Feedback and Reflection

Daan Herweg comments on the performance, noting that the left hand on the piano could be more proficient and the bass frequencies are missing. He appreciates the interplay and development of ideas between the piano and saxophone but suggests more abstract musical idiom could have been incorporated. Additionally, he feels the drum part lacked concrete ideas and development. Overall, he likes the dynamic arch of the music. Kika Sprangers acknowledges the open and assertive interaction among the band members. She highlights attentive listening without excessive waiting. Unlike Herweg, she enjoys the drum part and finds the layering of solistic approaches intriguing. She cautions against taking on an accompanying role for the saxophone unnecessarily. Similar to Herweg, she appreciates the dynamic arch and idea development.

In addition to their comments, Martijn and Tuomas provided feedback during the recording session. Tuomas mentions that we could have trusted our intuition more and engaged with each other's ideas. Martijn reflects on the overall arch of the improvisation, which boosted his self-confidence and notes a marked point of increased intensity. Tuomas desires more direct responses to his attempts to disrupt. They agree on the importance of staying in the same energy and gradually building up over time.

As a band, I feel we acknowledge the need for more practice with the listed interventions but recognize their positive impact on improving the artistic outcome. The expert feedback is very positive overall. The contrast between us individually is appreciated within the band, we adhere to shared ideas, contributing to an interesting form of interplay and awareness of the overall sound.

3.3.4 Data Collection & Analysis

The data collection in this cycle falls apart into two sections: the first is about experimenting with narrative arches using Pixar short films and combining this with our existing repertoire. The second section is focused on an interview and improvisation session with Michael Moore, some exercises he suggested, and the co-evaluation of how we play these exercises during the RPL sessions.

A New Narrative: Epoxy x Pixar
In the reflections and feedback of cycle #2, the band members of Epoxy Quartet mark the artistic ambition to practice our ability to play with a developmental arch during our improvisations. That means, in concrete, that we stick to one musical idea as long as we can, this could be a melodic motif, a harmonic colour, or similar. We develop this idea in a particular direction. Often, this direction takes the shape of a musical parameter, such as loudness, density, dissonance, rhythmicality, or similar. We then find, while improvising, the developmental arch. We could, for example, take a melodic motif, start soft, and develop into the same motif very loud, but then become softer again. Then the developmental arch is like a parabole, the parameter is loudness, and the idea is the melodic motif.

This is something Epoxy Quartet has rehearsed since the previous interventions, where it appeared that this could be a useful skill to have. In fact, the application as described above is a very basic framework of what we can develop into more complex structures. This is where the Pixar short films come into play this cycle. What if the developmental arch was not defined by a simple parabole, but by a complex narrative such as;

> A blue and a red umbrella meet in the rainy evening traffic and appear wildly in love, but their owners split ways. The blue umbrella releases itself from its human and flies over the New York traffic in search of its counterpart. Unfortunately, the traffic is very dangerous and the blue umbrella ends up in the gutter. Then, unexpectedly, the red umbrella human finds the blue umbrella, and the red umbrella shelters it from the rain. The umbrellas are reunited once more, and their human counterparts seem to match as well.

This is more or less the synopsis of *The Blue Umbrella* directed by Saschka Unseld and released in 2013. This is one of the short films we improvised to. The whole collection of short films is accessible here. Our experimentation process with this material was very practical. Beforehand, I selected shorts that I found interesting narrative-wise and challenging musically. In fact, this already constituted the setlist for the Yellowhouse performance on the 10th of March. They cover a wide range of emotions and energy, but also aesthetics and colour. After rehearsing the set once, which has been recorded, we wrote down some key points of every film, such as "rocket launch!" or "umbrellas reunited" because we felt the narrative really demanded a change of music at those points. Next, we constructed an audio track for Tuomas, as he was not able to see the video because of his visual impairment. For the concert, he worked with a synchronised descriptive audio track, including the key points discussed above, but also more. The whole setlist included the following films:

- Wind (Chang, 2019). A grandmother and grandchild are in a post-apocalyptic world. The boy builds a rocket to free themselves from the situation they're in a reach the outside world. He is successful, but his grandmother does not make the ride.

- The Blue Umbrella (Unseld, 2013), synopsis above.

- La Luna (Casarosa, 2012). A family of cleaners row a boat onto the sea and climbs a ladder to end up on the moon. There, they clean small light-emitting crystals to make the moon from a full moon into a crescent.

- Lou (Mullins, 2017). A creature constructed from items in a lost and found box at a primary school teaches a bully a lesson about kindness and humility. Although, in the process, the creature is slowly deconstructed, as items are returned to their owners.

- Piper (Barillaro, 2016). A small piper discovers how to hunt for scallops on the sandy shore.

Although the concert is not recorded due to a technical error, there is a small fragment of the rocket launch sequence of Wind that has been recorded. It displays very well, luckily, how Martijn is holding on to a specific melodic motif that I introduced at the start of the film-based improvisation. This rocket launch is good to keep in mind because my reference recording consists of a combination of one of my compositions and the narrative of Wind, including this rocket launch. This is discussed more below.

Co-Evaluation: Michael Moore x Creative Facilitation

The second part of this data collection consisted of an interview and improvisation session with Michael Moore, a member of the ICP orchestra. A recording of the whole session and interview is accessible here. Moore explained and performed different exercises with me. Apart from a totally free improvisation session, we did two exercises that I highlight below.

Exercise 1

In this exercise, the objective is to find a very simple idea and slowly develop it. We both would do that, independently, moving into different directions, trying not to respond to each other but rather sticking to our own path.[47] The exercise was loosely based on the instruction by Misha Mengelberg discussed in the introduction:

> Think from moment to moment about what the previous fragment has to do with the present one and how it should continue. Be aware that while playing you are speaking a language. Notice that in your language, you can say anything. Respect your grammar and syntax. [...] Comment on other players. If you can't play your own ideas, practice until you can. Or come up with something else that you can play. Realise what you have played.[48]

You can hear Moore and me bring this exercise into practice in the recording at 45:15. Around 51:40 when we finish, Moore directly asks "What did you start with?" and I respond by playing the melodic motif I started the improvisation with, and Moore plays the motif he started with. You can hear me say in the recording, "I remembered that it was a small part of a scale, and then a large interval, almost an octave."

Exercise 2

In this exercise, the objective was to play 5 short pieces between 20 seconds and one minute each, with a clear break in between. They should sound very different from one another. You have to start exactly together so that you cannot anticipate what the other improvisers are playing. During the very short period of time that ensues, there's "really not much time to develop anything. You just have to play and see what happens."[49] You can hear us bring this into practice around 54:00.

The above exercises are really about being aware of when to develop ideas, and when just to let creativity flow and search for new directions. This very much connects to the solution space that is introduced in the introduction of this research. In some instances, there is no need to engage really in the ideas that you create. There is no ownership over ideas, we postpone judgement, we have to dare to freewheel, and use anything to free ourselves from existing ideas or patterns and quality will happen through quantity. "By concentrating on quantity, any judgement in terms of quality that could result in self-awareness of group participants is moved to the background."[50] These rules for creative facilitation as Tassoul presents them, are all present in the second exercise presented by Moore. Moreover, Tassoul also discusses methods to select and evaluate these ideas to then further develop them. Accessible methods include making tables/charts with all the ideas and demands, visualising which ideas are best, or

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[47] Moore, Interview on Instant Composition.
[48] Mengelberg, *Enkele Regels in de Dierentuin*, 37. Originally in Dutch.
[49] Moore, Interview on Instant Composition.
[50] Tassoul, *Creative Facilitation*, 38.

evaluating ideas in smaller groups/duos, or even solo, before coming back to the group session, to make space for individually differing opinions.

I have combined these two exercises by Moore and the evaluation methods described by Tassoul in an RPL session with Tuomas, Martijn, and Stefan Lievestro on the 21st of April 2023. First, we improvised five very short ideas (recording: 5 ideas). Then, we listened back to the recording and individually graded all of the ideas based on the three demands we selected for the graphs in the previous cycle: originality, interplay, and coherence. We then discussed our grades and marked them up in a table on the classroom board (recording of the evaluation). This is a practical application of the methods suggested by Tassoul. Next, we selected our favourite idea and used this as the starting point for exercise 1: developing it individually over a couple of minutes (recording of development of one idea). Finally, I recorded our reflection on the whole process and our final performance (recording of the evaluation of the developed idea).

Summarising our reflections, we found that these new tools for co-creation and co-evaluation are a very good practice, and maybe even a little overstructured this way. Even though it was a lot of fun and it structures our process really well, it feels a little disconnected from what we really want to improve. In comparison to the success of the graphs during the previous cycle, this did not so far result in any long-lasting interventions.

Combining Repertoire in New Ways
As discussed in the introduction to this cycle, one of the ICP practices that I find very appealing for Epoxy Quartet is the ad-hoc combining of elements of our existing repertoire. This sometimes occurs naturally, for example during the Yellowhouse concert we played fragments during the film improvisations of my compositions, or of standards that we all know. Especially Kim already does this a lot with her trio already, and she has often expressed the desire to develop this more within the quartet as well.

To experiment with this way of improving, not within compositions but with compositions, we combined two elements of our repertoire during a performance on April 11th, 2023. The first element of the combination was a composition called "Inertia." Inertia was composed by me for Epoxy Quartet. There is a solo piano recording by me from the composition process. I already brought it to the band during two RPL sessions with Postma. The second session yielded a good recording with the full quartet, which is accessible here. Inertia is more or less through-composed except for the drum part - Tuomas cannot read sheet music so that never makes sense. However, the ending is open and we slowly develop into a textural improvisation after the written material has been performed.

Seconds before our performance on the 11th of April, it occurred to me that the atmosphere created by "Inertia" is similar to the atmosphere displayed in the Pixar short *Wind* before the rocket launch. We then made a decision to play the beginning of "Inertia" and connect it to the rocket launch in *Wind* and the end of the film as we more or less remembered it from our performance a month earlier. This was interesting not only because we instantly juxtaposed two different elements of our existing repertoire, but also because it had been some time since we had actually seen the short film. In fact, we all individually made a mental score for ourselves about what happened in the film, but always sketchy. This recording was a success and has become my final reference recording.

3.3.5 Interventions

From this research cycle, two interventions have been distilled.

Intervention 1: Using short films as inspiration for a narrative arch
Before the start of this cycle, Epoxy Quartet had never worked with improvising music for film before. After selecting a couple of effective and short films as working material, and rehearsing this together, we are now able to (1) perform a full concert consisting of live-improvised film music, and importantly, (2) even without the film being projected, we can base our improvised performance on the narrative arch as we remember it. This second aspect of working with films is possible because during rehearsals we mark different crucial narrative moments in the film that constitute the basic narrative arch or synopsis. We connect as discussed above to the development of simple musical ideas along the lines of a musical parameter. Especially because we can work with these arches separately from the film being projected, it constitutes a permanent change in our practice and is listed here as an intervention.

Intervention 2: Combining existing repertoire in new ways on the spot
A second item that Epoxy Quartet never did before, but now has successfully integrated into our performance practice, is making new combinations of elements from our repertoire on the spot. This practice is historically familiar to ensembles that do free improvisation or instant composition, but nevertheless, we now have a similar familiarity with it. This opens up endless possibilities for us to make different combinations with compositions and other parts of our repertoire, such as the short films or the standards we know. This is something that we will be able to develop further during our time together, thus the first integration of this constitutes a - hopefully long-lasting - intervention.

3.3.6 Outcome

Both of the interventions listed above are reflected in the reference recording of this cycle. The reference recording is both based on a narrative arch of a film we researched at the start of this cycle, and it is an on-the-spot combination of two elements of existing repertoire. The recording was made on the 11th of April during the Codarts Jazz Piano Faculty Day. The recording features Tuomas Ruokonen on drums, Kim Jäger on cello, and myself on piano - Martijn was ill. The start of the recording is based on an original composition of mine, called "Inertia," (see appendix 4) and the second half is based on the narrative arch of a short Pixar film called *Wind*. The recording has a running duration of 4m51s.

3.3.7 Feedback, Reflection, and Conclusion

This last reference recording rounds of the three research cycles of this artistic research. The recording/performance took place on the Jazz Piano Faculty Day on the 11th of April 2023, and there was direct feedback from colleagues and teachers. They were very surprised and pleased with the performance, highlighting the sophisticated textural improvisation, the balanced melody and band sound, and the overall arch of the improvisation. The band, including me, recognizes this when listening back. Tuomas specifically mentioned that he thought the atmosphere of the music connected to the film narrative and that it is hard to imagine what we would have played without it. I am also excited to explore even further all the possibilities that are available with the tools and methodologies that we have developed so far. I discuss this in more detail in the following chapter.

4 Conclusion, Research Findings and Outcomes

4.1 Conclusion

This research investigates tools for the co-development and co-evaluation of instant-composition-based performance practices. Based on analysis of preceding performance practices, Instant composition is defined in the introduction as working with concepts, structures, and limitations that stimulate interplay, coherence, and creativity in free improvisational contexts. The research employs these strategies and finds how they need to be adjusted to fit the artistic demands and ambitions of the performance practice I share with Epoxy Quartet.

This research develops exercises, instructions, or methods to co-create and co-evaluate expressive improvised performances based on interviews, literature reviews, and practice-based experimentation. These tools constitute the first part of the research outcome and are listed below. Together, they support our unique performance practice situated in the interstices between improvisation and composition. Our performance practice is different from the predecessors analysed in this research, as we hold the artistic ambition to develop a musical idiom that is more lyrical and accessible. Moreover, we are interested in combining instant composition and graphic scores with ideas from contemporary composition. In this research, we develop our own co-creation tools to build improvisations on different idioms, images or scenes, and films. Bringing together instant composition and the resulting musical freedom, and the accessibility and power of musical narrativity, leads to a strong relationship between the band, the audience, and the performance context. In addition, this research demonstrates the importance of effective tools for co-evaluation. Historically, evaluation has been an important part of improvisers' practice. However, this research contributes in a significant and unique way to this practice by developing tools to structure our reflection and evaluation, based on academic literature on industrial design and creative facilitation.

Combined together, the co-creation and co-evaluation tools facilitate *Epoxy Quartet* in the continuous development of our performance practice according to our artistic ambitions, and thus present an answer to the research question of this artistic research:

> **How can I enrich Epoxy Quartet's instant-composition-based performance practice through the development of co-creation and co-evaluation tools based on interviews, literature review, and experimentation?**

Finally, this demonstrates that this research is profoundly artistic and practice-based, as the methods and tools developed are demanded by, implemented in, and developed through the practice I share with my quartet. During all three research cycles, there has been a constant process of gathering material, experimenting with it, and evaluating our performances. These performances, all of which have been recorded, are another significant part of the research outcome. The most important recordings have been selected and are listed separately below. In spite of the fact that this research is based on Epoxy Quartet's performance practice, the knowledge and strategies developed in this research are applicable to other performance practices. They can thus help other improvisers to overcome obstacles on the path to the realisation of their artistic ambitions.

4.2 Documentation and Explanation of the Research Outcomes

The research consists, as explained above, of co-creation tools, co-evaluation tools, and recordings of performances. These are all extensively discussed in the corresponding research cycles and are only listed here briefly for overview. In the first cycle, I developed a repertoire of 5 compositions/scores based on interviews and literature on instant composition and free improvisation. These compositions have been developed during the RPL sessions of that cycle and recorded in a studio in Enschede, at my first year's recital, and during a concert in Bucharest. In the second cycle, I expanded this repertoire and included experiments with paraphrasing jazz standards. These have been recorded during a concert in Brebl. Additionally, I developed the first co-evaluation tool: the graphic questionnaires or graphs. In the last cycle, I expand our repertoire to include film and narrative arches as an inspiration for our improvisations, this is recorded during our rehearsal (the concert recording was lost). Moreover, I experiment with exercises suggested by Michael Moore during an interview and combine this with another evaluation tool developed by me in RPL sessions. Finally, Epoxy Quartet incorporates one last tool for co-creation: making on-the-spot combinations of elements from our repertoire during a concert recording at the Jazz Piano Faculty Day.

Tools for co-creation

- 5 compositions from cycle #1 that incorporate instant composition in different musical parameters:

    - *Shelter*; composed by Koen Gijsman & Kasper Rietkerk. Improvisation reflected in the open form and open pulse, graphic score based on boxes, illustrations, and text description (see appendix 4). Recorded as [reference recording #2](#) on the 25th of February 2022, with Koen Gijsman (piano), Cosimo Gentili (sax), Kim Jäger (cello), and Tuomas Ruokonen (drums), running time 6m38s. Another relevant recording, including an extensive instantly composed piano intro, happened [live in Bucharest](#) (0:00-9:40), on the 7th of July 2022, with Martijn van Ditshuizen on sax.

    - Three Strikes Out; composed by Koen Gijsman. Designed to practice improvisation without a harmonic centre and with odd meters, and score based on gestures (see appendix 4). Relevant [recording](#) with a piano intro and solo, Enschede, March 18th 2022. Koen Gijsman (piano), Cosimo Gentili (sax), Kim Jäger (sax), Ruurd Faber (drums). Running time 4m28s.

    - Out of Reach; composed by Koen Gijsman. Improvisation takes place along textural and sound parameters, and the arrangement is open. Designed to train our listening and projection in space. Relevant [recording](#), Enschede, March 18th 2022. Koen Gijsman (piano), Cosimo Gentili (sax), Kim Jäger (sax), Ruurd Faber (drums). Running time 5m07s.

    - Metta; composed by Koen Gijsman. Exercise in composing based on improvisations as described by Tineke Postma and Kenny Werner. Relevant recording, [live at EUROPAfest Bucharest](#), 7th of July 2022. 9:50-15:22. Epoxy Quartet: Koen Gijsman (piano), Martijn van Ditshuizen (sax), Kim Jäger (cello), and Tuomas Ruokonen (drums).

- Made; composed by Koen Gijsman (see appendix 4). Improvisation is based on intuition, trusting the hands, and getting the mind in the body. Relevant recording (32:23-42:00), master recital at De Doelen, Rotterdam, 15th of June 2022. Line-up Epoxy Quartet ibidem.

- Paraphrasing jazz standards, as described and worked on in RPL sessions with Stefan Lievestro. Brebl Concert & RPL Stefan Lievestro. Relevant recordings:
    - You Don't Know What Love Is (during RPL session in Rotterdam), 16th of September, 2022. Koen Gijsman (piano), Stefan Lievestro (bass), Tuomas Ruokonen (drums). 5m34s.
    - I Mean You, recorded at Brebl, Nijmegen, 28th of September 2022. Lineup Epoxy Quartet: Koen Gijsman (piano), Martijn van Ditshuizen (sax), Kim Jäger (cello), and Tuomas Ruokonen (drums). 6m10s.
    - Someday My Prince Will Come, recorded at Brebl, Nijmegen, 28th of September 2022. Lineup ibidem. 6m38s.

- Using narrative arches to structure the development of musical material during improvisations. Relevant recordings:
    - RPL session Nils Haften, Rotterdam, 18th of November 2022, reference recording #3. Line-up: Koen Gijsman (piano), Martijn van Ditshuizen (sax), Tuomas Ruokonen (drums). 6m21s.
    - Yellowhouse: Epoxy x Pixar concert, Rotterdam, March 10th 2023. Recording of the rehearsal on March 7th and film for the concert; concert snippet (0m49s). Line-up Epoxy Quartet: Koen Gijsman (piano), Martijn van Ditshuizen (sax), Kim Jäger (cello), and Tuomas Ruokonen (drums).

- Exercises by Michael Moore inspired by Misha Mengelberg
    - Exercise 1: find a very simple idea and develop it for a couple of minutes. Recorded (45:15-51:40) by Koen Gijsman and Michael Moore, Amsterdam, April 21st 2023. Recorded during RPL with Stefan Lievestro, Koen Gijsman, Tuomas Ruokonen, and Martijn van Ditshuizen. 3m31s.

    - Exercise 2: play 5 short pieces between 20 seconds and one minute each. Recorded (54:00-57:40) by Koen Gijsman and Michael Moore, Amsterdam, April 21st 2023. Recorded during RPL with Stefan Lievestro, Koen Gijsman, and Tuomas Ruokonen. 4m47s.

- Juxtaposing elements from the existing Epoxy Quartet repertoire. Relevant recording:
    - Jazz Piano Day Concert: Inertia x Wind, combining a composition by Koen Gijsman (see appendix 4) with the narrative arch of one of the Pixar short films. Reference recording #4. Line-up: Koen Gijsman (piano), Kim Jäger (cello), Tuomas Ruokonen (drums). 4m51s.

Tools for co-evaluation

- Visual Questionnaires / Graphs as described in cycle #2. The graphs present a template with a waveform and time-coded visualisation of the audio file that band members listen to. The selected musical parameters are presented in three empty graphs that are filled in by participants. Analysis and layering of the graphs present a valuable starting point for group reflection, as they initially make personal considerations of participants explicit in advance of the group reflection. Moreover, the tools are visual and easily provide an overview of the participant's response to the presented recording.

- The evaluation tool employed in the third research cycle in combination with the exercises by Michael Moore is also listed here. This method entails that individual participants postpone their judgement and break all boundaries in exercise 2 according to the rules of creative facilitation by Tassoul. Next, individual participants grade their previously recorded ideas while listening back to them in three parameters. By summing the grades of all participants the group selects the best idea and develops this according to the instructions of exercise 1. Then, listening back to that recording, the group starts a collective reflection.

- Focus group interviews/group reflections that follow from the above tools can be transcribed and annotated to distil into interventions, as is illustrated in the data analysis of cycle #2.

4.3 Self-assessment of the Research Outcomes and Expert Feedback

In a closing note, this research has helped to structure and deepen the artistic process I share with Epoxy Quartet a lot. I am extremely grateful for the time and effort the quartet has invested in this research. Within the band, we are starting to connect differently, and now that we're doing this for two years, the process is starting to become familiar. The band, and me included, are very happy about the way things develop. In general, this sentiment is shared by the RPL coaches, who see that this research has brought a lot of continuity and focus to the RPL sessions.

In terms of my individual performance, main subject teachers have commented on the development of my sound and technique, and I myself start to feel more comfortable letting go of control, I'm better at not being a conductor behind my instrument, I trust my hands more, I'm starting to understand what "unlearning" means. I can hear myself being more creative and finding new colours in more recent recordings, than compared to earlier during this research process.

My personal experience is that this research has led to a change in my practice and in that of my band. I'm very excited to see where this conscious development of the tools demanded by our performance practice can bring us in the future. This has been a long process with continuous decisions along the way. I am happy to see the current result and excited for what this research may still bring in the future for Epoxy Quartet.

5 Reference list

Literature

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Media

(For media not referenced here, see Appendix 1. Interview transcriptions, see Appendix 3)

Aust, Renard. Interview on scores. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, April 20, 2022.

Gijsman, Koen, and Jazzorchestra of the Concertgebouw. *Arecibo: Live at Conservatorium Talent Award*. Den Bosch, 2021.

Gijsman, Koen, Kasper Rietkerk, Chiel Van Rijn, and Ruurd Faber. *Shelter - Koen Gijsman Quartet*. Zwolle, 2021.

Jäger, Kim. Online interview with Kim Jäger. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, November 14, 2021.

Moore, Michael. Interview on Instant Composition. Interview by Koen Gijsman, April 21, 2023.

Schuiling, Floris. Interview on ICP and Misha Mengelberg. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, February 25, 2022.

Sprangers, Kika. Interview on improvisation and composition in No Man's Land. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, September 27, 2022.

Van Roon, Marc. Interview on Epoxy Quartet Recordings. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, March 22, 2022.

Von Chossy, Franz. Written interview with Franz von Chossy. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Digital writing, November 18, 2021.

6 Network (A-Z)

Renard Aust

Renard Aust is a composer, arranger, and teacher at Codarts. He is specialized in contemporary classical music and improvisation. I followed an interesting elective with him and decided to show him some of my own scores and do an interview to get feedback on them.

Franz von Chossy

Franz von Chossy is a jazz pianist and one of the main subject teachers at Codarts. I have interviewed him for feedback on my reference recording #1, Arecibo.

Martijn van Ditshuizen

Martijn van Ditshuizen is the current saxophone player of Epoxy Quartet. He give a lot of input and feedback in the whole research process and plays an important role, as he performs nearly all recordings and concerts with me.

Nils Haften

Nils Haften is a saxophone player and teacher at Codarts. He was my coach during 4 RPL sessions this year, during which I played together with him and interviewed him for feedback on recordings, compositions, and improvisations.

Daan Herweg

Daan Herweg is my former main subject teacher for jazz piano. He is a very experienced pianist and has a lot of experience in free improvisation and composition. Furthermore, he has a good understanding of the more abstract concepts related to improvisation and composition.

Kim Jäger

Kim Jäger is a cello player and fellow master's student of mine, who is currently part of my quartet. She is experienced in free improvisation and her feedback and reflections during RPL sessions and interviews have often turned out to be very relevant and on-point. She also co-organized our incubator+ project *The Resonating Body*.

Stefan Lievestro

Stefan Lievestro is a bass player, composer, and teacher at Codarts. He was my RPL coach for four sessions in which he gave valuable feedback on recordings and compositions, and gave some interesting insights into different techniques of gathering musical material for new compositions.

Michael Moore

Michael Moore is an improviser and composer with an outstanding reputation. He was part of the ICP under Misha Mengelberg and hosted me at his home in Amsterdam for an interview and an improvisation session.

Tineke Postma

Tineke Postma is a saxophone player and composer. She was my coach during 4 RPL sessions this year and has given a lot of good advice on composing and improvising and how they co-relate.

Marc van Roon

Marc van Roon is a jazz pianist and composer. He is my main subject piano teacher and research coach. His advice mainly focuses on the pianistic aspects of my playing and on the broader structure of my research. He gave very useful advice on how to formulate the interventions I have made this cycle.

Tuomas Ruokonen

Tuomoas Ruokonen is the drummer of Epoxy Quartet and features on nearly all recordings and concerts that we have performed so far. As a band member, he also provided a lot of input and feedback during the whole research process.

Floris Schuiling

Floris Schuiling is a musicolist and teacher at Utrecht University. He is an expert on Misha Mengelberg and the ICP Orchestra. His current research focuses on alternative notations and improvised music as a decolonial practice. All of these topics are relevant to my own research. Schuiling gave a very valuable interview at the start of this cycle.

Kika Sprangers

Kika Sprangers is a befriended saxophone player who is slightly further in her career than I am. She is interested in the same concepts that my research is about. She is furthermore a great improviser and composer.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: List of all AV media

All files are available in this folder.

1. 01 Reference Recording #1 - Gijsman, Koen, and Jazzorchestra of the Concertgebouw. *Arecibo: Live at Conservatorium Talent Award*. Den Bosch, 2021.
2. 02 Reference Recording #1 - Gijsman, Koen, and Rob Horsting. Arecibo - Score
3. 03 Jäger, Kim. *Online interview with Kim Jäger.* Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, November 14, 2021.
4. 04 Schuiling, Floris. *Interview on ICP and Misha Mengelberg.* Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, February 25, 2022.
5. 05 Van Roon, Marc. *Interview on Epoxy Quartet Recordings.* Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, March 22, 2022.
6. 06 Aust, Renard. *Interview on scores.* Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, April 20, 2022.
7. 07 Reference Recording #2 - Gijsman, Koen, Cosimo Gentili, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Shelter - Epoxy Quartet*. Rotterdam, 2022
8. 08 Gijsman, Koen, Kasper Rietkerk, Chiel Van Rijn, and Ruurd Faber. *Shelter - Koen Gijsman Quartet*. Zwolle, 2021.
9. 09 Gijsman, Koen, Cosimo Gentili, Kim Jäger, and Ruurd Faber. *Three Strikes Out - Epoxy Quartet*. Enschede, 2022.
10. 10 RPL Stefan Lievestro. "Shetler," 19th of November 2021.
11. 11 RPL Marc van Roon "Shelter," 21st of January 2022.
12. 12 Gijsman, Koen, Martijn van Ditshuizen, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Live in Bucharest - Epoxy Quartet*. Bucharest, 2022
13. 13 Gijsman, Koen, Martijn van Ditshuizen, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Master Recital - Epoxy Quartet*. Rotterdam, 2022.
14. 14 Epoxy Quartet rehearsal. "Three Strikes Out," 14th of August, 2022.
15. 15 RPL Marc van Roon "Three Strikes Out," 11th of March 2022.
16. 16 RPL 21 Feb 2022 w/ Nils Haften "Three Strikes Out".
17. 17 Gijsman, Koen, Cosimo Gentili, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Three Strikes Out - Epoxy Quartet*. Rotterdam, 2022
18. 18 RPL Nils Haften "Three Strikes Out," 14th of August 2022.
19. 19 Epoxy Quartet Rehearsal "Made," 21st of January 2022.
20. 20 Gijsman, Koen. "Out of Reach" Feb 22nd 2022 (solo piano demo)
21. 21 RPL Marc van Roon "Out of Reach," 11th of March 2022.
22. 22 Gijsman, Koen, Cosimo Gentili, Kim Jäger, and Ruurd Faber. *Out of Reach - Epoxy Quartet*. Enschede, 2022.
23. 23 RPL Tineke Postma "Metta," 8th of June 2022.
24. 24 Gijsman, Koen. "Metta" (piano demo).
25. 25 Gijsman, Koen, Chiel Van Rijn, and Hugo Hinkel. *Made - Koen Gijsman Trio*. Zwolle, 2021.
26. 26 Sprangers, Kika. Interview on writing for strings. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, 27 September 2022.

27. 27 Gijsman, Koen, Martijn van Ditshuizen, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Brebl Concert - Epoxy Quartet, 28 September* 2022

28. 28 RPL Stefan Lievestro, Improvisation 1 based on "You Don't Know What Love Is", 16th September 2022

29. 29 RPL Stefan Lievestro, Improvisation 2 based on "You Don't Know What Love Is", 16th September 2022

30. 30 RPL Stefan Lievestro, Improvisation 3 based on Density, 16th September 2022

31. 31 RPL Nils Haften, reflective group discussion on graphs, 11th November 2022

32. 32 RPL Nils Haften, Improvisation 1 incorporating first interventions, 11th November 2022

33. 33 RPL Nils Haften, reflective group discussion on graphs, 18th of November 2022

34. 34 RPL Nils Haften, Improvisation 2 incorporating interventions, 18th of November 2022

35. 35 Reference Recording #3 - Gijsman, Koen, Martijn van Ditshuizen, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Improvisation,* 18th of November 2022.

36. 36 RPL Nils Haften, feedback on reference recording #3, 18th of November 2022

37. 37 Gijsman, Koen, Martijn van Ditshuizen, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Brebl Concert "I Mean You"- Epoxy Quartet, 28 September* 2022

38. 38 Gijsman, Koen. Martijn van Ditshuizen, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Brebl Concert "Someday"- Epoxy Quartet, 28 September* 2022

39. 39 Gijsman, Koen. Martijn van Ditshuizen, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Brebl Concert "Honeywood"- Epoxy Quartet, 28 September* 2022

40. 40 Gijsman, Koen, ed. *Yellowhouse Epoxy x Pixar*. Concert film compilage. March 10, 2023.

41. 41 Epoxy Quartet. *Yellowhouse Epoxy x Pixar*. Concert recording. March 10, 2023.

42. 42 Reference Recording #4 - Gijsman, Koen, Kim Jäger, and Tuomas Ruokonen. *Inertia x Wind,* 11th of April 2023.

43. 43 Moore, Michael. Interview on ICP, instant composition, and improvisation session. Interview by Koen Gijsman. Audio recording, 21st of April 2023.

44. 44 RPL Stefan Lievestro, Improvising 5 short ideas. 21st of April 2023.

45. 45 RPL Stefan Lievestro, Evaluating 5 short ideas. 21st of April 2023.

46. 46 RPL Stefan Lievestro, Developing one idea. 21st of April 2023.

47. 47 RPL Stefan Lievestro, Evaluation of developed ida. 21st of April 2023.

48. 48 Gijsman, Koen. "Inertia." (solo piano recording). 27th of January 2023.

49. 49 RPL Tineke Postma, "Inertia," 18th of January 2023.

50. 50 Epoxy Quartet. *Epoxy x Pixar* (rehearsal recording). 7th of March 2023.

Appendix 2: Full feedback on reference recordings

I received a lot of feedback from peers and teachers informally. Most of the feedback was positive, Marc van Roon mentioned that he liked the improvisation and the outfit, but he also thought the rhythm section was a little too passive during my solo. Ruurd Faber mentioned that he liked the comping during the improvisational parts. Kasper Rietkerk liked the arrangement by Rob Horsting. A lot of the musicians from the Jazzorchestra of the Concertgebouw and my fellow candidates liked my composition. Now follows all the written feedback I received on my performance.

Conservatory Talent Award Jury (Tom Trapp, Kika Sprangers, Mischa Andriessen, Guy van Hulst, Aad van Nieuwkerk):
The melody in your performance has the potential to become a standard, well composed! The jury likes the idea of incorporating the feeling of lifting off into the music. However, do not hesitate to take your moments to shine. Don't be too modest!

Kim Kamilla Jäger:
My first reaction actually was [... that] at the beginning of the piece I really had this feeling of things that get picked up in the air, because of the horns and what they play in the beginning. The horns make these thin sounds that layer and move a bit. It makes me think of air and stuff. I really liked that. I didn't like the sound [mix] of the recording that much. Sometimes some parts were a bit too soft, which then distracted me from the music. But I really liked it.

I think what I find interesting is the improvisation part because it was actually really kind of tight. There was a clear harmonic and rhythmic structure, but then still it was not all the time super clear who was soloing. The solos melted into each other and also overlapped. And this above that clear structure. I like the improvisation because it's a bit chaotic. Because the underlying structure is so clear, if there would have been just solos on top I would have been bored pretty fast I think. I think there was a really nice contrast between the chaos and the structure underneath. There is more communication and interplay. That makes it fun to listen to.

I think I hear that you are looking for a combination of a more modern big band sound with more free elements, that still fit into a certain form. There is room for chaos, and structure is then just an underlying thing. I think about the big band of Frans Vermeersen and Jasper LeClerq, who both are [...] associated with new dutch swing. [...] Their pieces often also play with structure and chaos in a similar way. [...] New Orleans bands also had this element of playing together and [... i]n free jazz, this parallel playing also comes back.

Franz von Chossy:
There is an intro, the main melody, which uses motivic development, a kind of B part, a solo section, a recurring melody with development, and another solo section partly simultaneous soloing. The piano solo is also using motives from the main melody. This all comes across pretty clearly.

In terms of form, meter, rhythm, melody, and harmony it's all in accordance with the jazz tradition.

I thought the intro sounded very cool with that line that appeared twice right after each other as if there is a delay effect. [T]hat's something I would call innovative because it tries to copy an effect from the digital world and translates that into instrumental acoustic music. You hear Snarky Puppy playing with that a lot as well.

I like the moments in the piece where you change the texture. I think you could do that even more (it's pretty full arrangement wise, but that's also a matter of taste), the doubling of the piano line with the saxophone is maybe not so strong, I would leave that to the saxophone, doubling piano and guitar sounds very nice though. Anyway, congratulations on this beautiful work and the collaboration with the big band!

Feedback on reference recording #2: Shelter

From RPL Reflections:

Stefan was really happy with the recording of "Shelter". He really liked how free it was, how we used the space, and how well the melodic material supported the feel of the tune. "Three Strikes Out" was a difficult tune, and Stefan noted that the ⅞ pattern becomes boring after a while. Something Marc already told us as well. I had a little difficulty improvising atonaly, and Stefan made the great remark that the solo need not be atonal, it just "has to sound like it relates to the theme". I thought that was a great idea. He showed a video of *Der Rote Bereich* in which the same was the case. He told me to trust more on my intuïtion and to let go of what I have been studying and that I should groove more, because it is something I like to do - then I should also just start grooving if I feel like it would be nice during any free improvisation.

Something Stefan mentioned that I would like to highlight separately, is a comment on harmonic pivot points in the middle of melodic lines. I thought this was a great idea. Basically, you play an improvised line of music and halfway you use your current note to change to a different tonality/scale/colour. You line instantly gets more interesting and possibly very weird. It worked great on this particular kind of soloing, though it costs a lot of brain power!

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On "Shelter" Nils commented that the middle section felt too long and that we could have gone a little bit more far out in the improvisation. He thought the recording had a great sound, however, the space sounded nice and the piano and cello interfering with each other was a nice effect. For "Three Strikes Out" Nils suggested dividing the pattern in ⅞ over the players in the band. He also thought the improvisation could use some more adrenaline, something Marc already noted as well. We need to focus more on locking with each other as a rhythm section. Nils was happy about the fact that the free sections of the recordings were not too idiomatic.

Nils discussed different approaches to soloing and improvisation that related interestingly to what I had done in the incubator week. We talked about playing with contrasts in parameters, playing with a lot of dominance, and holding on to your ideas slightly longer. I also brought in that we could play scores and contrasts negatively, or play more of a movement, or even something like a word or image.

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Marc noted that I should let go of my urge to conduct the composition from behind my instrument, it makes my playing too full. I need to play more with the space, and listen to all the effects my playing has in the space and with the other players. Also, use less pedal. I actually enjoyed very much to focus more on the other members of the band and listen to all the resonance of my playing. It was super nice to enjoy and receive the sound we produce as a band in the space. It also gave our performance more weight, more intention.

Marc also noted that in the Mayhem section we need to focus on the parts of our instrument that resonate best in space. How can we make the most of our instruments? It's important to realise this if you want to make a lot of noise but still sound nice.

From Interviews:

Als ik lees dat het iets heel persoonlijks is wat je in muziek giet, en je wil eigenlijk dan dat je medespelers daarop reageren zou het ook iets kunnen zijn om niet alleen hen in aanraking te laten komen met jouw beeld, maar sterker nog: overweeg om te bedenken hoe je iets kunt triggeren wat ook met hen te maken heeft. Zeker als het stuk goed kent, en ook de spelers, kun je echt al van tevoren kunnen verzinnen wat hij [de drummer] zou kunnen doen in het stuk.

Dit is dus iets uit jouw ervaring met iemand, maar zoiets heeft van jouw medespelers ook. Die kan dus ook gaan naar zijn eigen gevoel en zijn eigen ervaring en daaruit kun je dus ook gewoon putten. En voor mij is het gewoon een fantastisch label. Daar kan ik dus van alles muzikaal bij bedenken: als er al een getal in zit, dan weet ik eigenlijk al zoveel dingen!

Als we het over subtiel hebben dan heeft zo een stuk misschien geen eindstreep, geen final barline. Als je dat zo bekijkt; het zijn twee A4tjes en het zou je dus zomaar zo kunnen wegspelen en dat is dus echt niet de bedoeling. En het is veel meer dan dit, dus dit is geen einde en als ik naar de opname luister is dit ook niet het begin. Dus wat je hier eigenlijk hebt – je gebruikt een beetje jazzidioom in die zin, zo'n real book style, dus je zegt dit is de head, dit is gewoon zeg maar de essentie van het stuk, maar natuurlijk verzinnen we daar nog allemaal andere dingen omheen. Als je bijvoorbeeld als componist ideeën hebt hoe je zoiets zou willen beginnen, zou ik dat het waarschijnlijk ook schetsen in een partituur. Dat wil niet zeggen dat je daar altijd aan moet houden, maar je gaat tenminste de repetitieruimte in met een idee van hoe dat zou kunnen beginnen. (Renard Aust)

Ik vind jouw partituur er zeer geslaagd uitzien! Geen 'final barline' - yes! De rehearsal marks niet op alfabetische volgorde - yess! Een visuele steun voor jouw instructies - yesss! Nog wat tips/opmerkingen: Je gaat voor veel details in de gegeven noten. Dat mag, dat kan. Als je echter verwacht dat de spelers de bladmuziek als point of departure gebruiken zou je gaandeweg steeds meer noten/info/details weg kunnen laten om steeds meer vrijheid toe te laten - of juist andersom. Is wellicht interessant om dat eens uit te proberen. (Renard Aust, for scores see appendix 4)

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Shelter: Melodieus, spreekt aan. Er ontstaat iets. Three strikes out: er ontstaat minder iets tussen de bandleden. Leuke compositorische ideeën, maar minder grip op het materiaal. Deed wel denken aan Benjamin Herman met Misha Mengelberg "Heterogeneity". (Floris Schuiling)

Feedback on reference recording #3: Improvisation

Daan Herweg: Ik mis laag, Van de piano dan, zeker zo zonder bas kan je meer met de LH doen. Mooie sensitieve interplay en duidelijk aan het doorwerken met ideeen samen met sax. Het intervallische begin mag van mij best abstracter dat leek even te gebeuren maar toen werd het al gauw safe settelen in de tonal Pull van Bb? of Fsus etc?. De drums rommelen een beetje teveel achteraan. Ik hoor daar geen consequente ideen maar puur flow of consciousness. Kan werken maar doordat je zo duidelijk een dialoog hebt tussen jou en sax voelt de drums wat detached. Mooie dynamische boog en de runs en arps aan het einde zijn mooi.

Kika Sprangers: Mooi Koen! Je kan horen dat jullie op een open, assertieve manier samenspelen waarbij er goed naar elkaar wordt geluisterd zonder dat er te veel gewacht wordt op elkaar. Het klinkt voor mij als een collectieve improvisatie en niet als een 'liedje', maar wellicht is dat ook wat je juist voor ogen had. In het intro vind ik de leegte mooi en spannend. Sommige lijnen zouden wat mij betreft nog wat uitgesponnen mogen worden. Ook in de stiltes kan je afwisselen, lange en korte pauzes en daarmee spelen maakt het wel spannend vind ik. De introductie van de sax, die ene noot is echt heel mooi. Ik had gehoopt op nog iets meer daarna. Al waren het maar vier noten bijvoorbeeld. Mooie rol van de drums. Op tweederde van het stuk vind ik de pianopauzes nog steeds erg mooi, maar soms mag je wat mij betreft nog iets meer ruimte innemen. Dat geeft misschien ook een mooi contrast.

Als de sax voor de tweede keer erin komt, neem jij een begeleidingsrol aan (of speel je in ieder geval zachter). Wat mij betreft zou dat niet per se hoeven. Juist de solistische rol voor jullie drie is spannend en voor de luisteraar nog overzichtelijk naar mijn mening omdat drums en piano al geïntroduceerd zijn. De extra solistische laag van de sax komt daarom op een welkom moment.

Drums suggereert op een gegeven moment time. Zo op 3 minuten +/-. Dat is mooi vind ik. Voor sax en piano mis ik dan ofwel een duidelijk contrast (dus heel erg out of time blijven) of wel meegaan in die time. Omdat het nu soms lijkt alsof jullie meegaan met de time, maar dat niet compleet doen, mist het net wat overtuiging op die plek vind ik. Een duidelijke keuze maken zou dan mijn voorkeur hebben. Er tussentin gaan zitten is met zo'n duidelijke stempel van time altijd tricky in mijn ogen. Jullie imiteren wel elkaars melodische materiaal op een creatieve manier.

De spanningsboog is goed vind ik. Knap hoe jullie die vasthouden. Op driekwart was je me even kwijt als luisteraar. Je zou kunnen overwegen om een melodie te schrijven die eventueel gespeeld kan worden door de sax (en eventueel piano) op een gegeven moment. Daar kan je je dan als luisteraar aan vastklampen. Die kan eventueel nog als echo terugkomen in de piano. Een soort flard van een liedje. Maar dit is een stijlkeuze die natuurlijk helemaal aan jou moet zijn en die daar ook zeker in goede handen is. Mooi gelukt! Ik kijk uit naar het album… :-).

Appendix 3: Transcriptions of interviews

a. Interview with Kim Kamilla Jäger[51]

This will be a bit handicapped interview, because of my condition and voice. But I try my best. My first reaction actually was [... that] at the beginning of the piece I really had this feeling of things that get picked up in the air, because of the horns and what they play in the beginning. The horns make these thin sounds that layer and move a bit. It makes me think of air and stuff. I really liked that. I didn't like the sound [mix] of the recording that much. Sometimes some parts were a bit too soft, which then distracted me from the music. But I really liked it.

Which musical ideas and concepts can you recognize upon first listening to the recording? To what extent do they come across clearly?

I think what I find interesting is the improvisation part because it was actually really kind of tight. There was a clear harmonic and rhythmic structure, but then still it was not all the time super clear who was soloing. The solos melted into each other and also overlapped. And this above that clear structure. I like the improvisation because it's a bit chaotic. Because the underlying structure is so clear, if there would have been just solos on top I would have been bored pretty fast I think. I think there was a really nice contrast between the chaos and the structure underneath. There is more communication and interplay. That makes it fun to listen to.

How, according to you, does the music performance relate to the jazz tradition in terms of composition and improvisation? And to what extent is the performance innovative, or originative in relation to the jazz tradition? Why do you think so?

This is a big question that requires a lot of historic knowledge. I think I hear that you are looking for a combination of a more modern big band sound with more free elements, that still fit into a certain form. There is room for chaos, and structure is then just an underlying thing. I'm not so familiar with big band music actually. So it is hard for me to answer whether this is innovative. In a sense, it is, because modern big band sound is always something that is happening now and if you combine it with something else it will also be new.

When I think about my own experience playing big band music, I think about the big band of Frans Vermeersen and Jasper LeClerq, who both are not super deeply associated with New Dutch Swing... but they definitely have a connection. Their pieces often also play with structure and chaos in a similar way.

Some things, of course, come back and they can still be new because they have lived through decades and have changed. They never come back in the same way they were. For example, New Orleans bands also had this element of playing together and clear solos only came later. In free jazz, this parallel playing also comes back. There are so many nuances to this playing on top of each other.

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[51] Kim Jäger, Online interview with Kim Jäger, interview by Koen Gijsman, audio recording, November 14, 2021.

There are so many ways of playing free jazz. Especially the amount of relation to one another changes the music super much. If you play the music without listening, it can really sound cool but really different than if they play more together.

How would you describe the relationality between the musical concepts and innovation discussed beforehand, and the broader socio-political value music has?

I think art doesn't have to do anything, first of all. And I think that's great, because it's art, and that's also one of its most important tasks in society to sometimes not mean anything. Of course, art is always connected to bodies, and people, and their experiences. So it's never really disconnected from politics. But I think theoretically art can also not mean anything. I don't have a clear answer on that I think.

Some will say art is sometimes looking ahead in society, simply put. There are also people who say music is following social movements and art support that. Maybe both, probably.

Actually, I think with music, it's kind of dangerous to try and produce something that is just innovative and is not really aware of sociopolitical circumstances. They are always there and they are often very important I think. Also concerning your own identity in relation to your art-making and I think art is always standing on the shoulders of people who have been and made art before. I think there is always a strong relationship to the past. I think it is important to acknowledge that, especially in jazz.

There's always this possibility of appropriation because with art and music we can move between so many worlds. It's so valuable that you can exchange knowledge and craft, and thinking and making and hearing and listening. And musical elements and all of that, but I think there's also always the question of who takes what from whom and at what price. I think this is also why jazz always has a strong sociopolitical connection because nothing comes from thin air.

How do you go about this in your own musical practice? Do you actively think about this? I'm wondering how you find a translation for these ideas and viewpoints you have to your music and your playing.

I think it's quite difficult with music, especially music without words. There's always this question of what you can convey without words, what should you convey. There's a lot of questions around conveying meaning through music and I think there are many layers to it. Also if you don't play it explicitly at political concerts, I think there still can be a lot of...

If you deal consciously with these questions in your working process, I think it's impossible for it to not be visible in your art because it affects a lot of decisions you make.

For example, if you deal with women in jazz history and where they are, and why they aren't there or why they were there and people still don't see them today. If you think about these questions and dedicate time to them. It becomes part of your thinking and music-making. You will also ask these questions to yourself in your making process and it will affect your choice of what kind of pieces to play. By whom? How am I playing these pieces? What kind of interpretation, with whom am I playing? At what kind of venues and places do I play?

I think these are small things that flow through your whole being as a musician over time. I think it's a super multi-layered topic because there are so many aspects to music-making. I'm also, of course, looking for this kind of answer at the moment.

Interesting thoughts. Thank you, Kim. Do you mean to say that if you deal with these issues consciously, they will translate to your playing unconsciously?

I think if you deal with these questions consciously you will make different choices unconsciously, but consciously as well of course. Because I think, asking yourself these questions also changes your way of thinking in general. I think it changes your music-making on many levels consciously and also unconsciously.

There's also a scholar, she's called Sharon Stewart, she is involved in deep-listening a lot. We also had a talk recently and she told me that she is currently thinking a lot about subject-object relations in her practice. She's also looking for different languages to express that. That she, for example, is looking for alternatives to "I am listening to" because this always suggests that there's somebody listening without really doing something and there's another person or thing that is making the sound. This is a really binary division and that this is never really true because as a musician you always hear the audience and listen to them. She's looking for more ways to express that, for example listening "with" something.

I think there's a tradition there, of course, of linking music and politics or society. So I think it's interesting to also look at this tradition inside of the jazz tradition. To look at Art Blakey for example, and Charles Mingus of course. Look into these things.

And then, we also talked about Terri Lyne Carrington doing some pretty cool stuff in her music-making, but also on an institutional level with her institute for jazz and gender justice. They also published a new real book with some new standards by female composers, or non-binary composers, of the last decades. I also mentioned Vijay Ayer I think. And then there's Louisa Folkmann, she's a German saxophone player. She's also pretty much in conversation with these questions and the jazz tradition, and her role in it as a white german saxophone player. Maybe she's also interesting to check out.

Is there anything you would like to add?

I just realized how much listening there still needs to be done, for me. In how many artists' footsteps I'm also trying to move with my research. Listening in a musical sense, that is. To look more at the works of people of the last century and onwards.

Maybe one last thing. Jazz has been linked so much to rebellion and going against the norm. But this has also been problematic because it also feeds into stereotypes of the musical genius that stands out of society and breaks with the rules and the norms. It's a really crude way to pathologize, to say that something is abnormal and sick.

There are so many links to the hypersexualization of the black man too. There are always these stereotypes that easily get reinforced. I want to look into that and reflect on that. Because like I said in the beginning, art can also do nothing or have no meaning. Jazz musicians have the right to just play music,

and it doesn't always have to be political. And to link everything always to politics can then be problematic.

b. Written interview with Franz von Chossy[52]

Which musical ideas and concepts can you recognize in the performance upon first listening to the recording? Do they come across clearly?

There is an intro, the main melody, which uses motivic development, a kind of B part, a solo section, a recurring melody with development, and another solo section partly simultaneous soloing. The piano solo is also using motives from the main melody. This all comes across pretty clearly.

How, according to you, does the music performance relate to the jazz tradition in terms of composition and improvisation?

In terms of form, meter, rhythm, melody, harmony it's all in accordance with the jazz tradition (depends a bit on what you count as jazz tradition).

According to you, to what extent is the performance innovative, or original in relation to the jazz tradition? Why do you think so, or why not?

Innovative is a big word, especially depending on what you include in the term "jazz tradition". Since composers/arrangers like Maria Schneider have in my opinion already stretched the boundaries and by now are part of a "jazz tradition" it's hard to use the word innovative. But then again, music should not be written for the sake of sounding innovative. I thought the intro sounded very cool with that line that appeared twice right after each other as if there is a delay effect (I hope that was intended and not a mistake though). I would have to listen more carefully. But that's something I would call innovative because it tries to copy an effect from the digital world and translates that into instrumental acoustic music. You hear Snarky Puppy playing with that a lot as well.

How would you describe the relationality between musical innovation or originality discussed above, and the broader socio-political value music has?

To be honest, I am not sure how much clear socio-political value instrumental big band music can have (unless maybe it is much more free). I would think in order to have a clear political message, you need to have lyrics. But probably you can explain this to me and I am curious about your idea about it. In a very abstract form I could see how socio-political views could be translated into musical concepts, but then more as an inspiration maybe and not as a clear message for the audience.

In what ways do you think this relationality could be broadened or strengthened in my future musical practice? How do you think my research can help me improve this?

Since I am not an expert in music with socio-political value, probably I cannot give you a good answer to this. I would expect that more in free improvised music. About innovation, originality. That's something, which I think most composers, who actually sound innovative and original, did not force into their music. As long as you stay true to your own personal musical mind and keep digging deeper looking for the right

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[52] Von Chossy, Written interview with Franz von Chossy.

ways/answers on your musical paths within your compositions, originality will show up by itself (because there is no second "Koen Gijsman"), and if you are lucky it will sound even innovative.

Are there any scholars, improvisers, or composers you would recommend to study with regard to this research?

Maybe musicians from the ICP orchestra?

Do you have any further comments? Are there any topics we haven't touched upon that are of interest to this interview?

I like the moments in the piece where you change the texture. I think you could do that even more (it's pretty full arrangement wise, but that's also a matter of taste), the doubling of the piano line with the saxophone is maybe not so strong, I would leave that to the saxophone, doubling piano and guitar sounds very nice though. Anyway, congratulations on this beautiful work and the collaboration with the bigband!

c. Interview on ICP and Misha Mengelberg - Floris Schuiling[53]

Het is de 25e, met Floris Schuiling, ik zeg het even voor de band. En we gaan hebben over Misha Mengelberg en de Instant Composers Pool Orchestra en ik wilde eigenlijk beginnen een hele algemene vraag namelijk:

Wat heb je tijdens je studie van de ICP geleerd over hun doelstelling, misschien muzikale maar ook misschien esthetisch of sociaal?

Dit is iets wat denk ik heel erg is veranderd door de tijd heen, dus ze zijn volgens mij – en dit is niet helemaal duidelijk – opgericht bijna als een soort belangenvereniging, omdat er veel jazz was in Nederland, er werd langzaam steeds meer geïmproviseerd en zij wilden een soort pool zijn van instant composers, dus van improvisatoren.

Dus volgens mij was het idee aanvankelijk om gewoon samen te komen, die belangen van geïmproviseerde muziek te verdedigen, uit te leggen aan het grote publiek wat improvisatie was, subsidie aan te vragen als stichting en dergelijke.

Dus dat was denk ik aanvankelijk hun voornaamste doel en toen is het – dit is mijn lezing dus misschien zit ik hier fout – min of meer per ongeluk en band geworden. Het was aanvankelijk dus een pool van musici, dus het idee was ook als er een ICP concert is kunnen er drie mensen bij zitten van ICP of 15, maakt niet uit. Maar in de praktijk kreeg de band van Misha en kreeg je band van Willem. En Willem heeft op een gegeven moment besloten dat hij een andere kant op wilde, en toen had je nog steeds ICP over, dat werd toen een beetje de band van Misha. Toen hebben Misha en Han een lange tijd duo gespeeld. Zij zijn langzaam een soort orkest gaan vormen.

Dus dat is een kant, er is ook nog een andere kant: ze zijn vanaf het begin ook een label geweest. Dat hoorde ook een beetje bij het idee dat je een belangenvereniging bent, dat je dus ook je eigen muziek uit kan brengen zonder afhankelijk te zijn van de muziekindustrie en interesses van labels die misschien andere belangen hebben dan de belangen van de musici zelf.

Dat is een beetje de post mij moet ontstaan is en daarnaast en je inderdaad de voor de esthetische interesse, dat is denk ik vooral de interesse van Misha geweest in het raakvlak tussen improvisatie en compositie. Dus het idee van *instant composition*, dat geeft al aan dat is natuurlijk ook een soort slogan om uit te leggen aan het grote publiek wat is improvisatie nou het is een soort instant compositie, dus daarmee ook eigenlijk rechtvaardigen waarom het waardevol is want compositie wordt waardevoller geacht dan improvisatie. En dat heeft ie maar het is tegelijkertijd ook wel bepaalde stijl denk ik van improvisatie. Ik weet niet in hoeverre Misha destijds bewust van was dat de definitie van improvisatie als instant compositie ook een bepaalde stijlrichting binnen improvisatie aangeeft, maar heeft zeker denk ik een grote invloed gehad op de Nederlandse improvisatie scene.

En aan de andere kant heb je natuurlijk ook de kwestie van "hoe schrijf je voor improvisatoren" en daar komt eigenlijk meer het esthetisch en het sociale wordt heel erg met elkaar verweven, want natuurlijk waren er heel veel improvisatoren die eigenlijk heel erg, nou ja, je zou kunnen zeggen tegen compositie waren. Dus er was gewoon heel erg sterk het idee van "ja improvisatie is gewoon, daarin is iedereen

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[53] Schuiling, Interview on ICP and Misha Mengelberg.

gelijk, het is volledig democratisch, en vrij en gelijkwaardig. En zodra er iemand noten op papier gaat zetten en zegt van laten dit met ze alle doen dan krijg je een soort hiërarchische verhouding.

Misha was eigenlijk niet opgeleid als componist, hij heeft conservatorium gedaan en hij was bevriend met Louis Andriessen en tot op zekere hoogte ook met Peter Schat en Rijnbert de Leeuw, en Jan van Vlijmen kon hij het ook wel goed mee vinden. Dat waren allemaal componisten en hij is zelf afgestudeerd in muziektheorie. [...] Dus hij wilde niet zomaar compositie helemaal afschrijven en hij heeft altijd gecomponeerd, dus dan wordt het vraagstuk: "oké hoe componeer je op die manier dat je niet alles van te voren bepaalt en ruimte – niet alleen ruimte *laat* voor improvisatie – maar misschien ook zelfs ruimte schept voor improvisatie.

En dat is een belangrijk ingrediënt geweest voor de instant composers pool, denk ik. Tegelijkertijd is dat ook maar één elementen ervan want Han staat daar heel anders in: die heeft helemaal niks met compositie. Die is trots dat 'ie geen noten kan lezen. Hij speelt altijd wel mee, en heeft altijd samen met Misha gespeeld, waren niet bevriend overigens. En zo zijn er steeds meer muzikanten aangehaakt die het gewoon leuk vonden om met Han en Misha en de andere mensen die erbij betrokken waren te spelen, zonder dat ze zich perse helemaal konden vereenzelvigen met de gedachte die Misha daarbij had. En dat was ook prima, daar was ook ruimte voor.

Om even aan te haken bij wat je zei over dat competitie ook scheppend kan zijn voor improvisatie, ik denk niet dat je instant compositie helemaal gelijk kunt stellen aan improvisatie, maar ik ben wel benieuwd naar hoe je de relatie zou beschrijven tussen compositie en improvisatie, en misschien ook de manier waarop compositie dan als een soort middel of een soort katalysator wordt gebruikt voor improvisatie.

Dat is een hele lastige vraag denk ik. Ik denk dat je dat niet in zijn algemeenheid kan beantwoorden. Mijn overtuiging is dat – en er zijn musicologen die hierover hebben geschreven – improvisatie als afzonderlijke muziekpraktijk is eigenlijk heel erg ontstaan binnen de westerse klassieke muziek, dus op het moment dat je zeg maar in de 19e eeuw heel erg nadruk kreeg op de componist was primaire schepper – in de 18e eeuw was dat veel minder het geval, toen schreef de componist wel muziek maar het ging uiteindelijk om de muzikanten die het uitvoerden. Dat ligt ook aan het genre, zeker in opera bijvoorbeeld was de sopraan gewoon de ster, en de componist was niet zo heel belangrijk. Pas in de 19e eeuw is dat heel erg gekomen dat componist de primaire creatieve bron van muziek werd geacht.

Daarmee kreeg een heel erg sterk concept van wat wel het *werkconcept* wordt genoemd door Lydia Goehr. Dat muziek dus een primair begrepen moet worden in termen van composities en dat dus ook de functie van een uitvoering niet meer primair is.

Het is niet van je maakt gewoon muziek, nee je maakt een geeft een uitvoering van een reeds bestaande compositie. Dus ook toen er allang componisten waren in de 18e eeuw, was het idee van een compositie meer als ingrediënt om iets uit te voeren, terwijl in de 19e eeuw kreeg je in de klassieke muziek sfeer veel meer het idee van "nee de commissie bestaat al en de uitvoering is om slechts dat ten gehore te brengen." Dus het wordt steeds meer secundaire en op dat moment begin je ook een praktijk te krijgen van improvisatie. Dus er is altijd wel geïmproviseerd, maar het is pas op het moment dat een uitvoering een soort reproductie wordt van iets dat reeds bestaat, dat improvisatie een aparte categorie wordt. Zo van "oké bij deze uitvoering gaan we echt iets helemaal nieuws maken wat je nog nooit eerder gehoord

hebt" en dat is eigenlijk het interessante: dan wordt improvisatie eigenlijk een soort instant compositie. Het wordt helemaal gegoten in het raamwerk, het denkkader van compositie. […]

==Dus daarom is dat denk ik heel moeilijk om te zeggen in het algemeen wat de relatie is tussen compositie en improvisatie, omdat ze zo historisch en zo contingent met elkaar verweven zijn geraakt. Er zijn heel erg veel muziek praktijken waar het niet veel zin heeft om te denken in termen van compositie en improvisatie.==

Er is een artikel wat heel vaak aanhaal van Lauren Nuchin (?) die heeft het over etnomusicologen die in de 19e eeuw naar Iran gaan. En die zien deze mensen gebruiken helemaal geen muzieknotatie om hun muziek te maken, dus ze zullen wel improviseren. Wat helemaal geen goede beschrijving is van hoe die muziektraditie werkt. Er wordt helemaal niet geïmproviseerd, het is gewoon best wel vaststaand repertoire. Er is wel iets wat we improvisatie zouden kunnen noemen van vrije creatie binnen een performance, maar ook dat is het heel streng aan regels gebonden. Maar improvisatie wordt dan ook van "oh ja *de ander* improviseert en daar hoort ook al ideeën bij van spontaan, ze zijn meer emotioneel, en meer lichamelijk, enzovoort.

De hele praktijk van ICP is een grote ondermijning van het *workconcept* en het primaire van compositie, of van wat op papier staat, in het begrijpen van muziek.

Tot op zekere hoogte geldt dat voor heel veel improvisatie in die tijd. ==Dus wat ik net zei heel veel improvisatoren keerden zich tegen die traditie waarin de componist centraal stond. [..] En waar Misha in ieder geval beducht voor was, hij wilde niet alleen het orale vieren – tenminste zo lees ik het. Hij wilde dat onderscheid ondermijnen en kijken van "oké maar hoe kunnen we dan misschien wel compositie schrijven op een manier die improvisatie stimuleert."==

Dus de praktijk gaat eigenlijk voor het weloverwogen gecomponeerde muzikale denken. En ook daarmee, ik denk een stukje collectiviteit, toch? Omdat die praktijk is per definitie met een collectief in ieder geval in het geval van de ICP, maar ook meestal met het publiek of iets. Dus de sociale praktijk in de brede zin gaat eigenlijk voor de wat dan in de traditioneel oogpunt muziek zou moeten zijn, wat op papier staat.

==Ja, het schijnt dat heel veel composities eigenlijk ontstaan zijn ook in de improvisaties== tussen Han en Misha. Er zijn allemaal verhalen over dat ze een concert gaven de eerste set speelden en de tweede set, maar de pauze was eigen net zo lang als ik eerste set omdat ze de opname van de eerste set in de pauze terug gingen luisteren. Ze waren altijd bezig met het documenteren van hun improvisaties.

En Han doet dat volgens mij nog altijd wel dat hij opnames terugluistert van improvisaties die hij heeft gespeeld. ==Dus heel erg documenteren en terugluisteren en vandaaruit nieuwe ideeën creëren.== […]

Ik heb een beetje het vermoeden dat de muzikanten van ICP zelf eigenlijk vooral heel veel plezier hadden in het type muziek dat ze maakten en misschien niet zozeer eigenlijk bezig waren met het sociale aspect of het geëngageerde aspect of niet super expliciet maakt dat ze dat waren. [..] In hoeverre denk je dat dat je zou kunnen zeggen dat de leden van ICP echt vanuit sociaal engagement muziek maken?

Ze zijn op zich wel heel bewust van bepaalde sociale vraagstukken – ja, wat is sociaal engagement? ICP heeft wel eens concerten gegeven bij protesten tegen de Vietnam oorlog en dat soort dingen.

In jouw artikel heb je een quote van Misha waarin hij zegt "luister ik vind het allemaal wel mooi al die revolutionaire Franse denkers, maar ik heb er zelf niet zoveel mee."

Hij heeft er wel degelijk iets mee, maar hij was niet erop uit om met zijn muziek daar een bijdrage aan te leveren. In algemene zin zijn het wel linkse mensen, dus dat beïnvloedt hun denkkader ook en er zit zeker een behoorlijke anarchistische invloed hierop. Maar ik denk dat er heel weinig, misschien wel geen, ICP muzikanten zijn geweest die echt hun muziek in dienst vonden staan van hun politieke idealen. Misha had dat ook vanaf het begin, hij was ook kritisch op Peter Schat en Louis Andriessen die dat destijds wel heel erg vonden.

En hij heeft zich er nooit echt expliciet over uitgesproken volgens mij. Hij was daar gewoon heel erg twijfelachtig over. Volgens mij wist hij het gewoon niet, ik denk dat het daar eigenlijk op neerkomt. Dus hij heeft wel dingen gezegd over de muziek die hij maakt. Je kan niet zomaar zeggen van deze muziek daarmee zijn we anti-imperialistisch ofzo. Dan moet je ook nadenken van, oké maar hoe verwerk je dat dan in je muziek? En daar is Misha wel degelijk mee bezig geweest, dus hij heeft ook wel wat dingen gezegd over als ik samen met Han speel zijn we de hele tijd bezig elkaar te ondermijnen en dat heeft in zoverre een politieke invloed dat het publiek dat merkt en zou kunnen denken van "oh ik pak dit zo aan, maar ik zou dat ook anders kunnen doen."

Maar goed, hij zegt van ja hoe effectief tot nou eigenlijk is in daadwerkelijk omverwerpen van imperialistische structuren die onze wereld domineren…. Mwah. Dus dat is een beetje hoe hij erin stond en ik denk dat dat voor veel ICP'ers zo geldt. Ze zijn er niet naïef in, zeg maar. Misschien zelfs een beetje blasé in die zin. Je zou je kunnen afvragen of ze daar niet toch wat meer actief in hadden kunnen zijn. Daar was denk ik wel ruimte voor. Het was natuurlijk wel zo dat heel veel mensen die terugdenken aan die groep en concerten, dat was voor heel groot publiek wel degelijk iets waar ze zich mee identificeerden. Kijk, we zijn met zijn allen iets moois en iets goeds aan het doen, en ook in politiek en sociaal opzicht er zijn we ergens aan het bouwen. Ik dat je dat nu niet meer kan zeggen van ICP of misschien überhaupt van geïmproviseerde muziek.

De vraag is of je uit moet zijn op echt een bijdrage leveren aan iets op in een concrete manier is denk ik heel lastig, zonder dat je eigenlijk het platslaat. […] Tegelijkertijd heeft de ICP natuurlijk wel een bijdrage geleverd. De vraag is natuurlijk, denk je dat je de werkwijze van de ICP, denk dat je met dezelfde insteek nu nog steeds relevante kunst zou te maken?

[… Cornelius Cardew, 10 jaar ICP, Treatise, Grafische Partituren] "Al die experimentele muziek is bullshit, alleen maar bourgeois geneuzel, ik ga alleen nog maar socialistische strijdliederen schrijven." "Ik hoop dat ze hoog op de hitlijsten komen, zodat ze daadwerkelijk publiek bereiken." Sympathiek, maar cynisch.

Kijk, Willem Breuker die was in die tijd ook al dat hij eigenlijk zei van "ja ik wil *wel* echte een publiek bereiken" en ook wel vanuit een politiek ideaal. Breuker heeft heel vaak gezegd dat hij eigenlijk hoopte dat vrije improvisatie de nieuwe dixieland zou worden. Ook al klinkt de muziek en beetje raar, je ziet toch dat iemand gewoon de longen uit zijn lijf staat te spelen dat maakt toch indruk op je? Ook de gemiddelde arbeider die niks van experimentele muziek weet kan zien *hier gebeurt iets*. Dus die hoopte heel erg dat die vrije muziek het grote publiek zou kunnen bereiken en toen hij merkte dat dat niet zo was, is hij best wel toegankelijke muziek gaan schrijven. Hij is muziektheater gaan maken, omdat hij dacht van, kijk als je niet van muziek houdt dan heb je tenminste nog een soort theater. Beetje lachen, met platte humor erin.

==Breuker zei eigenlijk, ik zie de effectiviteit van improvisatie als methode niet zo, wat denk ik best wel een valide opvatting is. Hoe meer je vrij improviseert, hoe meer je vraagt van je luisteraar, en hoe minder een eventuele boodschap ook over zou kunnen komen, denk ik.==

[aan de andere kant Misha, door improviseren en ondermijnen, vanuit strijd goed tot mooi dingen komen met elkaar, zie boven]

==Ik vraag mezelf heel erg af in hoeverre improvisatie nog een echte praktijk van betekenis is, zeker nu. De manier waarop muziek gemaakt wordt is gewoon zo radicaal en snel veranderd. En het idee van improvisatie past natuurlijk heel erg bij het jaren 60 idee van vrije expressie, spontaniteit, enzovoorts. Dat heeft heel erg te maken met improvisatie als tegenovergestelde van het werkidee zoals ik net verteld heb. Tegenwoordig wordt heel veel muziek in DAW gemaakt, wat ja prima, weet je. Dat is gewoon hoe muziek wordt gemaakt==. Dus het praktisch met elkaar musiceren is al eigenlijk minder van toepassing, laat staan dat je gaat nadenken over "oké schrijft iemand een compositie voor een groep of gaan die zelf improviseren?" Ik bedoel, de productie van muziek is gewoon zo ontzettend veranderd in die zin. Ik denk dat die tegenstellingen heel erg veranderd zijn.

==De aard van het maken van muziek is gewoon heel erg veranderd en ik vraag me af of improvisatie niet een soort achterhoedegevecht wordt. Je bent erg bezig met vraagstukken die misschien tot de jaren 70, eventueel tot de jaren 80, nog relevant waren. Maar nu misschien niet meer.==

Kan je dan wel wat bereiken met muziek die alleen gemaakt is om te consumeren? Per definitie niet, toch? Zodra het onderdeel wordt van hetgeen waartegen je kritiek probeert te hebben, raak je de hele waarde van wat kunst zou moeten zijn, kwijt. [vb. Groter dan ik]

Waar je als improvisator ervan uitgaat dat muziek vooruitloopt op de zaken, door zeggen dat we proberen verandering te bewerkstelligen, dat is misschien een beetje naïef. Aan de andere kant denk dat je ook wel een case zou kunnen maken dat veel van de geproduceerde muziek eigenlijk bijna niet vooruit loopt, misschien zelfs een beetje achter de feiten aanloopt qua betekenis. Er wordt wel gekeken naar nieuwe geluiden of nieuwe manieren om mensen te raken, maar de vraag is of dat eigenlijk een inhoudelijk vraagstuk is.

Ik weet niet of ik er echt in geloof dat muziek in die zin vooruit loopt op de wereldgeschiedenis. Ik ben daar sowieso best wel sceptisch over. Zo'n liedje spreekt bestaande gevoelens aan, en versterkt die misschien ook. Het creëert een gemeenschap. [..] Ik weet niet zo goed wat je daaraan zou missen.

Kijk, Adorno was heel erg van de historische bepaaldheid van het muzikale materiaal. Wat is dat dan tegenwoordig? Dan maak ik eigenlijk de link naar de aard van muzikale productie en hoezeer die is veranderd in de 21ste eeuw. Voor zover ik weet begreep Adorno dat heel erg in termen van tonaliteit en dergelijke. Dat heeft met 21ste eeuwse muziek helemaal niks meer te maken. […]

Ik denk dat heel erg veel boeiende muziek ook gemaakt wordt in DAWs, die ook heel modernistisch kan zijn. En in hoeverre spreekt modernisme zelf niet iets aan dat al bestaat bij een bepaalde groep mensen?

Zeker als je improvisatie ziet als *instant composition* dan is het misschien een praktijk die in veel verschillende muzikale tijden een plek heeft. Hoe past improvisatie dan nog in de situatie met

nieuw materiaal? Improvisatie is natuurlijk het vinden van nieuwe toepassingen of contexten voor bestaand materiaal. En dat gegeven is hoe dan ook relevant.

Ik denk dat je dat niet in termen van materiaal moet zien. Wat de waarde van improvisatie kan zijn, is het samen muziek maken. [De kracht ervan is het samen maken en een gemeenschap vormen.] Voor mij persoonlijk, is het leuke eraan dat je muziek ziet ontstaan tussen musici. Of het nou hele abstracte of modernistische muziek is of niet, maakt wat dat betreft niet zoveel uit. Ik denk daar wel een soort authenticiteit inzit wat herkenbaar is voor mensen, wat belangwekkend is.

Dat is een van de dingen die ik interessant vond aan ICP. Zij worden heel erg gezien als sociaal geëngageerd, maar als je gaat kijken waar hun engagement op neer komt, is het dat ze gewoon meer overheidssubsidie voor muziek willen. Het sociale engagement reikt soms maar tot maar de manier waarop we de sociale structuren van de muziekwereld hebben ingericht. Dat is toch iets anders dan het sociale engagement van de strijd tegen klimaatverandering of neokolonialisme, of dat soort dingen.

Ik was wel benieuwd wat je van mijn opnames vond die ik je gisteren heb gestuurd. [We proberen iets ter plekke te laten ontstaan.]

Shelter: Melodieus, spreekt aan. Er ontstaat iets. Three strikes out: er ontstaat minder iets tussen de bandleden. Leuke compositorische ideeën, maar minder grip op het materiaal. Deed wel denken aan Benjamin Herman met Misha Mengelberg "Heterogeneity". Wel strategieën uit vrije improvisatie, maar moet niet experimentele muziek worden. Mooie melodieën. Krijgt instemming.

Tot daar gaat het even nu maar ik ben wel altijd op de achtergrond bezig met dit soort overwegingen. *Je wil een bijdrage leveren maar het is naïef om te denken dat het ook echt gaat doen.* Ted Curson: we maken free-jazz niet voor politiek statement. Als je iets wilt bereiken, moet je gewoon op de barricades gaan staan. Muziek maak je om gewoon muziek te maken.

d. Interview on Scores - Renard Aust[54]

Prepared questions:

In mijn muziek gaan compositie en improvisatie vaak in elkaar over, maar de score of bladmuziek reflecteert dat vaak nog niet voldoende naar mijn idee. Ik overweeg daarom komend semester mijn onderzoek ook te richten op de vraag hoe ik scores zo kan opstellen dat ze tegelijkertijd muzikaal helder zijn, en expliciet ruimte scheppen/afdwingen voor improvisatie. Met deze stukken en bijbehorende bladmuziek in gedachten, wat zou een goede manier zijn om daarmee te beginnen?

Tijdens de repetities met de band werken we veel aan projectie in de ruimte, luisteren naar de ruimte, en het spelen van een individueel of gezamenlijk beeld. Deze drie stukken zijn allemaal gecomponeerd op basis van een gebeurtenis/scène met mensen die ik ken. Ik zou graag een manier willen vinden om die beelden beter om te zetten naar scores/instructies voor de spelers. Heb jij hier ervaring mee, of suggesties voor?

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[54] Aust, Interview on scores.

De hoofdvraag van mijn onderzoek tot nu toe gaat over het incorporeren van technieken van vrije improvisatie en instant composition in mijn eigen muziek, zonder dat het meteen in het typische free jazz idioom verandert of te experimenteel en ontoegankelijk wordt. Ik wil het publiek meenemen in een bepaalde klankwererld en iets van een narratief overbrengen, terwijl ik de band vrij wil laten zijn omdat dit naar mijn idee heel veel diepte en scherpte oplevert in de muziek. Bij welke improvisatoren of componisten herken je dezelfde vraag in hun muziek? Welke compositie of improvisatie technieken zijn hiervoor de moeite waard om mezelf meer in te verdiepen?

Dus… als het een over subtiel hebben dan heeft zo een stuk misschien geen eindstreep, geen *final barline*. Als je dat zo bekijkt; het zijn twee A4tjes en het zou je dus zomaar zo kunnen wegspelen en dat is dus echt niet de bedoeling. En het is veel meer dan dit, dus dit is geen einde en als ik naar de opname luister is dit ook niet het begin. Dus wat je hier eigenlijk hebt – je gebruikt een beetje jazzidioom in die zin, zo'n *real book style*, dus je zegt dit is de *head*, dit is gewoon zeg maar de essentie van het stuk, maar natuurlijk verzinnen we daar nog allemaal andere dingen omheen. Als je bijvoorbeeld als componist ideeën hebt hoe je zoiets zou willen beginnen, zou ik dat het waarschijnlijk ook schetsen in een partituur. Dat wil niet zeggen dat je daar altijd aan moet houden, maar je gaat tenminste de repetitieruimte in met een idee van hoe dat zou kunnen beginnen.

En dat zou hier bijvoorbeeld een motief kunnen zijn, wat je gebruikt in je piano improvisatie aan het begin en dat zou je eigenlijk voor iedereen op kunnen schrijven. Dat betekent dus ook dat niet alleen jij hoeft te beginnen, dat zou ook Kim kunnen zijn of de saxofonist. Dan maak je zo'n box, dit is het of je zegt gewoon bepaalde intervallen. Gewoon, daarmee kunnen we beginnen, of kan diegene die begint, beginnen. En dan op een gegeven moment gebeurt dit, op gegeven unisono de melodie en dan op een gegeven moment akkoord partijen erbij. Dus zo heb je in je gedachten dat het misschien zo *kunnen* lopen.

Als je daar vrij overtuigd van bent, kun je dat dus ook op papier zetten. Als je er niet zo mega overtuigd van bent, kun je bijvoorbeeld dingen gewoon nog meer in kunnen koken. Als een tomatensaus; dat het gewoon steeds meer smaak krijgt. Ik heb een motief en die kunnen we gebruiken, dus krijgt het motief een eigen plekje op de pagina. Of ik heb hier een *pattern*, die zou je eruit kunnen knippen als het ware en als een soort een box gebruiken en dan kan je als je dat dan ook nog slim labelt, zou je dingen ook kunnen *triggeren* – dat je zegt: nu wil ik het motief horen. Of dan kun je ook dwarsverbanden leggen, dat je zegt: altijd wanneer het akkoorden ding komt, spelen we dat altijd acht keer en dan gaan we over naar iets anders, ofzo. Ik noem het altijd legoblokjes, en die kun je dus ook in een partituurvorm gieten. Dat je zegt: ik weet eigenlijk ook niet hoe we het precies in elkaar zetten wanneer we het spelen, maar dat zijn de legoblokjes hiermee moeten we het doen.

[De drums missen ook] en dat is dan weer vanuit een compositie standpunt, vind ik dat soms een beetje een gemiste kans – als je al iets opschrijft, schrijf misschien ook iets voor de drummer op. Kijk als iemand op automatische piloot musiceert, dan zijn het toch vaak drummers. Als je een heel specifiek idee heb wat die misschien zou moeten doen, een melodie, een riff, een gesture, een sound idee, de rusten opvullen, uniritmisch. Zeker als het stuk goed kent, en ook de spelers, kun je echt al van tevoren kunnen verzinnen wat hij zou kunnen doen in het stuk. Al heb je maar een balk waarop staat gewoon "super een quiet brushes and symbols only" dan heeft 'ie al een idee.

Ik had het er ook met Marc over in mijn repetities, om de band soms een beeld mee te geven en dan dat te spelen. En ik ben benieuwd of jij dat ook wel eens hebt gedaan en hoe je dat dan in je score verwerkt.

Hoe ik te werk ga bij het componeren is vaak dat ik dus ook zo'n beeld schets. Dat label – kan van alles zijn: een gebouw, een gevoel, een beeld – is voor mij centraal voor een stuk wat ik schijf en op een of andere manier probeer ik dat is ook inderdaad over te brengen. Soms gewoon echt simpel in de titel, soms subtiel in de manier waarop ik zo een partituur vorm geef, en dan kun je ook bijvoorbeeld eraan denken om een soort van titelpagina te maken met letterlijk het beeld erop. Dat is inderdaad denk ik waar je creativiteit echt uitgedaagd wordt.

Er zijn componisten, zeker in hedendaagse klassieke kringen, die gebruiken dan een soort tape, of een vaste, vooraf opgenomen soundscape en daardoor schep ook meteen een soort van sfeer waarop je als musicus dan weer reageert. Er zijn fantastische voorbeelden daarvan Harry Sparnaay – basklarinet – en natuurlijk Stockhausen die heeft het ook gedaan – uit mijn hoofd *Contacten* of zoiets dat is ook een stuk om misschien naar te kijken. Maar als ik lees dat het iets heel persoonlijks is wat je in muziek giet, en je wil eigenlijk dan dat je medespelers daarop reageren zou het ook iets kunnen zijn om niet alleen hen in aanraking te laten komen met jouw beeld, maar sterker nog: overweeg om te bedenken hoe je iets kunt triggeren wat ook met hen te maken heeft.

[… uitleg Three Strikes Out]

Dit is dus iets uit jouw ervaring met iemand, maar zoiets heeft van jouw medespelers ook. Die kan dus ook gaan naar zijn eigen gevoel en zijn eigen ervaring en daaruit kun je dus ook gewoon putten. En voor mij is het gewoon een fantastisch label. Daar kan ik dus van alles muzikaal bij bedenken: als er al een getal in zit, dan weet ik eigenlijk al zoveel dingen! Drie keer misschien in variaties maar misschien loopt het altijd op hetzelfde uit, het is echt een goudmijn muzikaal.

Je zou ervoor kunnen kiezen als je een kwartet hebt, dat echt alleen maar 3 mensen spelen van het kwartet, maar doe het drie keer en altijd is er een iemand die niet meedoet. Of dat je drie keer hetzelfde materiaal hebt, maar het totaal verschillend benadert. Maar op een of andere manier hoe je het ook benadert, je komt altijd op hetzelfde uit. Dat vind ik echt muzikaal heel interessant om te onderzoeken hoe je dat als componist voor elkaar krijgt, maar dus ook als improvisator. Zo werkt een label voor mij.

Ook een beetje om te kijken naar wat ik misschien volgend jaar nog wil doen in mijn research.

Ja, in die zin zin vind ik bijvoorbeeld Morten Feldman heel sterk, omdat die echt dingen afdwingt. Om echt iets af te dwingen moeten [je partituren] nog schetsmatiger zijn of aan de andere kant hoor ik de hele tijd dat Kim iets doet met flageoletten en het staat er helemaal niet in. Wat is het nut van zo'n partituur dan? Hij moet echt super doelgericht zijn en aan de andere kant ook echt super open.

[...]

In de jazz kant vind ik mensen spannend die het ook heel duidelijk door laten schemeren dat ze iets moment tot moment het steeds anders doen. Graham Collier, *opening up the jazz ensemble,* moet je echt lenen. Hij vindt echt heel mooie en werkende manieren om dingen eenvoudig op te schrijven en het soort van legoblokjes. Hij heeft heel mooie ideeën over hoe je dingen in legoblokjes kunt onderverdelen zodat het bijvoorbeeld ook niemand afschrikt.

[... Tin men and the telephone, durven te reageren, improtheater, labels]

Reactie tweede iteratie:

Ik vind jouw partituur er zeer geslaagd uitzien!

Geen 'final barline' - yes!

De rehearsal marks niet op alfabetische volgorde - yess!

Een visuele steun voor jouw instructies - yesss!

Nog wat tips/opmerkingen:

Een vluchtige blik naar de bladmuziek suggereert dat in B de sax en de piano spelen, in A piano en bas en in C alleen de piano. Als dat klopt, prima. Als dat niet de bedoeling is dan zou je over een andere manier na kunnen denken om de verschillende partijen te noteren.

Je gaat voor veel details in de gegeven noten. Dat mag, dat kan. Als je echter verwacht dat de spelers de bladmuziek als point of departure gebruiken zou je gaandeweg steeds meer noten/info/details weg kunnen laten om steeds meer vrijheid toe te laten - of juist andersom. Is wellicht interessant om dat eens uit te proberen.

e. Interview on Epoxy Quartet Recordings - Marc van Roon[55]

Out of Reach:

Niet heel veel pedaal, maar veel sacraler met gewoon een akkoord wat dan mag klinken. Bij de repetitie was dat al een groot verschil, maar nu hoor ik het weer dat werkt heel erg goed. En ook gewoon het stuk: waar iedereen wel speelt en niet speelt en wat ze dan willen doen, daar heb je natuurlijk ook ideeën over. Dat maakt het heel sterk en coherent, heel cd waardig voor mij.

Nou ik denk niet dat het veel uitmaakt wat voor beeld het is. Misschien dat het iets uitmaakt of iedereen hetzelfde beeld heeft. Dat zal nooit helemaal zo zijn. Maar in ieder geval het idee heeft dat ze hetzelfde beeld hebben. ==Ik denk dat het het gevoel is dat je samen iets aan doen bent. Dat is een fijn gevoel.== Saamhorigheid, betekenis, *purpose.* Maar het zorgt dus voor een soort coherentie – het woord wat ik zou gebruiken – en dat hoor ik ook terug in de muziek. Ik hoor dat iedereen samen iets aan het doen is, ondanks dat Kim een heel ander liedje lijkt te spelen dan jij. Dat vind ik interessant: er dus is toch een soort verbondenheid. De energie, wat je terughoort.

[Koen benoemt: melodie onverwacht in de piano tijdens eerste thema]

==Ik denk dat het ook wel interessant is om te benoemen dat jij het aandurfde om in dat moment in te gaan op dat appel wat je hoorde.== Want je had ook kunnen denken: jeetje, we hebben het nou afgesproken, Cosimo doet de melodie, ik niet en laat ik dat maar zo houden. Maar niet nu de melodie gaan spelen, dat vinden ze misschien raar of gaat het misschien mis. Dat dacht je niet, wat natuurlijk veel spelers wel zouden denken. Jij doet hier iets wat heel fijn is, wat goed is voor het creatieve proces: je zegt ik kreeg het idee, of ik had het gevoel, ik weet niet waar het vandaan komt, maakt niet uit ik ging het gewoon doen. En levert iets mooi op. Die ontvankelijkheid voor – dit is iets heel anders nu wat er gebeurt, maar ik ga toch doen. Dat is natuurlijk voor mij wel een heel groot iets. Niet een klein iets. Voor mij is heel groot juist omdat een groot probleem dat ik zie in de samenleving is dat mensen deze stap niet durven te zetten, die jij daar zet. Dus de intuïtie durven te volgen en dan er maar op vertrouwen dat het goed komt. Dat is voor mij een heel groot iets, waardevol iets, ik weet niet of het bij je onderzoek thuishoort, maar ik zou dat wel een heel belangrijk stukje, een belangrijke opmerking vinden.

==Het is een stukje handelingsvermogen in jouw praktijk, wat dus iets oplevert.==

En het is ook iets wat een beetje nieuw is in mijn eigen spel, denk ik, dat ik op die manier erop durf te vertrouwen dat de rest het wel [handelt]. Misschien ook wel dat ik durf om in eerste instantie een beetje te botsen en dan dat we wel zien hoe het afloopt. Dat is ook wel iets wat ik met deze band meer opbouw dan met andere bands, omdat we het ook echt oefenen natuurlijk.

==En daar raakt het je onderzoek, dus wat levert het op om met elkaar in een gezelschap wat jij hebt gecreëerd met mensen die je bewondert en vertrouwt, om daar bepaalde zaken te bespreken en te beoefenen. Dan merk je nu dat wat het bij jou oplevert, is de moed om te kunnen zeggen van "ik ga nu de melodie spelen tegen de afspraak in, maar dit voel ik zo sterk intuïtief, dat dit nu moet gebeuren."==

Dat vind ik heel bijzonder, waardevol. Juist omdat zoveel mensen daar niet overheen gaan dan zeggen, ja intuïtie, intuïtie, maar er kan zoveel misgaan. En het is niet wat we afgesproken hebben. Jij brengt dat dus in jouw professionele handelen. Het is ook niet zo dat je even maar wat zit te doen. Dat je zegt, ja ik

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[55] Van Roon, Interview on Epoxy Quartet Recordings.

deed maar wat en dat heeft goed uitgepakt. ==Nee, jij brengt het dus in jouw professionele handelen. Hier heb je een voorbeeld van een interventie. Doordat je de band zo gestructureerd hebt, en jullie in zo'n werkproces zitten met elkaar, kun jij je nu u deze manier tot je eigen intuïtie verhouden. Dat levert iets heel moois op, en heeft een transformatieve kwaliteit. Dit is een blijvertje.==

Three Strikes Out:

Als ik jullie producer was geweest had ik het jullie nog een keer laten doen, want ik mis een beetje de energie die ik voelde in de RPL. ==Het is mooi en het werkt goed. Iedereen speelt goed, mooie solo, maar als je een plaat zou maken is dit wel het stuk dat even moet spetteren. Ik zou het iets sneller doen, iets meer iedereen erbovenop. Het is nu een beetje te comfortable geworden, deze uitvoering voor mij. [..] Dit stuk heeft het potentieel om op een album wel de energieke track te zijn en die spanning mis ik een beetje.==

Wat ik interessant vind aan deze take – ik weet niet of dit de beste take is – maar ik speel meestal niet de solo op dit stuk en hier, en omdat het als het gaat over mijn eigen pianistiek dat dit iets is wat vrij nieuw is voor mij. Om polyritimisch ingewikkeld en dan wel fraseren maar zonder al te veel harmonische context. En dan kijken of je toch een soort samenhangende solo kunt spelen met veel energie. Dat zijn dingen die voor mij eigenlijk nog net buiten bereik liggen. Sowieso veel energie geven of virtuoos zijn of atonaal improviseren – dit zijn alle dingen die die wel leuk zou vinden om meer tijd nog voor te maken. [...]

==Er zijn dingen te zeggen, maar ik vind dit een spannende solo!== Als jouw vraag zou zijn, als dit de context is in 7 en met hoge energie, wat kan ik dan doen? Dat is wel een exploratie waard. Hoe doen anderen dat? Maar ook in de context van samenspel: ==zo'n solo is natuurlijk niet alleen maar een uitsloof moment, het is ook een moment juist om de band bij elkaar te brengen, om energie te creëren, om onder verbinding met publiek te versterken. Want je wilt natuurlijk dat de mensen allemaal [imiteert enthousiast publiek]. Het is niet alleen effect ofzo, maar het is juist ook zo van dat jij zegt "jongens, huppakee, hier allemaal". Het is een beetje koken, wat je doet: laten stomen en dan is het *cooking*, daar ben je mee bezig. Dat is wel echt een karakter van dit stuk, daarom heb ik het ook over die energie.==

Kijk en zo'n pianosolo, het heeft mij heel lang gekost en heel veel cd's voordat ik de take koos die gewoon in zijn geheel het beste was, in plaats van de take waar ik de beste solo speelde. Dus ik heb geen recht van spreken die zin. Ik zeg niet dat jij dat doet, maar ik begrijp dat als je een opname hebt en je presenteert je, en je speelt een goede solo…. ja dan wil je ook dat mensen dat horen! Maar ik heb ook wel eens een take gekozen omdat het een goede take was, waarbij ik een slechte solo speelde, waar ik mijn hele leven lang van gebaald heb. […] Dat had ik toch niet moeten doen. Het heeft gewoon aandacht nodig, welke take kies je en een goede pianosolo alleen is niet een [goed criterium].

==Pianistiek vind ik dat je het [de solo] heel goed doet, en als solo en materiaal. Mijn aanpak hierbij zou zijn: jeetje, wat kan ik in godsnaam over 7 spelen? En hoe doen anderen dat?== En daar heb ik dan een eigen soort van strategie voor ontwikkeld.

[uitleg kiezen voor een van de delen van de maat, 5 over 4, 4 over 3, grote en kleine 7]

The interview with Kika Sprangers has not been transcribed or used in this research.

The interview with Michael Moore has not been transcribed, as it is mostly music.

Appendix 4: Scores

Shelter

Koen Gijsman, Kasper Rietkerk

Shelter

molto rall.

p sub.

5

Mettā

Epoxy Quartet

Koen Gijsman

Epoxy Quartet

Out of Reach

Koen Gijsman

Rubato ♩ = 60

Ballad / Epoxy Quartet

Three Strikes Out

1. Flow 1

Piano

Inertia

Epoxy Quartet

Piano

Piano

Appendix 5: Graphs

94

Kiln   Brebl 1

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

+2
+1
-1
-2

Contra.

Contra. Kan
w/ Tuomas.

↓ w/Kan

Parameter 2: Interplay

+2
+1
-1
-2

Contra.

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

+2
+1
-1
-2

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 1 / MONK

NAME AND DATE: Koen 8/11

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

Parameter 2: Interplay

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

1

AR KOEN GIJSMAN
NAME AND DATE: Tuomas

RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 1 / MONK

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

Parameter 2: Interplay

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

1

RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 2 / SOMEDAY

NAME AND DATE: Martijn van Ditshuizen, 12-11-22

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

Parameter 2: Interplay

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

98

Kim Brebl 2

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 2: Interplay

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

+2
+1
-1
-2

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 2 / SOMEDAY
NAME AND DATE: Koen 11/11

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.
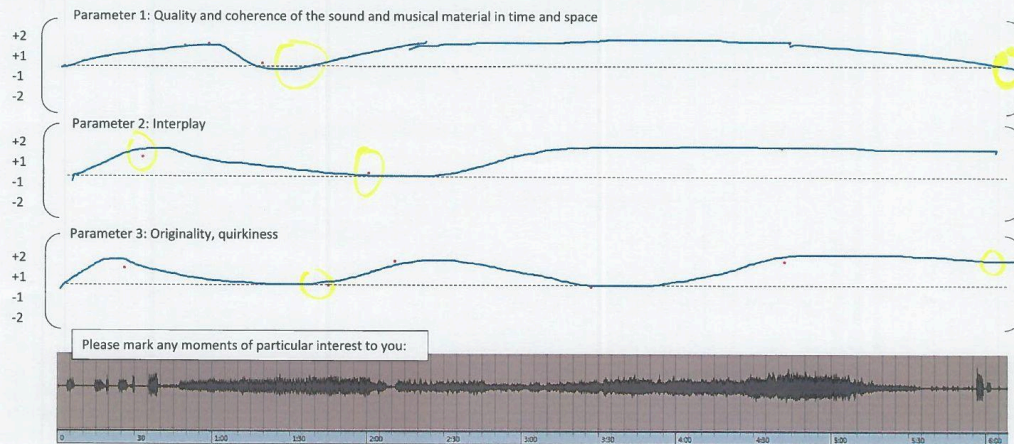

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

Parameter 2: Interplay

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

1

AR KOEN GIJSMAN   RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 2 / SOMEDAY
NAME AND DATE:

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.
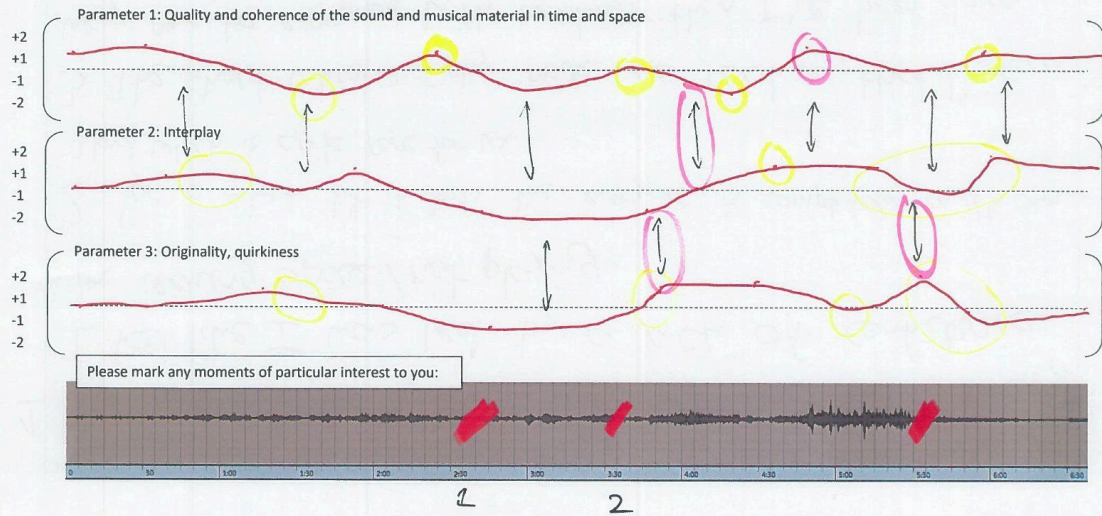

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

Parameter 2: Interplay

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

1

AR KOEN GIJSMAN

NAME AND DATE: Martijn von Ditshuizen, 13-11-22
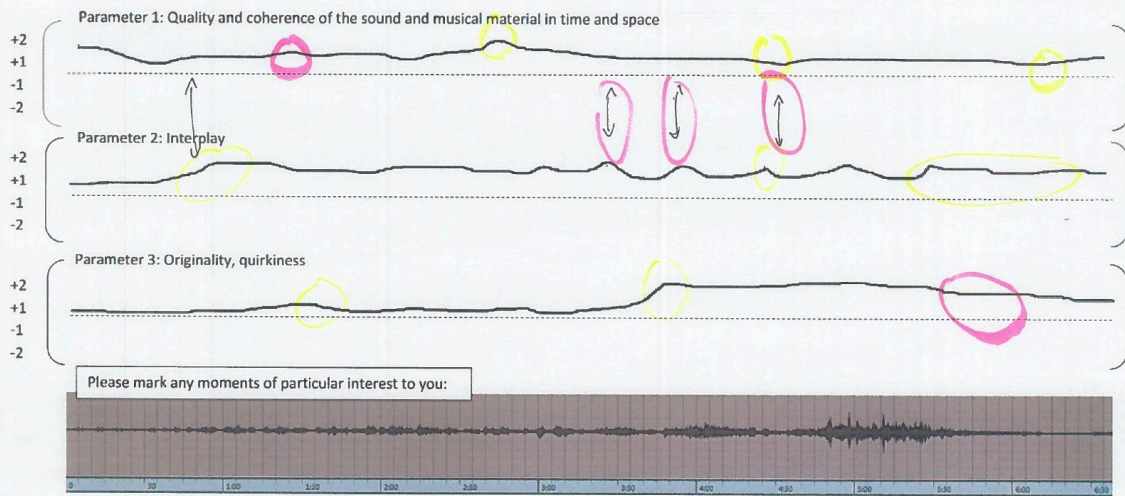
RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 3 / HONEYWOOD

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.
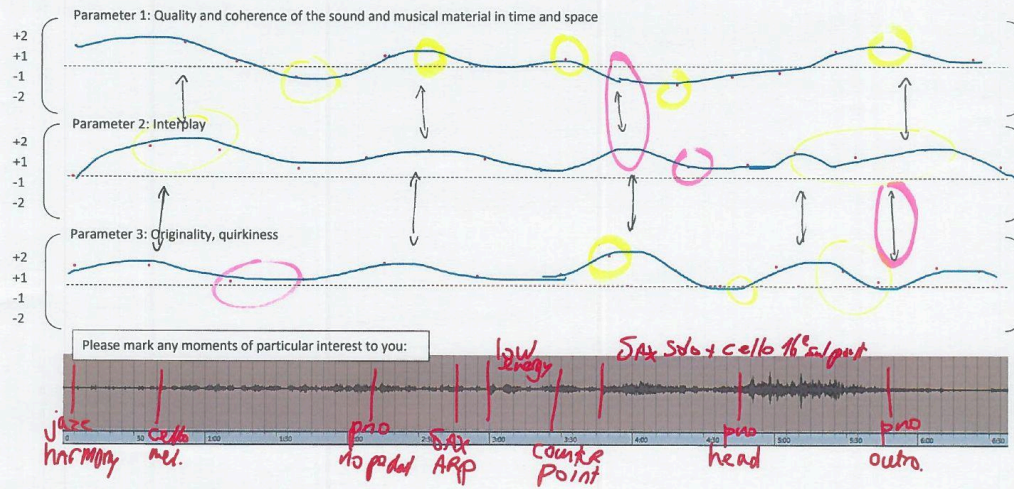
Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

Parameter 2: Interplay

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

1

Kim Breb/3

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 2: Interplay

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

+2
+1
-1
-2

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 3 / HONEYWOOD

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.
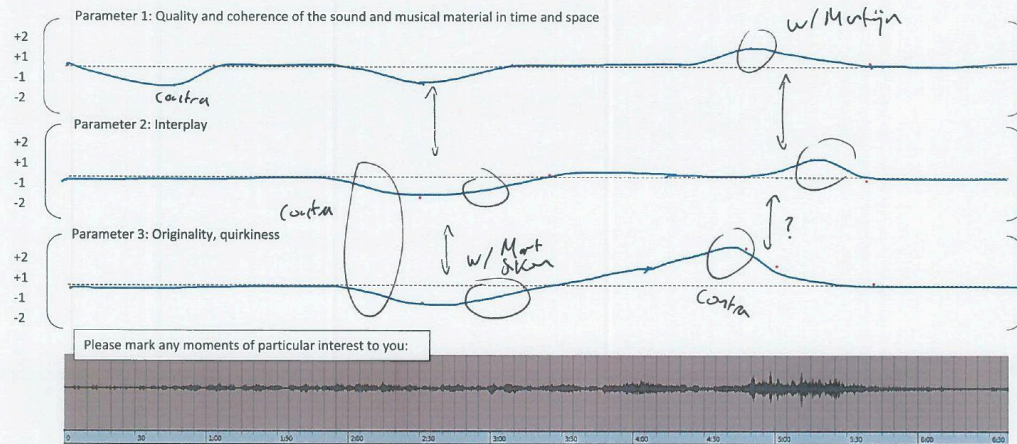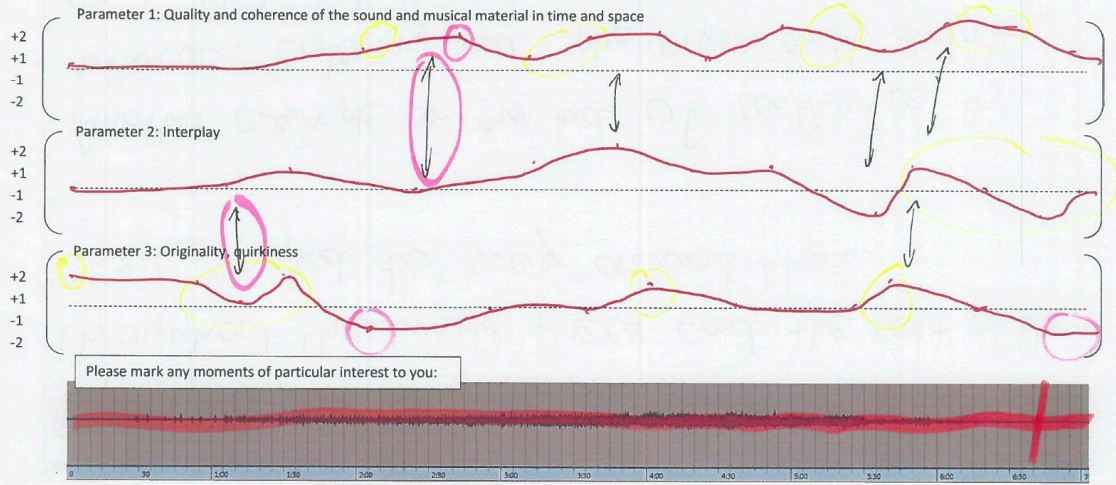
Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 2: Interplay

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

+2
+1
-1
-2

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:
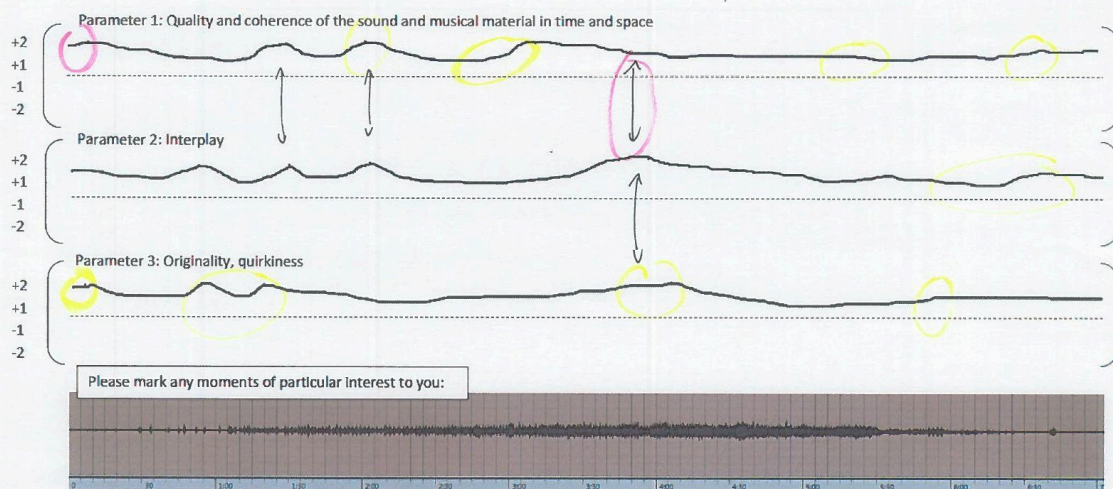
1

AR KOEN GIJSMAN
NAME AND DATE: Tuomas 15/11   RECORDING: BREBL RECORDING 3 / HONEYWOOD

Dear Epoxy band members,

Attached is a selection of our Brebl concert. Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the sound and musical material in time and space

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 2: Interplay

+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 3: Originality, quirkiness

+2
+1
-1
-2

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

1

AR KOEN GIJSMAN   RECORDING: SIENNA RECORDING
NAME AND DATE: Ruurd Faber 14 okt 2022

Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them a erwards.
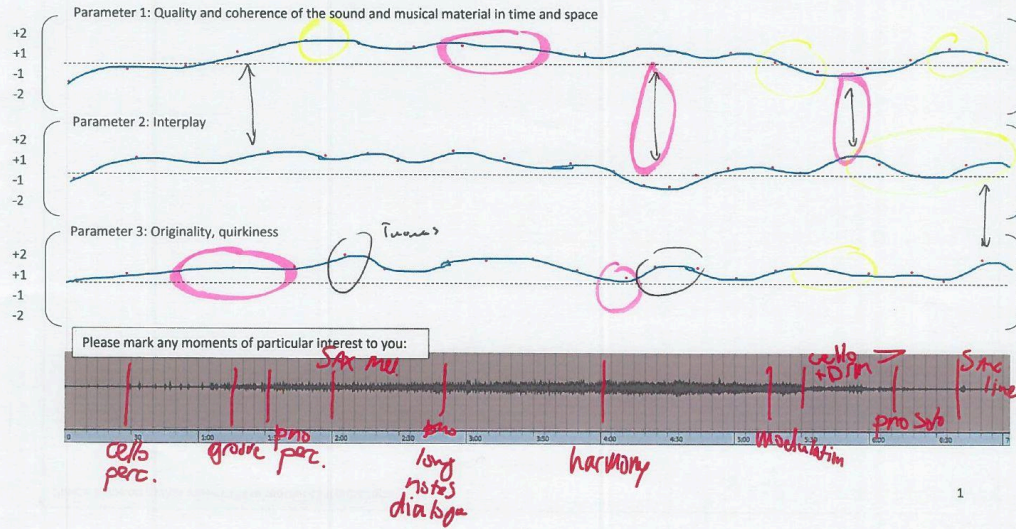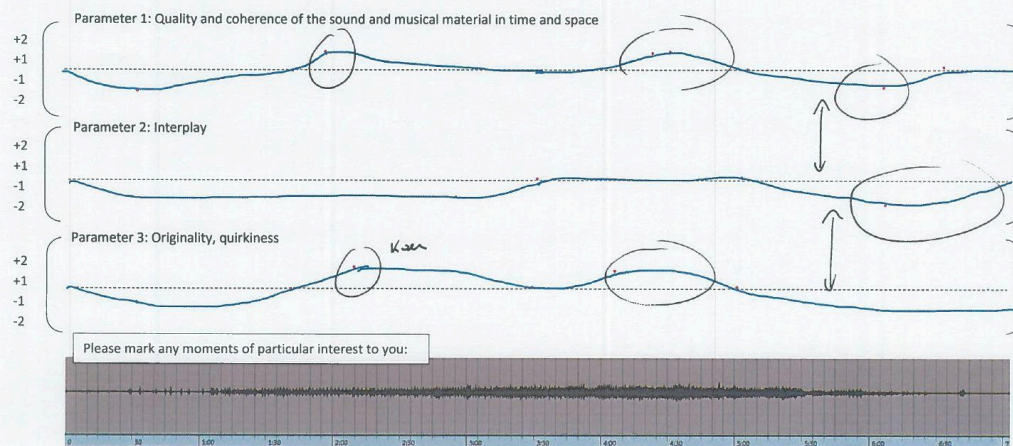

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the harmonic and melodic material

Parameter 2: Interplay

Parameter 3: Rhythmicality/Note-density

Please mark any moments of par cular interest to you:

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8
                                   1
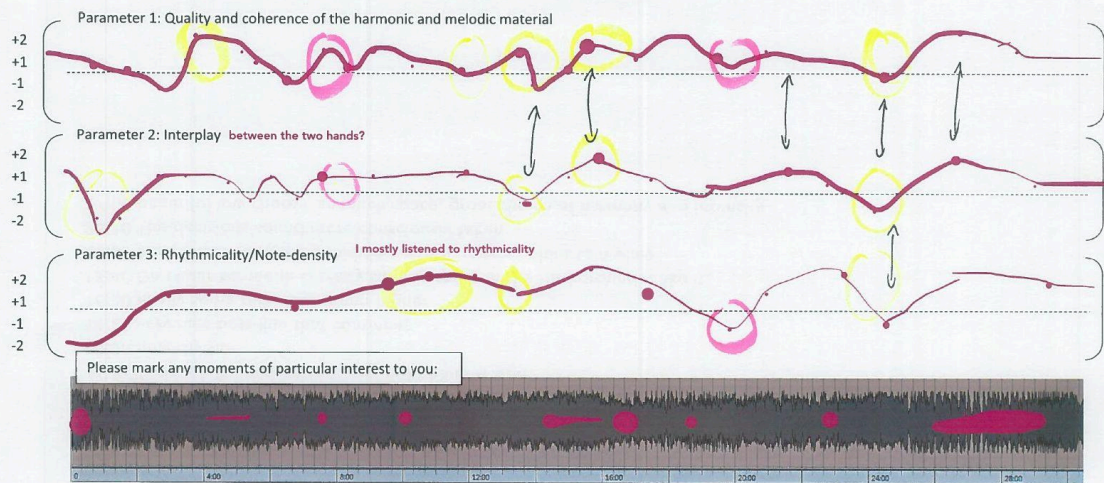
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AR KOEN GIJSMAN   RECORDING: SIENNA RECORDING
NAME AND DATE: Hanna Govers- van Dijk 11 -11 -'22

Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the harmonic and melodic material

Parameter 2: Interplay   between the two hands?

Parameter 3: Rhythmicality/Note-density   I mostly listened to rhythmicality

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

1

AR KOEN GIJSMAN
NAME AND DATE: Koen 13/11   RECORDING: SIENNA RECORDING

Please draw a graph for the following (musical) parameters according to your own judgement when listening to the presented recording. Tip: place dots immediately while listening, and connect them afterwards.

Parameter 1: Quality and coherence of the harmonic and melodic material
+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 2: Interplay
+2
+1
-1
-2

Parameter 3: Rhythmicality/Note-density
+2
+1
-1
-2

Please mark any moments of particular interest to you:

double pattern

Big Chords

bass + high
mel   pattern

the
river

Swap
places

virtuoso
stuff

high
note   + bass
pedal   solo

marching

new
vibe

1

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