

Editorial:

Creative practice in jazz research

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The editorial team at *Jazz Research Journal* is delighted to bring you this special issue on creative practice in jazz research. Creative practice is at the heart of jazz, and practice-led and practice-based research plays an increasingly significant part in jazz studies and beyond (see, for example, Vear 2021; Bulley and Şahin 2021; Kahr 2022). Yet the value of creative practice as a scholarly activity remains contested within the academy. For example, as Shaw (2021) notes, ‘the delivery of doctoral training in UK universities sometimes offers a version of universal researcher identity that excludes practice-based researchers’. Moreover, the discussion of practice does not sit comfortably with all practitioners, as Derek Bailey confessed in his influential book *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music*: ‘[t]urning again from improvising to writing about improvisation was done reluctantly; they are very different activities, it seems to me, and not always compatible’ (Bailey 1992: xiii).

This special issue of *Jazz Research Journal* welcomes a broad range of responses to our call for articles and an international roster of contributors. Themes around creative intent and collaborative practice are explored and unpacked by Sven Bjerstedt, who provides a phenomenologically framed investigation into temporality and intentionality in jazz improvisation: to what extent do improvisers intend to play what they play, and is this ‘mindful’, ‘mindless’ or a combination of both? Haftor Medbøe considers individual and shared identities and positionality in collective music making, using as a case study his own work on two duo album projects during the period following the coronavirus restrictions. In this article, Haftor reflects on his interpersonal relationships with his collaborators and how these might be exhibited in improvised music. Continuing with the theme of identity and

free improvisation, Gonçalo Prazeres gives focus to processes of interaction and musical identities scaffolded by his own practice and interviews with professional improvisors, finding that collective interaction plays a significant role in shaping an improvisor's musical persona.

The theme of collaboration in the practice of improvisation is explored in the following articles. Kyle Irwin discusses the musical text and its interpretation in collaborative practice around original compositions: how does the text of a composition inform the way in which musicians interpret it in practice in a specific musical situation? Stein Helge Solstad considers the changes that occur from rehearsal to recording through musical and verbal conversation between collaborating musicians, using participant observation and interviews to gain a better understanding of the role of conversation in 'moving from my music to our music'. And Jeremy Rose considers the role and function of drums across society and the exchange of knowledge across cultural boundaries, having collaborated in a composition project with two drum virtuosos with East Asian and Pacific Island influences under the broad umbrella of jazz.

The final three creative practice contributions consider music performance and factors beyond the notes. Heli Reimann turns our attention to how interactive processes between musical improvisation and space are experienced and conveyed by musicians and listeners, using examples of performances in atypical venues that could be described as a 'non-place'. She is followed by José Dias providing insight into how improvisation for silent film evokes and challenges the jazz canon through pushing the boundaries of genre, instrumentation, techniques and collaboration while engaging with the narrative and cultural contexts of the films. Dias draws upon the development of his own practice in improvising to the moving image, culminating with some interesting thoughts about future practice. Bálint Szabó then takes us into the world of 3D printed musical instruments, custom made for communal playing within a context of different tuning systems and playable by musicians of a wide range of experience and ability. Yveta Kajanova concludes this section by shining a comparative light on vocal jazz and poetry, considering the possibilities of new fusions of improvised jazz and poetry by analysing case studies inspired by Slovak, Russian and Polish poets, finding that their national identity can be transformed by the creative practice involved in these jazz collaborations.

In his piece 'Ethics, hermeneutics, and lessons from jazz' for our Open section of the journal, Sam McAuliffe explores the ethics within jazz performance and those at issue in hermeneutics through the example of Bill

Evans's 1961 live performance of Cole Porter's 'All of You'. Whilst this article was not submitted in response to the special issue call, it is fortuitous that it also considers encounters between musicians and the music. And in reiterating several of the key thematic strands of 'Creative Practice in Jazz Research', McAuliffe's considerations bring this issue of *Jazz Research Journal* to a close.

We are deeply grateful to the authors for both the scope and depth of their contributions that we believe come together to form an exciting addition to the fields of creative practice and artistic research. We very much hope that our readers concur.

Haftor Medbøe and Tom Sykes,
on behalf of the editorial board of
Jazz Research Journal.

References

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