

# EUROPEAN INTUITIVE MUSIC CONFERENCE DISCUSSION 2022 IN GARBICZ, POLAND, 23. JULY 2022.



*Present were: Adam "Izaak" Wasqżnik (PL), Carl Bergstroem-Nielsen (DK) (moderator), Hans Tonino (NL), Jopo Poffet (CH), Ingeborg Poffet (CH), Cornelia Voss (DE), Juan Maria Solare (ARG/DE), Iouri Grankin (UKR/DE).*

## LOOKING INTO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS

Carl: Seemingly I know improvised music so well. But it occurred to me while playing Hans' pieces that they took me out of some habits. They played the trick of demanding us to relate to a pulse that does not exist, etc... - and so I was seemingly handicapped, but maybe this prevented me from doing some familiar things and made me come into the flow. - Did something similar happen to you?

Iouri: on the contrary for me, as Jopo said yesterday, it was about recollecting other aspects to communication - for me it's about meeting meet new people with different backgrounds, to observe what they do on stage, learning.

Jopo: I think here is the place where we can experiment with some ideas, some advices how to play. Advice is sometimes difficult to carry out in practise. In Hans' pieces we had to at the same time go deep into whe whole music and look at oneself from outside. Instructions have the ability to bring you out of yourself. - In free improvisation you learn to relate to the whole music. Some musicians, even good instrumentalists, do not at all have this frame of mind - attention to the proces together.

## SOLO IMPROVISATON

Carl: free improvisation feels to me like an existential situation. In solo playing, I can both ask myself "why on earth am I sitting here" and at the same time it's very exciting to have all these people's attention... and there is the possiblityto pursue peak experiences, as my colleague Jack Wright mentions...

Izaak: there seem to be strong voices (Hans and Jopo) to look for quality in improvisation in this reactivity to others. So what is the quality of solo improvising since there is no reactivity there?

Hans: in solo you interact with yourself.

Iouri: Interaction without interaction?

Carl: for me, it's a peak discipline - I came very late to it and consider it difficult. That's because I have all the responsibility, in group improvisation I can lean back ad libitum...

Iouri: so how do you manage to do this 100% performance work...

Carl: I think one interesting thing is the weakness of human memory, and it's interesting to be stripped down to this pure existence - I have to swim in the water which is there ... I have to be very attentive and also think both back and forward to make it meaningful ...

Cornelia: you might have to have all kinds of games, images impulses that you can use ... often I just take what is there, like our EICM colourful logo or some noise I hear...

Carl: maybe it's a good psychological or Freudian question, where do good ideas come from?

Hans: from the subconscious, I believe...

Cornelia: from everything we have ever experienced, including the body... something will always pop up. If for instance you will ever hear somethings that reminds you of the situation we had with games, it will pop up again...

Hans: my old supervisor, Luc Houtkamp, saxophonist and composer, said that when improvising he used the very common mental model like a big house with many rooms - every kind of material and technique have their own room... so he can move around in this house...

Jopo: you need such cases to have a dramatic line. On the other hand it's also a little bit dangerous, like this page, turning to the next etc, then there is no flow...

Ingeborg: it's a huge difference whether you do it for two minutes or two hours! You have to measure your energy and you need a kind of inner story-board. If you play for 2 hours you have to carefully have pick in all your ideas - you don't just throw them one by one. I once did that, and then you have to cut off your mind and just *[quiet voice]* con--tin---ue...

Jopo: my longest one was 9 hours... the audience was changing from time to time. But if you play longer periods, it's just like a meditation. You've got to forget everything, otherwise you've got no chance, becoming both physically and mentally down. The experience was fantastic, to make yourself empty. All these thoughts "oh, what now, should I go up or down" doesn't matter - after two hours you can go up or down or stay, you just do! A good learning process.

Cornelia: so again, it's all about context - how many persons you are, where you are, which music wants to be created - even with those people I know very well and with whom I play very often, different circumstances make it feel very different.

Izaak: Solo improvisation in the street would for me not be much more different than in an ensemble. However, on a stage I would feel responsible that it was worth it for the audience.

Iouri: it's not the same for me to play in a group or solo. In terms of managing the energy, managing ideas, in the group there are more impulses from different sides. In solo playing I am 100% responsible for everything.

Jopo: I don't think we should make a solo evening, as Hans suggested. It gives some kind of competition feeling - a soloist creates the air, the spirit of the room - but to give 8 persons the same chance I consider nearly impossible. I might have to start from zero - but there is no zero in the room! It's already gone, you have no oxygen (laughter) ... we can do one-by-one things, but that's not solo...

Carl: we have ten minutes left - any other issues?

## **DIFFERENT IDEALS - CONVERSATION VERSUS SCULPTURE**

Hans: what makes a group improvisation a good one?

Cornelia: the nice thing in a group is to make everybody shine, the others need to step back to make space...

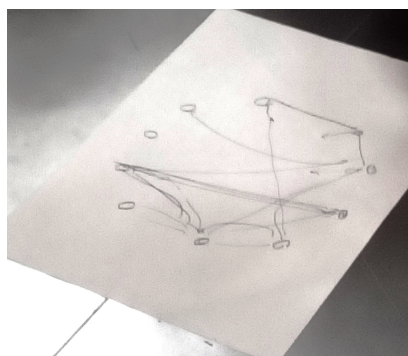
Carl: Phil Minton said "mind your gap" about this...

Izaak: active support is much more than leaving space - make other people shine is very important in improvisational theatre.

Ingeborg: breathing together like one organism, reacting, supporting, including these aspects of shining.

*[Here, several stories about bad experiences of missing attention from some fellow musicians were told, with much laughter].*

Iouri: in Ghent, Godfried-Willem Raes did a diagram showing who was connected by others and who not *[see illustration]*.



Godfried willem-Raes' "sociometric diagram", from his workshop at EIMC 2018

Izaak: One form is not better than the other, but I'm afraid that this reactivity is kind of dogmatic.

Carl: I had a very long email discussion published on my homepage with Andrzej Izdebski from Warsaw [[https://intuitivemusic.dk/intuitive/izi\\_cbn.htm](https://intuitivemusic.dk/intuitive/izi_cbn.htm)] about this topic. I perceived that he liked to make a sculpture together in music, not a conversation - to stand before this sculpture, to preserve individuality. I think it' a very possible way to play.

Cornelia: I would prefer the other, unless for a shorter time in between.

Carl: it depends on the people...

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*This text has been submitted to participants before publishing. However, some errors concerning names in the transscription may have occurred. Carl Bergstroem-Nielsen*