



1st – 2nd June 2019

Paris Cat Jazz Club

6 Goldie Place
Melbourne
Australia

Presented by:

**The Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music Monash
University**

in association with the
Melbourne International Festival of Jazz



MONASH University

Keynote speakers

Professor Raymond MacDonald (University of Edinburgh)
Professor Vijay Iyer (Harvard University)

Organising Committee:

A/Prof Robert Burke – Convener/President (Monash University)
A/Prof Andrys Onsman (Monash University)
Dr Chris Coady (University of Sydney)
Dr Nick Haywood (University of Tasmania)

AJIRN Board:

A/Prof Robert Burke – Convener/President (Monash University)
Prof. Roger Dean (University of Western Sydney)
A/Prof Andrys Onsman (Monash University)
Dr Chris Coady (University of Sydney)
Dr Nick Haywood (University of Tasmania)
Dr Aleisha Ward (New Zealand)
Dr Louise Denson (Griffith University)

Themes

- **Improvised lives**

Improvisation exceeds any knowledge domain constraint. However, it is also contextual. But mostly it is about people who have something to say musically and are not afraid to change what they are saying as they hear themselves saying it.

- **Playing with uncertainty**

At the start of their careers, many improvising musicians play tentatively and safely. At the peak of their careers, many embrace and deliberately seek uncertainty to force them to invent and resolve. Audiences too can approach improvised music with uncertainty, but as elements are recognised and anticipated, may also enjoy its uncertainty.

- **Theorising improvisation**

An interesting strand of research is emerging that considers how Improvisation builds a complex, at times volatile, entity out of the elements that the players bring to it. Are there discernible rules to improvisation, along the lines of the characteristics of chaos theory?

- **Crossing boundaries**

How has Jazz and Improvisation crossed boundaries? Perhaps a more pertinent question to be asked is whether boundaries in music are still relevant beyond simple appellation.

**** Painting by Raymond MacDonald

Welcome from AJIRN President



AJIRN first came about in 2015 in my role as the coordinator of Jazz and Popular Studies at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music - Monash University in 2015 and after I had completed a 4-year stint as head of school. With a greater understanding of the research landscape, I identified a need for a like-minded group that could come together to discuss and disseminate their research. This included the need to collaborate, draw on each other's expertise and experience and develop an atmosphere that inspired researchers to belong to a like-minded group. We also needed a voice in the academic world be it in music, the arts and more generally in research as a whole.

Now in our fourth year, it is important to reflect on where AJIRN sits from the original seed idea to where we are now. In my mind, the most important outcome has been to successfully engage researchers from the region (and generally internationally) and draw on these relationships in the advancement of knowledge in the field.

There are a couple of important acknowledgements to be made: first is the team that show leadership, artistic vision and support for the organisation. Conference Committee: A/Prof Andrys Onsman, Dr Chris Coady and Dr Nick Haywood along with the AJIRN committee of Prof. Roger Dean, and the recent additions: Dr Aleisha Ward and Dr Louise Denson. Second, I would like to thank the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music - Monash University who have supplied staffing infrastructure, facilities and administrative support. Third, I would like to thank all the contributors who come from all over Australia and New Zealand as well as a cross-section of international participants: their contributions are informative, thought provoking and inspiring.

Special thanks go to Fiona Burnett for her help over previous conferences, Head of the School of Music at Monash Prof. Cat Hope, technical expert Karl Willerbrandt and our two keynote speakers: Prof. Raymond MacDonald and Prof. Vijay Iyer (both are artists in residence at Monash University)

I am very excited to hear the wonderful research to be presented in the next two days: I believe this will be a part of transformational experience that AJIRN conferences offer.

Best wishes

*Rob Burke
AJIRN President*

PROGRAM

Saturday 1st June

Coffee - 8:30	
Welcome - 8:45 – 9:00	
Session 1: 9.00 – 10.30 (Upstairs) 1. Glen Hodges: <i>Raney's "Move", an 'outside' solo ahead of its time?- Meta principles revealed by uncertainty.</i> 2. Courtney Feldman: <i>Examining the connection between piano skills and high-level vocal jazz improvisational ability.</i> 3. Danilo Rojas: <i>Cueca, Tradition and Innovation- Utilising the traditional Bolivian music form of Cueca as a generative tool in Jazz based Composition and Improvisation</i>	Session 2: 9.00 – 10.30 (Downstairs) 1. Michael Kellett: <i>Dyadic and Hegemonic Afrological and Eurological Belief Systems: A Case for Austrological Practice.</i> 2. Alastair McGrath-Kerr: <i>Overlaying Schemas: Piagetian parallels when Jazz crosses boundaries</i> 3. Sam McAuliffe: <i>The Hermeneutic Character of Improvisation</i>
Morning Tea 10.30 – 11:00	
Keynote 11.00 – 12.00 – Professor Raymond Macdonald	
Session 3: 12.00 -1. 30 (Upstairs) 1. Dave Wilson: <i>A Conflux of Musical Logics: Improvising in Duo for SLANT</i> 2. Damien Kingston: <i>Derek Bailey - Order or Chaos</i> 3. Jordan Murray: <i>Vignettes as a way of communicating sociocultural influences in spontaneously improvised music performance.</i>	Session 4: 12.00 -1. 30 (Downstairs) 1. Paul Williamson & Johannes Luebbers: <i>Collaborative Composition: Improvising the Compositional Process and Embracing Uncertainty</i> 2. Rob Burke: <i>Algorithmic Jazz: Soul in the Body of the Machine</i> 3. Kevin Hunt: <i>A New Era of Improvised Music Pedagogy: a practice in time.</i>
Lunch 1.30 – 2.15	
Session 5: 2.15 – 3.45 (Upstairs) 1. Chris Coady: <i>Exceptionalism Routines, Scholarly Currents, and New Orleans' Music History Discourse</i> 2. Aleisha Ward: <i>Crossing ethereal boundaries: Early radio and the New Zealand jazz audience</i> 3. Toby Wren: <i>Jazz standards as archive: Creative limitations in jazz performance.</i>	Session 6: 2.15 – 3.45 (Downstairs) 1. Matt Keegan: <i>Crossing Boundaries</i> 2. Michael Wallace: <i>Initiating performer-directed open form structures through composition and improvisation</i> 3. Alistair McLean: <i>Improvised Recording Practice: Traditionalists and Innovators, Documentarians and Idealists</i>
Afternoon Tea 3.45 – 4.00	
Plenary 4.00– 4.30	
Panel: Dean, Onsman, Burke	

Sunday 2nd June

Coffee- 8:30	
Session 7: 9.00 – 10.30 (Upstairs) 1. James McLean: <i>Rhythm Cycles and Number Groupings: Towards an Understanding of Antripodean Improvising</i> 2. Louise Denson & Hannah Reardon-Smith: <i>Feministing Free Improvisation</i> 3. Melissa Forbes: <i>The vocal jazz improvisation act: A phenomenology</i>	Session 8: 9.00 – 10.30 (Downstairs) 1. Gareth Hill: <i>Uncertain Path: An Investigation of Henry Threadgill's Musical Concepts and their Effect on Creative Improvised Music Making.</i> 2. Johannes Luebbbers: <i>'My heart is sad and lonely': transforming a jazz compositional practice through collaboration</i> 3. Niran Dasika: <i>Mistuning, Compression, Polymodal Chromaticism and Inversional Symmetry: How to Improvise Like Béla Bartók</i>
Morning Tea 10.30 – 11.00	
Keynote 11.00 – 12.00 Professor Vijay Iyer	
Session 9: 12.00– 1.30 (Upstairs) 1. Andrys Onsman: <i>Improvisation and Embodied Time: Vijay Iyer, Piet Hein and Schrödinger's Cat.</i> 2. Roger T. Dean & Andrew Milne: <i>Uncertainty with well-formed but complex rhythms</i> 3. Angus Leighton: <i>Creating an original sound: a study of Lester Young's improvisational language, its influence on Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon and Wayne Shorter, and, how this has informed my development as an improviser.</i>	
Lunch 1.30 – 2.15	
Session 10: 2.15 – 3.45 (Upstairs) 1. Ben Phipps: <i>The uncertainty of jazz and improvisation education: An examination of the implications of cognitive load theory and motivation for learning.</i> 2. Pei Ann Yeoh: <i>Fusion Factor</i> 3. John Mackey: <i>Reducing Unpredictability or Uncertainty in relation to 'Outside Playing'</i>	
Afternoon Tea 3.45 – 4.00	
Plenary 4.00– 4.30	
Panel: Coady, Haywood, Burke,	

ABSTRACTS

Saturday 1st June

Session 1: 9.00 – 10.30

1.1 Glen Hodges: Raney's "Move", an 'outside' solo ahead of its time?- Meta principles revealed by uncertainty.

Jimmy Raney's solos on the two takes of "Move", from a bootleg recording that was later released as Stan Getz, Birdland Sessions (1948-1952) are unique examples of early bebop guitar virtuosity. Australian guitarist Jim Kelly regards them as one of the most challenging recorded bebop guitar improvisations of the period. Jon Raney, Jimmy's son, suggests that as far as Raney himself was concerned these sessions contained his best and most representative work.

Aside from the display of technical skill and musicianship from a seminal jazz musician at the peak of his powers these solos explore aspects of tonality and harmonic tension that are unusual for guitar styles of the period. While the term 'outside' has become somewhat hackneyed by overuse, its application here is both relevant and appropriate for a performance that is firmly situated chronologically in the middle of the "classic" bop period. The solos clearly stretch the standard approaches of the time to tension and resolution and may provide a glimpse into the approach of an improviser that operates in global concepts based on meta principles rather than more confining practices.

This paper investigates the improvisational language Raney uses, exploring the concepts of a solo being 'ahead of its time', the artistic power of a mature artist dramatically venturing into areas of risk and uncertainty and the importance of this in revealing key global elements of improvisational theory.

1.2 Courtney Feldman: Storied lives and relational research: Using narrative inquiry as a research methodology in jazz and jazz improvisation studies.

To be human is to lead a storied life. The sharing of stories illuminates one of the most authentic, and significant ways that human beings can connect. Story-telling has long been used to communicate shared cultural, religious, social, political and economic values and beliefs, passing knowledge and truth from one generation to the next. Story-telling marks our uniqueness from other species, knitting us together through relational interaction and communication. Like complex improvisations, the lived and told stories, or narratives, of an individual, provide a space in which meaning and understanding can interconnect and resonate, on both an individual and collective level.

As a methodological approach recognised across multiple social science disciplines, including music, narrative inquiry provides a way for researchers to explore deeply engage

with the lived experiences of individuals. By establishing a collaborative relationship with their research participants, the narrative researcher constructs subjective meanings of social phenomena and lived experiences, to craft a rich description of the research phenomena in their own words, or re-storied narrative. This presentation will provide a brief history and outline of narrative inquiry as a research methodology. The central concepts and philosophical underpinnings of narrative inquiry will be highlighted, making reference to issues of reliability, rigour, and ethics in research practice. The outcomes of narrative studies will be explored, giving implicit reference to the suitability and merit of narrative inquiry as a methodological approach for studies in jazz and jazz improvisation. Throughout the discussion, aspects of the presenter's own doctoral research will be reflected upon, situating the presentation, and the methodological approach, within contemporary research practice.

1.3 Danilo Rojas: Cueca, Tradition and Innovation.

This presentation will discuss which musical elements of the Bolivian Cueca encountered in an autoethnographic investigation can be used as generative material in the composition of new works in jazz-based improvisation.

The Cueca is an expression of Latin American culture in the form of dance, poetry and music. In this paper I contextualise the sociological lens from which I come through an investigative "Epoche". My background is significant insofar as it identifies my linkage to the tradition of Bolivian Cueca, from the pioneers and influential Bolivian composers: Simeón Roncal (1870-1953) and José Lavadenz (1883-1967) through to my Father Gilberto Rojas (1916-1983). The investigation analyzed the elements of their compositions through an ethnomusicological and musicological methodology coupled with a critical autoethnographic evaluation, the intention being to ground the rationale that integrates my later African-American jazz-based improvisational studies within the Bolivian Cueca tradition.

Findings from my practice-led research enabled an understanding of the unconscious elements that hitherto I had adopted from the pre-mentioned composers to then create and spontaneously integrate jazz and improvisation techniques within the Cueca. The creative work, which includes Cuecas that I composed through this study, was inspired by my personal experience as a Bolivian currently living within a multicultural context in Melbourne, Australia.

Session 2: 9.00 – 10.30

2.1 Michael Kellett: Dyadic and Hegemonic Afrological and Eurological Belief Systems: A Case for Austrological Practice.

From the mid-twentieth century, a dyadic division of improvisative practice arose labelled by George Lewis as Afrological and Eurological belief systems. Afrological practice is shaped by social and cultural forces whilst Eurological practice refers to a practice divorced from these influences. This paper examines whether Lewis' model is congruent with the performance of three contemporary Australian improvisers, and whether a hegemonic

paradigm is implicit in Lewis' model in the form of Americentric and Eurocentric practice. In doing so this study postulates a third possible categorisation, the Afrological or Australian improvisation.

Engaging in interviews with three prominent Australian improvisers – Jim Denley, Joe O'Connor and Scott McConnachie – the Afrological and Eurological model are scrutinised to observe how the rational of these individual's performance reconciled with Lewis' taxonomy. Subsequently, it is argued that this binary system is perhaps discordant with the improvisative performance of this study's participants where they seem to resist obstinate fidelity to one belief system over another but rather promulgate a level of unfixity which manifests in a vacillation between both schools of thought.

Furthermore, the examination of prominent literature surrounding the distinction between various global improvised musical forms, focusing principally on Australian practice, assesses the legitimacy of dominant European and American improvisative domains. It is argued that through the process of glocalisation, these American and European hegemonic traditions have become destabilised from global primacy as asserted in Lewis' model.

The insights gained from this research are two-fold. Primarily, a categorical model such as Lewis' would be better supplemented with a fluid like spectrum which would complement the actualised performance of this research's participants, and secondly the hegemonic structures axiomatic of Lewis's schema have become destabilised with the ascension of diasporic modes of improvisation which can be observed in Australia.

2.1 Alastair McGrath-Kerr: Overlaying Schemas: Piagetian parallels when Jazz crosses boundaries

Australian jazz has been noted for its ability to incorporate ideas from outside of the US jazz tradition, creating new music that demonstrates transculturation. As a performer and educator working with the influence of Brazilian music on jazz and improvised music in Australia, I am interested in the way that musicians build schemas to deal with multiple influences that each have their own conventions.

The work of developmental psychologist Jean Piaget describes a pathway of updating schemas, where a new situation leads firstly to disequilibrium, then accommodation, assimilation and finally to equilibration. Based on my experiences of teaching Brazilian music to jazz undergraduate students, and my personal experiences as a performer and researcher, this paper will examine the parallels between Piaget's theories and the development of students' and performers' schemas to deal with new musical styles. I will examine questions such as: Which elements cause the disequilibrium? What does the adaptation process look like? And, are the new schemas overlaid, or replacing existing schemas?

2.3 Sam McAuliffe: The Hermeneutic Character of Improvisation

Both musical improvisation and hermeneutic engagement are often characterised as 'dialogic' or 'conversational', which is to suggest that both improvisation and hermeneutics

involve a degree of back and forth, or to-and-fro. Whereas standard accounts of the conversational character of musical improvisation do not translate to hermeneutics particularly well (the metaphor rarely extends far enough), Hans-Georg Gadamer's account of the conversational nature of hermeneutics, where what 'comes out' of a conversation cannot be attributed to any one individual but emerges from the 'in between' of the conversation itself, seems an apt description of the way in which musical works come into being in improvised music. Further, that understanding, according to hermeneutics, is possible by virtue of our prejudices, or fore-understanding, bears similarities, is identical even, to the idea that one's ability to improvise music is dependent upon one's pre-understanding of music and engrained habits/skills. Finally, Gadamer's idea of 'play', as it relates to one's engagement in hermeneutic inquiry, seems a fitting way to describe the focus and attentiveness required of the performer of improvised music. Thus, in this presentation I argue that musical improvisation is an essentially hermeneutic activity and thus, I consider ways in which Gadamer's explication of hermeneutics might help us gain a deeper understanding of improvisation.

11.00 Keynote: Professor Raymond Macdonald

Improvisation versus composition: a false but useful dichotomy

Improvisation is a process whose time has come and, in recent years, there has been an exponential growth of interest in improvisation around the world. Improvisation is now recognised not just as a defining feature of jazz, but as an accessible, unique, spontaneous, social and creative process that can facilitate collaboration between many musical genres and across disciplines. This presentation will highlight how improvisation can be utilized as a contemporary approach to creative engagement within educational, therapeutic and artistic contexts that can facilitate the development of musicality and creativity. This paper sets out a framework, based on psychological findings, for understanding improvisation as a universal capability and an essentially social behaviour, with implications for education, contemporary artistic practice, therapy and the psychology of social behaviour. In attempting to offer some defining features a number of paradoxes and problems will be also be considered.

A number of research projects that investigate the fundamental features of improvisation will be outlined. Musicians' critiques of their own improvisations are discussed and key links with music education therapy are made.

A model is presented for the process of choice that individuals undertakes when improvising, with examples provided to illustrate how the model functions. The presentation also outlines a comprehensive set of options children, or any improviser, may take over the course of a musical collaboration to allow a group to generate music. This way of conceptualising improvisation has utility across all forms of music and across different art forms. It also offers a less daunting challenge to the novice improviser, and a potential way round a 'block' for creative practitioners. The implications are discussed in relation to broader social issues and cultural change.

Key words: Improvisation, collaborative creativity, musical identities

xSession 3: 12.00 -1. 30

3.1 Dave Wilson: A Conflux of Musical Logics: Improvising in Duo for *SLANT*

George Lewis' (1996) discussion of Afrological and Eurological systems of improvisative musicality has provided a useful framework for understanding discourse and practice in improvisation across multiple social and cultural locations. With this framework, he and other scholars seek to de-couple ethnic essentialism from speaking and writing about music, and to open up possibilities for facing ethnic and racial components of historically emergent sociomusical groups. Improvisers today often are often multiply situated in these kinds of systems, working together across the fluctuating and fluid boundaries inscribed by Afrological, Eurological, and other socially- and culturally-located systems of musicality. Since Lewis' original writing, research on improvisation in the European classical music tradition has also perhaps shifted notions of what kinds of listening and intermusicality the Eurological perspective might (or might not) contain.

In this paper, I discuss *SLANT* (2019, pfMENTUM), my collaborative improvisation-based project conceived, recorded, and performed (on three occasions so far) in duo with pianist and new music-specialist Richard Valitutto. The short compositions constituting the project engage with musicalities associated with Ornette Coleman, Alexander Scriabin, Eric Dolphy, Horațiu Rădulescu, Keith Jarrett, Cecil Taylor, and others, spanning and deconstructing the sound worlds of categories such as late nineteenth-century Romanticism, avant-garde/free jazz, microtonal spectralism, and eastern European rural music. Drawing on Lewis' framework, I analyse excerpts from *SLANT* in dialogue with my and Valitutto's process, arguing that bringing Afrological, Eurological, and other systems of improvisative musicality together in confluence is a resonating statement *against* the erasure and denial of the musical impact of African American and other communities subject to domination and marginalization. I demonstrate how, in this project, Afrological and other perspectives powerfully participate in an embodied and fluid notion of tradition, manifesting in a sonic relationality that points to and emerges from the multi-ethnic and multicultural histories of improvised music.

3.2 Damien Kingston: Derek Bailey - Order or Chaos

Derek Bailey (1930-2005) was an English born guitarist known widely for his work in freely improvised music. His performance and recording career features freely improvised music in a variety of settings, from solo to large ensemble performances. Bailey is viewed by many as one of the progenitors of 'European Free Improvisation', and was one of the earliest visible practitioners of the genre, especially on the guitar. His style was characterized by extreme variance of register and timbre, discontinuity of phrasing and extended instrumental technique.

This paper will examine a selection of Bailey recordings, identifying the various elements and materials he frequently utilised when improvising in order to investigate whether his improvisatory language was structured, chaotic or sitting somewhere in between. Bailey's

practice will then be used to examine free improvisation more broadly and argue that much improvising in the area can be conceived of as being organised through a set of malleable yet discernable rules.

3.3 Jordan Murray: Vignettes as a way of communicating sociocultural influences in spontaneously improvised music performance.

While the exegetical component of artistic research aims to explain the process behind creative output, a challenging component of exegetical writing can be articulating the influence of sociocultural factors.

In the performance of spontaneously improvised music, attributes such as deep listening, empathy and give and take are generally accepted as paramount in communicating how content is generated and negotiated. Social and cultural circumstances surrounding a performance are therefore influential to the performance process.

But how do you communicate sociocultural circumstances in an exegesis? For my write-up process, I have chosen to include vignettes. Vignettes provide a rich description of such circumstances; a way of illustrating the ways in which sociocultural factors intertwine with processes underlying an artist's work. I build on an approach to writing that was first described by Clifford Geertz (1977) as 'thick' description.

In this paper, I discuss my use of vignettes as a way of telling stories; first-hand accounts of situations and events, from my position as a participant-observer. Through the use of vignettes, I reveal my character, perceptions, values, relationships, mood and impression of events thus adding insight to the reasoning behind particular artistic decisions.

Session 4: 12.00 -1. 30

4.1 Paul Williamson & Johannes Luebbers: Collaborative Composition: Improvising the Compositional Process and Embracing Uncertainty

Whilst a common practice between performers and songwriters, collaboration between composers of large-scale musical works is a relatively rare phenomenon, with co-authorship and co-composed works remaining uncommon. This paper aims to explore approaches, processes and outcomes arising from collaborative composition through reflection on a large-scale collaborative work, *Interpolations*, composed for the Monash Art Ensemble by Luebbers and Williamson.

Interpolations is an experimental cross-genre work that includes improvisation aimed at developing contemporary techniques of ensemble interaction. The title refers to the nature of collaborative composition, where the usual trajectory of working by oneself is interrupted by a series of interpolations in the form of suggestions and input from a co-creator. Thus the compositional device of interpolating musical material is applied to the composer and process of composition itself. These interpolations embed a unique kind of reflexivity in the

compositional process, whereby the ongoing opportunity to articulate one's thoughts, and the reciprocal feedback generated, create a continual reflection and refinement of the work being composed. Rather than simply contributing individually composed sections, Luebbers and Williamson approached the process by playing, discussing, and exploring together across a series of development sessions.

The composers were struck by the refreshing and inspiring nature of working collaboratively, the unexpected and complimentary ideas and materials, and the value of a constant sounding board that enabled them to formulate, develop and refine ideas. Similarities and differences in the composers' approaches culminated in a seamless final work where the composers can barely decipher the origins of the different materials and sections within the overall composition. By relinquishing individual control and pre-determined approaches in favour of a more collaborative approach the composers observed an increase in the uncertainty of process, structure and outcome. However, this uncertainty was experienced as a positive catalyst for problem solving. This project suggests collaborative composition as an alternative model that would be valuable for exploration within education and professional communities.

4.2 Rob Burke: Algorithmic Jazz: Soul in the Body of the Machine

The award-winning author, Yuval Noah Harari raises many poignant questions about our future as homo sapiens in his book *Homo Deus – A Brief History of Tomorrow* (2016): “True, at present there are numerous things that organic algorithms do better than non-organic ones, and experts have repeatedly declared that something will ‘fore ever’ remain beyond the reach of non-organic algorithms. But it turns out ‘fore ever’ often means no more than a decade or two.” (p. 372)

In 1997, the chess program *Deep Blue*, defeated the chess world champion Garry Kasparov through the programming of all possible moves on the chess board. Twenty years later a (Google) program called Alpha Zero defeated the world's best ‘chess engine’ over the course of 100 matches. The significance of this was that Alpha Zero taught itself to play chess: it took on human traits or organic algorithms to be creative. What does this mean for the future of improvisation or indeed jazz?

Andrys Onsman and I have investigated recent developments in AI and how they will affect future music making and the listening to music. These include the recent brouhaha about Chinese tech company, Huawei finishing Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. The critics declared that the music was written “without soul” knowing full well that the machine played a role in its composition. But what did the critics say when they didn't know who wrote what?

So . . . in relation to improvisation (jazz), can one accurately tell the difference between improvised music that is created by AI or by human intelligence? Is there a difference between them? . . . and does it matter? . . . which in-turn serves as an interesting marker of where the Western world is in terms of the embodiment of improvised jazz.

4.3 Kevin Hunt: A New Era of Improvised Music Pedagogy: a practice in time.

A ground swell of pedagogical change is occurring in the curriculum planning of Sydney's historic music institution that is a direct result of decades of idiosyncratic improvised music practices of ingenuity and individuality by local improvising artisans who have shaped a musical identity of place and community. The View From Within Frampton, R. (1999); Bodgie Dada and the cult of the Cool Clare, J (1995); Jazz: the Australian Accent, Shand, J (2009); The Inaudible Music Johnson, B (2000)

Since the Bachelor of Music in Improvised Music has been offered at the Sydney Con, Improvised Music pedagogy is regularly considered as a fundamental aspect to all music pedagogy and performance discussions at the highest level of curriculum design. The implications of this new trend in tertiary education brings forward the notion long held by Sydney's legendary improvising performer-pedagogue Ms Judy Bailey AO, that in the near future, the art of improvisation will be reinstated to most concert music performance practices across a wide range of musical styles.

I will present an account of the new emphasis on Improvisation across a wide range of curriculums at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 2018-19, and with this a parallel timeline of a relatively recent development of improvised music in Sydney along with my own development as a performer, improviser and educator that has led me to lead the Bachelor of Music in Improvised Music and coordinate Intercultural Aboriginal music programs.

I will discuss how the teaching and research by Simon Barker Korea and the Western Drumset (2015) which is closely associated with notions of the embodied music cognition research of Vijay Iyer, Improvisation, Action Understanding, and Music Cognition with and without Bodies (2016) has influenced change in how music is taught and researched at the Sydney Conservatorium. I will discuss the subsequently new pedagogical styles by practitioners Carl Dewhurst and Phil Slater in Improvised Music

Session 5: 2.15 – 3.45

5.1 Christopher Coady: Exceptionalism Routines, Scholarly Currents, and New Orleans' Music History Discourse

The idea that New Orleans is an "exceptional" American city anchors the literature produced about its people and culture in both scholarly and popular arenas. Barbara Eckstein locates the origins of this critical bent in a narrative routine linked to the city's folkways. In Eckstein's view, "boundary violations" have long defined ways of life for New Orleans residents and therefore reasonably echo in the "informal histories that claim exceptional status" for the city. As writers from both inside and outside New Orleans engage with these "informal histories," their writing keeps alive and gives rise to a wider circulation of the rhetorical gestures imbedded within the city's folkways.

Certainly it is uncontentious to claim that studies of New Orleans' music have tended to focus on musical genres that engage obvious "boundary violations," the most familiar being traditional jazz, New Orleans rhythm and blues [R&B], and New Orleans' second line parading traditions. Teasing out the syncretic nature of these practices has long served as a key methodological maneuver for scholars working in the field of New Orleans music. Yet such persistent focus on New Orleans' twentieth-century boundary violating music traditions has resulted in only a partial reckoning with the city's cultural history and has, problematically, conflated the dimensions of African American musical practice in the city during the twentieth-century.

In this paper, I identify the multitude of ways in which New Orleans music scholarship is grounded in the study of "boundary violations" and examine how this focus has functioned as a scholarly current, pulling non-boundary violating music into jazzcentric narratives. Identifying this current does not diminish the impact the city's regionally rooted music traditions have had on American culture, it merely frees us from thinking of these traditions as prescriptive for the city's residents. New Orleans, like every city, will always have its exceptional cultural components. Yet fleshing out a complete telling of the city's music history requires that we develop an awareness of the musical practices exceptionalism routines bring into focus and the musical practices exceptionalism routines occlude. This paper endeavors to open up space for a discussion of the latter.

5.2 Aleisha Ward: Crossing ethereal boundaries: Early radio and the New Zealand jazz audience

In the 1920s radio, broadcasting was a new and exciting entertainment medium. As the decade progressed, and as there were more radio stations to listen to, a group of enthusiasts emerged called 'listeners in'. Listeners in would actively try to hear specific radio programmes (and importantly for this presentation specific jazz bands) in other countries, and report to fellow enthusiasts what they heard and how.

This presentation investigates the experiences of New Zealand jazz fans and musicians crossing boundaries in the ether to 'listen in' to overseas broadcasts in the 1920s and 1930s. New Zealand is geographically well-placed for international listening in and fans could tune the dials and cross ethereal boundaries to hear jazz being broadcast from Australia, the Americas, Asia, and even parts of Europe. In this presentation, I will consider the situation of the jazz listening in experience: whether it was isolated or social, whether it was a listening experience (including musicians transcribing arrangements) or one that included dancing and socialising. Finally, I will examine how this activity affected fans' and musicians' experiences and perception of jazz, and how that impacted jazz as it was performed in New Zealand during the interwar period

5.3 Toby Wren: Jazz standard as archive: A genealogy of improvisational ideas

The jazz standard remains an enduring part of the tradition of jazz performance and pedagogy. Contemporary jazz scholarship has tended to focus on improvisation as practice

and jazz as lived experience, with the purpose and role of its repertoire relatively unexamined. In this presentation, I argue that the collected repertoire of jazz is the principal limiting factor that facilitates creative action in jazz, and propose this as a distinguishing feature of jazz compared to other improvising traditions. Rather than examining jazz improvisers as unique creative forces, I borrow Foucault's conception of the archive to examine the historical progression of ideas. In this genealogical context, the jazz standard is positioned as an archive of a particular body of thought, a way of organising and understanding the transmission, evolution and connection of ideas over time. The intended effect is to shift our understanding of creativity and jazz from being entirely the product of individual cognition and embodiment, towards a still agentic, but more historically and socially constructed creativity, an understanding that is implicit in historical jazz pedagogy and practice.

Session 6: 2.15 – 3.45

6.1 Matt Keegan: Crossing Boundaries

Music is often described as a universal language. However, coherent musical communication between collaborating artists can be obstructed by a number of intimidating boundaries. Practical limitations include constraints of time and money; stylistic barriers present generic and technical issues; mental constraints can exist in the form of self imposed musical safe zones defended to disguise musical limitations and safeguard reputations. All these factors are particularly evident in intercultural musical collaborations where linguistic and cultural considerations may also serve to amplify potential hurdles.

This presentation will outline how the thoughtful application of improvisation can be used to negotiate barriers and serve as a powerful tool in the creation of an original music ensemble. The Three Seas is a cross-cultural collaboration project between Indian and Australian musicians, blending Bengali and Nepali folk music with contemporary western music styles. An examination into the ten year development of the ensemble will reveal how improvisation has played a key role in crossing boundaries throughout the various stages of the bands evolution. Improvisation helped facilitate and establish musical relationships between the members of the group, aiding the exploration of common musical territory and uncovering the potential for more in depth musical partnerships. It was employed throughout periods of creative development to playfully explore the musical parameters of the band, the sounds of the instruments and the orchestration options. It also helped generate an awareness of the idiosyncratic nature of band members and their respective communicative musical gestures.

Implementing technical boundaries on musical elements may influence the success of creating an empathetic musical environment conducive to collaboration. In a continued effort to transcend boundaries that impede cross cultural expression, my current research is exploring ways saxophone technique may facilitate an improvising style that more clearly engages with the unique musical elements that make up the ensemble

6.2 Michael Wallace: Initiating performer-directed open form structures through composition and improvisation

This paper presents preliminary research explored during the first year of my doctoral candidature.

Centred on a field of enquiry at an intersection of performance, improvisation, and composition, and embracing a trans-idiomatic outlook, this presentation will outline strategies that investigate performer-directed open form structures. This research is framed by Benson's (2003) view that the musical act exists in a constant state of indeterminacy; Borgo's (2007) appropriation of ecological systems theory to describe improvisation as a complex system involving embodied, situated, and distributed knowledge; and Reardon-Smith's (2018) description of improvisation as a sympoiesis, a making-with, where mutualistic interactions that embrace immediacy, preparation, embodiment, and socio-musical relations exist in an inextricably-linked entanglement.

Defined by and delimited by this terrain I examine the practice-based development of open form works, which explore variable ordering of sections and indeterminacy in the structuring of works. This ongoing research currently focuses on the transitioning action-event in enacting the improvised co-construction of form. Preliminary techniques developed from conceptual antecedents including Stockhausen, Zorn, Braxton, Kneebody, and the Shorter Quartet will be examined and discussed.

6.3 Alistair McLean: Improvised Recording Practice: Traditionalists and Innovators, Documentarians and Idealists

This paper will explore the approaches and methods used by improvising music practitioners in the process of recording. Utilising a body of data generated through interviews with practising musicians, it will be proposed that improvised music recording approaches can be broadly identified as occurring on a scale ranging from 'documentarian' to 'idealised'. Both categories have defined practices, and it is suggested that there is a strong correlation between the nature of a musician's improvised music practice and their preferred recording practices.

This research demonstrates that practitioners operating in experimental or 'free' improvisational contexts are more likely to utilise a documentarian approach; one that favours little to no editing, manipulation or alteration after the fact, and is concerned with documenting an occurrence, in a specific time and place. Conversely, practitioners operating in more defined genres of improvisation, including but not limited to jazz, and those with more pre-composed elements in their recorded work, are more likely to favour an idealised approach, where they hope to realise a pre-conceived idea. This approach is more likely to incorporate the use of studio techniques, including editing, overdubbing and extensive manipulation.

Whilst all recording projects should be approached with their own individual needs and merits in mind, this paper will demonstrate that knowledge of these broad categories may assist improvised music practitioners, particularly those who have less experience in recorded environments, to identify a recording practice that best presents their work.

Sunday 2nd June

Session 7: 9.00 – 10.30

7.1 James McLean: Rhythm Cycles and Number Groupings: Towards an Understanding of Antripodean Improvising

In the late-2000s and early-2010s, a flurry of recorded activity emerged from a small group of east-coast Australian improvisers, documenting their shared approach to long-form improvisation. At the centre of this constellation of artists is the quartet *The Antripodean Collective* – comprised of violinist John Rodgers, drummer Ken Edie, pianist Marc Hannaford, and trumpeter Scott Tinkler – who produced two albums documenting this unique approach to music making (*Funcall*, Extreme, XCD066, 2008; *NTRPDN*, Marchon, MCH01, 2010). This presentation seeks to understand and contextualise this musical moment within a historical lineage of Australian improvising, tracing the gradual development of aesthetics and techniques across a period of four decades, with particular attention paid to the advanced techniques for rhythmic manipulation that emerge. Combining musical analysis with first-person accounts (drawn from interviews and artistic research undertaken by the artists themselves), a path is drawn through Australian artists and ensembles including Phil Treloar's *Feeling to Thought*, the *Mark Simmonds' Freeboppers*, the *Scott Tinkler Trio*, and *Artisans Workshop*, leading to *The Antripodean Collective* and associated artists. Emergent musical characteristics are identified, producing a definition of *Antripodean Improvising* as a "system of improvisative musicality" (after Lewis 1996) distinguished by a predilection to foreground rhythmic manipulation within improvisations, by improvisers possessing highly developed and shared rhythmic language (combining a non-discriminatory approach to subdivision with fluent control of number grouping sequences), enacted under a strong aesthetic preference towards obfuscation (McLean 2018, 15-17). This paper will explore these musical characteristics, and point the way towards further analysis of these Australian artists and their improvisational practice.

7.2 Louise Denson & Hannah Reardon-Smith: Feministing Free Improvisation

This presentation seeks to propose a thinking of free improvisation from the perspective of feminist and queer theory. While the internet contains evidence of vibrant improvisational practice by women and nonbinary folk around the world, the discourse around free improvisation remains dominated by male voices. Seminal texts on free improvisation such as Bailey's *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music* (1992) mention women, but fail to document their practices as meaningful contributions to the art form. Borgo's *Sync or Swarm* (2005) uses inclusive language, but ends up relegating women to a footnote. In *The Philosophy of Improvisation* (2009), Peters focuses almost exclusively on not only male improvisers, but also on the work of a European male-dominated canon of Continental philosophers, citing, among others, Kant's and Heidegger's writing about art and creativity.

Hence, we ask these questions. Does the thinking about free improvisation change when framed from a feminist/non-binary perspective? How can we reframe the thinking of the

practice in ways that are explicitly inclusive of those on the margins? What implications for free improvisation do the writings of contemporary feminist theorists have?

Three contemporary feminist texts will be used to explore three themes: Wilfulness – *Living a Feminist Life* (Sara Ahmed); Freedom – *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (Anna Löwenhaupt-Tsing); and Collectivity – *Staying with the Trouble* (Donna Haraway). Wilful feminist improvisers can allow themselves to be responsive in a holistic way to the things that happen around them as well as to their own desires. This engenders a freedom that allows a new kind of relating to the other beings sharing this space and this moment, allowing contaminations, collaborations, co-operations, as well as oppositions to occur.

7.3 Melissa Forbes: The vocal jazz improvisation act: A phenomenology

The human voice is the only musical instrument housed within the “body case” (Vitale, 2014)—it is not subject to the musician’s direct control. It is perhaps because of the unique character of the “instrument-voix” (Vitale, 2014) that research on jazz vocal improvisation has tended to focus heavily on the pedagogical aspects of improvising with the voice. As a result, little is known about the lived experiences of jazz vocal improvisers and the phenomenon of the vocal jazz improvisation act itself. This paper reports on a pilot study to explore one singer’s lived experience of the vocal jazz improvisation act (the larger study will investigate at least three singers’ lived experiences). The participant for the pilot was recruited using purposeful sampling, and is an internationally-recognised, award-winning jazz singer with extensive improvisation experience over many years. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Smith, Larkin & Flowers, 2009), this paper provides “glimpses and manifestations” (Vagle, 2018) of the phenomenon of vocal improvising in jazz. Seidman’s (2006) phenomenological interview technique will be used to interview the participant three times, for a period of one and a half hours for each interview. As the researcher has personal experience of vocal jazz improvisation, a “bridling plan” (Dahlberg, 2008; Vagle, 2018) will be used to restrain prior understandings of the phenomenon and to actively engage in openness, awareness and reflexivity around the phenomenon. Data analysis will be through a whole-part-whole process (Dahlberg, 2008; Vagle, 2018). This research will produce a text that “captures tentative manifestations” of the act of vocal improvising in jazz “in its multiple, partial, and varied contexts” (Kumm, 2013, p. 207) as well as the meaning of the improvising act for the participant. Beyond musical and performative concerns, this research aims to provide insight into the psychological, embodied and situated nature of the vocal jazz improvisation act.

Session 8: 9.00 – 10.30

8.1 Gareth Hill: Uncertain Path: An Investigation of Henry Threadgill’s Musical Concepts and their Effect on Creative Improvised Music Making.

Drawing from a recently completed performance-based doctoral study into Henry Threadgill’s music for his ensemble Zooid, this paper discusses his concepts and their contribution to creative improvised music making. His innovative approach differs

significantly from standard jazz practice and requires musicians to enter unfamiliar and uncertain territory.

Threadgill has been described by journalist Nate Chinen as “one of the most thrillingly elusive composers in and around the jazz idiom.” While highly engaging, his music for Zooid does not have readily identifiable musical structures; time signature, melody, harmony and form are all difficult for a listener to determine in performance. This ambiguity is fostered by a number of concepts developed by Threadgill for this ensemble.

Threadgill states, “It’s about challenging the musicians. You’ve got to have people in a position where they don’t really know, where they’re a little bit off guard, a little bit off balance, and they can really be spontaneous and extemporaneous.” Threadgill’s concepts for Zooid provide a suitably complex environment for the musicians of the ensemble. This uncertainty was clearly evident in fieldwork interviews conducted for this study and became an important aspect in the application of these concepts in my own musical practice.

This paper will examine the positive effect Threadgill’s concepts have in creating uncertain conditions for improvisation through interviews with musicians in Zooid and those connected with Threadgill, transcription and analysis of Zooid’s recorded pieces, and reflections on the way this has altered my approach to music making.

8.2 Johannes Luebbbers: ‘My heart is sad and lonely’: transforming a jazz compositional practice through collaboration

As a musical practice dependent on improvisation and interaction, jazz might be described as quintessentially collaborative – a musical journey best taken with others. Though developing within this performance tradition, with performer/composers the norm for much of jazz history, the practice of the jazz composer rarely engages the kinds of collaborative interactions found in performance. The jazz composition canon is instead dominated by single-author works, maintaining the “prestige of the individual” attitude of much of Western art (Barthes and Heath 1978 142-143). The benefits of collaboration have been increasingly acknowledged, with research into collaborative practice emerging from such diverse fields as education (Goulet, Krentz & Christiansen, 2003), behavioural science (Wood & Gray, 1991), nursing (Bosque 2011) and business (Pisano & Verganti, 2013). There has also been a growing interest in collaboration in creative contexts, some of which draws on the developmental theories of Lev Vygotsky (John-Steiner, 2000).

This presentation will discuss recent practice-led projects by the author that engage collaborators in the compositional process, with reference to the developmental theories of Vygotsky and how they might be constructively applied in a jazz compositional practice. Vygotsky’s ideas around thought and language, as well as his concept of zones of proximal development (ZPD) are considered as potential provocations to individual development. In doing so I propose a model in which uncertainty and the dismantling of boundaries between collaborators might facilitate stylistic and musical development.

8.3 Niran Dasika: Mistuning, Compression, Polymodal Chromaticism and Inversional Symmetry: How to Improvise Like Béla Bartók

Béla Bartók's music reconciles hauntingly lyrical beauty with harsh chromatic dissonance, appealing to musicians and theorists alike, and suggesting a rich resource for jazz improvisation material; "Whether it is in a brutal violence animating a sound material in fusion, or in a tranquil gentleness glowing in a halo of grating sounds and colours, Bartók is incomparable and remains unique" (Boulez, 1990).

Informed by major Bartók theorists Elliott Antokoletz, János Kárpáti, Erno Lendvai and Bartók's own writings, this study identifies four melodic techniques: 'mistuning', 'chromatic compression and diatonic extension', 'polymodal chromaticism' and 'inversional symmetry'. These four techniques inform a practice-led study, developing a set of practice methods aimed at internalising and executing the techniques in improvised performance. The resulting practice methods will be implemented and documented over a one year period, in the process exploring and evaluating concepts of automaticity and motor program theory. This research aims to expand my improvising practice, fuel the creation of new interesting music, and to lay the groundwork for a model by which other musicians and jazz students may approach the work and analysis of composers such as Bartók as a resource for inspiration.

11.00 – 12.00 Keynote Speaker Professor Vijay Iyer

Session 9: 12.00 – 1.30

9.1 Andrys Onsman: Improvisation and Embodied Time: Vijay Iyer, Piet Hein and Schrödinger's Cat.

Any mental model of the functional structure of the brain/mind must accommodate physical/temporal embodiment within the environment if it is to be of use in understanding how music is conceived and perceived. Embodied cognition conceptualises the environment (and our bodies within it) as a fundamental of how and why our cognitive systems function. Vijay Iyer (2016; 78) states, "A fundamental consequence of physical embodiment and environmental situatedness is the fact that *things take time*. Temporality must ground our conception of physically embodied cognition." In Free Music, improvisation assumes creation is an event in the moment where the creativity is (often) spurred *by* the moment. However, the multiplicity of temporality makes any moment an unstable intersection on a raft of intersecting spectra of time scales. Embodied cognition recognises that any given moment is perceived idiosyncratically and exists within and as part of an environment.

One aspect of embodied cognition that we might all agree on is that time is an essential element of sound and silence, and therefore it is a key element of music and by corollary of free jazz. When we accept that spontaneous refers to "in-the-moment" we acknowledge

that it has a temporal aspect. At the same time, we also acknowledge that improvisation is the making manifest of something that may have been incubating for a long time; the instantaneous, automatic response to a perceived cue; or anything in between, above or beyond. This paper investigates the implication that it is an embodied activity regardless of where that moment falls on the spectrum of the gestation, and that the audience is not privy to its position. As Iyer asserts, "An improviser is engaged in a kind of highly disciplined physical activity, of which we only hear the sonic result." The paper concludes that while that implication seems so obviously based on direct observation, it actually holds an important key to understanding the intersectional nature of temporality in improvised music

9.2 Roger T. Dean & Andrew Milne: Uncertainty with well-formed but complex rhythms

In this study, 91 well-formed rhythms have been performed by 113 participants with timings recorded. The stimuli were rhythmic loops, repeated for 30secs, in which isochronic pulses were sounded every 234msec on a cymbal, while the cues for tapping were sounded on a piano tone. Participants were asked to tap along with the cues as accurately as possible, starting as soon as they felt able (which usually requires recognizing the start and finish of the recurrent pattern). Generally, in tapping isochronic rhythms > 90% of taps are very close to a cue, and almost all cues are tapped. But here only 51.5% of cues were tapped, and only 63% of taps were close to a cue. Thus, the rhythms were often difficult for our participants, and created uncertainty. For taps that coincided with cues, the mean timing error was -1.99 msec (s.d. 49.71), and the mean absolute timing error 38.98(30.90). Thus, the tapping did not display the otherwise common roughly 30msec anticipation of the cues. Performance varied substantially between rhythms and participants. We will present analyses of overall tapping accuracy, and joint time series models of all participants' tapping performances. These address hypotheses concerning the possible influence of features of the rhythms such as the number of cues per rhythm or per 30sec loop, mean cue length, rhythmic pattern, evenness, balance, entropy and others. While the time series analyses also address issues of autoregression (influence of previous events and features on the next), we hope additionally to present point process analyses which address the fundamental kinetic of the propensity to tap, from work done in collaboration with Dr David Bulger, Macquarie University. In a sense, this propensity could represent the progression of uncertainty to decision to certainty

9.3 Angus Leighton: Creating an original sound: a study of Lester Young's improvisational language, its influence on Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon and Wayne Shorter, and, how this has informed my development as an improviser.

The goal of many, if not all musicians who work within the vast spectrum of the jazz genre is to create an original musical identity. Historically, this has always been conducted through a musician's acknowledgement and assimilation of the musical language of the great musicians who have come before them.

Imitation, Assimilation and Innovation are three primary stages of a jazz musician's development. It is widely accepted that the best way to assimilate the language of the 'jazz greats' is to transcribe, learn and analyse their improvisations. The research I am conducting is investigating the imitation, assimilation and innovation process through analysis of Lester

Young's improvisational language and its contribution to the construction of the unique musical languages of Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon and Wayne Shorter. The knowledge gained through detailed examination of the improvisational language of these four saxophonists will then provide a springboard into creating my 'musical voice', which will be reflected upon throughout my thesis through transcription and analysis of improvisations performed throughout my degree.

This project follows on from studies conducted by researchers including Robert Luckey ("A Study of Lester Young and His Influence upon His Contemporaries") and Shawn Salmon ("Imitation, assimilation, and innovation: Charlie Christian's influence on Wes Montgomery's improvisational style in his early recordings (1957–1960)") who have analysed how one musician's improvisational language has informed that of another. This research will also build upon the work done by researcher's who investigated the music of the selected saxophonists individually, including, but not limited too; Steven Strunk, Lewis Porter, Steve Larson and Marcus Wolfe. This research is unique because the thesis itself will be analysing my individual development as a musician through undertaking this project.

In this presentation, I will be discussing the Improvisational language of Lester Young, the transcription and analysis process as well as the steps taken to begin assimilating this language and how it is beginning to inform the rest of the project.

Session 10: 2.15 – 3.45

10.1 Ben Phipps: The uncertainty of jazz and improvisation education: An examination

Music education institutions and advocacy bodies are increasingly calling for the inclusion of improvisation in tertiary programs not only for those specialising in jazz but the training of music teachers and classical performers with little previous experience. A large body of research literature on jazz and improvisation education currently advocates for teaching that utilises constructivist notions of experimentation and play as the basis of learning and diminishes the role of scaffolded instruction. This literature attempts to prioritise the learning of improvisation as a metacognitive strategy rather than the stylistic aspects of improvisation. The implication is that learning to improvise places a significant burden on the cognitive capacity or load of students by making them generate novel information. Evidenced-based educational research, on the whole, is at odds with the constructivist position of literature on jazz and improvisation education. Instead, it advocates that learning occurs by interacting with others with greater expertise, calling for educational strategies that seek to reduce cognitive load by pre-loading and developing skills in stages from novice to expert, enabling students to succeed. As a result, there is a significant issue at stake, in that when students are required to generate new information in order to learn without clear criteria for success the research tells us that this burdens them and undermines their motivation. In this paper, I examine a range of instructional strategies used by educators to teach improvisation and their relationship to evidence-based practices in education. Drawing on a research program investigating student motivation when learning to improvise I suggest a need to be alert to the difference between the ideals of teaching students to improvise and the practices that lead to student achievement.

10.2 Pei Ann Yeoh: Fusion Factor

The historical tradition of jazz has shown how the spirit of jazz blends well with improvising freely. Over time, there is a tacit assumption that all jazz involves improvisation, leading to situations where musicians seem to improvise for the sake of improvisation. This criticism can be brought to music academies where improvisation pedagogy can be circular and idiomatic 'producing idiomatic players of specific genres' (Solis, 2016:96). Yet, there are many examples of how jazz and improvisation meet organically to construct new soundscapes. Collaborative projects such as Dave Holland and Anour Brahem's 'Blue Maqams' (2017), Herbie Hancock's 'River: Letters to Joni' (2007), and Esperanza Spalding's 'Chamber Music Society' (2010) are great examples of fusion, straddling lines between jazz, improvisation, and everything in between.

This paper seeks to test our theoretical definitions of jazz and improvisation as separate entities, but also uncover the practical concept of 'fusion'. Are our definitions of jazz or improvisation too narrow? How are boundaries useful in guiding the creative spirit? When Derek Bailey writes that improvisation is able to 'serve many ends' (1992:142), it offers jazz musicians an opportunity to regenerate their identity from idiomatic improvisers to one that is able to participate in different forms and genres.

I will draw upon literature by Kevin Fellezs that outlines fusion music as a 'process of self-definition' (2011:226). Fusion is not recognised as a genre per se due to little commercial relevance and aesthetic ubiquity. However, I argue that a fusion approach has opened more creative possibilities for jazz musicians to rationalise their creative process through a self-determination that is fluid, contextual, and dialectical. Through this, I will find various conceptions of jazz and the role of improvisation in constructing a jazz ethic.

10.3 John Mackey: Reducing Unpredictability or Uncertainty in relation to 'Outside Playing'.

Within the music paradigm, improvisation utilizes preconceived elements of certainty or predictability in the form of applying scales to chords and rhythm. During the act of improvising however, each practitioner creates an environment of opposing elements of predictability and unpredictability, based on ones approaches to reimagining and shaping these preordained facets.

Unpredictability in relation to the Chaos Theory suggests that, 'in mechanics and mathematics, the study of apparently random or unpredictable behaviour in systems governed by deterministic laws. A more accurate term, *deterministic chaos*, suggests a paradox because it connects two notions that are familiar and commonly regarded as incompatible'. (<https://www.britannica.com/science/chaos-theory>)

Within the musical improvisation realm, unpredictability, in relation to the Chaos Theory, balances the perceived randomness of music making with the reality of honed skills which can include elements such as, aural aptitude, technical prowess, demonstrated theoretical knowledge, rhythmic security and musical creativity.

Converting pre-set structures and theories into an improvised solo creates varying degrees of uncertainty.

“Even though each new improvisation is different from past improvisations, most improvisers feel that there is a tendency to repeat oneself in terms of note choice and rhythmic application; the inevitable emergence of personal clichés results in a desirable imperative for uncertainty: in order for an improviser to continue to be creative, ‘safe’ clichés must give way to the ‘fresh’ and unpredictable ‘freedoms’ possible through uncertainty’. My research focuses on the development of improvisatory vocabulary utilizing the pentatonic scale in a chromatic and anagrammatic system of permuted structures. The effect of this system creates line construction containing varying degrees of dissonance and consonance.

he traditional rules of functional harmony and chord to scale relationships do not apply within this system. May the Chaos continue!

In this paper, I discuss my use of vignettes as a way of telling stories; first-hand accounts of situations and events, from my position as a participant-observer. Through the use of vignettes, I reveal my character, perceptions, values, relationships, mood and impression of events thus adding insight to the reasoning behind particular artistic decisions.

BIOGRAPHIES

Alastair McGrath-Kerr is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, working in performance-led research. His thesis title is *A Cannibalist's Manifesto: Candomblé Rhythms for Drum Kit*. Alastair has worked extensively in Australia's jazz and Brazilian music scenes, performing and recording with a diverse range of artists including Doug de Vries, Vince Jones, Alda Rezende, The Sheiks, and Marc Hannaford. Alastair has composed two major suites of Afro-Brazilian inspired music, both performed and recorded by his group *Panorama Brasil*, and the group has performed at many major festivals, including the Melbourne Jazz Festival, Adelaide Cabaret Festival, and Stonnington Jazz.

Aleisha Ward holds a PhD in music from the University of Auckland where her thesis was on jazz in New Zealand 1920-1955. She was the 2017 Douglas Lilburn Research Fellow and is a recipient of the 2018 Ministry of Culture and Heritage New Zealand History Research Trust award. Aleisha is an award-winning writer, and is a freelance editor and lecturer in music. She writes about jazz in New Zealand for a number of publications including *audioculture.co.nz* and *New Zealand Musician*.

Alistair McLean is a guitarist, composer and researcher committed to the creation of new and inventive works, focused on improvisation and recorded practice. Alistair directed ACME's Melbourne Festival investigation into AI and music, *no new noise*, and has collaborated with artists including Kutcha Edwards, William Brittelle's (USA) Australian debut, and Pulitzer Prize finalist Ted Hearne (USA) on Australian performances of *Katrina Ballads*. Alistair's compositional practice focuses on explorations of rhythm and timbre, and his work has been exhibited at *Melbourne Now* (NGV) and commissioned by Arts Centre Melbourne for the Art Music Award winning *5x5x5*. Alistair is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts, and is undertaking his PhD at the University of Melbourne investigating the relationship between improvised music and the recording process. During his studies he has been awarded the Alan C. Rose Memorial Scholarship, the Athenaeum Award, and an Academic Assistantship for 2018 and 2019.

Andrys Onsman is a writer, academic and musician. He has had critique and commentary on music published and presented in mainstream media and his academic work has been widely cited. With Rob Burke he has written numerous conference presentations and papers. Together they edited *Perspectives in Artistic Research* (Lexington, 2017) and wrote *Experimentation in Improvised Jazz: Chasing Ideas* (Routledge, 2018). Their current project is tentatively titled *Cyborg Jazz: the improvisational intelligence of Machines*.

Angus Leighton is a saxophonist from Tasmania and is a current doctoral candidate studying at the University of Tasmania's Conservatorium of Music. Leighton graduated from the University of Tasmania's Conservatorium of Music in 2017 where he received first class honours for his research titled "The link between the Compositional and Improvisational language of Wayne Shorter (1960-70)." This research paved the way for his doctoral research which is currently titled "Creating an Original Sound: A Study of Lester Young's Improvisational language, its influence on Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon and Wayne Shorter, and, how this has informed my development as an improviser." In conjunction with his studies, Leighton has played alongside many bands at a variety of events and festivals but is

most well-known for his work performing with Uncle Gus and The Rimshots and The Gus Leighton Quartet.

Ben Phipps completed his Ph.D. at the University of New South Wales in ethnomusicology and jazz studies. He currently teaches in the music department at UNSW. His primary research interest is the impact of cultural hybridity on musical practice and the development of associated social meanings, particularly in musics involving improvisation. Currently, he is conducting research into student motivation and development of expertise in learning to improvise.

Christopher Coady (PhD, University of New South Wales) is a senior lecturer in musicology at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, the University of Sydney. He is the author of the monograph *John Lewis and the Challenge of "Real" Black Music* (University of Michigan Press, 2016) and is an active researcher of both historical and contemporary jazz practice.

Courtney Feldman is a pianist, vocalist, educator and researcher, who models and inspires innovative and exemplary practice in the field of contemporary commercial music. Courtney is a PhD candidate at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia (USQ), where she is researching the connection between piano skills, and high-level vocal jazz improvisational ability. Courtney was featured in USQ's "Become More" marketing campaign, and is the elected Higher Degree by Research (HDR) student representative of the USQ Academic Board, and a number of its working groups. She is also the HDR student representative of the USQ Ethics Learning and Teaching advisory group. Courtney's Honours thesis (2017) investigated how professional development can enhance singing teacher agency. Courtney is certified in Level 1, 2 and 3 of Somatic Voicework™ the LoVetri Method. Her current research interests lie in jazz improvisational learning and performance practice; and functional vocal training for spoken-voice professionals.

Damien Kingston is an Australian born jazz guitarist currently based in Hobart, Tasmania. Upon completing a Bachelor of music at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music, Damien relocated to Europe to further his study. After an initial period spent in Berlin performing, Damien relocated to Amsterdam where he completed his Masters of Music at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, studying under renowned Dutch guitarists Jesse van Ruller and Maarten van der Grinten. During this period, he toured extensively both as a sideman and as a leader of his own ensemble countries including The Netherlands, Germany, Italy and France. Damien is currently teaching guitar, ensemble and theory at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music where he recently obtained his Doctorate investigating the improvisatory language of free improvising guitarist Derek Bailey.

Danilo Rojas is an Australian/Bolivian musician. He has released numerous albums including CD/DVD "Jazz in Bolivia", "Lunar" and "Música Popular Boliviana". As an educator, Danilo taught piano for seven years at the National Conservatorium of Bolivia in the Department of Modern Music. Completing a Masters of Music in jazz and improvisation at the University of Melbourne in 2018. As a lecturer Danilo has been invited to give workshops about the Cueca at the Complutense University of Madrid and University of Valladolid in Spain. He is author of Bolivian Book Music Improvisation (BBMI) supported by the Swiss Embassy in Bolivia and the La Paz City Council. The book is a historical compendium containing a compilation of

transcribed scores of Bolivian music for jazz and improvisation. Danilo has decades of national and international performance experience and is currently in Melbourne performing, composing and arranging for his trio and 'Ensamble Latinoamericano.'

Dave Wilson holds a position as Lecturer in Music at the New Zealand School of Music—Te Kōkī at Victoria University of Wellington. His work focuses on jazz and popular music and explores how music and sound relate to nationalism, belonging, intangible cultural heritage, the construction of social space, and the nature of scenes. He received his PhD in ethnomusicology from UCLA, and his research has been supported by the ACLS, the American Councils of International Education, and the Herb Alpert Foundation. He has been published in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, *Ethnomusicology Review*, *Commoning Ethnography*, and the *Journal of World Popular Music*, and his textbook *Gateways to Understanding Music* (Routledge), co-authored with Timothy Rice, was published in 2019. He released the albums *On the Face Place* (2016) and *In Passing* (2017) on SkyDeck Music, and his duo improvisation-based album *SLANT* with pianist Richard Valitutto was released in 2019 on pfMENTUM.

Gareth Hill is a Melbourne-based musician, teacher and researcher. Recently graduating from a PhD at the University of Tasmania, he is interested in the intersection of formal music research and musical practice. Studying with renowned bassists Eric Ajaye and Max McBride at the Australian National University guided Gareth to perform jazz, classical and other music. Gareth's dedication to his art led to travel to New York where he studied with legendary bassists Rufus Reid and John Patitucci, as well as building links with musicians in its experimental jazz scene. Additionally, he has performed with diverse artists such as jazz greats Bernie McGann, Bob Sedergreen, Ted Vining, Don Burrows and Mark Levine, as well as classical composers Thomas Ades and Brett Dean. Gareth is deeply involved with the vibrant music scene of Melbourne with ensembles Blow, The End and the Ted Vining Trio.

Glen Hodges is coordinator of contemporary guitar at the University of Tasmania. In an extended tertiary career he has received a number of awards for teaching, program design and management. He supervises postgraduate students on studies ranging from performance and improvisation to analysis and composition. His publications include a feature article in the IAJE Journal and works on music education and research. He is endorsed by Yamaha Guitars and Hancock Archtops and has performed with some of Australia's finest jazz musicians. He has also been involved in church music for some 35 years across a number of liturgical styles.

Hannah Reardon-Smith is a flutist, improviser, composer, conductor, curator, activist, and writer living in Brisbane, Australia on Jagera/Yugara/Turrbal land. She is co-artistic director of Brisbane-based contemporary art music ensemble Kupka's Piano, and a founding member of improvisation trio Rogue Three (Brisbane/Melbourne: flute/s, trombone, and recorder/s) and electro-acoustic duo Richard&Linda with Liam Flenady (flute/s, electric guitar, and live electronics). She has performed in local and international festivals including Kunstenfestival des Arts (Brussels), ManiFESTE (Paris), IMD (Darmstadt, DE), SPOR (Aarhus, DK), BIFEM (Bendigo, AU), Totally Huge New Music Festival (Perth), and the Queensland Music Festival (Brisbane). Her PhD at the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University explores a queer-feminist thinking of free improvisation founded

in sympoiesis and contamination, featuring the work and voices of women, trans, and non-binary folk practicing in the field.

James McLean is a researcher and improvising drummer, based in Melbourne, Australia. James received his PhD from the University of Sydney in 2018, researching the application of embodied music cognition theory to the development of a solo drumset practice; two recordings from this research, *Counter Clockwork* (2015) and *Oscillator* (2018), have been released. James is an active performer, co-leading ensembles including *All Talk*, *Blind Spot*, and *Lightly Toasted*, as well as featuring on recordings by the Eugene Ball Quartet, The Paul Williamson Quintet, and Andrea Keller's *Five Below*. In 2016, James was awarded the prestigious Freedman Jazz Fellowship, becoming the first drummer to win the award.

Johannes Luebbbers, winner of the 2011 'Young Australian Jazz Artist of the Year' (Australian Jazz 'Bell' Awards) and the 2011 'Jazz Work of the Year' (APRA/AMC Art Music Awards), and finalist for the 2018 'Jazz Work of the Year', is one of Australia's leading jazz composers. A graduate of the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), Luebbbers is also a current PhD candidate researching within jazz composition and collaborative practice. He has released two albums with his award-winning ensemble the Johannes Luebbbers Dectet and an EP with experimental trio Artefact Agency. He is active as a composer and arranger in contemporary popular music and music theatre, composing the score for the Australian operatic drama 'Melba'. Previously lecturing at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts and the ANU School of Music, Canberra, Luebbbers is currently the coordinator for Music Theory and Ear Training at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music, Monash University, Melbourne. He is an 'Associate Artist' with the Australian Music Centre.

John Mackey is a renowned saxophonist, composer and educator. He has been lecturing at the ANU School of Music since January 2000. John was nominated for the Freedman Jazz Prize in 2001 and has recently been invited into the Higher Education Academy in the UK as a Senior Fellow and is excited about a recent co-invention with the Physics and Engineering Department at ANU. He is currently halfway through his PhD based at ECU, Perth, WA. His topic is researching Extended Applications of the Pentatonic Scale and proposing a new modal concept. John has performed with many artists including: Ray Charles, B.B. King, Dame Kiri Tekanawa, Kurt Elling, Kendrick Scott, Nat Adderley, Eddie Henderson, Roy Hargrove, Red Rodney, Lew Tabackin, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Kenny Werner, Bob Mintzer, Richie Cole, Johnny Griffin, Al Cohn, Woody Herman, Ralph Moore, Mark Levine, Don Rader, Ronnie Scott, Jim McNeely, Kenny Werner, Mike Nock.

Kevin Hunt is a jazz pianist, composer and academic who has performed regularly in the Sydney jazz scene since 1979. Kevin currently performs most regularly with vocalist Emma Pask and pianist Simon Tedeschi. Kevin also is a faculty teacher and research academic in Improvised Music and Jazz Studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Kevin's Australian jazz influences and teachers are Don Burrows AO MBE, Chuck Yates, Dr Roger Frampton, Bruce Cale, The Kinetic Energy Theatre Company, John Speight OAM, Judy Bailey AOM, George Golla AM, Julian Lee, Paul MacNamara, Paul Grabowsky AO, Bill Motzing, Phil Slater. Kevin completed a PhD in 2016 entitled '*Perceptions of the Stuart & Sons piano: realising a creative, active vision.*' In this research Kevin analyses the unique sound

produced by the Australian made Stuart & Sons piano. As an outcome of this research, Kevin collaborates musically with local and regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians to produce new music for the Stuart Piano. This research has instigated the annual OUR MUSIC Indigenous music program at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music to encourage continued collaborations between Sydney's Indigenous and non- Indigenous musicians. In 2016 Kevin launched the inaugural Aboriginal Music Ensemble at the Sydney Conservatorium. This tertiary student ensemble has recently been implemented as a Chamber Music course each semester.

Louise Denson (Senior Lecturer, Jazz, Queensland Conservatorium) is a pianist, composer and educator. She holds a Masters in Jazz (New England Conservatory, Boston), and a DMA (Griffith University, Brisbane). She has released six CDs of original compositions and arrangements, most recently *Dark Sky* (Denson Baartz Quartet 2019) and *Colours of Your Love* (Wild Silk Strings Project with Ingrid James 2018). Predominantly a jazz composer, Denson's work includes songs for classical voice, chamber works and an extended composition for large jazz ensemble. Her compositions have been performed and recorded by Muses Piano Trio, Griffith Trio, Southern Cross Soloists, Queensland Conservatorium Saxophone Orchestra, Brisbane Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, Collusion, Bell Award-winning vocalist Elly Hoyt, and L.A.-based jazz fusion group San Gabriel 7. Her compositions are published by Wirripang and the Australian Music Centre. Denson has performed at the Montreal International Jazz Festival, Wimbledon International Music Festival, Wangaratta Festival of Jazz, Melbourne International Women's Jazz Festival, Manly Jazz Festival and MONA (Hobart), among many other public and private performances with her own and others' ensembles.

Matt Keegan has produced eight albums that feature his prolific work as a composer, arranger and saxophone soloist. In 2018 he was a recipient of the APRA AMCOS Art Music Fund and in 2011 he won the prestigious MCA Freedman Fellowship for jazz. He is currently the artistic director of the cross cultural ensemble The Three Seas, a collaboration with folk musicians from West Bengal, India. The group recently undertook extensive national tours of both Australia and India. As a saxophone soloist Keegan has performed with a diverse range of ensembles including; The Phil Slater Quintet; Mark Isaacs Resurgence Band, the James Muller quartet; 20th Century Dog, The Jazzgroove Mothership Orchestra; Jackie Orszaczky; Jimmy Barnes; The Japan Australia Jazz Orchestra (JPN) and Maroon 5 (USA). Keegan is currently a PhD candidate in his second year of study at UNSW under the supervision of Dr. John Napier and Dr. Sandy Evans.

Melissa Forbes is a Senior Lecturer in music at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) in Toowoomba, Australia. Her PhD (2016) examined the use of collaborative learning for first year music practice courses at USQ. She is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium jazz program, and has released two albums as a vocalist, *No More Mondays* and *The Intimacy of Distance*. Current research interests include music, health and wellbeing, contemporary commercial music vocal pedagogy and alternative pathways to, through and beyond higher music education. Melissa is a Churchill Fellow, and was, in a former life, a corporate lawyer of little renown.

After completing his Honour's year at Monash University in Music Performance (2018), **Michael J. Kellett** is now returning in 2019 to commence his PhD in the same field – of practice-led research – on Alto Saxophone. His present research is centred around the ontology of freedom in improvisatory practice which was derived from his previous year's study on testing the experimental validity of George Lewis' Afrological and Eurological belief systems, while concomitantly questioning their hegemonic nature. His past and present research draws from hermeneutical, philosophical and ethnographic frameworks to understand the intertextuality between his practice and theoretical publications concerning spontaneity, freedom, personality and the nature of improvisation. Along with Associate Professor Robert Burke, Michael is restructuring his 2018 paper for journal publication. Michael is also an improvising saxophonist and composer based in Melbourne, whose most notable and contemporary recordings include: *Interpolations* with the Monash Art Ensemble and a recording with Linda Oh through Monash University.

Michael Wallace is a creator and arranger of improvised and composed music, Wallace's main instrument is the tenor saxophone. 2019 sees Wallace continuing his ongoing music research through a practice-based PhD candidature at Monash University under the supervision of trumpeter Paul Williamson and composer Ryan Smith. His field of enquiry centres on the investigation of social networks as structures for composition and improvisation. Wallace recently released his debut album, *Hinterland* (2018), recorded after a successful tour of the west coast of Norway back in 2016. It documents a quartet formed while he resided in Bergen, Norway, which features Thomas T. Dahl (guitar), Petter Asbjørnsen (bass), and Øyvind Skarbø (drums). Currently residing in Melbourne, he has been an ongoing collaborator and performer with the Johannes Luebbers Dectet and Andrew Murray's ATM15 big band. Prior research publications include: *The Map is not the Territory: Reconsidering Music Improvisation Education* (2012) and *Unifying Composition and Improvisation* (2007).

Niran Dasika is an Australian trumpeter with extensive experience as a performer in the field of jazz and improvised music, performing at festivals around Australia and Japan and recording on over 25 albums including three under his own name. Niran is currently completing a Master of Arts (Performing Arts) at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, and he received his Bachelor of Music degree in music performance from Monash University in 2015.

Paul Williamson is a trumpeter, composer and educator with a reputation for producing distinctive recordings of outstanding ensemble performances. As a leader, he's released eleven CDs, and has performed with international jazz artists at festivals and venues in the United States, Europe, Asia, and Australia. He has performed with many jazz greats, including Carla Bley, Eddie Palmieri, Tomasz Stańko, Charlie Haden, Kenny Werner, John Abercrombie, Hermeto Pascoal, Aaron Goldberg, Django Bates, Mike Nock, Tony Gould, Nasheet Waits, Mark Helias and Linda Oh. Williamson was also active in the European jazz scene whilst based in Dublin performing with an array of artists including Bill Carothers, Dave Liebman, Reggie Washington, Paul Wertico, Ronan Guilfoyle, and Lindsay Horner. In 2014 Williamson was invited by Dave Douglas to perform at the Festival for New Trumpet Music (FONT) in New York City where he premiered a program of new works. Williamson is

the Honours coordinator and lecturer in jazz studies at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music at Monash University.

Pei Ann Yeoh started her musical endeavours at the age of 4 and has since received her Fellowship Diploma from Trinity College London in both Solo Piano and Violin Performance. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Queensland Conservatorium, Australia and a Master's degree from Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, UK – majoring in jazz violin performance. She has worked and played with renowned musicians such as Dave Holland, Chris Potter, James Morrison, Mark Feldman, Frederic Rzewski, and Louis Andriessen. Between 2016-2018, she was a regular member of the London Improviser's Orchestra, performing with legendary improvisers, among whom are Steve Beresford, Veryan Weston, and Caroline Kraabel. In 2015, she was awarded a full scholarship by the Malaysian Government and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) to undertake a PhD at King's College London. Her research focus area is on identities and the creative process in jazz violin.

Robert Burke is an Australian composer, improvising musician, founding director of jazz and improvisation and deputy head at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music Monash University. Rob has performed and composed on over 300 CDs and has toured extensively throughout Australia, Asia, Europe, and USA over the last 30 years. Rob has recorded with international leaders in the field including George Lewis, Dave Douglas, Enrico Rava, Hermeto Pascoal, Kenny Werner, Mark Helias, Tony Malaby, Ben Monder, Tom Rainey, Nasheet Waite, George Garzone, Paul Grabowsky, Tony Gould, etc. Rob's research is mainly focused on practice-based artistic research. Publications include co-edited book with Andrys Onsman, *Perspectives on Artistic Research in Music* (Lexington), co-written book *Experimentation in Jazz: Idea Chasing*, Routledge. Rob is currently president of AJIRN (Australasian Jazz and Improvisation Research Network).

Roger Dean is research professor in sonic communication at the MARCS Institute, Western Sydney University and an international composer/improviser. He founded and directs the ensemble australYSIS, which has appeared in 30 countries. He has performed as bassist, pianist, piano accompanist and laptop computer artist in many contexts, from the Academy of Ancient Music to the London Sinfonietta, and from the core of contemporary jazz to free electroacoustic improvisation. He has published more than 70 commercial recordings and numerous online digital intermedia pieces in his creative work, and more than 300 journal articles and 17 books. Current research concerns improvisation and computational creativity, affect, roles of acoustic intensity and timbre, and rhythm generation and perception. His most recent album is one for soprano trombone, piano and electronics (2018) involving composition and improvisation with Torbjörn Hultmark (UK). Prior to 2007, he was a full professor of biochemistry in the UK, foundation CEO/Director of the Heart Research Institute, Sydney, researching on atherosclerosis, and then Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Canberra. He has considerable commercial experience, as MD, NED, consultant and collaborator.

Sam McAuliffe is a PhD candidate at Monash University working at the intersection of improvised music and philosophical hermeneutics – particularly free- or non-idiomatic improvisation, and hermeneutics as it relates to the thought of Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Jeff Malpas. Sam has also worked as musical director for numerous

experimental theatre productions and short films, curated sound installations for major Australian art festivals, and performs widely in a variety of improvised avant-garde ensembles (mostly on guitar).

Toby Wren is a composer, improviser and artistic researcher from Brisbane, Australia. Toby studied composition and he has composed for a range of ensembles across western classical music and jazz including releasing six albums for his own ensembles. His most recent release is the critically acclaimed 2018 trio recording, *Black Mountain*. Toby has also collaborated extensively with leading musicians in the South Indian Carnatic music tradition, and his doctoral research explored the intersection of jazz and Carnatic improvisation. His recent work includes a co-edited a book with Vanessa Tomlinson on *Artistic Practice, Here and Now* (2018), including a chapter authored by him, and a commission for the project *Trading Fours*, which plumbed archival material on the history of jazz in Queensland to examine the through-lines into contemporary jazz practice.

Vijay Iyer

Grammy-nominated composer-pianist VIJAY IYER (pronounced “VID-jay EYE-yer”) was described by Pitchfork as “one of the most interesting and vital young pianists in jazz today,” by the Los Angeles Weekly as “a boundless and deeply important young star,” and by Minnesota Public Radio as “an American treasure.” He has been voted *DownBeat Magazine’s* Artist of the Year three times – in 2016, 2015 and 2012 – and Artist of the Year in *Jazz Times’* Critics’ Poll and Readers’ Poll for 2017. Iyer was named *Downbeat’s* 2014 Pianist of the Year, a 2013 MacArthur Fellow, and a 2012 Doris Duke Performing Artist. In 2014 he began a permanent appointment as the Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts in the Department of Music at Harvard University.

The New York Times observes, “There’s probably no frame wide enough to encompass the creative output of the pianist Vijay Iyer.” Iyer has released twenty-two albums covering remarkably diverse terrain, most recently for the ECM label. The latest of those is *Far From Over* (2017), the first from the Vijay Iyer Sextet. The record was ranked #1 in US National Public Radio’s annual Jazz Critics’ Poll, surveying 157 critics. It was named among the best jazz albums of the year in the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, Boston Globe, Slate, and The New York Times, and the only “jazz release” in Rolling Stone’s list of the 50 best records of 2017. Iyer’s Sextet was subsequently voted 2018 Jazz Group of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association.

A polymath whose career has spanned the sciences, the humanities, and the arts, Iyer received an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in the cognitive science of music from the University of California, Berkeley. He has published in *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, *Wire*, *Music Perception*, *JazzTimes*, *Journal of the Society for American Music*, *Critical Studies in Improvisation*, in the anthologies *Arcana IV*, *Sound Unbound*, *Uptown Conversation*, *The Best Writing on Mathematics: 2010*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies*. Prior to his permanent appointment at Harvard in 2014, Iyer taught at Manhattan School of Music, New York University, and the New School. He is the Director of The Banff Centre’s International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music, an annual 3-week program in Alberta, Canada. Iyer has served as Director of the International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music at The Banff Centre since 2013. He has been featured as Artist-in-Residence

at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), Wigmore Hall (London), the Molde Jazz Festival (Molde, Norway), SF Jazz, and Jazz Middelheim (Antwerp, Belgium), and served as Music Director for the 2017 Ojai Music Festival in southern California. He is a Steinway artist and uses Ableton Live software.