



# Musical Compost, Consorts and Collapsing Pyramids: On the Disintegration of Traditional Performance Practices to Raise a Sound Society

Hafez Modirzadeh

It begins with a few ideas sounded together, each one in an incomplete fashion, as if light were peering through traditions' tattered curtains. A cryptic wail from the *shakuhachi*, a few strokes from the bronze *kulintang*, and then, silence. The *santur* and *tar* both start to thread stringed sequences around the tongues of the *mbira*, itself settling now into a brief *hosho* repetition. The *kulintang* re-enters in sympathetic dynamic with its own rhythmic phrases in the mode of *binelig*, while the *shakuhachi* resumes its scattered breath-tones in *miyako bushi*. With more overlapping, all linear forms of call and response evaporate in shared existence [1].

Once the drums that have set up—and continuously kept up—all the anchoring rhythmic cycles, stop, an eternal presence shines from those players left sustaining one another. This effect of time and space converging from the withdrawal of the temporally explicit eliminates perceptions of intervallic distance, is no longer a defining force for imposing change or direction between each accent of conception and decay, sits outside history, inside eternity. Without a drumming authority, the “Creator” as conductor seems to have left the house, leaving us with the sole responsibility of either holding ourselves together or falling apart. We, in fact, are in the process of becoming one another through our own disintegration.

Breaking this pause, the *daff* wraps around the lilt of a *chahar mezrab*, joined now by the *changgo* and *cajon*; while drums and bass walk, faint harmonic clusters wisp from the guitar. Finally, distinct Northern Plains vocal strains pierce what has become a rainforest of sonic activity, reaffirmed with crying interjections by the double-reeded *karna* [2]. Gradually, collective attention gravitates from the vocals to the *kulintang* gongs. Together, with all traditions upheld, distinct tunings upheld, melodic integrity upheld, unison occurs with all parts joined in the direction of an intuitive cadence. Swelling up and out from the last instrumental stroke, sound humans [3] are left interrelating in seamless continuity.

For many laypersons, music continues to be defined more in terms of a curative product than as a creative process. The endless subdivisions of styles, genres and artists' lists that

serve this public concept of music are perpetuated by an entertainment industry geared more toward reinforcing consumer passivity than toward empowerment. One way to remedy this would be to set up a live context that could dissolve every obstacle in the way of our realizing our full humanity. Whether an instrument is played or not, in this sound space, no performer/audience lines are drawn. Furthermore, since the aim of this endeavor is more a social process than a musical product, there are no composers or conductors to invent, own or control the total expression. As traditional performance contexts are sacrificed for the sake of interrelating with others, their formal structures are expanded upon within the larger collective. Through extinction of form, then, human spirit expands.

This disintegrative process results from playing incomplete ideas, thus interrupting the conscious flow of repertoire; as one's conscious memory gets replaced with a shared ancestral memory, technique is transformed beyond the virtuosic; pre-determined clichés are eliminated and all solo efforts relieved. Ideally, the coexistence that results from dissolving all exclusionary and hierarchical positions (such as professional/amateur or leader/side-person) interlocks the above vulnerabilities in trust and embracing support to weave a net of compassion that is ultimately empowering for all concerned. According to the above, such binary-oppositional notions as improvisation and composition finally become obsolete, consequently resolving struggle and resistance by dealing all hard-lined oppression a fatal blow of fluid inclusiveness. Revolution, then, like compost, recycles itself, continuously breaking down, then transforming and finally rising in prophetic liberating order.

## IMPROVISATION AS COMPOST

In the broadest sense, improvisational concepts encompass all the dynamic processes of life. Power and resistance, identity-politics formation, intercultural collaboration, community development, human rights and hope, are but only a few of the areas in which improvisation is considered today for critical study [4]. What can we learn, though, from other cultural concepts without a literal equivalent for the term *improvisa-*

## ABSTRACT

By introducing a consort of instrumentalists representing musical traditions from Iran to the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Japan, Korea and the Americas, the author presents a paradoxical compost approach of defining while disintegrating musical cultural elements, thus conveying the transformative nature of self and society. Improvisation informs the author's chromodal concept, illustrated in the article with a collapsing pyramid model, thereby illuminating co-existence as a shared creative source that ultimately expands human potential through the extinction of the formal.

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Article Frontispiece. Japanese calligraphy signifying the interrelationship between quadrangular, triangular and circular forms. (© Ryoko Minemura)



**Fig. 1.** Sun Ra Arkestra members from the Edward O. Bland film, *The Cry of Jazz*, Chicago, 1959. (© Atavistic Worldwide. Courtesy Edward O. Bland and Atavistic Worldwide.)

tion, let alone for the term *music*? For example, in Javanese gamelan practice, in which there are expected norms, there are deviations better referred to as variation or interpretation, rather than improvisation in the creative sense of the term. Divergence from a skeletal melody (*balungan*) is related to the treatment (*garapan*) of a melody, or melodic passage (*lagu*). According to ethnomusicologist Anderson Sutton, the lay term *garap*, as in “to work on” or “to cultivate,” “implies a kind of busy activity, a working through, in an attempt to produce something suggested but not fully formed, hence also a searching—for something inherent, but perhaps not yet uncovered” [5].

This state of becoming, or incompleteness, as characterized by all life processes, carries a profound impetus for improvisatory practice as well. The flamencos of Southern Spain, for example, draw musical inspiration from a cryptic sense of ancestral memory. Incompleteness is also a powerfully creative concept embedded in the Dogon cosmology of West Africa, wherein poet Nathaniel Mackey sees the mythological Andoumboulou “as an earlier, flawed or failed form of human being . . . (who) are in fact us; we’re the rough draft” [6]. Improvisation as compost, then, fragmentizes tradition, and in the process invites liberation from all other hegemonic forms as well [7]. Attributing this liberation to various resistance movements of the world’s peoples would indicate that, eventually, a total disintegration of natural and political

systems due to environmental and economic pressures would lead all things to compost into fertilizer for a renewable future.

Currently, forces in conflict are identified as an oppressor—who adheres to a fixed, closed, fundamentalist view—resisted by a liberator, whose fluid, open, improvisational view always provides a shape-shifting advantage. The improviser’s inherent inclusiveness always

empowers him/her over the exclusionary. Now, it can be said that the inclusive kind are stepping up by folding-in the exclusive kind within their sphere of influence, thereby turning the tables toward freedom for all concerned. The price of eliminating the dualistic battle of “us vs. them”—a perpetually losing battle at that—is that of sacrificing old concepts of resistance that perpetuate sides and, instead, focusing on realizing ideals through sound, which can then be materialized through spirit.

## RESISTANCE, DISINTEGRATION AND LIBERATION PROPHECY

The Ghost Dance religion of the late 19th century, culminating in 1890 with the messianic prophet Wovoka, provided a unified vision for American Indians of all nations: that, through a doctrine of nonviolent resistance consisting of singing and dancing, ancestral spirits would materialize and join with their living descendants to recover a world lost to White settlers [8]. A subtle African American complement to this American Indian liberation prophecy can be found in Edward O. Bland’s rarely seen 1959 Chicago film *The Cry of Jazz*, featuring the Sun Ra Arkestra of that period (Fig. 1). Here, a repetitive form as the restraining element causes the “death of jazz,” foreshadowing either America’s redemption or destruction based upon whether Black America can be healed of the wounds of those forms that repeatedly oppress it:

**Fig. 2.** Beethoven’s *Adagio in E<sup>b</sup>* serves as compost for a collective of disintegrating ideas from Mindanao, Zimbabwe, Iran and North America. Consort members left to right are: Danongan Kalanduyan (partially hidden by music stand), kulintang; Kelly Takunda Orphan, mbira; AmirAbbas Etemadzadeh, tombak; Ramin Zoufonoun, tar; Hafez Modirzadeh, tenor saxophone. Saint Gregory’s of Nyssa, San Francisco, 18 August 2007. (Photo © Andy Nozaka)



No new growth can occur in jazz. Anything which happens now will be a variation on something old. The body is dead but the spirit of jazz is here for a long time, just like the [Black American]. The death of jazz is the first faint cry of the salvation of the [Black American] . . . and the rest of America. That is, if America can realize that the hope for America lies through the [Black American] (who) controls America's destiny . . . (who) is their conscience [9].

With the prophetic nature of both the Ghost Dance and *The Cry of Jazz*, the collective ancestral enables an overcoming of humanity's most oppressive forms through the music and dance of the living. Indeed, such dualistic viewpoints provide clear objectives for unified counter-Western resistance, as Fred Ho points out:

Just as the Black Liberation Movement has inspired many other social movements for justice and equality, so too has much of African American culture, especially its music, inspired other oppressed peoples to sing and express their stories, to assert their unique and distinctive cultural identities, to challenge the aesthetic dominance and practices of white settler-colonialist America. . . . The "avant-garde" of oppressed peoples' cultures generally tends to fuel liberation, challenge cultural dominance and hegemony (usually of the oppressor, colonial traditions, and forms), and to promote rebellion, struggle, dissidence, disturbance, militancy, and opposition to the status quo [10].

Where the dominant paradigm for musical expression has been the Western European, intercultural collaborations are



**Fig. 3.** Freeing the idea, from Ornette Coleman's "Lonely Woman." Consort members left to right are: Donna Kwon, changgo; James Norton, bass clarinet; Masaru Koga, shakuhachi; Timothy Volpicella, guitar; Hafez Modirzadeh, karna; John-Carlos Perea, Lakota vocals; royal hartigan (partially hidden), drums; Ken Filiano, bass. Saint Gregory's of Nyssa, San Francisco, 18 August 2007. (Photo © Andy Nozaka)

naturally sought in order to express resistance to the colonial hegemonic [11]. While some of these collaborations simply perpetuate an exotica syndrome—strengthening hegemony by absorbing its colonizing effects into a compromised expression, as with Chinese or Persian folksongs, for example, performed in a western operatic or symphonic context—it is through indigenous practices expressed together that resistance can truly move forward toward liberation

[12]. This was described in healing terms by the Black "avant-garde" of the 1960s, including John Coltrane and, here, Ornette Coleman:

I am writing a piece of music, a long piece, for what I call...*The Oldest Musical Language*. The music will be for about 125 musicians, and for as many nontempered musicians as I can get into it...The talking drums. The sitar. The kind of instruments African people play, instruments that Arabs play...But the thing that I'm more interested in is having the experience of hearing the musicians express how these sounds are going to affect how they play as an individual. That's the result I'm looking for, that's my motive behind doing this. And what I hope to bring about is, shall we say, some form of medicine in the music...some kind of healing medicine would be incorporated in these sounds, come from these ancient instruments. I would like to try to bring about some kind of medical sounds that could actually cure depression, cure whatever it could [13].

**Fig. 4.** Mahmoud Zoufonoun, on his home-made "hashtar" (an eight-stringed bass lute made from a large spoon he found at a local flea market), in interlocking harmony with Faraz Minooei on santur, and Danongan Kalanduyan on Filipino kulintang. This is the first known time that Persian and Filipino tuning systems are practiced together without compromise. St. Gregory's of Nyssa, San Francisco, 18 August 2007. (Photo © Andy Nozaka)



Whether in the process of embracing, resisting, enforcing or unfolding form, the trickster-nature of human creative expression ultimately moves toward a liberation from those very constraints inherently conceived to define experience in the first place [14]. This leads to a quest, through sound, for freedom from all formal structure. Our inherent drive to expand, whether physically or spiritually, resists the imposition of fixed systems, and so, by obliterating restraining factors, we are claiming freedom, in essence, from repetition, invention, replication.

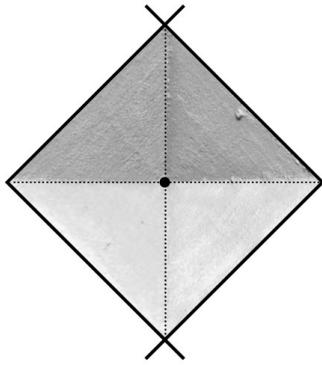


Fig. 5. A pyramid-structure as perceived from above, with square base, four triangular sides and a circle-point at the top; the diamond formation can also be generated from intersecting both less-than and greater-than mathematical symbols, signifying the quality of the infinite within a quantifiable form. (© Hafez Modirzadeh)

### CHROMODAL CONCEPT AS CONSORT

I coined the term *chromodal* to refer to an interdisciplinary approach to music-making I developed during the 1980s and 1990s: “chro” signifying “the spectrum or range of” and “modality” signifying “a phenomenon of behavior.” During that time, I conceived new terms in order to gauge cross-cultural musical collaboration, where the parameters defining two or more formal traditions could be clearly and consciously exchanged between musicians in order to engage in “chromodal discourse.” A multifaceted process of “idiomatic transformation” could then be applied toward the flourishing of traditional practices beyond traditional boundaries, expanding the range of individual musicianship as well. By late 1997, however, chromodality had run its course both as a systematic method and theoretical model, remaining more as a personal bridge between stages in my development of a concept. Over the next 10 years, the intellectual contrivance of chromodal discourse would eventually give way to more organic conceptualizations of intercultural music-making directly linked to the present work: (1) “aural archetypes” are inherent forms that re-arise spontaneously between all musical traditions of the world in defiance of any historical, geographical or cultural distinction, considering what I refer to as (2) “Makam X,” that universal spectrum of overtone partials naturally binding together all sound systems, just as light’s spectrum binds all colors [15].

Then, on 18 August 2007, a consort of some 22 friends, students and master

musicians gathered together at St. Gregory’s of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco to engage in that particular intercultural musical coexistence I here describe as “compost music.” Turning from an integrative and formal discourse to a collective, more improvisational context (dis-)integrative of traditional forms, chromodality returns now as sacrificial concept. The sonic result can be heard from two points of view: *micro-motivic*, from the inside, in the form of a polyphonic web of interaction, and *macro-energetic*, from the outside, as dense sound complexes [16].

The Chromodal Consort, an eclectic group of willing volunteers representing Filipino (kulintang), Iranian (santur, tar, karna, daff), Zimbabwean Shona (mbira), Japanese (shakuhachi), Korean (changgo), European (bass), South American (Peruvian cajon, Brazilian pandeiro), American (drums, electric guitar) and American Indian (Lakota vocals, cedar flute) musical traditions, strives for the creation of an ideal society devoid of class or position [17] (Figs 2–4 and Color Plate F). Usually, to perform together, musicians of various cultural reference points synchronize the tuning of their instruments; they are then conducted through predetermined forms that have been carefully rehearsed. Any deviance from this model may be considered musically irresponsible. Since the alternative presented here follows none of this conventional protocol, it may be justified to consider a chromodal consort outside the realm of “music” altogether. This may then free the players from the rest of the expectations associated with this term as well [18]. The effects of this reorientation require us to reexamine some musical terms in order to challenge notions of binary opposition in the music-making process.

*Unison*, for example, here refers to moving in the same direction only, with the same intent, and not to any identical matching of tonal or rhythmic ideas. The possibility of coming from different cultural directions while going in the same human direction reinforces the “how” (manner) and “why” (intent), rather than the “what” (forms) and “who” (musicians), that moves players together. The result sounds similar to two or more people conversing on the same topic simultaneously. In the case of a chromodal consort, when they are conversing in different languages, the need to convey ideas will inevitably dissolve grammar into pure emotional gesture. Thus, unison here is a plurality of sounds, reflecting a variety of individual

resonances, which, like partials of human overtones, are partials of ancestral memory emanating from a fundamental humanity.

*Transposition* refers to changing the position of a sound or idea, either from within registers of the same instrument or from one instrument (or person) to another. Here, though, the original sound or idea may altogether change between instruments of various cultural source. For example, what starts out as the same tonal idea for saxophone and bass, when shifted to the tar or mbira, transforms itself in a redistribution of overtones to fit another’s musical context. The multiplicity of sounds and ideas that result from transposing—and consequently transforming—a single one, still move out together with the same unison of spirit from which they were generated and, consequently here, count on. *Harmony*, then, refers to the creative ordering together of these ideas, which are open to definition when organized among instruments that carry their own intonation.

*Temperament* diversity, as well, is crucial to a just intercultural life and must be expressed in concurrence by all consort members, with no one conforming to a foreign set of standards. Any given *composition* must be played in cryptic, incomplete phrases (by starting from the middle of a tune, for instance), so a composer’s work is dissolved into fodder for nurturing ideas that are more creative and relevant to the present. With no script or director to stage the story, the nemesis roles of “composer” and “improviser” are obliterated, and each person instead becomes an empowered “composter” in real time.

In all, matching tone between instruments of different cultural traditions is not as much a goal as is matching the direction of intent, heart, or spirit, which generates form itself. Altogether, resolution occurs within a collective idea more so than a musical key. The consort assembled for these purposes adopts a “key-free” (or “free-key”) tradition, knowing that it is people who make traditions and not the other way around.

Over time, this sort of group develops the intuitive skill to interlock collectively within each person’s stylistic tradition while removing the conventional flow of their traditional practices to absorb the unconventional sonic environment surrounding them. Instead of resorting to rehearsed tunes (which only continue to exclude the uninitiated and artificialize time with repetition), all listen intently while playing in order to recognize the

one who may be leaning toward a resolution, which can be shown in a gestural manner or dynamically. Indeed, with familiarity, cadences can be expected to last certain lengths depending on who is initiating them. In this fashion, players decide to enter or not, to play rhythmically with someone else or not. At some point, when explicit time-keeping by the drummer stops, through a literal extinction of time, individual time-references become self-illuminating, working interdependently beyond meter, driven toward realizing a social ideal through music.

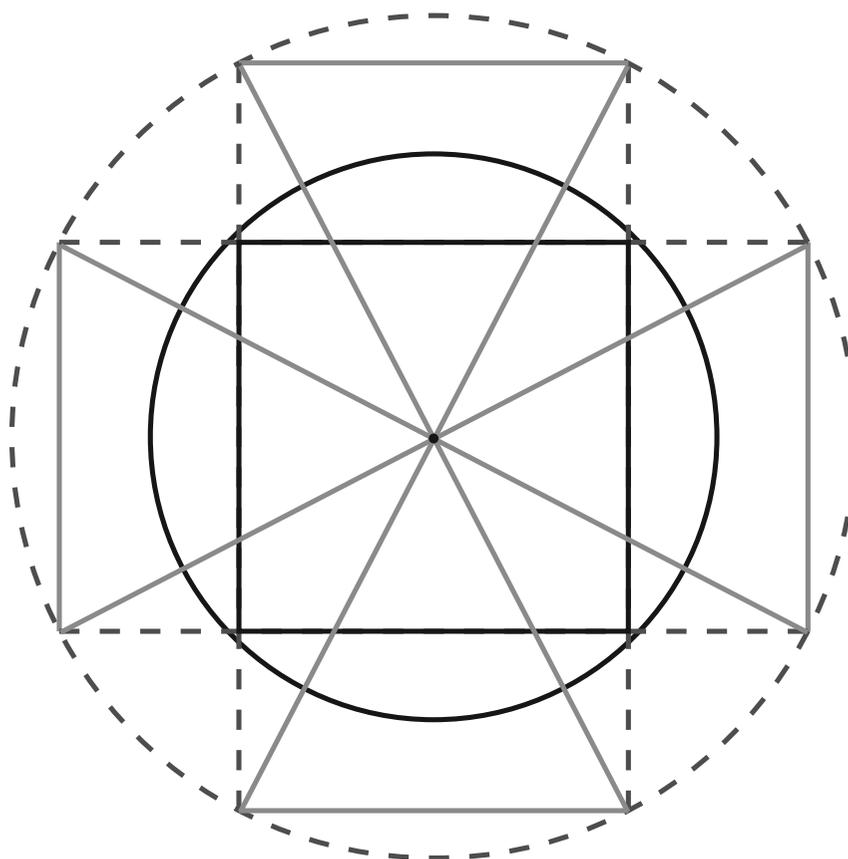
Altogether, the sound society that unfolds reveals that temperament, form and emotional content can indeed be compatible between musicians of different cultural systems. Regardless of instrument, if people are willing to sacrifice showmanship through the discipline of self-imposed limits, more can be accomplished together [19].

In all, with the above, there exists the potential for one syncretic context to emanate from the integrating disintegration of two or more musical idioms. Accordingly, rather than blur or dissolve into one another, musical traditions in respectful coexistence can enhance and sustain their own uniqueness, while allowing musicians to flourish beyond their cultural borders [20]. Ironically, however, this creative growth comes only through musicians agreeing on experiencing elements both familiar and foreign. It is in nurturing a relationship of trust, through humility, in accepting one another's vulnerabilities, that musicians' consciousness can expand beyond artistic labels.

In a 21st-century digital world, this kind of live collaboration can only help to strengthen the rapport between self and society. But whether live or digital, our instruments are mastered only as tools toward our own self-realization in order to work more effectively toward a larger social realization. Transcending the predator/prey gnashings from below, a "rainforest" of human activity raises a sound society upward toward the unison of variance heard from above. The following model crystallizes these ideas in the geometrical shape of a collapsing pyramid [21].

### **COLLAPSING PYRAMIDS AS A MODEL FOR EXPANSION BY EXTINCTION**

The pyramid stands as a perfect symbol for the process of moving between physical and metaphysical realms. Through



**Fig. 6. The collapsed pyramid, signifying the expansion of spirit through the extinction of self; finite and infinite meet through the crossing-principle of relationship, illuminated here with the intersection of mystical rectangles. (© Hafez Modirzadeh)**

the ages, the triangular has acted as the mother of form, of becomingness, of that passage between the infinite (or circular) and the finite (or square) realms of manifestation (Article Frontispiece). The pyramid's square base, as the earthly quantifiable representation of the infinitely circular, attains this unifying infinite with a point reached by the outgrowth of its four converging triangular sides. These sides' active crossing principle gives birth to form, existence, measurable by two complementary yet opposing forces—intersecting lines (Fig. 5). The pyramid then represents the transformational relationship between the earth-bound and the spirit-bound via the intersection of both.

As with Rumi's "moth to flame," actively extinguishing the self-centric will condense earthly and infinite into one enlightened realm [22]. For this to occur, the triangles would have to collapse, shifting creative forces: The square base, or physical self, is now sustained by two mystical rectangles crossed together to enlarge its perimeters, and by so doing, expand the self in a larger potential form (Fig. 6). In short, with each repeated collapsing of the becoming-progression,

historical tense is obliterated, past and future reside together in the present, and the self, in dialogue with Source, expands both concentrically and vertically. Growth thereof continues as often as the pattern of extinguishment is repeated.

Likewise, two or more musical languages can interrelate in proportion to grow simultaneously beyond their traditional boundaries while retaining their distinctive integrities. Through obliteration of personal ambition, structural principles from the base of each tradition are carefully interrelated to meet a more unifying aspiration: the expansion of human spirit through contraction of musical choice.

Ideally, musical cultural source can be understood from various points of origin, primarily because of the non-linear, non-chronological nature of sound itself. Indeed, there can be no Source without the Multiplicity that defines it. Affirming one affirms the other. When historical perspectives are then cleared of all chronological static, all hierarchical positions may then dissolve in obsolescence to reveal "source" as that which is connected within rather than without each person.

## Acknowledgment

To the inspiration of Mahmoud Zoufonoun and Ornette Coleman, whose friendship and mentoring are open book covers to this work.

## References and Notes

*Unedited references as provided by author.*

1. The above instruments are described as follows: *shakuhachi*, a five tone-holed end-blown cane flute from Japan; *kulintang*, a row of stick-struck bossed gongs from the Southern Philippines; *santur*, a hammered dulcimer from Iran; *tar*, a long-necked lute with membrane-facing from Iran; *mbira*, a finger-plucked row of metal tongues over a gourd resonator from the Shona of Zimbabwe; *hoshō*, a rattle that accompanies *mbira*; *binalig*, a traditional rhythmic cycle in kulintang practice; *miyako bushi*, a pentatonic mode from the traditional shakuhachi repertoire.

2. More descriptions for the above: *daff*, a frame-drum from Iran; *chahar mezrab*, a rhythmic improvisation in Iranian instrumental music; *changgo*, an hourglass-shaped double-headed drum from Korea; *cajon*, an Afro-Peruvian percussion box; *walking*, the standard rhythmic propulsion in jazz accompaniment; "Northern Plains," referring to the American Indian Lakota vocal tradition; *karna*, a large double-reeded shawm from Iran.

3. The idea of "sound human" (obviously having the double meaning of a person who both creates with sound and is also inherently "good") is inspired by Ornette Coleman's "sound grammar" (from Coleman's 2006 CD *Sound Grammar*), referring to musical languages that adhere to a universal Grammar of Sound. Coleman's personal message of "freeing the idea" (in that ideas come from an eternally creative source that transcends ownership and containment) directly relates to this piece, where "sacrificing the concept" refers to opening those sequences, or ideas, previously dictated closed and impenetrable by tradition.

4. Ajay Heble, et al., "Editorial," *Critical Studies In Improvisation*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (on-line, 2004). In freely improvised musical practice, the most consistent characteristic is diversity, "established only by the sonic-musical identity of the person or persons playing it." Derek Bailey, *Improvisation* (New York, Da Capo Press, 1992) p. 83. The widening range of musical improvisers today involves abilities "to reference an intercultural establishment of techniques, styles, aesthetic attitudes, historical antecedents and networks of cultural and social practice." George Lewis, "Teaching Improvised Music: An Ethnographic Memoir," in *Arcana*, John Zorn, ed. (New York, Granary Books, Inc., 2000) pp. 78–109; p. 78.

5. R. Anderson Sutton, "Do Javanese Gamelan Musicians Really Improvise?," in *In the Course of Performance*, Bruno Nettl, Ed. (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998) pp. 69–92; p. 74.

6. Nathaniel Mackey, Strick, CD (*Spoken Word Engine* 1994), liner notes.

7. Marilyn Crispell, for instance, acknowledges the possibility to "use traditional compositions as springboards for improvisation, rather than being forced to play them in a traditional manner (although knowledge of the traditional interpretations and manners of playing can only enrich the new interpretation)." Marilyn Crispell, "Elements of Improvisation," in Zorn [4] pp. 190–192; p. 192.

8. Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1970) p. 416.

9. Edward O. Bland, *The Cry of Jazz*, film (Chicago, KHTB Productions, 1959) (Bland 1959: film script).

10. Fred Ho, "Notes and Opinions," *Critical Studies in Improvisation*, Vol. 1 No. 3 (on-line, 2006).

11. Unfortunately, intercultural efforts that—for the sake of remedying their own exclusion—exclude western perspectives end up sustaining those perspectives unless they are effectively absorbed by the resistance movement. Deborah Wong, in reference to free improvisation as coalition politics that resists European hegemonic forms through intercultural expression that is inherently non-European, includes the following by Virginia R. Dominguez: "Many non-European countries, especially those long-subjected to direct colonial domination by colonial powers, indeed make concerted efforts to establish cultural politics that highlight and celebrate forms of creative expression thought to have been developed before the establishment of European hegemony. This is typically perceived to be a form of resistance. Yet it is arguably more a continuation of a form of European ideological hegemony more than an example of resistance." Virginia R. Dominguez, "The Messy Side of 'Cultural Politics,'" *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 91 No. 1 (1992: 19–42) p. 25; from Deborah Wong, *Speak It Louder* (New York, Routledge, 2004) pp. 276–277.

12. Jason Stanyek's pan-African model actually articulates how differences can be sustained among practices expressed together: "Interculturalism needs to be seen for what it is: an organizational strategy built upon categories of difference. . . . Musicians from Africa and the African diaspora have hit upon a mode of intercultural relating that provides a convincing example of how intercultural relationships can point toward something transcendent while still retaining a firm grip on the socially and historically constructed processes that contribute to the production of human difference." Jason Stanyek, "Transmissions of an Interculture: Pan-African Jazz and Intercultural Improvisation," in *The Other Side of Nowhere: Jazz, Improvisation, and Communities in Dialogue*, Daniel Fischlin and Ajay Heble, Ed. (Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 2004) pp. 87–130; p. 119.

13. Quincy Troupe, "Ornette Coleman: Going Beyond Outside," in Mark Rowland and Tony Scherman, *The Jazz Musician* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1994) pp. 25–46; p. 44.

14. Christian Wolff, on behalf of his contemporaries (Cage, Feldman, Brown, et al.), states: "We had to liberate ourselves from the direct and peremptory consequence of intention and effect, because the intention would always be our own and would be circumscribed, when so many other forces are evidently in action in the final effect." Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music* (New York, Schirmer Books, 1974) p. 42.

15. Hafez Modirzadeh, *Chromodality and the Cross-Cultural Exchange of Musical Structure* (Wesleyan University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1992) p. 156; Hafez Modirzadeh, "Aural Archetypes and Cyclic Perspectives in the Work of John Coltrane and Ancient Chinese Music Theory" in the *Black Music Research Journal*, XXI:1 (2001) pgs. 75–105; Hafez Modirzadeh, "Rising Partials Realizing Sound Come-Unity: Makam X and the Afro-Diasporic Un-Conscious,"

15th Guelph Jazz Festival Colloquium Paper, Ontario, Canada (September 4, 2008).

16. This observation is taken from Ekkehard Jost's comparison of Coleman's 1960 Free Jazz recording with Coltrane's 1965 *Ascension*. Ekkehard Jost, *Free Jazz* (New York, Da Capo Press, 1994) p. 89.

17. The Chromodal Consort at St. Gregory's of Nyssa in San Francisco 18 August 2007, consisted of: Avotcja, poetry; Jimmy Biala, cajon, pandeiro, shekere; Tom Edler, bass; AmirAbbas Etemadzadeh, tombak, daff; Ken Filiano, bass; royal hartigan, drumkit; Danongan Kalanduyan, kulintang; Masaru Koga, shakuhachi, alto saxophone; Donna Kwon, changgo, vocals; Faraz Minooei, santur; Hafez Modirzadeh, karna, ney, tenor saxophone; James Norton, alto flute, bassoon, bass clarinet, soprano saxophone; Kelly Takunda Orphan, mbira, vocals; John-Carlos Perea, cedar flute, Lakota vocals; Bo Razon, bongos; Leo Sifflet, tenor saxophone; Tim Volpicella, electric guitar; Ted Williams, tenor saxophone; Francis Wong, tenor saxophone; Mahmoud Zoufonoun, violin and hashtar; Ramin Zoufonoun, tar. Recorded excerpts of the event can be found at <mitpressjournals.org/loi/leon>

18. Francis Wong has stated, "In a lot of ways. . . (we) don't play music anymore. In a sense. We're just telling our stories, you know. It's not like playing pieces. We play ourselves." Wong [11] p. 296.

19. Anthony Braxton refers to "world group cultures," which are in ritual "the essence foundation of (a) meta-reality position," thus helping to unify society. Graham Lock, *Forces in Motion* (New York, Da Capo Press, 1988) p. 310.

20. Masters Kalanduyan and Zoufonoun, both leading senior exponents of their respective instrumental traditions (kulintang from Mindanao, *dagtag* from Iran) expressed how they were able to tap new depths by playing alongside other traditions outside their own; they related how the "sacrificing" of closed traditional concepts, done together with others of similar artistic and human intent, opened doors in their own practices.

21. This model was previously presented as part of a series of Fulbright lectures at the University of Granada, Spain, during the spring of 2006. Material herein was also presented at a symposium on 21 June 2008, at McGill University, as part of their project on "Improvisation, Community and Social Practice."

22. Jallaleddin Rumi (also known as Mowlana) was a 13th-century poet and philosopher who wrote inspired verse in Persian; in his reoccurring metaphor for love, the moth (or butterfly) extinguishes itself in oneness with the flame of the candle around which it revolves.

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*Hafez Modirzadeh introduced his original saxophonic and theoretical approach on the 1993 CD In Chromodal Discourse, culminating in 2003 with Dandelion, and in 2007 with Bemsha Alegria (both on Disques Chromodal), when as a 2006 Fulbright Scholar in Southern Spain he collaborated with flamencos. Modirzadeh is currently a Professor of Music at San Francisco State University.*