

Guelph Jazz Festival Colloquium 2014: Sounding Futures
September 3-5, 2014
Abstracts and Bios

Jonathan Adjemian (Programme in Social and Political Thought, York University)

“Of Afterness and After”

This paper is an extended meditation on one of Sun Ra's most famous one-liners, the repeated "it's after the end of the world - don't you know that yet?" from *Space is the Place*, as a proposal to address—or sidestep—the crisis of history that occupied the late twentieth century. What does it mean to situate history not just after catastrophe, but so far beyond that its catastrophic nature comes into question? What is at stake in making the future, like the past, not just another time but another place? Making reference to the Iraqi painter and sculptor, Jewad Selim, the Algerian painter Mohammed Khadda, and the Martinican writer and theorist Édouard Glissant (with some sideways glances towards European phenomenologists), I read Ra among—and beyond—other approaches to the future of the past and the past of the future. These artists and writers faced questions, still actual today: what does it mean to reactivate the past, beyond the disasters of the slave trade, colonialism, and the increasing presence and possibility of total war? As a challenge not only to linear history but to cyclical or static models, the actuality of past and future together points away from any figure of history, but what does it point towards?

If the aft-er is what moves from fore to aft, putting behind, then what is it to be after that, beyond obsolescence? And how do the oscillations of a history that is beyond the form-er, beyond the foreman who shows man his form and keeps him to it, run past not just man but the world, too? How does the slipperiness of sound mix with the visual to upend our sense of time and our place in it?

This paper attempts to write in a looser and more free-form mode than my usual academic writing, moving quickly between points and images while indicating connections more than spelling them out.

Jonathan Adjemian is a PhD candidate in the Programme in Social and Political Thought at York University, where he is writing a dissertation on Algerian novelist and poet Mohammed Dib. He is also active as a musician, working in improvised, song-based, and electronic music in and around Toronto.

Rebecca Caines (Creative Technologies, University of Regina), Rick Kotowich (Native Health Services, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region), & Amanda Schenstead (Wascana Rehabilitation Centre)

“Improvising with iPads: A Partnered Inquiry into Technology-based Music Therapy, Improvisation and Cultural Expression in Health Settings”

This paper outlines the ongoing research project “Improvising with iPads: A Partnered Inquiry

into Technology-based Music Therapy, Improvisation and Cultural Expression in Health Settings” (Regina, Saskatchewan 2014). The project involves a group of ten First Nation and Métis clients in a long-term rehabilitation care at the Wascana Rehabilitation Hospital who are working with an artist/researcher, a Native Health Educator and a Music Therapist to research the social and creative possibilities of making music and intermedial art with iPad tablets. The project is supported by a range of health workers, and by Elders in the local community. Research is being conducted through arts-based methods (creative audiovisual music workshops using critical improvisation methodologies) and through qualitative inquiry in the form of a music therapy group case study. Music therapy sessions use improvisation as the primary musical therapeutic component as well as using psychotherapeutic concepts/counselling techniques adapted from the Group Analytic Music Therapy model (Ahonen, 2007). The project investigates the potential in improvisation projects like this for creative expression, cultural affirmation for First Nations and Métis clients, reduced isolation, the development of collaborative, technical and listening skills, the development of new forms of innovative community-based art, and the building of new skills in new media literacy, participatory technologies, and digital citizenship (Jenkins, 2006).

Whilst the project is only partially complete, we will discuss data and examples gathered in the first three months of the project and examine the potentials and issues of applying insights from the field of Critical Improvisation Studies to form our research methodology. We argue that a model drawing from Critical Improvisation Studies can utilize the elements of improvised arts practices to critically inform research design and practice. These elements include active listening, collaboration, real-time decision-making, and reconfigurations of ideas like risk and mistake (Heble, 2005; Caines, 2013). This methodology engages with the social and cultural implications of improvised activity, and is informed by historical practices where improvisation has provided aggrieved communities new forms of agency (Lewis, 2008; Heble and Fischlin, 2004). This methodology utilizes tried and tested exercises and methods from improvised art practices such as theatre, music, dance, film and interdisciplinary art practices as part of the research method to enable participation and break down barriers to achieving positive social change (Johnstone, 1981; Stevens, 1985; Oliveros, 2009). In this case, we argue that improvisation has provided a powerful methodology for building community-engaged research, therapeutic goals and innovative improvised music making, whilst helping to address the complex health and wellness challenges faced by First Nations and Métis people in long-term care in the Canadian Prairie context.

Dr. Rebecca Caines is an award-winning interdisciplinary artist and scholar. Her artistic practice, teaching and research work crosses between creative technologies (including sound art, new media, and augmentation), contemporary performance and improvisation, site-specific art practices, and community-engaged art. She is currently playing a lead role in developing the new Creative Technologies area at the University of Regina, which is an exciting initiative crossing between Fine Arts, Computer Science and Engineering. She is a co-applicant on the 2.5 million dollar SSHRC-funded International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation (IICSI) - a partnered research institute, directing the new Regina Improvisation Studies Centre (RISC). Her recent practice-based research projects include Community Sound [e]Scapes: Northern Ontario, a collaborative sound art, video and new media project in remote First Nations communities (with K-Net Services and Ed Video Media Arts); and The University of Regina iPad Orchestra, a creative project exploring improvised music with the iPad and other tablets and mobile devices (with David Gerhard and Pauline Minevich). She has convened large-scale community projects in

Australia, Northern Ireland and Canada, and serves on the board for Common Weal Community Arts, Knowhere Productions, and Holophon Audio Arts. She has published internationally, including a number of journal articles and book chapters and is currently completing a co-edited book on improvisation entitled *Spontaneous Acts: The Improvisation Studies Reader*, with Ajay Heble for Routledge.

Rick Kotowich is Health Educator for Native Health Services at Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, Regina, Saskatchewan. His current work involves group and individual support and referrals for First Nation and Métis clients at Wascana Rehabilitation Centre. He has over thirty years of experience working in education, health, community development and social welfare, including teaching small business training, coordinating community schools, serving as Chair of the Board of Common Weal Community Arts for many years, and participating in development and training with the East Side Institute, NYC. He has also served as a community-based research collaborator and peer reviewer over the past decade.

Amanda Schenstead holds a Master's Degree in Music Therapy from Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, ON. This training program specializes in an approach called "music centered psychotherapy" which combines musical improvisation with psychotherapeutic techniques. She continues to practice using these techniques as a framework. All music therapists are also accredited and belong to their professional association: The Canadian Association of Music Therapists. She has been working at Wascana Rehabilitation Centre for 5 years in both the Veterans and Extended Care program and has also had experience working with a wide variety of client populations including palliative care, adult mental health, and children with autism and global developmental delay and has also co-facilitated sessions with Caring Hearts Camp (a bereavement camp for youth).

Keith Cartwright (Literature, University of North Florida)

"From 'Magic City' to 'Mayan Temples': Muse, Musication, and Mythos in the Outer Spatial Reaches of Ra's Arkestra

I propose a paper on Sun Ra's mythic vision and soundings of an alter-destiny—in a movement launching itself out of the gravitational fields of Euro-centric power on this planet. My paper will be written and scored for auditory performance (with musical samplings) against a backdrop collage (to be prepared and hung or mounted behind me) of words and lines from Ra's poetry. In my examination of Ra's attentiveness to myth and his cultivation of an "alien" status and muse, I will examine what Ra shared with key poet-theorists of his time and ours—writers such as Jay Wright, Nathaniel Mackey, Kamau Brathwaite, and Wilson Harris, many of whom published alongside Ra (in *Hambone*) and have been concerned not only with muses and musication of alter-destinies but also with a renewal of cross-cultural mythic vision and rites fetching a nonapocalyptic futurity. In particular, I seek to align the theories of the Guyanese writer Wilson Harris and the "Astro-black" mythic practice of New Mexico-born poet Jay Wright with Ra's vision. I hold Ra's practice, when understood from the theoretical-performative positions of Harris, Wright, and others, as an exemplary model for reconceiving the humanities (and humanity itself).

The Guyanese novelist/theorist Wilson Harris in *Jonestown* (1996) offers one set of frameworks

for appreciating Ra's accomplishments. Like Ra, Harris utilizes a music-and-myth driven quest (the starward search of Magi—as in “Magic City”) for averting scriptings of progressive catastrophe, as “one becomes a vessel...imbued with many voices...a multitude” of “the broken communities... from which I have sprung” (6). Reminiscent of “Mayan Temples,” Jonestown invokes the muse through Mayan time-space and via a Carib bone-flute as the novel recalls how “The Caribs ate a morsel of enemy flesh when the Spanish priests and conquistadors invaded their lands. They sought to know and digest the secrets of the enemy in that morsel. They hollowed the bone from which the morsel had come into a flute that is said to inhabit all species that sing” (16). This “morsel, a flute, a fury,” allows a musical retraversal of “frames in which conquistadorial priests of old sought to conscript the Imagination” (16), and offers a sonic call for “different weddings and marriages to reality” (25). Like Ra's holistic (sonic, technological, and mythic) practice, Jonestown presents an epistemological challenge. Under-utilized resources of “shamans and seers and magi” (32) are key here to awakening us from “the state of embalmed institutions” (72). Without such sonic/philosophical models of “undying originality” and “resistance to the predatory coherence of fact that masquerades as eternity,” our “art is dead” (46). Sun Ra presents the most striking example of an undead imagination and originality—charged with altering destinies scripted of “misconceived beginnings, misconceived empires”: “test every fabric of a biased humanities, break the Void by sifting the fabric of ruin for living doorways into an open universe” (216).

Keith Cartwright is Professor of Literature at the University of North Florida. He is the author of *Sacral Grooves*, *Limbo Gateways: Travels in Deep Southern Time, Circum-Caribbean Space, Afro-creole Authority* (2013), *Reading Africa into American Literature* (2002), and two collections of poetry. He writes on music, myth, and literature from an Afro-Atlantic perspective—with a key interest in calling-responsive ritual performance, the counterclockwise ring-dance as vehicle of conversion/possession, and the “heat” or agency (Fe Chauffe) generated by improvisational practices of swing.

Clelia Cliardulli (The Audacious Art Experiment, Sheffield, UK)

“What does my future sound like?”

I guess I was deaf about my future when I walked into The Audacious Art Experiment (TAAE), three rooms full of posters, vinyl, punk, equipment, transistors, old computers, and a poster of Chelsea Manning. Suggested donations for events, but no-one will be turned away for lack of funds. The events are not entertainment or commercial ventures. There is experimentation, a sense of trust, respect, play and self-responsibility.

I am one of the many who seeks to experience something outside entertainment, commerce and the meaningless slog of unfulfilling work. In TAAE, an arts collective based in Sheffield UK, I have found much more than experimentation and the musical aesthetics of improvisation: since I have joined the collective, I have participated in a community that challenges the given system, the assumptions, the predictable, the provided for and the certified by industry, by academia or by what has become for many of us an empty, hijacked democracy.

Quoting from our website: “The Audacious Art Experiment is more than a record label, (or art/rehearsal/meeting space); we're a community mind-set that yearns for something more

than 'nine to five' and aim to take back our chosen social freedoms, artistic expressions and community spirit from the companies trying to sell them to us. Music is our voice and the records we make are the product of our beliefs, dreams and desires."

Very recently, English singer-songwriter and activist Billy Bragg stated that "music no longer has its vanguard role in youth society" and goes on to say that music "was the way we spoke to one another and the way we communicated to our parent's generation" while now we have YouTube, blogs, social media, twitter. I wonder if, instead, "music" has gone underground to a deeper agency of communication and connection.

In this paper, I bring my experience of improvised music and my perspective on how it bonds a group including the audience, with the exploration of the unknown and the intuitive; and my experience of improvised communities, arising around shared values such as resourcefulness, autonomy and a search for alternatives to our estranged economic system, or at least our strategies to survive in it. I will explore the role of experimental, improvised sonic expression as a catalyst for an "improvised community" and how that differs from a group formed around a specific blog, cause, place. I would like to put forward the idea that "music" has developed parallel to democratic engagement in its "vanguard role in society", from charts to DIY space, from national parties to local initiatives, from rhetoric to dialectical process.

Clelia Ciardulli is a DJ, broadcaster, soundscapist, workshop facilitator and world citizen based in Sheffield UK. Originally from Italy, Clelia was classically trained at the Accademia Di Musica di Sondrio, learned to play the flute, endured a solo concerto every end of academic year, played in the Accademia's chamber orchestra. She also learned Commedia Dell'Arte in a touring amateur theatre company since the age of 14.

Aged 20, she moved to England to study advertising and subsequently film, obtaining a degree in 1997. But it was her venture in DJing that broke the rhetoric barrier of artistic expression into the dimension of dialectic engagement. In 2000, Clelia attended a short course in Mixing Technology at the Sheffield City Council's Red Tape Studios and within 6 months she was running a weekly night at a local 'intercultural arts centre' in a culturally mixed area of the city. Through the rich connections brought by that experience, she became resident at a monthly event in the nearby Bradford, going by the name of DisOriental and inspired by Edward Said's Orientalism. The opportunities of curating musical space for a variety of venues peaked within the first half of the 2000s, leading to experience of the politics of tribal gatherings, dancing, drug use and the rapid commercialisation of the club scene.

In 2006, Clelia started to explore the possibility of soundscaping, effectively searching a freer or other context than the generally prescribed club patterns of music mixing aesthetics. She soundscaped the Winter Gardens, a public space enclosed in a large greenhouse hosting a wonderful range of exotic plants, flowers and trees. Bob Dylan and Ali Farka Toure sounded great.

In August 2007, Clelia began to broadcast a weekly live radio show on Sheffield Live 93.2fm, a local community radio station, and the experience really expanded what was possible in mixing terms, opening up to traditional jazz, classical music, spoken word, noise pieces, acousmatic landscape and more.

At the end of 2013, on a winter day of great discontent, Clelia visited The Audacious Art Experiment headquarters to be greeted by loud dissonant noise and random samples played in a back room of a small warehouse to an audience of 12 people.

Onwards and upwards.

Douglas Clarke (Programme in Social and Political Thought, York University)

“Signifyin’ and Improvisin’: Papa Legba, Improvisation and Afrofuturism”

The power of improvisation is undeniable. From jazz riffs to comedy to literature there is an undeniable puissance that comes from improvisation. Much of the Black experience has been characterized by some aspect of improvisation, whether it is the aforementioned jazz or the ability to escape slavery due to cunning and skill, improvisation has played a major role in Black life and continues to inform the adaptability of Black culture. Mythically speaking improvisation is traced to Papa Legba; a spirit of Afro-Caribbean descent. His ability to mediate between the worlds of the mundane and divine has been the focus of much study but more importantly his role as a spirit of improvisation is behind many Black cultural creations. Legba guards the crossroads of past and future, good and bad, written and spoken. It is said that he punishes you today for something you will do tomorrow and that his power extends throughout all of time. His very presence is what keeps the balance of the universe.

Afrofuturism is one of those cultural creations which would not exist without the power of improvisation and Papa Legba. Imagining Blackness in space, the future, fantasy and science fiction has become a major center of focus for many researchers. While this subject matter has not yet received as much attention in Canada as it has in America, it is vitally important to understanding the power of improvisation.

In my work I look at the role Papa Legba has in the Afrofuturist movement. There have been studies done that focus on his presence in modern literature and music but few push the boundaries to explore how the spirit of the crossroads has been depicted in Afrofuturist work. At the center of my study is the use of Black comic books, a field that has grown exponentially in the last few years. With artists looking to both the future and the past for subject matter, Papa Legba is one of the most important methodological tools we have to study these works. Afrofuturism and improvisation are intimately tied together and it is the work of dedicated artists and scholars to help establish what those links are.

Douglas Clarke is a second year Ph.D. student in the Social and Political Thought Programme at York University. His current research centers on Afro-American gothic, monsters and the folklore. He has previously studied philosophy and social justice and has published in the area of Queer theory. Douglas enjoys thinking about the role that monsters and spirits play in the social and cultural fabric of society and is particularly interested in how these monsters are used and created by Black artists.

John Corbett (School of the Art Institute of Chicago)

KEYNOTE: We Are In The Future: Fifteen Thoughts on the Next Phase

Abstract and bio forthcoming.

Kip Haaheim (Music, University of Kansas), Jesse Stewart (School for Studies in Art and Culture, Carleton University), Sherrie Tucker (American Studies, University of Kansas), & Pete Williams (American Studies, University of Kansas)

“AUMI-Futurism: Adaptive Performance in ‘Turning the Page,’ ‘(Un)Rolling the Boulder’ ... and Beyond!!!!”

This hybrid roundtable of brief presentations and longer discussion explores the potential for performance practices involving the Adaptive Use Musical Instrument (AUMI) to sound new kinds of accessible, sustainable aesthetic and social futures. The AUMI, a project of Pauline Oliveros and the Deep Listening Institute, is no stranger to the Guelph Colloquium. Previous panels have demonstrated how this instrument uses camera tracking to adapt to all bodies and addressed its potential for improvising across abilities. This panel moves beyond the “demo” mode in order to address recent uses of the AUMI-in-performance and as-performance, in which non-hierarchical musical performance using affordable and accessible technologies reconfigures performance practices, bodies, and social relations of audiences and performers.

Representing two of the six sites of the newly formed AUMI Research Consortium (University of Kansas and Carleton University), the panel is made up of performers, composers, and scholars who use the AUMI in mixed-ability performance. In 2013, Kip Haaheim, Sherrie Tucker, and Pete Williams, with other members of the University of Kansas AUMI-InterArts group, participated in a performance titled (Un)rolling the Boulder: Improvising New Communities. Using movement, sound, video, spoken word, and social media, a mixed-ability, cross-community ensemble worked together to produce a structured improvisation that challenged social norms regarding “disability” (<http://aumi.drupal.ku.edu/>). In Ottawa in 2014, panelist Jesse Stewart produced a multi-faceted, multi-institutional interdisciplinary collaboration titled Turning the Page, which included two art exhibits and a theatre and dance performance using found musical objects, video projection, and four AUMI-equipped tablet computers to gesture towards a future that is inclusive of physical and musical differences (<http://www.cbc.ca/player/News/Canada/Ottawa/ID/2453529144/>).

Inspired by Sun Ra’s Afro-futurism, in which Ra imagines better futures through sound, movement, group singing/chanting, and new technologies, as well as by scholar/activist Alison Kafer’s invocation of “accessible futures” as not just inclusive of, but shaped by the “political discourses, political dreams, and political practices” of people with disabilities, this roundtable will explore the possibilities for sounding new futures generated by AUMI performances. Because the AUMI can be played by anyone, and does not require similar bodies for group improvisation, it can bring together communities of difference to participate in sound and movement improvisation, often resulting in “experimental” performances that suggest new modes of community interaction, much like the Arkestra’s large-group improvisations.

Panelists will draw on their experiences participating in these two events to discuss the site-specific and broader implications of AUMI performance. Guiding questions include: 1) How have you used the AUMI in performance to sound the future? 2) What futures has the AUMI enabled

you to sound? 3) What futures did you hope to sound remain elusive? 4) What are your hopes for the AUMI future? In exploring these questions, the panel hopes to consider the potential of the AUMI to sound out future communities that do not marginalize people with disabilities or make “overcoming disability” a criterion for inclusion. We also hope to expand on the implications of perspectives generated by AUMI performance for new analytical approaches to improvisation.

Kip Haaheim is a composer, digital artist and former Jazz musician dedicated to using technology in a more organic and humanistic way. He favors live performance over fixed-media and often uses improvisation (both in performance and in the composition of his works). He has had chamber music, electro-acoustic art, and experimental films performed, screened, uploaded and/or installed throughout the United States and he has had works performed internationally in Lubeck, Toronto, Mexico City, Banff, Paris, Berlin and Tel Aviv. His music is available on DVD and CD on the Summit Records release "Sacred and Profane" and on two CDs on the AUR label in Tucson, AZ. In addition to concert music and interactive installations he has scored and produced the music for two critically acclaimed films "Fall from Grace" (broadcast on the Showtime cable network) and "The Only Good Indian" (premiered at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival). Both films are currently available through Netflix. Haaheim has been on the faculty of the University of Kansas School of Music since 2001 where he teaches composition, computer music and multi-media, and 20th Century music theory.

Dr. Jesse Stewart is Associate Professor in the School for Studies in Art and Culture at Carleton University. He is an award-winning composer, percussionist, researcher, and writer. An active performer, he has performed and/or recorded with musicians including Pauline Oliveros, Roswell Rudd, Hamid Drake, William Parker, Michael Snow, and many others. He has been widely commissioned as a composer and his music has been documented on over 20 recordings. In 2012, he was honoured with the "Instrumental Album of the Year" Juno award for his work with Stretch Orchestra, a trio consisting of Kevin Breit on guitar, Matt Brubeck on cello, and Stewart on drums. As a researcher and writer, he has published on subjects including jazz history, improvisation, hip hop music and culture, experimental/new music, sound art, music pedagogy, and music and human rights. He is a research collaborator with the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation, which received a 7-year \$2.5 million SSHRC Partnership Grant in 2013. He is also a member of the AUMI Consortium, an international research group dedicated to exploring, sustaining, developing, and sharing the Adaptive Use Musical Instrument.

Sherrie Tucker (Professor, American Studies, University of Kansas) is the author of *Dance Floor Democracy: the Social Geography of Memory at the Hollywood Canteen* (forthcoming, Duke, October 2014) and *Swing Shift: "All-Girl" Bands of the 1940s* (Duke, 2000), and co-editor, with Nichole T. Rustin, of *Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies* (Duke, 2008). She became involved with the AUMI in 2006 through her participation in the SSHRC-funded 7-year major research initiative, *Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice (ICASP)*, when Pauline Oliveros shared the project with members of the *Improvisation, Gender, and the Body* research area. With Oliveros, and KU colleagues Kip Haaheim (Music), Michelle Heffner Hayes (Dance) and Nicole Hodges Persley (Theater), Tucker received a Collaborative Seed Grant from the Hall Center for the Humanities for 2012-2013, out of which the AUMI-KU InterArts emerged (now an official member of the AUMI Research Consortium). <http://aumi.drupal.ku.edu/>. AUMI has become a crucial site for Tucker in her abiding interest in the potential for improvised music to

facilitate modes of community-formation that take difference as generative, rather than as threat.

Pete Williams is an adjunct lecturer in American Studies at the University of Kansas, where he received his Ph.D. in 2013. His research explores issues of identity, embodiment, and power in music and other improvised cultural practices. His dissertation, “Weird Bodily Noises,” examines the significance of race and gender in jazz and performance art in Kansas City in the 20th and 21st centuries. He served as project manager for the research group “Improvisation, Bodies, and Communities of Difference” at the University of Kansas in 2013 and is an affiliated researcher with AUMI-KU InterArts, a member of the AUMI consortium. He is an improvising bassist and performed in the production of “(Un)rolling the Boulder: Improvising New Communities” in 2013.

Carolyn Hart (Creative Writing, London Metropolitan University)

“At the Crossroads: Trans-Atlantic Exchange, ‘Jazz Writing,’ and Hybrid Literatures”

Canadian writer Michael Ondaatje’s novel *Coming Through Slaughter* (1976) tells the story of turn-of-the-century cornet player Buddy Bolden. In terms of content, the novel is about a jazz musician, and New Orleans with its “metissage” of cultures forms the backdrop for the story. But not only is Ondaatje’s novel about a jazz musician and jazz: in terms of style, Ondaatje breaks from traditional storytelling that follows a straightforward, chronological narrative, instead briefly following one theme before switching to another; he then switches to yet another theme, before returning to the first, as though making modulations in key. The story of Bolden moves back and forth in time, and Ondaatje interweaves themes and motifs in a way that is reminiscent of jazz. Also, the novel has spaces or silences, and repeated motifs and riffs, employing what might be described as improvisatory techniques. Such stylistic techniques are not unique to Ondaatje’s novel, but are characteristic of other novels that are classed as “experimental” or “postmodern” – novels that break from traditional narrative form in that they are not chronological, and are not primarily plot-based or character-driven. Contemporary authors whose novels invoke themes of jazz through their content, aesthetics, or both, include African Americans Gayl Jones, Toni Cade Bambara, Ishamel Reed, and Toni Morrison; “experimental” or “postmodern” European and American writers like Italo Calvino, Ray Federman, and Robert Coover; and African writers such as Dambudzo Marechera, Ayi Kwei Armah, and Yvonne Vera, to name just a very few. These authors have in common that they employ stylistic techniques and in some cases themes in their writing such that it might aptly be termed “jazz writing” or “improvisatory writing.”

This paper explores the hybrid nature or “metissage” of such texts, particularly the incorporation of stylistic techniques that share links with jazz. Literary scholars often consider “postmodern” writers of Africa to have drawn on or been influenced by “modernist” techniques of writers such as Faulkner (who, interestingly, lived for some years in New Orleans). The paper follows on my earlier scholarly articles in which I suggest that “modern” and “postmodern” texts that employ techniques such as shifts in space and time, repeated motifs, and non-linear narrative share commonalities with aesthetics of oral arts and drumming present in African culture before and alongside the advent of “modernism.” Here, I wish to demonstrate how some of these writers’ novels employ themes or aesthetics that have links with jazz – in itself

arguably a hybrid musical form that developed from retentions of African cultures as discussed by scholars such as Melville Herskovits, Robert Farris Thompson, and Paul Gilroy. The paper will discuss the writers' own reflections on their stylistic techniques in relation to jazz, through published author interviews and also the novels themselves. Finally, I will read and discuss excerpts from my novel "into the silence: the fishing story" (Red Hen Press, 2014). The novel is about a girl who grows up to become a music composer, and like Ondaatje's novel, it eschews traditional chronological narrative and employs repeated motifs and riffs, as well as shifts in space and time.

Carolyn Hart directs the MA Creative Writing Program at London Metropolitan University. She holds a PhD in African and Diasporic literature from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, and an MA in Africana Studies from New York University. She also holds an MA in Creative Writing and a B.Mus. in Piano Performance, both from the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her work has appeared in journals and publications such as Black Ice, Sniper Logic, Blackbox Manifold, Shearsman Magazine, Stride Magazine, and the Journal of African Cultural Studies. Her honors include a Rocky Mountain Women's Institute Fellowship, the Jovanovich Award from the University of Colorado, and the award of a British Council UK-US New Partnership Fund. She has received research grants to conduct fieldwork in Jamaica, Zimbabwe, and Ghana. Her novel "into the silence: the fishing story" is published by Red Hen Press (2014) under her pen name, America Hart.

Stephanie Khoury (Music Education, McGill University)

"Re-Imagining the Role of Improvisation in Music Education"

The creative practice of improvisation should be at the core of all music education. By prioritizing the attainment of musical fluency over the study and memorization of pre-existing compositions, we provide music students with the musical agency so often lacking in today's musical training. In this way, music education becomes a true arts education based upon an organic process of action, discovery and expansion. Through improvisation, students attain a deeper integration of the fundamentals of music and are challenged to be active listeners, capable of making complex decisions in the moment. When improvising collectively, students are learning to communicate with the language of music, giving them with the ability to interact with other musical genres and cultures. Students widen their musical possibilities while developing their own creative voices.

This discussion considers the necessity, implications and potential considerations of a transformation to music education. The author's own ethnographic research examines the music teaching of improvisation in three distinct contexts: a community music school in inner city Houston (USA), an improvised modal counterpoint class at McGill University in Montreal (Canada), and an institute of improvised music in Salamanca (Spain).

Examining pedagogy and practice in these locations in contrast to non-improvised musical contexts reveals a number of benefits and important considerations for the field of music education.

Among these considerations is the problematic nature of formalized improvisation pedagogy,

such as those in jazz or Early Music. Strict adherence to extreme complexity of form and linguistic syntax is often impractical or disadvantageous. Finding an improvisatory practice which embraces differences and encourages creative expression is crucial for re-imagining music education. Freer forms of improvisation diminish reliance on particular stylistic know-how and open the practice to all, creating a space in which diverse backgrounds and musical influences enrich the musical process rather than restrict it.

A successful pedagogy of exploratory improvisation must necessarily disrupt traditional teacher-student models and invite the unknown into the teaching environment. In the spirit of critical pedagogy, the teacher becomes learner along with the students, opening themselves to the unexpected in order to help each individual and the collective grow into its potential. There exists a vast array of tools to enhance the experience, ranging from exercises of listening, to transcendental or meditative practices, genre specific styles of music such as classical, jazz and blues, theatre exercises, invented exercises of the teacher or other creative pedagogues of the past and present. Ultimately, the most successful teachers of improvisation are those able to improvise in their teaching, using the tools at hand to connect with students and decipher what is necessary in order to enable them to find confidence and their own voice.

Stephanie Khoury is a guitarist, educator, and PhD candidate in music education at McGill University. Her research interests focus on different aspects of creative music education, ranging from improvisation pedagogy to community music. Currently she is conducting ethnographic research of experimental community music programs and working towards a complete overturn of music education as we know it.

Brian Lefresne (School of English and Theatre Studies, University of Guelph)

“A Fool in Space: Sun Ra the Jester”

In his 2012 essay, “The Humor of Jazz,” Charles Hiroshi Garrett contends that the diminished role and outright dismissal of comedic and ludic elements have displaced “certain figures, practices, and modes of performance” (50) from the narrative and historiography of jazz. Garrett provides examples of jazz musicians whose humor, both within their performances and as part of their personalities, has limited scholarly discourse on and about their musical praxis and identity. In this paper, I follow Garrett’s lead and present how ideas related to humor and play can help decode and translate the performance practice and persona of an oft misunderstood and marginal figure in the history of jazz: Sun Ra.

I examine how recent scholarship on fools, jesters, and folly can help decrypt and reconfigure Ra’s personal and public persona. Using Vicki Janik’s wider rubric of the “fool,” I construct a framework to highlight the aspects of play and humor in Sun Ra’s appearance, biography, and rhetoric. Framing Ra as a jester brings to the fore how through play his identity, personal life, and written works merge to form a highly nuanced critique and commentary of the social order of post-war society.

Overall, the figure of the fool allows us to place and connect Sun Ra into the wider narrative and history of jazz, but also situate his persona and artistic oeuvre within a much longer genealogy of African American comedic performance practice that critiques as well as lightens people’s loads.

Brian Lefresne is a Doctoral Student at the University of Guelph in the School of English &

Theatre Studies where he is under the supervision of Dr. Ajay Heble. Brian has a B. Mus and a M.A. in Musicology from the University of Ottawa where he completed a master's thesis on the compositional techniques of European composer György Ligeti. He has presented papers at the Guelph Jazz Colloquium and meetings of the Canadian Association for American Studies and the Society for the Study of Southern Literature. He is currently working on a thesis tentatively titled "Sun Ra: At the Crossroads of Jazz and Performance," which will examine the intersections between Sun Ra, African American theatre, and performance theory.

Daniel Marrone (Humanities and Cultural Studies, University of London)

"Shadows of Tomorrow: Kool Keith, Madvillain, and Afrofuturist Historiography"

In the work of many contemporary hip hop artists, subjectivity is not so much split as omnivalent; Afrofuturist scholar Kodwo Eshun refers to "multi-egos" as opposed to alter-egos. Kool Keith performs under many names, most notably Dr. Octagon and Black Elvis. Daniel Dumile a.k.a. Doom collaborates with a range of producers, adopting a new persona for each new project, one of which is Madvillain (with Madlib). Both artists have strong tendencies toward Afrofuturism.

J. Griffith Rollefson argues that "Afrofuturism is a critical project," the principal target of which is the legacy of Enlightenment rationality. He suggests that, for Sun Ra, this received rationality and the Western ideals of progress that go along with it are practically inseparable from white supremacy. Tracing a line from Sun Ra to Kool Keith, Rollefson considers the notion of "robot voodoo power"—a phrase from Keith's song "Earth People"—which collapses "white science" and "black magic" in a manner that exemplifies Afrofuturist recuperation of familiar racial signifiers. Comparable to the "Myth-Science" of Sun Ra, "robot voodoo" illuminates a central component of Afrofuturism, what Rollefson calls "the racialized tension between future and past."

Hayden White's account of "The Conventional Conceptions of Historiography" helps to situate this tension. In *Metahistory*, he writes that Enlightenment thinkers "conventionally distinguished among three kinds of historiography: fabulous, true, and satirical." These distinctions persist, indeed have become so entrenched that most people likely regard the term "true history" as redundant, and think of fabulous or satirical history simply as genres of fiction. Afrofuturism unsettles these categories, often through unexpected juxtapositions. Through close readings of songs from the albums *Madvillainy* and *Black Elvis/Lost in Space*, I will argue that Afrofuturism cultivates something akin to what White calls a metahistorical consciousness, which "stands above, and adjudicates among" the various claims made by the three conventional kinds of historiography. For instance, Madvillain's "Shadows of Tomorrow" is a meditation on temporal relations in which history seems to be constantly folding in on itself. The lyrics are taken directly from "The Shadow of Tomorrow" by Sun Ra, whom Madlib credits toward the end of the track. Against a hypnotic atonal guitar line, Madlib raps Sun Ra's words, and also intersperses samples of Ra's own voice, dialogue from the opening scene of his 1974 film *Space is the Place*. These two different quoting techniques complement the two different voices used by Madlib (one of which is his technologically pitched-up persona Lord Quas) to create a range of overlapping multi-egos.

What are the parameters of Afrofuturist historiography? In *Space is the Place*, Sun Ra offers this dictum: “The first thing to do is to consider time as officially ended. We work on the other side of time.” It is tempting to call this statement post-historical or poststructuralist, and to align it with anti-essentialist ideas about identity, but anti-essentialism ultimately has more in common with Enlightenment rationality. Afrofuturism, in its attempts to work on the other side of time, highlights racialized tensions and playfully disrupts rational identities and histories alike.

Daniel Marrone has a PhD in Humanities and Cultural Studies from the University of London. His research focuses on ambivalence, longing, and historiographical metafiction in popular culture.

Matthew Neil (Ethnomusicology, University of California, Riverside)

“Creative Agency, Musical Autonomy, and Post-Raciality in Temple University’s Jazz Studies Program”

In the last 30 years, university conservatory programs have become central sites of jazz activity. As jazz continues to move into the university, its future will be increasingly determined by the institutions of higher education that shape the music’s knowledge production, supply of musicians, and creative aesthetics. This paper follows David Ake’s call for additional scholarship on these university jazz conservatory programs as important sites of music making, while paying particular attention to the implications of university institutionalization on jazz. Through examination of Temple University’s jazz studies program, involving interviews with its alumni, I unravel discourse amongst jazz musicians on a potential future for jazz.

This sense of future is both informed by and contrasted with a certain notion of “tradition,” that is, the values that university jazz conservatory programs, following the lead of Jazz at Lincoln Center, play a large role in transmitting and perpetuating to students. Crucially, these musical values arrive in deracinated form as a way to suit a contemporary North American ideology of multiculturalism and post-raciality, a strategy which also benefits university programs which seek greater inclusion and diversity. The “tradition,” as it is referenced by musicians, is mostly understood as referring to the post-bebop, pre-fusion era spanning the 1940s through the ‘60s, an improvisatory tradition also thoroughly grounded in African American cultural practices. My informants’ conceptions of this “tradition,” however, rarely identify it along racial lines, but rather speak of musical characteristics near-exclusively to the detriment of social and cultural context.

This decontextualization of this set of jazz practices, I argue, results both from the university’s strategy of multiculturalism as well as the nature of music conservatories which in seeking to legitimize jazz for conservatory study, move it into the realm of autonomous art music. As jazz becomes more valued for its creative than its social potential, its future becomes regarded by musicians in aesthetic terms only, with important cultural context at risk of being lost by those young musicians who gravitate towards playing jazz. I argue that though alumni of jazz studies programs demonstrate keen awareness of the musical potential for jazz, resisting notions that university institutionalization of jazz would necessarily lead to greater homogenization of style, their accompanying lack of social concern is evidence of jazz’s ongoing transformation from an important African American cultural manifestation to a more detached and deracinated high art. This is evidenced by the privileging of hiring performers, composers, and arrangers as faculty at

university jazz conservatory programs such as Temple to the absence of historians and critical scholars. This suggests a divide between the academy and conservatory that will need to continue to be bridged if the future of jazz is to be in good hands. As the impact of university jazz conservatories on modern jazz will only continue to increase, scholars must pay attention to the ways conceptions of jazz are being defined by these types of institutions.

Matthew Neil is a current Ph.D student in the ethnomusicology program at the University of California, Riverside. He graduated with a degree in jazz composition from Temple University's jazz studies program in 2011, when he was also an active participant in the Philadelphia jazz scene. His current research interests include jazz and improvisation, American popular music, Latin American music, transnationalism and globalization, and music and technology.

Sara Ramshaw (Queen's University Belfast) & Paul Stapleton (Sonic Arts Research Centre, Queen's University Belfast)

"Sounding the Future: Transposing Musical Improvisation: The Case of Child Protection in Northern Ireland"

What will the future of child protection in Northern Ireland sound like?

This is one of the questions explored by 'Into the Key of Law: Transposing Musical Improvisation. The Case of Child Protection in Northern Ireland', an 18 month-long UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded research project, which commenced on 29 May 2014. This interdisciplinary collaboration as between lawyer/Law Lecturer, Dr. Sara Ramshaw, and sound artist/improviser/Senior Lecturer, Dr. Paul Stapleton, engages with improvisation as a social practice applied to the discipline of law with the aim of facilitating new kinds of intercultural and interdisciplinary conversations and fostering new, better, ways of being with one another, both as individuals and as members of diverse communities, in a multicultural and, in the case of Northern Ireland, a divided society. Contrary to common sense notions of improvisation, critical improvisational research does not equate improvisation with a reduction in formality. Instead, it emphasises that formal structures are essential for creativity to occur. This project thus explores the structures necessary for more creative decision-making, looking specifically at the area of child protection law. Child protection suits this exploration well because of the current review of the system in the United Kingdom and the call for a reconsideration of the structures currently in place. Through discussions, interviews and workshops with key stakeholders in this area, such as judges, lawyers, social workers and charity/third sector employees, along with local and international musicians, this project endeavours to bring to light further structural changes necessary to enable quicker, more creative and just decisions in the area of child protection law. This will undoubtedly benefit not only Northern Irish children and their families, but will potentially impact child protection law globally as well.

Dr. Sara Ramshaw joined the Queen's University Belfast (QUB) School of Law as a lecturer in 2005. After receiving her B.A. (Honours) (With Distinction) from the University of Toronto, with majors in Women's Studies and Ethics, Society and the Law, Sara obtained both a LLB and a LLM from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. She then clerked at the Ontario Court of Justice (General Division) and was called to the Bar of the Law Society of Upper Canada in 2000. Sara worked as a Research Lawyer at the Superior Court of Justice, Family Court in

Toronto, Ontario before commencing postgraduate studies at Birkbeck School of Law, University of London, England, where she was also employed as a Sessional Lecturer of the Law of Obligations I (Contract Law). Sara's doctoral thesis, completed in 2007, examined the legal regulation of jazz musicians in New York City (1940-1967) through the lens of poststructural theory informed by feminism, critical race theory and musicology.

Dr. Paul Stapleton is a sound artist, improviser and writer originally from Southern California. Paul joined SARC in 2007, where he has been teaching and supervising MA & PhD research in performance technologies, interaction design and site-specific art. Paul also designs and performs with a variety of modular metallic sound sculptures, custom made electronics, found objects and electric guitars in locations ranging from experimental music clubs in Berlin to remote beaches on Vancouver Island. He is involved in a diverse range of artistic collaborations including: improvisation duos with saxophonist Simon Rose & percussionist Michael Speers, networked installation design and performance with Tom Davis, Eric Lyon's Noise Quartet, and the co-direction of QUBe experimental music ensemble with Steve Davis.

Chris Reyman and Sandra Paola Lopez (in2improv)

"Improvising New Realities: Movement, Sound and Social Therapeutics"

As artists and collaborative improvisers, our work has a profound impact on the way we relate to others and in different ways, we have pursued using our practice to perform community outreach for many years. We have been able to further frame our movement/sound improvisation practices within the context of human development and community building through the study of Social Therapeutics. This has led to the creation of in2improvise.play.live (www.in2improv.com), an organization we co-founded in 2011 that blends these elements in performance and in educational contexts. The presentation of this paper will be a performative and interactive experience in which we will illustrate the meeting point between Social Therapeutics and movement/sound improvisation, the skills of heightened awareness and active listening they develop and the collaborative nature of the two.

Social Therapeutics is a performative and radically humanistic approach to psychology, therapy, education and community building where human beings are related to as active social creators of their lives. This methodology was developed by a group of therapists, artists, psychologists and community organizers in New York City and it is now being practiced in different iterations and contexts throughout the world. Its main hub and training center is the East Side Institute for Group and Short Term Psychotherapy, an organization co-founded in 1985 by social therapy's creator Dr. Fred Newman and developmental psychologist and current director Dr. Lois Holzman. The Institute is "a unique community think tank, building bridges between university-based and community-based practices and bringing the traditions and innovations of each to the other" (<http://www.eastsideinstitute.org/>). The framework of the Institute offers a unique environment for us to also blend our scholarly practices and our desire to build and work directly in communities.

The work we do with in2improv is centered on the exploration of movement/sound improvisation, which can lead to the discovery of complex listening (aural and kinesthetic) skills needed for ensemble improvisation. It heightens the senses, enabling people to build with what

they have in the present in order to create new realities. It is important to note that we understand ensemble improvisation as a collaborative, group building activity, which we see as analogous to building “the group” in social therapy. In ensemble/collaborative improvisation, this happens when we see the ensemble as a new unit that has a developmental life of its own and not just as a group of individuals performing together. In an ensemble, we view members as creators of change/changers of totalities, in this case the ensemble/group. It is precisely this activity of building the group in social therapy that is therapeutic. In both Social Therapeutics and ensemble/collaborative improvisation, it is through collective creative activity that we have the opportunity to continuously grow, develop and create new realities.

Dr. Chris Reyman (DMA) is an improvising pianist and accordionist, having performed throughout the US and abroad. He is a highly versatile artist with degrees in Jazz Performance and extensive experience with interdisciplinary collaborative improvisation. In addition to performing, Dr. Reyman is an accomplished composer, having completed several short film scores and written works for small and large jazz ensembles, orchestra and chamber ensembles. For six years, Dr. Reyman was a member of the faculty at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois and at the Community Center for the Arts in Urbana, Illinois. During this time he taught courses in improvisation, composition, piano, music theory, ear training, music technology, accordion and directed ensembles. After completing his doctorate in 2011, he began collaborative work with dancemaker and improviser Sandra Paola López and shortly after, they founded [in2~improvise.play.live](http://in2improvise.play.live) (in2improv.com), an organization that fosters group creativity to promote the building of environments in which people can explore new ways of relating and creating through performance and collaborative improvisation. Dr. Reyman is an Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Texas at El Paso where he teaches improvisation and piano.

Sandra Paola Lopez (MEd) was born and raised in Bogota, Colombia where she began her dance training at a young age. She moved to the US to pursue her dance career in 2004 and since then has acquired a BFA in Dance Performance from Missouri State University and a MEd in Aesthetic Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her multifaceted work involving performance, education, community building and organizing and has taken her throughout the US, Colombia, Brazil, Cyprus, France and Mexico. She has ample experience in a wide variety of dance styles as a performer and educator and her most recent position was as a Visiting Lecturer in the Dance Department at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. Ms. Lopez has a growing interest in using collaborative improvisation to foster human development and community building and in 2013 completed a certification program in Social Therapeutics with the East Side Institute for Group and Short Term Psychotherapy in New York City. In 2011 she co-founded [in2~improvise.play.live](http://in2improvise.play.live) an organization that fosters collective creativity through ensemble improvisation and currently manages its developing programs in Champaign (Illinois, United States), Bogota (Colombia) and Ciudad Juarez (Mexico).

Jeff Schwartz and Charles Sharp (California State University, Fullerton)

“The Decisive Instant and the Futures of Creative Music”

Since 2011, the authors have co-lead The Decisive Instant, a large creative music ensemble in Los Angeles. In this presentation they reflect on and theorize their experience and consider its

implications for the future of creative music as a repertoire, practice, and community.

Their first section: “The Future of the Past,” examines The Decisive Instant’s performances of works by past composers, particularly their May 2014 Sun Ra centennial shows. The practical and aesthetic issues surrounding jazz repertory projects are revisited in the context of Sun Ra’s avant-garde and futurist vision and of Amiri Baraka’s concept of Black music as a politicized dialectic, i.e. the Changing Same. What do 1965’s revolutionary gestures mean in 2014? What is the future for the past of singular works of creative music beyond recordings?

Part two: “The Future of the Present,” covers The Decisive Instant’s performances of pieces by celebrated contemporary artists including Barry Guy and Anthony Braxton, critically considering the forms of community (university programs, workshops, websites –legitimate and not, personal relationships, etc) that function as an alternative network to document, preserve, and distribute unpublished music. These institutions, formal and not, determine the conditions of future performances of the creative music of the present.

Last, “The Future of the Future” discusses the role of large ensembles in fostering community among Los Angeles creative musicians and perpetuating the music. The groups led by Horace Tapscott, Vinny Golia, and Adam Rudolph each played crucial roles and were inspirations for our own group. Rather than focus exclusively on a single leader’s compositional vision, The Decisive Instant instead encourages compositions by the members, which have ranged from pieces rooted in jazz swing to graphic scores. The Decisive Instant was intended to expand opportunities for artists to compose for a large group. It has also, by bringing together geographically and culturally diverse players, enhanced networks of support and collaboration. Like the other groups discussed, from Ra to Rudolph, it is the performance of community, not the expression of a pre-existing collectivity but its performative articulation.

Jeff Schwartz is co-leader of the Decisive Instant creative orchestra, principal bass of MESTO, a member of the Santa Monica Symphony, and very active in the Los Angeles creative music community. He has a PhD in American Studies from Bowling Green State University and has attended the Creative Music Studio and Vancouver Creative Music Institute. His writing has appeared in the journals *American Music*, *Popular Music*, and *Postmodern Culture*, and in the forthcoming revision of *A Basic Music Library*. He works as a reference librarian at a public library.

Charles Sharp has a PhD in ethnomusicology from University of California, Los Angeles and he teaches at California State University, Fullerton. His dissertation examined improvisational and experimental music in Los Angeles from the 1970s to the present. His writing has been published in *Black Music Research*, the *Journal for the Society of American Music*, and the *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology*. He is a multi-instrumentalist and composer whose work has been recorded on UCLA Ethnomusicology Artist Series, Big As Records, Acoustic Levitation, Empty Cellar, and Ictus Records.

Kimber Sider (School of English and Theatre Studies, University of Guelph)

“Playing in Silence: Exploring Inter-species Resonance through Human/Equine Improvisation”

The need for sound is often equated with the need for voice. But as theatre scholar Theresa May points out, “The absence of spoken words is not the absence of voice” (4). In fact the absence of sound is not the absence of voice. Working with horses brings notions of silent talking to the forefront, in that horses rarely speak through sound, but carry on a constant, detailed conversation through their body language and physical resonance. Whereas humans tend to be less adept at this form of listening. So how do we (humans) learn to listen to these other, silent voices? And what might these voices mean for improvisation, both musically and otherwise? How does this silent talking influence our understanding(s) of engagement? How might this silence influence our musical sounds and the way that we listen? What can be discovered from listening to the silent voices of horses? And what happens when you invite a horse and a musician to improvise in response to each other in an open and neutral space?

Drawing on these questions this paper reflects on the experience of improvising with horses. Through a series of improvisational encounters between musicians and horses ideas of sound, silence, improvisation and collaboration are explored, and captured on film. Horses perceive the world in a way that is very different from humans. They are less visually based, with a heightened sense of hearing, which reaches over 33,000Hz (where humans have a limit of 20,000Hz) (Saslow 218). Their sense of sound functions differently than what humans experience, in that horses are less able to locate the source of a sound, especially when it ranges in the high frequencies. Horses experience the world largely through their sense of sound and feel (Saslow), but communicate through body language, movement and physical resonance. Working with horses requires that the humans who share their space recognize these levels of interaction as well, creating a shift in focus and opening up an opportunity to collaborate with a different perspective, and (potentially) produce an experience of inter-species resonance, which plays in both sound and silence.

Resonance is a concept that speaks to both musical experience and equine experience. Through bringing together experts in the fields of physical resonance (horses) and musical resonance (musicians) perhaps a new understanding of combined resonance can be struck, opening up a space of play and discovery for both individuals involved.

Kimber Sider is a PhD candidate in Theatre Studies at the University of Guelph working under the supervision of Dr. Alan Filewod. Sider’s doctoral research focuses on equine/human inter-species performance, and how this form of exchange has the potential to influence social change by recognizing alternative modes of communication and embracing other ways of knowing, such as embodied knowledge. Sider is also a practitioner in both theatre and film; most notable is her 2010 CBC documentary *Chasing Canada*, which follows Sider’s independent journey across Canada with her horse Katrina.

Cauleen Smith

KEYNOTE: “Black Utopia LP - A Cauleen Smith Movie”

Abstract and bio forthcoming.

Isabella Stefanescu (Globe Studios, Kitchener-Waterloo)

“The Voices of Drawing”

What does a drawing sound like?

Drawing is the technique of making marks with a stylus or brush on a surface. A finished drawing may exhibit some of the characteristics of the movements made by the person who draws, such as the location of the mark on the surface, the pressure on the brush/stylus while the mark was being made, the repetition and rhythm of a kind of mark. Other characteristics of a drawing performance, such as the order the marks were made in, the speed of entry and exit of the instrument making the mark, the speed with which the mark was made, pauses in and between marks, are lost. Therefore the performance of a drawing contains information and expression that a finished drawing does not.

The Euphonopen is an electronic assemblage created to generate and manipulate sound in real time for the live performance of drawing. Through the Euphonopen, drawing—as a subset of dance—becomes integrated with sound and allows us to see and hear the drawing expressed in time as well as space.

This paper will describe research to date, including methods for translating drawing gestures into musical gestures, based on the interpretation of drawings as graphic scores by a number of musicians.

What does a drawing sound like? It depends on what you draw, what you draw with, what you draw on, and who you draw for. Designing the Euphonopen sound for a drawing performance involves artistic choices: the paper will talk about our experimental performance pieces, and what we discovered in creating them.

The Euphonopen is a project created in collaboration with scientist Klaus Engel under the auspices of Inter Arts Matrix of Waterloo, Ontario, funded by grants from the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts.

Papers on the Euphonopen project have been presented at the Concordia Live Electroacoustic Colloquium (2011), the University of Waterloo Feltlab The Art of Invention lecture series, and at the McGill University Time Forms Colloquium (2013).

For more information: <http://www.interartsmatrix.com/euphonopen.html>

Isabella Stefanescu is a visual and media artist based in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario. Originally from Romania Isabella Stefanescu immigrated to Canada and continued her education in mathematics and fine arts at the University of Waterloo. She is associate artist with Inter Arts Matrix, and co-founder of Globe Studios, an artist run center in Kitchener, and of the Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Area (CAFKA). Stefanescu has been artist in residence at the Canadian Film Centre Media Lab, and at the Banff New Media Institute. She is a recipient of the Ontario Arts Council K.M. Hunter Award for interdisciplinary art.

Chris Stover (Music Theory and Composition, New School)

“‘Mau-Mao’: Afro-Futurism and Afro-Asian Activism in Fred Ho’s Sweet Science Suite”

From 2012 to 2013, I had the honor of participating in several of the last concerts that Fred Ho presented, including his final performances as a baritone saxophonist at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, before he lost his long battle with cancer last month. These BAM concerts included Ho's multimedia Sweet Science Suite, for jazz orchestra, dances, and choreographer martial artists, written in honor of Muhammed Ali and foregrounding its dedicatee's activism, political engagement, and consummate athleticism while depicting through music and dance several important historical and personal episodes in Ali's life.

Sweet Science Suite exemplifies Ho's Afro-Asian aesthetic in both overtly programmatic and nuanced structural ways. This paper explores specific compositional and improvisational procedures that Ho uses to craft a musical "Mau-Mao," a neologism Ho coined to describe his "Afro-Asian concept," which refers in turn to the Mau Mau revolutionary movement in 1950s colonial Kenya and to Mao Zedong, the Chinese revolutionary leader. These range from scalar and harmonic materials to extended techniques for saxophones that mimic the timbre, inflections, and intonation of the Vietnamese *sáo trúc*, to polyrhythmic impulses and visceral sonic gestures that project Ho's long engagement with and political appropriation of Blaxploitation and Kung-fu films, to call-response and layering structures that directly channel the ways in which both Charles Mingus and Sun Ra radically extended blues forms for their own activist-oriented musics.

In this paper, I trace similar connections between Ho's compositional techniques and the radical activist aesthetic that functions as the driving force behind his music generally. To do so, I draw upon the Sweet Science Suite score, audio and video recordings, my experience rehearsing and performing Ho's music, conversations with Ho and with some of his close collaborators, and Ho's numerous writings, including specifically his writings on Sun Ra's legacy (as "Afro-Utopian futurism") and that of the Black Arts Movement, on his own location in the liberatory trajectory that Mingus, Sun Ra, and others opened up, and on the Afro-Asian ontological trajectory that he helped usher in and propagate.

Chris Stover is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Composition at the New School, and a trombonist, composer and bandleader in New York City. His current research is on phenomenological readings of musical time and process and on affect, interaction, and "in-between-ness" in improvised music. He has recent or forthcoming articles in *Music Theory Spectrum*, the *Journal of Music Theory*, *Pedagogy*, *Latin American Music Review*, *Musikschritftum*, and *Theory and Practice*, and a recent chapter in the edited collection *Sounds of Resistance* (Praeger Press).

Ariel Swan (McGill University)

"Creativity and Chaos: Exploring a Community-Based Improvisation Workshop"

Improvisation is recognized as an ideal component of music education. Scholars cite its ability to elicit creativity and encourage communication (Hickey 2009; Willox, Heble, Jackson, Walker, and Waterman 2011) while tapping into a freedom of expression absent from most formal programs. Improvisation serves as a useful tool to encourage students to explore their creativity and formulate musical identities, especially when presented in non-formal, alternative spaces.

Programs held in community centres and other non-institutional establishments are able to reach students not served by formal curricula and encourage the development of creativity, musicianship, and self-efficacy. These programs serve as a means to foster expression and engage participants in forming a collective identity within their communities.

This paper will focus on my work facilitating and researching an improvisation workshop catering to marginalized adolescents in Montreal. The program (which will be referred to as Montreal Improvisation Workshop, or MIW) utilizes different exercises to encourage participants to develop musical fluency and express their creativity through improvisation. By providing adolescents with the opportunity to improvise, they are encouraged to discover their own musical lexicons and question notions of artistic authenticity, challenging the idea that performers are limited to preconceived musical idioms. Improvisation dismisses the value that there are “authentic” musical identities and demands that artists and audiences expand the concept of creativity. The students of MIW are able to experiment with their musical and personal identities, an opportunity that is particularly important for marginalized youth.

The perceived benefits and challenges of facilitating improvisation in alternative spaces will be explored. This discussion will be situated within the growing body of literature promoting the potential of community music programs to reach underserved communities and nurture creative expression. The intersection between alternative spaces, critical pedagogy, and improvisation will be considered within the curriculum of MIW, which combines improvisation instruction with such critical pedagogical values as dialogue-based praxis and a student-focused framework (Freire 1970).

By creating a space that encourages open musical and verbal dialogue between students and facilitators (a teaching title chosen to evoke the tenants of Freire’s “liberatory education”), MIW allows participants to explore their potential as musicians and creators. Drawing on my facilitation and research of the program, I will discuss how the exercises employed in MIW successfully develop agency in the participants and encourage them to engage in self-reflection as performers and members of the community.

Violinist **Ariel Swan** received her M.A. from McGill University in 2014. Her work focused on exploring the pedagogy of instrumental improvisation and how improvisation-based programs can be implemented in different teaching environments. She is particularly interested in the ways in which creative music can be a method of engaging students who feel alienated by traditional music curricula. Ariel’s thesis report focused on her work facilitating and administrating an improvisation-based workshop catering to marginalized youth.

In addition to her academic work, Ariel performs regularly as a violinist and vocalist. Her debut EP, *Symphony Plastique*, was released in 2013. The album has received praise from critics, who describe the music as “fun, playful, and at times intricate; a true symphonic debut” (CJLO Magazine) and “honest, accessible, and unique” (Cult MTL). In February of 2014, Ariel was named one of *Aux Magazine’s* “11 Unconventional Canadian Singer-Songwriters You Need to Hear.” Ariel’s works have appeared at several festivals, including Pop Montreal, One Man Band, and Suoni per il Popolo.

Marcel Swiboda (School of Fine Art, History of Art, and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds,

UK)

“Sun Ra’s Philosophical ‘Spiritual Exercises’ and the Improvisational ‘Permutation’ of the Present”

In his sleeve description on Sun Ra and the Myth-Science Arkestra’s LP *Cosmic Tones for Mental Therapy* (1967), Michael Shore describes Sun Ra as a ‘philosopher-king’, and in doing so, draws the listener’s attention to the oft-cited yet still scarcely comprehended philosophical aspects of the archive Ra has bequeathed us. However, what is clear is that Shore’s description belies a misconception of whatever Sun Ra’s philosophy might actually entail, the ‘philosopher-king’ being the idealized figurehead of a despotic imaginary city-state as described in Plato’s *Republic*. In his biography *The Space is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra*, John F. Szwed provides a more amenable account of Ra’s philosophical affinities, which he claims lay less with Plato than with ‘Neoplatonism’—the school of ancient philosophical thought which took its name from Plato but which developed its own specific approaches to the practice of thinking. As Szwed states, ‘Neoplatonism [is] the philosophical-mystical tradition in which music is seen as both a model of the universe and a part of its make-up, and where it has the power to bring human beings in line with the cosmos’.

In this paper, I propose to explore these affinities, in terms of what the late French philosopher Pierre Hadot thought of, apropos the Neoplatonists (among other notable ancient and modern thinkers), as ‘spiritual exercises’—approaches to the task of thinking that treat it as a theoretical, practical and ethical enterprise of self-transformation. My paper will attempt to sound the resonances between philosophy as a form of spiritual exercise and Sun Ra’s musical and extra-musical practices, whereby the documentation of these ostensibly divergent areas—the solitary activity of abstract thought associated with Western philosophy and Sun Ra’s eminently concrete, collective and improvisatory approaches to his idiom—will be brought to a critical conjuncture, under the auspices of what Michael Jarrett has described, by way of Gregory Ulmer, as the ‘heuretics of invention.’ As Jarrett states, Sun Ra shares with certain exemplary instances of Western philosophy his ‘methods for pushing interpretation (hermeneutics) to invention (heuretics).’ Sun Ra’s own ‘Spiritual exercises’ will hereby be explored in terms of their capacity to engender techniques for affirmative (self-)invention.

The main aim of this paper will be to confront the academic humanities and their prevailing epistemologies with the conception of philosophy as a form of ‘spiritual exercise’, to shed light on how and in what ways Sun Ra could himself be viewed as a philosopher in this sense, at the same time as exploring how the singularity of Sun Ra’s approach to improvisational ‘tone science’ might now aid us in inventing new critical, affirmative, ethical and practical ‘permutations’ of our precarious present.

Marcel Swiboda is a lecturer in Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds, UK. His research is currently focused on the critical conjunctures between technics, improvisation and idiomaticity, in relation to philosophy, cultural theory, music, media and audiovisual culture.

John Szwed (Centre for Jazz Studies, Columbia University)

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: “Sun Ra On Earth”

This talk will be a critical reconsideration of *Space is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra*, and will discuss the problems of writing a biography of a person who denied earthly origins, deflected casual conversation into his lifelong jeremiad (which was a complaint about life on earth, albeit a good humored one sprinkled with jokes and word play), treated current politics and social concerns as merely a back-story to a larger reality, and whose taste in music focused on pre-swing and extreme modernism, largely ignoring everything in between. Self-criticism of the author of the biography will also be included.

John Szwed is Professor of Music and Director of the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University. Previously he was John M. Musser Professor of Anthropology, African American Studies, and Film Studies at Yale University and was Louis Armstrong Professor of Jazz Studies at Columbia. His anthropological work includes studies of Newfoundland and the West Indies, and his music books include *Jazz 101*, *So What: The Life of Miles Davis*, *Space is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra*, *Crossovers: Essays on Race, Music, and American Culture*, *Alan Lomax: The Man Who Recorded the World*, and a forthcoming book on Billie Holiday. In 2006 he was awarded a Grammy for Doctor Jazz, notes included with Jelly Roll Morton: the Complete Library of Congress Recordings by Alan Lomax.

Chris Tonelli (Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice, University of Guelph)

“Chronologies and Conflicts: The Extra-Normal Voice in Free Jazz”

This paper will examine some of the ways the sounds of vocal performers, particularly those who employ "extended" or "extra-normal" singing techniques, have been received in free jazz communities from the 1950s to the present. In exploring this issue, I draw on interviews I have conducted in 2013 and 2014 with vocal improvisers including David Moss, Shelley Hirsch, Faye Victor, Joane Héту, and Paul Dutton, among others. The accounts of such performers can help us expand upon recent scholarship by Mladen Dolar (2006), Freya Jarman-Ivens (2011), and Ana Maria Ochoa (forthcoming) on notions of voice under and outside the epistemologies of modernity.

My paper will begin with a historical overview of uses of "extra-normal" techniques in free jazz. I will trace some of the connections between sound poetry and free jazz communities between the 1950s and 1980s in order to reveal one primary source from which "extra-normal" methods of vocalization came to be introduced into free jazz. I will offer brief overviews of the ways performers like François Dufrêne, Yoko Ono, Jeanne Lee, and Bob Cobbing blurred the lines between music and poetry and brought new approaches to vocality into free jazz spaces and practices. Following this, I will discuss other early sources of unconventional vocal practice in free jazz, including Leon Thomas, Phil Minton, and Maggie Nicols. These quick histories will lay the historical groundwork for the theoretical discussion of the experiences of the contemporary vocalists I have consulted with in my research.

In the second section of my paper, I will draw on the experiences of my consultants to help theorize the ways the ideologies associated with modernity have, at times, led to the marginalization of unconventional approaches to voice or vocal practices at large within free jazz contexts. One of the principal themes to emerge in my interviews with these vocalists has

been a tension between the perceived “emotionality” of all vocal sound, regardless of the techniques being used, and the modernist aims of certain free jazz communities and practitioners. Another theme relates to issues around virtuosity and a strong desire audiences have displayed to articulate unconventional vocal sound with the idea of bodies that have lost self-control, despite the practiced and often virtuosic control required to produce many of the sounds vocal improvisers employ. A third theme relates to the gendering of the voice and the ways that utilisations of vocal timbres thought to be at odds with the gendered body of the singer producing them become subject to forms of control in a variety of settings. The emergence of these themes in the interviews I have conducted reveal conflicts that have arisen both between musicians in free jazz communities and between musicians and audiences. I will discuss the ways singers have dealt with attempts to contain and marginalize their practice, the ways it has affected their musical choices and relationships, and the conditions under which these tensions amplified or dissipated.

Chris Tonelli completed his doctoral work in the Critical Studies and Experimental Practices in Music program at the University of California, San Diego and has held teaching positions at Memorial University of Newfoundland and the New Zealand School of Music. His postdoctoral research with the Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice project has involved archival and ethnographic research with improvising vocalists, with an emphasis on vocalists who employ "extra-normal" techniques. This research emerged out of his own practice as an improvising soundsinger. His other research interests include theorization of mimesis in music and histories of transnational musical exchange between North America and Japan.

Camille Turner (Toronto, Ontario)

“HUSH: Sonic Black Geographies Across Canada”

Numerous Black Canadian Studies scholars agree that nation’s official narratives have deliberately omitted the nation’s earliest Black histories, in particular, the history of slavery in Canada. Even though historians have uncovered evidence of Canada’s Black past, the persistent Whiteness of the Canadian landscape still dominates. Katherine McKittrick names space as a key mechanism through which this erasure is accomplished (McKittrick, 2006). As an artist, I intervene in this erasure and despatialization of Blackness through the creation of sonic walks that combine sound, walking and site-specific performance. My work uses speculative fiction to draw from the past and to (re)envision the future. The stories I create animate Black geographies directly on the Canadian landscape. Participants experience an immersive sonic world in which a story unfolds as they walk in the footsteps of characters whose voices they hear through their headphones. The visceral intimacy of the form brings the Black presence to life disrupting the invisibility of the White encoded space to posit new meanings of home and belonging within and beyond Canada.

Camille Turner is an artist/scholar born in Jamaica and raised in Canada. Her focus on home and belonging takes many forms, spanning disciplines such as media, performance and social practice. She is the founder of Outerregion, an afrofuturist art studio producing and presenting projects internationally. Her latest works intervene spatially to uncover and remap hidden Black histories and imagine new futures. Camille’s writing has been published in academic journals, cultural magazines and online publications.

James Gordon Williams (African American Studies, Syracuse University)

“Sun Ra Presentation/Performance: Sun Ra’s Epistemology”

You will see an abstract tomorrowness myth
A triumph of otherness love
[from Message to Black Youth-1971]

Beyond other thoughts and other worlds
Are the potentials
That hidden circumstance
And pretentious chance
Cannot control
[from The Potential-1980]

The music is the living mirror of the universe.

In his poem *The Other Side of Music*, Sun Ra creates a binary between music as a “specialized interpretation” and music as a “synchronization precision.” As someone who studies how music represents the philosophical and spiritual thought processes of its producers and how these processes represent resistance to status quo assessments of African American music, I explore in this presentation/performance how Sun Ra’s writings in *Immeasurable Equation* (Geerken 2006) represent ways of knowing; his theory of knowledge. How does Sun Ra know what he knows about music? How does his thinking about music and his compositional process represent canon busting epistemologies? Does Sun Ra’s canon-busting epistemologies defy musical criteria that has led to the canonization of the great African American improvisational works? In that space of alter-reality where Sun Ra has invited us to explore, what are we supposed to learn through Sun Ra definition of music as an expansive universal substance and a moral barometer?

Solo Piano Performance: I will do a short piano improvisation based on Sun Ra’s 1980 poem *The Other Side of Music* (1980) My improvisation will be based on three themes prominent in Sun Ra’s writings: Community, Black potentiality in the face of despair, and music as a universal substance.

James Gordon Williams, PhD is a critical musicologist, composer, and pianist. His research focuses on how musical texts are reflective of imagination and activism. An accomplished pianist and composer, *Jazz Improv Magazine’s* Winthrop Bedford has stated, “James Gordon Williams is nothing less than an accomplished, impressively creative pianist and composer, with great depth and substance.” All About Jazz writer Rusty Aceves stated, “Williams’s writing is marked by intensely lyrical and evocative melodic elements which are sometimes staggered with pointed chordal syncopations, adding depth, dimension, and a feeling of seeming serenity against constant motion.” Dr. Williams has performed at music festivals in the United States, Malta, Switzerland, France, Italy and many of the well-known musical venues in the United States. A Yale Bouchet Scholar, Williams was a member of legendary drummer Charli Persips’ “Supersound” big band for several years and has also performed with AACM members Joseph

Jarman and, George E. Lewis. Additional performances include performances with Mark Dresser, Anthony Curtis Davis, Greg Osby, Kendrick Scott, Miles Griffith, Peter Sprague, Peter Erksine, and Warren Smith. Dr. Williams is Assistant Professor of African American Studies at Syracuse University.

Thomas Zlabinger (Music, York College / CUNY)

“Robot Man, Will You Sing? Visions of Jazz Automatons”

When thinking of jazz, ideas of freedom and liberty come to mind before ideas of robots and automation. Jazz has a long history of creating a space for personal liberation and sonic exploration. And with the rise of the use of electronic instruments starting in the late-1960s and throughout of the 1970s and 1980s, jazz musicians gained new sonic possibilities. Understandably, ideas of freedom of expression and new technologies that created previously unheard sonic possibilities seem to naturally dovetail with one another. Interestingly, the ideas of technology and the new avenues open to jazz created conflicting dialogues in different spaces.

Yusef Lateef criticized the ideas of robots on *Autopsiopsychic* (1974). During a televised performance of the tune “Robot Man” from the album, Lateef stated that the message of the tune was: “Let’s not be taken in, with our advances in technology to the degree we forget to be human beings. Let’s not become robots and forget our fellow man. Let’s not forget to help those who need help. Simply to be brothers and sisters to everyone, to each other.” Lateef sees automation as a threat to humanity, asking: “Robot man, will you sing?”

More famously in his music video for “Rockit” (1983), Herbie Hancock thrilled the MTV generation with his images of robots and computers providing a new world of possibility that fit perfectly with the new television station’s agenda. Hancock had first used the latest electronic instruments while still a member of Miles Davis’ groups and would continue to do so with his own *Head Hunters* (1973) and other albums. And Hancock would incorporate futuristic images of space travel, for example flying through space at the controls of a keyboard-controlled spaceship on the cover of *Thrust* (1974). But a trilogy of 1980s albums envisioned a love affair with technology that was more automated, culminating in *Perfect Machine* (1988).

To accurately explore the theme of jazz and automatons, two more-recent images of robotic jazz from popular culture also need to be included: 1) the famous YouTube footage of the robot performing John Coltrane’s “Giant Steps” note-for-note on a real saxophone at Hosei University in Tokyo in 1996; and, 2) Stephen Colbert’s 2010 mockery of the improvising robots at the Georgia Tech Center for Music Technology. Both are jazz automation pushed to the extreme.

How can these negative, positive, and almost-absurd visions of jazz automatons help illustrate some of the more important ideas and goals found in jazz? How do these images widen (or limit) the discourse surrounding jazz? Will these robots truly sing? And what will be their song? By looking at further examples of images of robots and automation in jazz, this paper hopes to begin to answer these and other questions.

Dr. Tom Zlabinger is Assistant Professor of Music at York College / CUNY in New York, where he directs the jazz ensembles and teaches jazz history and ethnomusicology. He received his PhD from the Graduate Center at the City University of New York, holds a master's in jazz performance from Queens College / CUNY, and earned a BA in music at Grinnell College. His dissertation was entitled *FREE FROM JAZZ: The Jazz and Improvised Music Scene in Vienna since Ossiach (1971-2011)*. His scholarly interests include the pedagogy of improvisation and the use of music in film, literature, and other media. He is also an accomplished bass player.