

**HABITABLE
EXOMUSIC
INTERVIEW
ANSWERS**

Jacob Anderskov, August 2015

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The Questionnaire

A number of my favourite musicians and colleagues from around the globe were asked to respond to the same five questions.

The interviewees were all – by choice of mine – musicians that I had personal contact to beforehand, most of them because we had performed together at some point.

All interviews reprinted in this text were done by e-mail correspondence, with no following up to the questions. No editing was made except for spelling and graphic considerations.

The questionnaire went like this:

“ ...

The SUBJECT in brief:

I am interested in to what extend leading improvisers of today are concerned with / interested in “definable post tonal material structuring principles”.

When I talk about “definable post tonal material structuring principles”, I am thinking about concepts like *melodic serialism, quasi-serialism or limitation to a few intervals at a time - melodic symmetry - “cells” - “set theory” - concepts of consistency of dissonances - multiple simultaneous tonalities - tone grids and twisted spectres - etc. ...* ⁽¹⁾

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The QUESTIONS:

- To what extend have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles? – e.g. from specific concepts/theories, or specific parts of recent music history.

- If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you?

- And, to which degree of formative importance to your musical language and approach?

(You may answer in terms of either:

- Your formative years,*
- Your present day activities,*
- Your daily rituals/ rehearsals/practice routines,*
- Your compositional processes,*
- Your approach to improvisation in your own compositions or in other peoples music,*
- Your focus of awareness on stage, or in the recording studio, or,*
- Your view on which approaches to music you want to pass on to future generations of musicians)*

- Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music? (e.g. in music, art, literature, musicology, pedagogic materials, others...)

- Other comments or additional perspectives on your music or methods?

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**Best regards,
Jacob Anderskov**

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Note (1)

The focus in this interview on rather linguistic/rational dimensions in music is in no way meant as an indication that these are neither the only nor the most important aspects of music creation. It is just a chosen focus in this interview. And, it is an area that I feel is under-documented in the literature on improvised music. I recently analyzed parts of my own back catalogue, and the mentioned concepts were among the most frequent in my own music, hence the mentioning of them in the interview. "

The Answers

The interviewees chose to respond in quite different ways, as can be seen in the full text.

I find that their individual answers are beautifully aligned with the aesthetics of their music. It is interesting how different the responses are – and yet, also how much recognition there seems to be between at least half of them to the landscape I had been considering during the project.

Some excerpts of their responses showing a strong similarity of thought to the way my project has developed:

“Time-stretching and time-contracting techniques of minimalists (also usable in a post tonal way). Intervallic games, sometimes related to, but avoiding the rigidity of, Serialism. Cells and collage edits. Multiple simultaneous tonalities as learnt from Charles Ives. Dissonances based on harmonics. Superimposed phrases of differing lengths forming the skeleton of a composition. (...) For example, it has been a conscious choice to have never read a book on Serialist techniques. I’ve enjoyed Morton Feldman’s writings about music and art, perhaps because they are also impressionistic, often ambiguous; he seems unafraid of contradicting himself.” - Django Bates.

“In the last ten years or so I have been trying to focus more on the problem of using some of the given musical material and stretching it out or contracting it or mirroring the cells etc., so the “freedom” in the execution would add to the general sense of shape. Very old games like palindromes, rhythmic augmentation and diminution, melodic or harmonic extension/contraction help me defining my role as an ‘improviser’ inside a piece played solo or with an ensemble - which means of course working a lot on ‘improvisation’.” - Marc Ducret.

“Reduction/limitation - trying to explore certain areas by focus on it and limit the possibilities very drastic. Pitchfields (also microtonal), symmetry, statistics, extreme limited ambitus, combinatoric, variations, inversions, retrogrades, rotations, imitating/analyzing/transcribing speech, trying to imitate/approximate field recordings, basically transforming things from one territory to another..... It's hard to break down to a few. Also the question what is a definable material structuring principle. At the very end it always breaks down to limitation, because every system limits your possibilities.” - Frank Gratkowski.

“I have spent time creating my own exercises out of intervals and random patterns, so using an intervallic approach is common source material for me (thinking of each interval as it's own mode). I enjoy creating symmetries, dissonances, patterns, in the moment, although most of that is improvised and is not drawing from a specific line of study.” - Mary Halvorson.

“In composition, especially for me, as I feel it is a slower process of improvisation with a capacity for editing and improvement on a personal nature, I try to utilize bastardized forms of serialism (surrealism) in a retrograde and/or retrograde inverted nature, incorporating atonality in combination with tonality. I’ll reverse melody and form, play around with time and rhythm through the signature system, and also mix up a combination of regular and graphic notation in a game of exchange and chance.” - Herb Robertson.

The above quotes are very similar to my own way of thinking about the issues in the questionnaire, whereas others, not surprisingly, were thinking in very different terms in their replies. Some respondents chose to mainly speak about more intuitive dimensions of music making, of sound and feeling, and hence their answers come out quite differently.

“I prefer to take as intuitive a approach as possible so as to be able to interact in the moment with other musicians or to be able to discover ideas or courses of action when playing solo. In order to do this I have tried to develop a very clear intention with regard to phrasing and rhythmic generation of musical ideas. From rhythm comes melody. From this more gestural impulse come the pitches that I hear in the moment. I take an intervallic approach to melodic construction therefore my ideas are not based upon harmony.” - Ellery Eskelin

“What helped me in the beginning was imitation and a very loose form of analysis. For example listen to a song I like, find out the general ideas behind it (without going too deeply into it) and imitating something like this. Today I have more inspirational sources from outside the music like places I have been to, stories I have read or have experienced myself, sayings, philosophies, films. My main goal is to come up with strong moods for my tunes. Thinking of places, stories, situations etc. helps me finding a clear and strong mood.” – Nils Wogram.

“Free improvised music is the only form of music where I can completely change my way of playing depending on the character of the room or the space. The room becomes a co-player that I can either go along with or resist. In my project I investigate different ways to explore and clarify how changes of direction in free improvisation can be performed and how the spatial conditions and other conditions affect the way the music is played. The form of improvised music I am examining is extremely dialogue-oriented, where action and reaction within the dialogue in the room play a vital role in the process. What I would like to try out and demonstrate is how a sonic language entirely based on the participants’ sensitivity can be moulded, i.e. a language that is altogether based on the listening and playing of a person in a particular space.” – Sten Sandell.

The complete responses are shown in the remaining chapters.

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DJANGO BATES

– To what extent have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles? – e.g. from specific concepts/theories, or specific parts of recent music history.

To a great extent.

– If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you?

Time-stretching and time-contracting techniques of minimalists (also usable in a post tonal way). Intervallic games, sometimes related to, but avoiding the rigidity of, Serialism. Cells and collage edits. Multiple simultaneous tonalities as learnt from Charles Ives. Dissonances based on harmonics. Superimposed phrases of differing lengths forming the skeleton of a composition. Also Bebop which is not normally described as a concept but is certainly conceptual and consciously cryptic (see below).

– And, to which degree of formative importance to your musical language and approach?

Formative years: From a very early age my understanding of music was largely informed by Bebop, and the folk music of Africa and Eastern Europe. In the context of your question it is Bebop that stands out, being the music of codes, in-jokes, deliberate dissonance, and highly chromatic melodies. I heard Bebop as a baby and transcribed and studied it from the age of 11, so it is my first language.

Also at the age of 11, I met Kenny Wheeler at a jazz summer school. I played trumpet next to him in a big band and he explained what the chord symbols on the music meant; how they could be interpreted as modes to guide one's improvisation. It was a 10 minute explanation and perhaps all the more powerful for its brevity.

At 19 I got a weekly jazz gig supporting uk musicians such as John Taylor, Harry Beckett, John Stevens, Dudu Pukwana. I noticed that all of them played their own compositions, and this music was deliberately idiosyncratic and highly personal. So I began to write music for my set too. My compositions were influenced by the aforementioned players, and others like Kenny Wheeler, Jarrett, Hancock... My pieces were often designed to challenge my trio and myself; taking us into areas where we were unsure by, for example, exploring keys and time-signatures we'd not used before. I still feel like that when composing for my own bands; I like to feel like an explorer.

So in my present day activities I'm composing, playing, improvising, and teaching my own music. This music is influenced by the above in that it is personal, idiosyncratic, ornamented in the Bebop tradition, and ornamented in the Jan Garbarek tradition (which to me is an evolution of the Bebop tradition via Slonimsky); it is very interval-conscious because I listened to Wheeler's album Gnu Hi a lot and started to picture the melodies as well as hearing them. Think of Heyoke: an intervallic shape with no traditional key is presented, then it is repeated from a different starting note with a different harmonic solution, and on it flows, creating its own logic... That could be a description of my piece Early Bloomer (or Evening Primrose which is some kind of mirror version of Early Bloomer), except my pieces are often even more transparently pattern-based, almost like an exercise that wills itself to become real

music. Heyoke and Early Bloomer are both abstract yet still romantic. The romance is in the harmony. Harmonically, my music is flavoured by the all the influences I mention above, from Ives to Steve Reich via Bebop. The jazz/Blues minor 3rd/major 3rd conflict is very often present (The loneliness of being Right), and other signals of the Blues like minor 7ths are very present.

Daily rituals, practice routines: Often it's this: I'm practising things which I hope will one day appear in my improvisations (and they do, eventually). So I take an invented phrase that is out of the range of what could be improvised, then I play it through all the keys, often over a Bass and Drums groove that I have made specifically. The phrase is usually characterised by intervallic interest (a variety of intervals being used), Bebop ornamentation, and rhythmic interest (i.e it might be something like a phrase of triplets grouped in fives). When I listen to the first phrase of Jarrett's solo on Heyoke, I imagine the kinds of things he would've had to practise at one stage in order to facilitate a spontaneous outpouring like that! A lot of the music I write for my own bands has places where a melodic line of unusual length and character (often in the bass) becomes the key to everything; because these bass-lines are not harmonically defined, practising improvisations over them is a process of infinite exploration and discovery. I practise this type of material with students very often because it is enriching and it leads us all towards strong compositional and improvisational skills.

I'd like to acknowledge that I'm very glad that Bebop, this musical language of politicized black American jazz music, was well-balanced by my simultaneous exposure to Eastern European folk/gypsy music; that gave me a healthy dose of earth, tradition, roots.

- Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music? (e.g. in music, art, literature, musicology, pedagogic materials, others...)

My main source of inspiration has been listening to a wide range of music and analyzing it for myself. Sometimes I've chosen to have an impressionistic response to what I hear without trying to learn everything about it. For example, it has been a conscious choice to have never read a book on Serialist techniques. I've enjoyed Morton Feldman's writings about music and art, perhaps because they are also impressionistic, often ambiguous; he seems unafraid of contradicting himself. I have also been inspired by discussing the business of being an artist with people from other disciplines. Recently, BANKSY'S film Exit Through The Gift Shop has reminded me that musician composers need to be more creative about how we deliver our work; it feels like the time for a drastic rethinking!

- Other comments or additional perspectives on your music or methods?

I have been, and remain, uninterested in defining music by genre. Anything that is well-crafted has value for me. If something is well-crafted I will find at least some little moment in it that inspires me. That is why my own music still ranges freely in a way that might confuse some commentators. I don't want to rule out any possibilities; there's a moment when only a major chord will satisfy me, and a moment where I need to use an extra keyboard tuned a quarter-tone lower than my piano. As a composer/improviser I have my own set of rules and aesthetics but I'm happy to add a new rule whenever the music demands it of me! Ultimately my choices are led by my ears and emotions. I mention this because you are asking about "definable post tonal material structuring principles" and I both use them and eschew them, depending on what I believe best serves the needs of the music of my imagination and dreams.

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MARC DUCRET

- To what extent have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles? – e.g. from specific concepts/theories, or specific parts of recent music history.

I have to say I don't consider "improvisation" as a musical tool IN ITSELF; I prefer to call it "unplanned" or "less planned" moments in the construction of a musical form.

The important goal for me is the shape; anything which can enhance the cohesion of the form must be practiced alone and in ensemble playing. The principle would be: to what extent can an "improvised" moment participate in the overall structure?

In the last ten years or so I have been trying to focus more on the problem of using some of the given musical material and stretching it out or contracting it or mirroring the cells etc., so the "freedom" in the execution would add to the general sense of shape. Very old games like palindromes, rhythmic augmentation and diminution, melodic or harmonic extension/contraction help me defining my role as an "improviser" inside a piece played solo or with an ensemble - which means of course working a lot on "improvisation".

- If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you?

Being a self taught musician, I have tried to learn as much as I could about concepts; all of them, even those expressed by extremely valuable musicians, seemed to me very remote from the way their music actually sounded and most of the times a kind of theoretical justification constructed afterwards.

- Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music? (e.g. in music, art, literature, musicology, pedagogic materials, others...)

Among many others, Swiss sculptor Jean Tinguely has been and still is a powerful source of inspiration to me: most of his work starts with recycled objects that he puts together and shapes into a design conveying different layers of interpretation which in turn can evolve in time...

To take another example, in my "Tower" project (composition 2008-2013), the aim was to transpose in musical structure some of the literary tools and games Vladimir Nabokov played in his novel "Invitation of a small body of water". Trying to mirror the different devices used by Nabokov in the construction of his book led us to a reflection on musical form and how one can obtain a certain "depth of field" in sound, using some patterns like leitmotive on a larger scale: rhythmic patterns, sound "pools", harmonic colors are given a "meaning" and given to the musicians who can decide if, when and how to play them - thus bringing more "freedom" (the "unplanned") into an overall shape. Moussorgsky's very underrated musical ideas are also among my main influences...

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ELLERY ESKELIN

– To what extent have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles? – e.g. from specific concepts/theories, or specific parts of recent music history.

I use very few structural principles in my improvising. I prefer to take as intuitive an approach as possible so as to be able to interact in the moment with other musicians or to be able to discover ideas or courses of action when playing solo. In order to do this I have tried to develop a very clear intention with regard to phrasing and rhythmic generation of musical ideas. From rhythm comes melody. From this more gestural impulse come the pitches that I hear in the moment. I take an intervallic approach to melodic construction therefore my ideas are not based upon harmony. However, harmony is very important to me and I am able to apply this kind of language to any situation. You might call this a “post-tonal” approach but I am also able to create very tonal melodies if desired. But the harmony never fully dictates my melodies. My melodies are somewhat self-contained in this way.

– If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you?

This approach holds for most any situation I am involved with. While I do not approach music idiomatically I do feel that with sufficient familiarity to the musical materials of any given situation I am able to generate improvised material that functions.

I have always felt that I was a melody player at heart even if I am playing texturally. Often jazz musicians are playing variations against something that they hear in their heads (a melody, song form, harmonic series) and are at risk of being a bit removed from hearing what they are playing as being primary material. I want to be sure that the music I am making is complete for what it is.

– And, to which degree of formative importance to your musical language and approach?

My basic approach is the same in all situations.

– Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music? (e.g. in music, art, literature, musicology, pedagogic materials, others...)

These ideas come from various sources in my experience coming up as a musician. Developing my first solo saxophone concert (in 1992) was probably the strongest catalyst for the development of this approach. During a three month period I chose not to

play with any other musicians at all while reassessing my approach and developing this program.

– Other comments or additional perspectives on your music or methods?

In the end I try not to compartmentalize or make too many distinctions in methods or approaches to playing music. I want the experience to be as complete and holistic as possible. I like the process of improvising to be as simple as possible (hear something in my musical imagination and play it). And yet the simple process is informed by years of study and experience.

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FRANK GRATKOWSKI

– To what extent have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles? – e.g. from specific concepts/theories, or specific parts of recent music history.

– If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you?

Reduction/limitation - trying to explore certain areas by focus on it and limit the possibilities very drastic. Pitchfields (also microtonal), symmetry, statistics, extreme limited ambitus, combinatoric, variations, inversions, retrogrades, rotations, imitating/analyzing/transcribing speech, trying to imitate/approximate field recordings, basically transforming things from one territory to another..... It's hard to break down to a few. Also the question what is a definable material structuring principle. At the very end it always breaks down to limitation, because every system limits your possibilities, so just using floating dynamics could be considered as a system. I studied many contemporary compositions and try to implement almost all possible things I found there.

All these techniques I only use mainly for practice and very rarely on stage, at least not dogmatic. While improvising all what I learned comes to consideration but the decisions come on the fly and get destroyed if necessary. As Berio said "A system is only good as long as you don't have a better idea" ;-)

– Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music? (e.g. in music, art, literature, musicology, pedagogic materials, others...)

Reading James Joyce, especially the Ulysses. Spending about 1 year with the book (I'm still going back to it from time to time), reading it aloud, changed my whole viewpoint of art and helped me to find my own personality as an artist. Also the painter Gerhard Richter.

– Other comments or additional perspectives on your music or methods?

In general improvisation is for me just one aspect of composition. The difference to written composition is that you do it on the fly, often in collaboration with others, and you can't take things back. In order to learn proper improvisation I study composition. When I teach improvisation I talk almost all the time about aspects of composition. The problem in improvisation or maybe in music in general is form and if it tells a story (whatever that can be) or not. Structures/Systems help to clarify things but they don't solve the problem.

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MARY HALVORSON

– To what extent have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles? – e.g. from specific concepts/theories, or specific parts of recent music history.

All of the musical styles I have studied played and listened to over the years inform the materials I use in improvisations. The jazz tradition is probably the largest influence in terms of materials I draw from. Harmonic and melodic sequences (scales, chords, arpeggios, modes) define a big part of what I do, even when I'm improvising freely without a specified structural framework. I think about all these materials and enjoy reorganizing/ restructuring/ using them as source material. As far as post-tonal materials, I think about that too but probably in a less organized way. I have spent time creating my own exercises out of intervals and random patterns, so using an intervallic approach is common source material for me (thinking of each interval as it's own mode). I enjoy creating symmetries, dissonances, patterns, in the moment, although most of that is improvised and is not drawing from a specific line of study.

– If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you?

– And, to which degree of formative importance to your musical language and approach?

During my formative years I studied classical music on violin, and jazz and rock music on guitar. The idea of musical tradition is important to me, and my approach to improvising involves constant learning based on various traditions. Even when I'm not playing music that exactly fits into a certain style, I like to be able to access materials from various styles, warp them, use pieces of them as a jumping off point. Jazz and rock music have been my biggest influences, however I like to remain open to any style or musical direction that might interest me. Atonal and tonal theories interest me equally, and I enjoy the merging of the two. My practice routines change from year to year; I often spend at least year-long chunks focusing on one main thing. Right now I am pretty engrossed in studying traditional jazz... specifically chord changes, arpeggios and tunes; I have spent other years of being more focused on atonal theories and rock music. I try to do daily ear training, sight reading and technique exercises. In this sense, my practice routine is quite traditional. Yusef Lateef's Repository for Scales and Melodic Patterns, and Nicolas Slominky's scale book have been useful as well.

– Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music? (e.g. in music, art, literature, musicology, pedagogic materials, others...)

I can't say my music has been directly influenced by non-musical art forms. Although I love literature and art, I rarely try to connect that into a tangible musical approach (of course, much of this stuff may seep in unconsciously). But as far as musical influences go, my teachers, Anthony Braxton and Joe Morris, and their pedagogical methods, remain important to me to this day. Learning from both of them definitely steered the direction of my music.

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HERB ROBERTSON

“Considerations of my personal approach to Composition and Improvisation”

Composition:

In composition, especially for me, as I feel it is a slower process of improvisation with a capacity for editing and improvement on a personal nature, I try to utilize bastardized forms of serialism (surrealism) in a retrograde and/or retrograde inverted nature, incorporating atonality in combination with tonality. I'll reverse melody and form, play around with time and rhythm through the signature system, and also mix up a combination of regular and graphic notation in a game of exchange and chance. These compositional systems that I adapted for myself help me “speed up” my writing concepts while also dissolving possible creative blockage that will at times be inevitable when the spontaneity flow ceases for a spell.

Improvisation:

In all this and more (sound and noise textures, etc.) as stated above, I try to assimilate some of that into my improvising during the improvisational sections of written composition or free playing situations. The most important concepts for me at this time are the form and recapitulation of a structured improvisation, adding to or at least influencing the process.

Before a performance, or even earlier in the day, I'll intentionally think about what I might possibly create in terms of material ... but then let it all go and release these ideas long before I endeavor to perform an improvisation. This is my so called period of subconscious saturation. In other words, it's there and then it's gone (somewhere), so that my bodymind is empty and vulnerable for anything that could/would happen at any given present moment at an environmentally active performance. The chance and surprise element hopefully would be activated in unity with structure. A structured freedom could be a possible result. It doesn't happen every time, but in the least, it is a process that's worth considering.

Some sources of inspiration/information:

I've had many musical influences since I'd started playing the trumpet at age ten. By my early teens I was already listening and trying to assimilate jazz in its many varied forms starting for me with the hard bop period of the 60's. The funky jazz and hard bop schools challenged me to eventually investigate the older traditional forms and to venture into the music of that time period: the 1st and 2nd waves of the 1960's decade avant-garde. The Blue Note recordings were also a major influence on me during the 60's. Then, the AACM, Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, late Coltrane and Sun Ra directed me to gravitate and saturate myself with 20th Century Classical music including the music of Charles Ives, Igor Stravinsky, Olivier Massiaen and Edgard Varese, then to John Cage, Gyorgi Ligeti, Luciano Berio and Iannis Xanakis. From these composers I developed an interest in Zen Philosophy, meditation and Tibetan Buddhism. I have found that unifying all of these areas together has had a tremendous impact on my life in music ... and life in general.

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STEN SANDELL

- To what extent have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles?

Free improvised music is the only form of music that allows me, as a musician, to be able to change direction at any time. Free improvised music is the only form of music where I can completely change my way of playing depending on the character of the room or the space. The room becomes a co-player that I can either go along with or resist. In my project I investigate different ways to explore and clarify how changes of direction in free improvisation can be performed and how the spatial conditions and other conditions affect the way the music is played. The form of improvised music I am examining is extremely dialogue-oriented, where action and reaction within the dialogue in the room play a vital role in the process. What I would like to try out and demonstrate is how a sonic language entirely based on the participants' sensitivity can be moulded, i.e. a language that is altogether based on the listening and playing of a person in a particular space.

- If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you? - And, to which degree of formative importance to your musical language and approach?

How can I through musical improvisation change the course of interaction between music, space and text? The aim of my project is, on the basis of the various conditions a room or a space has to offer, to study the uniqueness of improvised music to be able to change the direction of a music composition in real time, with focus on the integration of text and music. The following questions are also addressed: how can one identify the effect a room has on how a voice or instrument sounds, and how can one create a unique world of sound in that same room with the intention of creating a new kind of aural drama. The main empirical data for this project will consist of a number of case studies in the form of: a series of experiments/improvisations - that trigger a series of processes - that again trigger a series of methods. Writer Fredrik Nyberg and pianist/composer Sten Sandell form a duo working on integrating voice with piano in a live setting, in different ways. In the artistic intervention "I turn around n' walk into the woods instead / I do not know how to depict my hatred n' my anxiety any longer", a poetic course of events taken down, meets a musical one, which to a great extent is

of an improvised/real-time composed kind. An important focus in this artistic examination is the temporal and spatial pause, whose different forms of appearance in poetry and music respectively (by the notion of intermedia), are put into new light. In the book *The Philosophy of Improvisation*, Gary Peters calls attention to the silent space as the aesthetic essence that different sounding practices, within the improvising procedure, have to break off. In a poetic context, it is not controversial to state that the way a line of verse creates meaning occurs in between, and accordingly because of, the two pauses, silences, spaces, that surround it, which make it emerge as a specific unit in time and space. The central question examined in the work "Jag vänder om å vandrar istället in i skogen / Jag vet inte längre hur jag skall gestalta mitt hat å min ängslan" is how the caesura/line break, which is written into the versified poem as a silent event in time, is affected when integrated in an improvised sounding course of events. And also how a musical, to a great extent improvised, flow of time transforms when integrated with verbal poetic material. The sounding image process that becomes a link to the narrative text. Through the use of sound, text and image, and all their mixed forms, and drawing from my experiences as musician and composer, I will, together with you as listener and reader, find a number of passable ways.

- Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music?

Nu händer något. En spänning, en förväntan uppstår igen mellan [] varje händelse. Mellan varje läte, slag och ton. I dessa mellanrum har texter av Johan Asplund, Captain Beefheart, John Cage, Morton Feldman, Magnus Florin, Michel Foucault, Bengt Emil Johnson, Lotta Lotass, Henri Michaux, Fredrik Nyberg, Steve Sem - Sandberg, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, Daniel N. Stern, Peter Weiss och D.W. Winnicott varit inspirerande i mitt undersökande om vad som händer mellan två händelser. Men framförallt har musiken i sig – det klingande i rummet – varit avgörande i mina försök att utvidga mitt lyssnande och seende – tillsammans med de musiker/poeter/ bildkonstnärer/skådespelare som jag har det stora privilegiet att få arbeta tillsammans med. Mitt letande. Mitt famlande. Mitt babblande. Ofta i ett dunkel men med snabba ljusmoment som blixtrar förbi och slocknar, men som ibland fastnar som små ärr på näthinnan. På öronhinnan.

<http://stensandell.com/object.php?id=66&l=s>

- Other comments or additional perspectives on your music or methods?

- The method I apply is strongly integrated with the act of doing – here and now: In what I play. In what I sing and recite. In what I draw and film. In real time. The method is constantly present – also when I make a presentation through my work, when I explore the mediation as a shaping part of the artistic process. What happens to my artistic expression when it takes on the form of a dramatized research performance? Do I find something of value or do I just create dead ends in my practice? Do I dare to carry out these lines of thought all the way, and actually articulate a new, characteristic way of expression? The field I find myself in is the subjective doing, in music, image and text. The doing forms new meanings when I, seamlessly searching, move through these three different expressions of art. With my research method I want to avoid positioning myself in a field characterized by predetermined points of reference. Hence, I have, in this text, chosen not to make a distinction between improvisation and composition, but regard them as two, of each other interdependent, sides in the seamless searching. It is precisely on the way through music, image and text something becomes visible to me. The method allows me to be and act in a context new to me: A research field to play in.

On. In front of. Behind. The research method is a process that results in the work on the inside of silence. Here and now.

– Moving along is the process of proceeding through the session at the local level. This process finds its way as it proceeds. Its path is not known in advance. It consists of the relational moves and present moments that strung together make up the session. It is characterized by attempts to achieve a greater and more coherent inter-subjective field. This, however, involves much unpredictability about what will happen next because the process is extremely inexact, nonlinear, and sloppy. Because of the nature of the process, it gives rise to many emerging properties, such as now moments and moments of meeting. (Daniel N. Stern, *The Present Moment in Psychotherapy and Everyday Life* (W.W. Norton & Company 2004), pp. 244-245.)

Jag börjar rita någonstans på ett papper utan att ha någon aning om riktningen i ritandet eller vilken typ av bild som kommer att växa fram under tiden. Framför tiden. Mellan tiden. Själva övergången från ett då som håller på att bli ett nu. Som blir.

...

NILS WOGRAM

– To what extent have your processes as an improviser been informed/influenced by definable material structuring principles? – e.g. from specific concepts/theories, or specific parts of recent music history.

When I was a teenager I started writing jazz tunes by imitating some of my heroes and their compositions. At the same time I was performing new music compositions for trombone. Through that I became interested in more methodic composition ideas and started to write 12-tone tunes. Through my studies at the New School and Kenny Werner's composition class I became familiar with random composition technique. We tried to let go from any self-controlled composing and simply wrote random notes on music paper and tried to do something with it. A lot of it had to do with editing (erasing notes, changing rhythms etc.) so what came out was a useable tune. I am still using this method up to this day because it helps me to get new ideas and get away from judging my composition in an early stadium. Also you can go any direction with this method depending how you edit the given material. What comes out is not necessarily an a-tonal piece.

– If applicable, which concepts were or are the most important to you?

The above described random note technique. I simply write down a whole bunch of notes and try to edit them until I like it. Important is to have a pretty clear idea what kind of music you want to compose. As I said with this method you can write totally abstract music as well as simple and melodic stuff. I sometimes also use particular scales or simply sing/improvise stuff and transcribe it to make a tune out of it.

– And, to which degree of formative importance to your musical language and approach?

This method I still use a lot. I only compose when I have a concrete writing project. For example a new repertoire for one of my bands or a commission I got. The amount varies between approx. 2 and 10 hours of music (including improvisation parts) per year.

- Which sources of inspiration/information now and then were most crucial to form your present day approach to music? (e.g. in music, art, literature, musicology, pedagogic materials, others...)

What helped me in the beginning was imitation and a very loose form of analysis. For example listen to a song I like, find out the general ideas behind it (without going too deeply into it) and imitating something like this. Today I have more inspirational sources from outside the music like places I have been to, stories I have read or have experienced myself, sayings, philosophies, films. My main goal is to come up with strong moods for my tunes. Thinking of places, stories, situations etc. helps me finding a clear and strong mood.

- Other comments or additional perspectives on your music or methods?

Very important to me: don't get too critical with your own compositions too early. Don't wait for the inspiration. Get inspired by working on your music. Don't simply write what you can hear or sing. Also write something that you don't hear yet but that you have an affinity for. You'll hear and feel it eventually by working on it. Only write music that you would like to listen to yourself. Be personal not modern.