FEYERABEND
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CENTENNIAL

IMPROVISE!

METHODS for times of uncertainty

18 April 2023
<u>Rockheim</u> **Trondheim**

Faced with a world of uncertainty and challenges like climate change, global health, and food and energy security, it becomes important to identify and cultivate skills for dealing with the unforeseen in real time: Trying the untried, together. We need to learn to improvise -together, better.

This workshop brings together philosophers, scientists and artists to explore practices of improvisation. Improvisation can take many forms, but one way to think of it is as a method for going beyond method. As the philosopher of science Paul Feyerabend stressed, giving an account of scientific progress needs to go beyond accounting for 'scientific method'. As perhaps with all creative endeavours the unexpected is key. And addressing challenges like the climate catastrophe calls for creativity.

Chance is a generative factor in a range of creative processes - from evolution to mathematical modelling and found art. Embraced as a way of making art, but also influential in multiple fields including education, science, medicine and management, principles of improvisation offer a starting point for exploring collective work in uncertain times. These principles include a. actively listening to others and to what a situation has to offer, b. accepting what is offered and building on it, c. accepting and celebrating the unexpected, d. building trust and collectivity by accepting vulnerability. These principles can further translate into ethics or used as principles guiding individual behaviour –evoking to some extent stoic thinking but also indigenous ethics and epistemologies for harvesting the potential of a given situation respectfully.

This workshop is featured as part of Paul Feyerabend's upcoming centennial celebrations asks:

- What is improvisation? Where does it happen? Who is an improviser? - Going beyond the human?
- How can we understand and use improvisation as a method?
- How do creativity and improvisation connect?
- What is ethics of/as improvisation?
- How might addressing societal challenges benefit from improvisation?

Supported by
The Institute for Philosophy and Religious Studies, NTNU
The AFINO Research Network
The Programme for Applied Ethics
EU project ISEED: Inclusive Science and European Democracies
Norwegian Research Council project MEATigation: Towards sustainable meat-use in Norwegian food practices for climate mitigation
The Norwegian Artistic Research Program project: RTAI Real-time Telematic Audiovisual Improvisation
Trondheim Academy of Fine Art, NTNU

REGISTER by April 14th here:
https://forms.gle/wHgqf1KWuAsbkbKd7

TUESDAY 18ᵗʰ of APRIL 2023

8:30-9:00   *Registration, Coffee and Mingle*
9:00-9:20   Welcome to the Meeting **& WARMUP**

IMPROVISATION AS METHOD: SCIENCE, ART, PHILOSOPHY

Chair: Sophia Efstathiou - Researcher, Programme for Applied Ethics NTNU

9:20-9:50   Jeremiah Day - artist & Writer
              And Cupcakes?: Real-Time-Composition and Cold War II
9:50-10:20   Nancy Mauro-Flude, artist, Leader of the 'Engineering Flora Fiction and Data Fauna' studio, at the College of Design and Social Context, RMIT University. Founder of the Holistic Computing Arts Network.
              The Art of Proprioception (online)
10:20-10:30   *Break*

IMPROVISATION AS METHOD ctd.: SCIENCE, ART, PHILOSOPHY

Chair: Heine Alexander Holmen - Institute leader in Philosophy and Religious Studies, NTNU

10:30-11:15   Talk (online)
              Mike Stuart – Associate Professor at the Institute for Philosophy of Mind and Cognition at the NYCU in Taiwan;
              Science is Improv
11:15-11:30   *Break*
11:30-12:15   Talk
              Elena Pérez – Associate Professor in Drama and Theater at NTNU
              Theorising Improvisation -Insights from Drama
12:15-13:15   *VEGAN Lunch*

IMPROVISATION APPLIED: EDUCATION, CLIMATE, MEDIA,

Chair: Alex Murray Leslie, Trondheim Academy of Fine Art

13:15-13:45   Talk (online) & Discussion
              Helen Palmer - Assoc. Professor in Science Education, University of Agder
              Applied improv in science education: Accepting gifts and embracing failure
13:45-14:30   Talk & Discussion

Sophia Efstathiou (Researcher, Programme for Applied Ethics, NTNU), Avijit Pandit (Doctoral Candidate, Industrial Ecology, NTNU) & Mrudhula Koshy (Assist. Professor in Planning and Architecture, NTNU)

Starting from hopelessness- Sustainable Development Goals and improvisation

14:30-15:00   *Coffee Break*
15:00-15:20 Talk

Matilda Rolfsson (PhD Candidate, Artistic Research, NTNU - Department of Music)

In Motion, Movements With Directions (within) -Interplay with dance, as tool and asset for the free-improvising musician

15:25-15:45   Talk

Michael Francis Duch, (Professor, NTNU - Department of Music)

On Cornelius Cardew's *The Tiger's Mind*

15:45-16:00   *Coffee Break*

ETHICS OF/AS IMPROVISATION

16:00-17:00   Workshop (hybrid) - **Found Ethics and Sound**
Assoc Professor Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri, Music (Composition), Cornell University, and Dr. Sophia Efstathiou, Researcher, Programme for Applied Ethics, NTNU

17:00-17:15   *Break*

17:15-18:00   Panel Discussion - Addressing societal challenges learning from improvisation - Imagining ways forward: including

- Kangela Tromokratisch (Artist, co-founder of Queer art space LALA, Athens),
- Jeremiah Day (Artist)
- Thomas Litherland (Educator, chairperson of Gibberish Improv Theater, Trondheim)

Moderated by Alex Murray Leslie and Sophia Efstathiou

18:00-20:00   *VEGAN Dinner*

PERFORMANCE 20:30-22:30

20:30 Jasmine Guffond 'Listening Back' teleprovisation
20:50 Mx. Cibelle Cavalli Bastos performance teleprovisation "title tbc"
21:15 Gibberish Improv Theater

22:00 Kangela Tromokratisch

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE FOR PHILOSOPHY, ART & NTNU
As evidenced by the MEATigation project, which brought together a variety of stakeholders and disciplines centered on a major societal challenge, Philosophy is a field that has the potential to bind together a diverse set of scholars and thinkers on a common project - here: improvisation as a method that has so far been underappreciated and undertheorised outside the arts. Improvisation and building skills for improvisation is an aim that we believe resonates with times of uncertainty we are living in, and that has a lot to offer across multiple domains today. A lot of businesses and public and third sector actors are using and looking for people with skills for working with unexpected situations deftly and collaboratively. Our aim is to collect a team of people in Trondheim, and build the basis for a collaborative international research project to investigate improvisational methods further, linking to particular action domains and particular actors. The topic has the potential to join together different fields (social and natural/computational science, humanities, education and the arts) within NTNU, and to link to topics of strategic importance like climate & sustainability, health and social inclusion. We thus see this workshop as part of strategic "seed" funding for building such a network and project. Our experiences with the MEATigation project is that building a strong team with shared ownership of the project idea and methods is key for facilitating a smooth running and productive project team.

CLIMATE IMPACT JUSTIFICATION
The workshop is inviting two international speakers to visit in person, both artists/improvisers who would like to engage us physically in their work through live performance. Our other in person speakers will be in Trondheim, NTNU.
We have several invited speakers who are joining us online, and indeed will be following a hybrid model for some of the talks to cut down on travel and emissions. We are also combining the visit of Jeremiah Day with work on an OCEANS week, project and so funding his honorarium that way via NTNU Oceans.

Given the collection of eminent people we are inviting in the workshop and the nature of some improvisation tools as relying on shared bodily experience, we believe that the travel climate impact is justified.

We are further limiting our climate impact via our vegan food choices for lunch and dinner for invited participants.

Abstracts & Biographies:

The Art of Proprioception Nancy Mauro-Flude

Nancy Mauro-Flude is a seasoned performance artist, theorist, and digital caretaker, recognised for her innovative work in hands-on computing arts, expanded choreography, and algorithmic narrative. With a deep passion for demystifying technology and perceiving the beauty of machinic assemblage, Nancy has made her mark on the global art scene, collaborating in cross-cultural art milieus for over two decades across five continents.

Her artwork has been featured at esteemed events such as the Ghetto Biennale, Port au Prince; Transmediale, Berlin, and Ars Electronica, Linz, as well as exhibited at prestigious venues including the Museum Quartier, Vienna; Contemporary Art Tasmania, Museum of New and Old Art, Dark Mofo, Mona Foma festivals; and Artspace, Sydney, among others. Her contributions to the field of digital art are recognized in collections such as the SIGGRAPH Archive and the Cyberfeminist Index. Currently, she serves as a researcher at the Digital Ethnography Research Centre at RMIT University, and is represented by Bett Gallery.

The Flow Equation: Mx. Cibelle Cavalli Bastos

The Flow Equation is anti-performance improvising improvisation in a stream of consciousness exploring the Flow Equation.

To inhabit the flow in chaotic times, vulnerability and trust is necessary. The dropping of the mind, a state of presence embracing failure and making do with whatever arises.
At a time in desperate need for the eradication algorithmic behavior, The Flow Equation anti-performance embraces the possibility of failure as an acknowledgement of one's humanity, and through delving into what underlies self-consciousness, find a channel for insight into what's needed at any given time.

Mx. Cibelle Cavalli Bastos (b. 1978, São Paulo, Brazil) Non-binary, They/Them pronouns.
Artist, musician, independent researcher, educator and activist.
Lives and works in Berlin.

Graduated in 2015 from the Royal College of Art, London. Released four music albums worldwide under "Cibelle" for Crammed Discs and has performed and presented work in Martin Gropius Bau (Berlin-DE), ICA (London-UK), MASP (São Paulo-BR) Carnegie Hall (NY-USA), LCCA (Riga-LV), CAC Wifredo Lam (Havana-Cuba), Steirischer Herbst (Graz-Austria), MdbK Leipzig (DE), Transmediale/Haus der Kulture der Welt (DE), KW Institute for Contemporary Art (DE), Fotomuseum Winterthur (CH), NRW-Forum Dusseldorf (DE) and collaborations within the 28th /31st São Paulo Biennial (SP-BR) alongside Yonamine and Tiago Borges, and as a member of assume vivid astro focus (AVAF).

In recent years, Cibelle has participated as a guest lecturer, visiting tutor, and panellist and given workshops at Stanford University Fine Art Department, The Graduate Center City University of New York, Goldsmiths University of London´s Fine Art MA, Gerrit Rietveld Academie and Sandberg Instituut under the Unsettling program, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm, the Royal Academy of Art The Hague, FHNW in Basel, Berlin Program for Artists and KiT-NTNU.

Cibelle's practice is a continuous reflection on the reuse of materials and data that channel psycho-cognitive perception through examination and transformation from positions of the in-between. It operates against societal algorithms seeking non-compliant patterns of behaviour and material, abstracting data to transform and assemble new frontiers, visuals, images, and ideas of the appearance and the polymorphism of selfhood and collectivity.

In creating feedback loops and short circuits to redirect the algorithm, the outcome is an amalgamation and consideration of the many forms and textures we can inhabit and the work to move between them. Performances, painting, sculpture, AI and mixed reality weave and collage together fragments of whole notions of identity, questions of artistic labour and challenge formalism.

Extracting oneself from automated algorithmic decision-making, they work to create resistance and refusal to the identities constructed by algorithms and social conditioning.

Listening Back, a teleprovisation performance by Jasmine Guffond
Listening Back is an add-on for the Chrome and Firefox browsers that sonifies Internet cookies in real-time while one browses online. This creative tool is utilised for a practice-based research focused on the commercial online context of extractive algorithmic surveillance technologies. As a critical mode of sonic inquiry it takes place at the convergence of Web surveillance and sensory perception to offer another approach for experiencing how surveillance itself is situated. Cookie data is rendered audible as a sounding strategy for interrupting the visual surface of the browser interface to draw attention to backend data capture and advance experiential engagement with the normalisation of Web surveillance. Seamlessly embedded in to our everyday Web experiences, online surveillance remains largely intangible to the surveilled. Listening Back proposes the creative potential of sound to provide a supplementary layer of sensory information to advance experiential engagement with Web surveillance through its aesthetic disclosure during the everyday act of browsing the Web.

The Listening Back browser add-on has been used for live performance and installation. I have also begun to explore its potential as a musical instrument for live improvisation. Through musical improvisation I aim to investigate particular tensions inherent to the normalisation of online surveillance through a creative practice whose outcomes are determined by certain technical protocols as designed by big Tech and the data broker industry.

http://jasmineguffond.com/art/Listening+Back

https://echo.orpheusinstituut.be/article/listening-back

JASMINE GUFFOND is an artist and composer working at the interface of social, political and technical infrastructures. Her practice spans live performance, recording, sound installation and custom made browser add-on. Through the sonification of data she addresses the potential of sound to engage with contemporary political questions.

Interested in providing an audible presence for phenomena that lie beyond human perception - via the sonification of facial recognition algorithms, global networks, or Internet tracking cookies - she questions what it means for our personal habits to be traceable, and for our identities, choices and personalities to be reduced to streams of data.

Jasmine has exhibited internationally including composing sound for Shulea Cheang's installation at the Taiwanese Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2019, and collaborating with Zorka Wollny on a sound installation for the Chicago Architecture Biennal, 2019. She completed her Sound Studies masters at the University der Künste in 2015, received the 'Working Grant for New Music und Sound Art' from the Berlin Senate in 2016, was featured in Wire magazine in 2019 and interviewed for 'Listen to Lists' a publication by Haus der Kulturen der Welt and Spector Books, 2021.

She has performed live internationally at electronic music and art festivals including opening for CTM festival in 2020.

She has released solo records to critical acclaim with Sonic Pieces (2015, 2017), Karl Records (2018) and Editions Mego (2020).

In 2021 Dr. Jasmine Guffond completed her PhD at the University of New South Wales Art, Design & Architecture department, where she conducted research into sound as a method of investigation into online surveillance cultures.