

## as\_the\_tex(t)

For this piece, I am asking the improvisers to focus on one element of the way that I make music; they will be using **my body in musical action** as a dynamic score. I have written a *guide* to influence and direct my performance on vibraphone; phrases that will suggest an improvisation. The other performers are given descriptions of seven discrete physical states or poses that my body takes up in improvisation<sup>1</sup>. Each pose is assigned a guiding statement for the performer's improvisation. When the performer observes the pose in me, they will improvise using the their guiding statement until they register another movement or they feel that musically they should move on or improvise independently.

### The performers

Richard Olatunde Baker – percussion

Liran Donin – bass

Robert Mitchell – piano

Rachel Mussson – saxophones

Corey Mwamba – vibraphone

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<sup>1</sup> These poses are based on a video of me performing with my group yana in Leeds in 2013: see Steve Crocker, *Corey Mwamba/Dave Kane/Joshua Blackmore@Seven Jazz Leeds* 21/4/13 <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noG\\_MVNGUO8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noG_MVNGUO8)> [accessed 17 May 2017].

## Preamble

I want to work with my aesthetic in a way that reflects the process of using texts in improvised music. When I say *texts*, I don't mean just written words; I'm using it as an academic term to cover any medium that can be experienced and interpreted.

I want to briefly state the small working definitions I have around *music*, *listening*, and *improvisation*.

- i. Music is art of generating and/or manipulating sound, and interrelationships between sounds.
- ii. Listening is paying attention to sound, using sounds, music, and memories of these as resources.
- iii. Improvisation is the use of listening to make music.

With these definitions, there are further explanations needed. The process for generation/manipulation of sound can be transcribed (written down, recorded) in some form; and the sounds used do not have to come from musical instruments.

When I play, my body is involved fully in the process of making music<sup>2</sup>; and the music I make is rooted in a practice of music improvisation refracted through jazz. My body and the vibraphone are the limits and agents of my musical eloquence and imagination. I think that it is also stored and continuously processed in the listener<sup>3</sup>, who can also be the performer(s) of music – and in improvisation, necessarily includes the performer(s): and – if this is the case – then what and how the listener pays attention to music is as important to the process of generating that music. The limits of making music in a social situation are not just located within me as a performer; those limits rely on a collective “paying attention” from the people inside the situation. With *as\_the\_tex(t)*, I hope to show explore the following ideas:

1. Australian musician and theorist Bruce Johnson has posited that jazz is “stored” in the performer<sup>4</sup>. Does the use of a jazz improviser's performing body as a text reflect the identity of the improviser? If so, in what ways?
2. Where are the tensions in using the performing body as a jazz text with an identity?

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2 Corey Mwamba, 'Dance/music', 2014 <<http://www.coreymwamba.co.uk/rambles/1406693544>> [accessed 17 May 2017].

3 Corey Mwamba, 'Is the First Thing', 2013 <<http://www.coreymwamba.co.uk/rambles/1386494518>> [accessed 28 October 2016].

4 Bruce Johnson, 'Hear Me Talkin' to Ya: Problems of Jazz Discourse', *Popular Music*, 12.1 (1993), 1 <<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143000005316>>.



## Directions for Corey

stretch

step back

approach

(scurry → The ONE)<sup>repeat</sup>

tiny explosions, punctuated high screams

cantillation → settle on chant

step back

approach, make adjustments as necessary

chant → underscore<sup>(m, v)</sup>

/node/

Dolphy

step back

the times we almost died

micro-aggression

the machine → Marvin Gaye

death

step back

knead/press | move energy

“the vehicle is the journey”

as warm as the sun

step back

wait