

The fourth person in a trio Investigating the artistic identity of an ensemble

The ongoing artistic research project “The fourth Person” addresses the immanent and difficulty defined soul or identity in long-existing ensembles.

The project is using the practice in my own piano trio, Trio con Brio Copenhagen (with more than 20 years of performing history), as the main source of defining and researching what the project metaphorically calls “the fourth person” thus displaying a first-hand connection from practice to research.

As part of the project young ensembles of students participate exploring together with me the results from the research done on Trio on Brio and developing strategies to nurture the emergence of The Fourth Person. In that way, the students not only benefit from the results of the project but are introduced to the working processes and methods of artistic research through practice.

The wish to conduct this research project comes from a personal curiosity to describe what has evolved through many years of performing and studying with the same group of people and from a wish to make this knowledge accessible for emerging ensembles to find easier, maybe faster or better ways to form a strong ensemble identity. The project is trying to pinpoint the fascinating magic of music-making on the highest level and to explore and explain the processes leading to the musical moments that we all appreciate so much!

The main methodological approach is the use of video recordings made in connection with a complete Beethoven recording session in the Danish Radio in 2018. The recordings were used to document the processes with multiple cameras from different angles. Furthermore, interviews and most importantly; video-stimulated-recall-interviews using the recordings were used to interview the ensemble members to investigate the process.

The research found that the fourth person evolves over years and has many faces: a common memory, body language and spoken language and furthermore specific performance- and work processes. Besides the video recordings showed two different sorts of signals between the players defined as “inner” and “outer” signals. The presentation will introduce the method, unfold some of the findings and present perspectives for the further development of the project.



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Jens Elvekjær’s multifaceted activities cover his work as a piano professor at RDAM, as a pianist in Trio con Brio Copenhagen and also as an artistic director of Chamber Music at Lundsgaard and Hellerup Chamber Music Society. Since 2019 Jens Elvekjær has been conducting the research project “The fourth person” at the RDAM.

Elvekjær is educated in Aarhus, Salzburg, Vienna, Cologne and Budapest and performs all over the world with his piano trio Trio con Brio Copenhagen in leading concert halls such as Carnegie

Parallel Session

Hall, Theatre de Ville, Concertgebouw, Wigmore Hall, Boulez-Saal and Seoul Arts Centre. In 2005, Jens Elvekjær was the first Danish pianist ever to be appointed Steinway Artist.

Jens Elvekjær has received numerous top awards and honors, including the ARD Wettbewerb, the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson International Trio Award, the Premio Vittorio Gui, DR's Chamber Music Competition and the Carl Nielsen Prize in Denmark.