

L8Nite Performance

Not even remotely dead cats
The Denmark performance

As it often happens in artistic research, the path of the *not even remotely dead cats* is the result of accidental encounters slowly resonating into meaningful artistic relations. Bruno, Helena and Rui are part of a larger movement of experimental music in Portugal and often play together within various ensembles. Øyvind is part of a rich environment of musicians using technology in composition and performance in Norway. Øyvind and Rui first met at two conferences held in Porto (CMMR 2017 and ICLI 2018) and were happy to find each other's work and thought artistically stimulating. When a funding opportunity for projects connecting Norway and Portugal came along, we became involved in a project, "Fostering innovation in musical performance research through the study and development of technologic interfaces", which allowed us to travel back and forth between the two countries performing, improvising, composing and recording together. We focused a significant part of our joint work on testing devices, apps and performative strategies that involved feedback as the basis for musical creation. As meaningful relations can provide a fertile background for the emergence of possibilities that transcend the original conditions, the four *not even remotely dead cats* came to be somehow always present in each other's performances, even in the cases where one or more could not be physically present. We have played together within larger ensembles, we have played in duos or trios using artistic approaches developed together and we have played together with some elements on stage and others virtually present via zoom. In fact, we have performed in almost all possible combinations except for the most anticipated one: the four of us, on the same stage, at the same time. This is our utopia, but for now we are still not even remotely dead cats.

All the aforementioned brought us to what we call the DENMARK PERFORMANCE. This title is willing to stress the uniqueness of our performative relation with space and its site specificity and the time, an additional layer to the ongoing process of sonic exploration. One of the focal points of our artistic proposal addresses the performance issues raised by the interaction between acoustic instruments (piano and voice) and technologic interfaces, and its visual and aural implications. We will keep on searching for a deep connection between the group members through a shared form of instrumentality, i.e., most of the individual sounds are linked and transformed, through live processing, by someone else. This unusual and new instrumentarium, a result of the implementation described above, comes from a place beyond a natural and desired interaction in a kind of chamber music setting. It comes from a co-dependency between the players, leading to a high uncertainty about the individual and the group sound, as well as a sense of lack of control, providing the performers with a new challenge while improvising or creating contents. These imposed constraints transform the listening mode, leading us to the unknown territory outside the expected individual framework. It can be described as a deterritorialized performative outlook that departs from standardized techniques and the legacy underlying historical practices and their associated virtuosity (as regards the instruments or the voice), which diverges from that context, widening the sonic and musical possibilities of the final performative object shared with an audience.

This multi-dimensional empirical relation with the non-expected frames us within a state of diachronic emergence in which we lose the trace of the sound path to an extent that allows us to consider that novelty is achievable.

The methodology of our artistic research thus departs from the artistic practice to enter a swirl of reflection and new practices causing a meaningful shift in what we do. The challenge is to

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accept and to foster uncertainty while using it to shape a musical gesture with an inner energy, a connecting vibration and a relevant sonic print.



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Øyvind Brandtsegg is a composer and performer working in the fields of computer improvisation and sound installations. He has a deep interest in developing new audio processing methods for artistic purposes, and he has contributed novel extensions to both granular synthesis and convolution techniques. Brandtsegg has participated on more than 25 music albums in a variety of genres. Since 2010 he is a professor of music technology at NTNU, Trondheim, Norway.

Helena Marinho is a pianist and an Associate Professor at the University of Aveiro. Helena combines her performing career with academic and artistic research. She has presented solo and chamber concerts in Europe, South America and Asia, and recorded 12 CDs, playing Classical and contemporary repertoire for piano and fortepiano. She has premièred several contemporary works, and collaborates often with composers from Portugal and other countries. Several of the projects she conceived and performed, which ground her artistic-research outputs, have been selected for funding by the Portuguese Culture Ministry. Her publications include book chapters and articles, and she has been the Principal Investigator of three large-scale research projects financed by the Portuguese Government and European funds, on subjects ranging from gender studies to musical experimentation. She is an integrated researcher of the research center INET-md, and she will lead its University of Aveiro branch, starting in January 2023.

Rui Penha is a composer, media artist, and performer of electroacoustic music, Rui Penha was born in Porto in 1981. He completed his PhD in Music (Composition) at the University of Aveiro. His music is regularly recorded and played in festivals and concert halls around Europe and North America, by musicians such as Arditti Quartet, Peter Evans, Remix Ensemble, or the Gulbenkian Orchestra. He was a founder and curator of Digitópia (Casa da Música, Porto) and has a deep interest on the relationship between music and its technology. His recent production includes interfaces for musical expression, sound spatialisation software, interactive installations, musical robots, autonomous improvisers, and educational software. More recently, Rui has focused his attention on the problems of defining and guiding artistic research. He taught at several Portuguese institutions, in both music, art and engineering faculties, and is currently an assistant

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professor at ESMAE and researcher at CESEM.

Bruno Pereira is a singer, performer, teacher, researcher. He holds a degree in lyrical singing and a post-graduation in opera. Working closely with composers he premiered several new works and, in the last few years, after more than 15 years intensively performing opera, he has been researching and performing within the field of contemporary performance and vocal improvisation with the creation and presentation of various solo experimental works or in collaboration with artists such as Girilal Baars, Dimitris Andrikopoulos, Horacio Tomé-Marques, Telmo Marques, Rui Penha, António Aguiar, Mário Azevedo, Oyvind Brandtsegg, Helena Marinho, Trond Engum, Henrique Apolinário, among others. He has been actively performing and teaching in very different contexts in Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Germany, Czech Republic, Ireland, Turkey, Slovenia, Russia, Lithuania, Brazil and Argentina. He holds a PhD in Arts – Contemporary performative practices where he developed deep research about voice, body and improvisation. He teaches at ESMAE P.PORTO.