

**The Insider Experience of Improvisation
Reaching new audiences for classical music through the 'improvisatory approach'
concert model**

This presentation discusses findings from the author's performance practice and artistic doctorate research, in which the performers' and audience's experiences were collected in a series of five concerts incorporating the 'improvisatory approach' (Dolan 2005, 2013; Haustein 2022). The two-fold artistic motivation to (1) explore solo & ensemble improvisational performance practice in a historically evidenced context and (2) to engage in meaningful interactions with audiences informed the development of a concert programme model, in which repertoire performance is intertwined with historically evidenced improvisatory elements (from embellished repeats to improvised fantasies on themes from audience). Audience research found that the performers' improvisatory contributions impacted audience members' experiences positively, facilitated a more personal connection to the performers, and created inclusivity and accessibility to the musical experience. This impact appeared particularly meaningful for those audience members who were seldom concertgoers and had little familiarity with classical music. This correlation became highlighted in audience data because performers engaging in new, improvisatory responses to repertoire also created new and meaningful connections to 'old' composers and the classical canon – especially when there was little connection to begin with.

Social elements as contributing aspects to the Western classical concert experience have been somewhat marginalised, while identified and discussed by some (Pitts, 2005; Walmsley, 2019), including the desire of audiences to connect more with performers (Brand et al., 2012; Sloboda & Ford, 2012). In the context of this study, audience feedback highlighted ensembles improvising on audience requests as a uniquely inspiring and engaging element in the concert programme. According to audience's reflections, these moments facilitated an 'insider experience' of the musical performance, increased respondents' feeling of social inclusivity, and contributed to a longer-lasting emotional impact of the concert event (Haustein 2022). It appears that in these moments, audience members started feeling more like active participants in a creative, collaborative exchange, and became stakeholders in a deeper phenomenon of meaning-making (Keith, 2007) and narrativization (Meelberg, 2014). The paper presents data from audience research, concert videos and certain key moments analysed with objective sound parameter analysis software.

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Parallel Session



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Pauliina Haustein, DMus, is a performing, improvising and researching cellist. After a decade of traditional performance experience, Haustein redirected her path towards classical improvisation and embarked on an artistic performance doctorate supervised by classical improvisation pedagogue, pianist David Dolan, cellist Adrian Brendel and John Sloboda at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Since being awarded her DMus in 2022, Haustein has become a sought-after improvising performer and pedagogue, actively sharing her approach through co-performance and teaching across Europe, including at the Hochschule der Künste Bern, Zürich Hochschule der Künste, Crescendo Summer Institute, and Sibelius-Academy, Uniarts, Helsinki. As featured in the classical music magazine "Rondo" (10/22, Finland), her method combines world-class professional orchestra experience with a pedagogical path of re-introducing classical improvisation skills to music students as well as existing professional practice and performance, including ensemble and symphony orchestra formats.

