

The Continuously Receding Fourth Wall

Cooperation, improvisation, and research co-created with the audience

Abstract:

How can hybrid participatory concert formats enable professional musicians, amateur singers, and audiences to become simultaneously active collaborators? And how might such practices contribute to a broader rethinking of the role of art and artists in society?

To explore this question, the Artistic Research projects *Echoes from the Torn Down Fourth Wall* and *The Song of the Continuously Receding Demarcation Horizon of the Role of the Artist* have developed and tested concert formats that merge composition, improvisation, community singing, and audience participation. These formats have been realized through collaborations involving, simultaneously; a sinfonietta, an improvising ensemble, community choirs, and audiences performing together, while maintaining a “contemporary art music sensibility”. The projects have investigated how shared musical agency can become an integral part of professional artistic practice.

The empirical material consists of rehearsals, workshops, full-scale concerts, and listening-based inquiry sessions, which together form the basis for analysis and reflection.

The methodological approach is practice-led, combining artistic experimentation with theoretical reflection. Perspectives from 4E cognition help conceptualize listening as an embodied, relational activity, while literary genre theory supports an examination of the hierarchies, dichotomies, and mutual cultural blind spots between contemporary “art music” and “cultural heritage community singing”.

The research is additionally framed by the broader societal shift from top-down cultural models toward participatory structures, prompting renewed questions about artistic authorship, cultural authority, and potential social responsibilities of artists in an increasingly AI-mediated world.

The research ultimately seek to nurture forward-looking discussions on how shared and situated musical experiences might be created and perceived today. Thus, proposing ways in which artistic research can function as a catalyst for rethinking both artistic practice and the societal discourse around the role of music and its capacity to support collective cultural resilience in the 21st century.

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(Main alignments of proposed research with the EPARM '26 conference themes:

- Research co-created with diverse ‘publics’
- Improvisation in diverse contexts
- practical and ethical dimensions of cooperation)

Research Presentations



Jacob Anderskov
Rhythmic Music Conservatory, Copenhagen, Denmark
jaan@rmc.dk

Biography (150 words):

Jacob Anderskov is professor WSA at RMC, Copenhagen, where he is subject responsible for the main subject Artistic Development Work. Here, the students' reflections on methodology and contextualization are intersected with presentations of the students' own artistic work.

As part of his development responsibilities at RMC, Anderskov has initiated and lead a handful of larger artistic research

projects, including Habitable Exomusics, Sonic Complexion, and Echoes from the torn down fourth Wall, all of which are published at researchcatalogue.net.

In his artistic practice, Anderskov is a pianist, composer and bandleader. He has released more than 35 albums as a leader, and his oeuvre covers a broad continuum from improvised works in small groups to composed material for larger ensembles. The numerous ensembles he has been forming and leading include Anderskov Accident, Agnostic Revelations, Emerald, Resonance, and most recently "I Sang". Anderskov was nominated for the Nordic Council Music Price 2018.

Links to a related RC-exposition, representing an earlier point in time for the proposed research:

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/3025944/3025945>

www.jacobanderskov.dk