

## A Musical 'We'?

How do two or more musicians form a single expressive voice? Togetherness is not a given in music, but an attainment. It is easier said than done; particularly in free ensemble improvisation, where performers are often found playing alone together *involuntarily* (unless the aesthetic is one in which territorial separation is an aim). What does profound musical togetherness encompass, and how is it attained? This L8nite baritone sax and piano duo performance instantiates and then discusses the skills, kind of listening and psychological attitudes behind achieving relational duo improvisation - forming a shared expressive voice. We present an advanced understanding of reciprocal musical empathy, which was reached and continues to be refined via a dynamic combination of artistic exploration and scholarly reflection. The underlying artistic research project researches empathy through free improvisation. In the past years, it involved work in 20 duos and trios and resulted in an interpersonally dialogical practice, and in a continuously deepening understanding of what musical empathy and togetherness involve on a general, conceptual and practical, level. Steve Day writes on the CD 'Edith's Problem' by Deniz Peters and Simon Rose (Leo Records, 2017), one of the project's artistic research outcomes: "I sat and consumed the whole of the Peters/Rose recording in one sitting, I couldn't move from the room. After over 50 minutes of music, my immediate response was to put the whole album back through the speakers and listen again [...] This review of *Edith's Problem* is shorter than usual because I find myself unable to write anything beyond how absolutely bewitchingly beautiful this music is. There is an intense brevity in the construction of the Peters/Rose performance [...] The shuddering sense of this minimalist piano and the horns has sound-tracked me for days, as if I have a new pulse emerging. [...] This is a recording which holds a huge amount of gravitas in a comparatively small space." [www.stevedaywordsandmusic.co.uk](http://www.stevedaywordsandmusic.co.uk)

Video link <https://vimeo.com/264619340>

download

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/0ar0de2c1ohqdl3/01%20between%20%28part%20one%29.wav?dl=0> this is the 1st track "between, part one" of the CD "Edith's Problem" by Simon Rose and myself mentioned in the proposal "A Musical We?".



**Deniz Peters**

*University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz, Austria*  
*deniz.peters@kug.ac.at*

Dr. Deniz Peters is Professor for Artistic Research in Music and Director of the Doctoral School for Artistic Research at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz. He leads an artistic research project on interpersonal improvisation (FWF/PEEK AR188), and is re-thinking musical expression within a philosophical-analytical research project. He has written on topics such as musical empathy, gesture, bodily listening, rhythm, and instrumentality. His artistic research approach combines an experimental piano practice with phenomenological, conceptual and interaction analyses, improvising with musicians and dancers including Simon Rose, Stevie Wishart, Ellen Waterman, Magdalena Chowanec, Bennett Hogg and Stefan Östersjö. Recent and forthcoming publications of his artistic research findings include chapters in collections with Lexington, Springer, Oxford University Press, Leuven University Press, Königshausen & Neumann and a CD (Leo Records LR 812, 2017).

**In duo with  
Simon Rose, Berlin**

Dr. Simon Rose researches creative processes and his recent book is: *The Lived-Experience of Improvisation: In music, learning and life* (2017, Intellect/Chicago). He performs on baritone and alto saxophone in a wide variety of settings: from high-energy free jazz to classical piano, from reductionism to noise, from silence to rock, from solo to improvising orchestras. Most recent, ongoing groups include collaborations with: Hilary Jeffery trombone; Paul Stapleton sound sculpture; Nicola Hein guitar; Stefan Schultze piano; Andrew Wass dance; Ingo Reulecke dance; Julie Myers visual art; Deniz Peters piano; Philippe Lemoine tenor saxophone; Claudia Binder piano; Jan Roder double bass and Willi Kellers drums; Dag Magnus Narvesen drums and; Adam Pultz Melbye double bass, Devin Gray drums. Recordings can be found on the labels: Emanem, Leo, PSI, Bruce's Fingers, Not Two, Rayon, FMR, PfMentum, Bug Incision and Red Toucan. Simon Rose has a particular interest in transdisciplinary performance.