

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### **“Improvisation in Contemporary Art” The Polish Journal of Aesthetics No. 54 (3/2019)**

**Editors:**

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**Submission Deadline: March 31, 2019**

It can be assumed with a substantial degree of probability that improvisation has been used in art since the beginning of the latter's existence, particularly in the performing arts, such as music or theatre. Historically speaking, when it comes to Europe, the use of improvisation has been documented since the Renaissance, for example in the theatre: *commedia dell'arte*. In music, too, from this period, one can observe interest, which has substantially persisted until modern times, in improvisation as an element of performance practice. In non-European cultures as well, improvisation was and still is present: Indian music, Japanese *Noh* (*nō*) theatre, etc.

However, without overly exaggerating, we can say that the twentieth century, in comparison to previous epochs, represented an 'improvisation explosion' in artistic practices. Improvisation became an important method of practice in virtually all fields of art, e.g. action painting, performance, and contact improvisation (dance), gaining particularly strong significance in musical practices. Improvisation even became a determinant of some of the musical genres which arose in the twentieth century, such as blues, jazz, rock music, and many others originating therefrom. In addition, two artistic practices appeared in the second half of the twentieth century in which improvisation was used in a radical form: in academic experimental music (Stockhausen's *intuitive music*) and in extra-academic sound activities (*free/spontaneous improvised music*, associated with the iconic figure of Derek Bailey). In artistic environments, organisations and associations dealing with improvised and intuitive art emerged (e.g. DIMC, <http://intuitivemusic.dk/intuitive/eimc.htm>), along with academic institutes studying the phenomenon of improvised activity (e.g. the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation at the University of Guelph, <http://improvisationinstitute.ca/>) and academic journals focusing on improvisation in art (e.g. *Critical Studies in Improvisation*, <http://www.criticalimprov.com>).

On the threshold of the third decade of the twenty-first century, we wish to take a look at improvisation in contemporary art. What is the current significance of this creative method? What is the status of research on improvised art as well as on improvisation as a mode of operation in general? Is improvised art developing, or, following its twentieth century explosion, has a period of stagnation begun? Has improvisation influenced the

understanding of art, thus differentiating it from the traditional paradigm? Has improvised art created its own distinctive forms, can it be captured by means of the categories we apply to non-improvisational art, or does it perhaps require new creative as well as new theoretical tools?

These are just a few of the questions that we wish to answer in a volume of *The Polish Journal of Aesthetics* devoted to the contemporary approach to improvisation. Additionally, we are open to any suggestions on topics related to improvisation in contemporary art. We are particularly interested in the practice of improvisation and reflections thereon within cultural areas for which it represents a new experience – areas which for various reasons did not take part in the twentieth-century boom of improvisational art, such as the countries of Eastern Europe or China.

We invite submissions from theoreticians in all areas of art and researchers studying models of activity, as well as from practitioners – artists who are actively involved in improvisation within the framework of their activities. We seek cross-sectional, descriptive, theoretical, and analytical texts as well as personal reflections, descriptions of method, etc. We would like the volume *Improvisation in contemporary art* to serve as a kind of insight into the practice of improvisation in art being practised today and into reflections on that art.

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