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## Uncertainty as a Creative Principle in Free Jazz Improvising<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

A significant part of the work of orchestras that interpret composed music is aimed at optimizing the coordination of activities between different musicians by means of time-consuming rehearsals, in order to reduce the degree of contingency of their performances to a minimum and thus to remain loyal to the musical composition, whose score has already been largely defined. However, in the case of free jazz we are confronted with a phenomenon, which counteracts this pursuit of certainty because it deliberately produces uncertainty, thereby stimulating the musicians' artistic productivity. By looking at the example of free jazz improvisation, I wish to tie two central topics in sociology into the following reflections: the structure of human action and the mutual coordination of action. Using these topics I will analyze certain aspects with regard to the contingency within a specific type of human action – improvising – and with regard to the related interactions. These aspects have received little attention in the empirical research until now.

Uncertainty plays a decisive role in free jazz improvising in three different respects: a) with respect to individual actions, b) with respect to the music and to the musical material employed, and c) with respect to interactions and their coordination. These three "levels of action" will be explained in the following sections.

### Individual action within free jazz improvising

Free jazz improvising can only be understood from the context in which this musical genre is rooted and/or from which it "liberated" itself: jazz. As Becker and Faulkner demonstrate, jazz musicians have a repertoire of *songs*,<sup>2</sup> i.e. melodies with a set harmonic structure.<sup>3</sup> *Songs* are thus short, formula-like compositions, which can take on one of many shapes, for example

the 12-bar scheme in blues with a simple harmonic structure, or the most frequently used scheme in jazz with 32 bars according to the AABA or ABAB form, in which each letter stands for a segment of eight beats. When jazz performers learn a *song*, they use this structure as a basis and add their variations to it.

In free jazz, by contrast, there is no repertoire of *songs* as described above, rather a "repertoire" of *material* (as described in the following paragraph), since the music which is played in this genre does not have a previously defined structure. Instead, this structure (which Noll describes as "sound surfaces,"<sup>4</sup> or *Klangflächen*) only results from the musical process. In cases of "total improvisation"<sup>5</sup> in free jazz, the musicians cannot orientate themselves towards binding musical parameters or "formulas," which would determine their actions: tonal or atonal, melodic, harmonic or temporal "bonds" between the musical elements, which musicians produce, only emerge in the process of playing. Moreover, free jazz performances can consist of improvisations within all musical parameters – hence the term "total improvisation." On the scale developed by Pressing categorizing different genres of improvised music between the poles "everything predetermined" and "everything invented," free jazz is placed near the latter with a score of over 90%.<sup>6</sup> It is striking that musicians tend to improvise simultaneously and not subsequently to one another, although "solos" certainly do occur. To do so, musicians indeed have certain musical *material*, which they have acquired or "learned to improvise" during their musical careers,<sup>7</sup> but they do not know in advance what *material* they will be using in the respective improvisation, or how it will be restructured, depending on the musical situation.

As will be shown below, free jazz oscillates between certainty and uncertainty. There is certainty with regard to the location or venue (jazz club, recording studio, etc.), the instruments used, and constellation of musicians, which usually lasts a long period of time. If

the formation (trio, quartet, etc.) has shared experiences of playing together over the long-term, it often develops certain musical dynamics and sound properties, resulting in a recognizable musical style of the group. However, the group's style<sup>8</sup> still does not allow listeners or the musicians to anticipate what sounds, tempo, intensity, and the like will be selected. Nor does it reveal what "direction" (will the sound density increase, for example?) the music being played will take, and when the improvisation will be over. Even if certain free jazz ensembles have "scores" which define musical motives, themes or parameters, Noll notes that in those areas in which total improvisation takes place the played music "detaches" itself from these motives; "a direct relationship between theme and improvisation can seldom be concretely specified."<sup>9</sup> And further: "The theme can be abandoned in any direction, thus in the 'opposite' direction as well;"<sup>10</sup> "the theme seldom has more than one 'warm-up function'"<sup>11</sup>. However, free jazz musicians are not concerned with creating absolute uncertainty, rather with keeping the music moving in an area of tension between certainty and uncertainty – and doing so in an aesthetically valuable, "balanced form." Yet "form" does not pertain to the idea of a musical work, which as a product of musical composition has a certain finalized structure that corresponds with the respective genre. Free jazz improvisations do not have a previously defined structure.

From an action theory perspective, free jazz improvisation appears to be a type of action, which does not comply with the notion of action as the realization of an action project.<sup>12</sup> If one assumes that action is by definition the realization of a plan that includes the means and ends of the action, free jazz improvisation cannot be entirely explained, because it is not teleological action.<sup>13</sup> The understanding of improvisation as routinized action also comes up short in explaining improvisation in action theory terms, because routinized action is the relatively automatic, uncreative repetition of a concrete action, which has already been carried out in the same manner. This kind of action, as we will see with the example of the *materials*, does not correspond with improvisation.

An action project does not appear to exist or is reduced to a minimum in the case of total improvisation.

Individual action is not steered by a musical idea already conceived by the musician before playing. Unlike when composed music is played, the piece of music which has been imagined does not yet exist as an action-guiding notion in the consciousness of the musician. If the musicians envisioned a concrete action plan, which would add certainty, but also inflexibility to their music, they would be blocked out from improvisation – as they have reported during our research project.<sup>14</sup>

Contrary to everyday pragmatic action, which tends to take place on the basis of action projects, we are instead dealing with a form of aesthetic action, which functions according to different principles that we shall analyze. "A significant problem for the improviser is the real-time condition, under which he/she operates. Unlike a composer, who is almost entirely unconstrained by running time and can correct written music at any time or restart from the beginning, the improviser is constrained by running time. For him or her it is a matter of coping with all the mistakes and decisions made. Any influence on the already played music can only take place in the form of a reinterpretation and recourse in the subsequently played music."<sup>15</sup>

In summary, musicians playing improvised free jazz act within a highly contingent context with regard to what exactly is being played, and their actions are constituted in the currently played music, which is to a large extent unplanned. In the case of total improvisation, music can develop in very different directions, which is why musicians cannot carry out their actions according to previously conceptualized actions, because "options"<sup>16</sup> only arise when the music is actually being played. The assumptions of those sociological theories, which conceptualize action exclusively as target-oriented, reflexive and calculative action, which is only aimed at realizing an action project, can thus be questioned. Furthermore, it can be noted that – since the evolution of jointly played music is of constitutive significance for individual actions – the levels of individual actions, the evolving music, and the group coordination are more difficult to analytically differentiate than one might assume. Theories examining the actions of isolated individuals come up short as explanations for total improvisation because they ignore the

constitutive significance of the concrete context for action.<sup>17</sup>

Since the degree of contingency is very high in this context, the free jazz musicians must be able to act and react to music within a split second. This is made possible by a particular *disposition*, which allows for creativity, spontaneity, and flexibility. It can be described as a mode of action, in which the “internal” focus is aimed at one’s own perceptions and at the same time at what the others are playing. Musicians are in a position to concentrate on the music without reflecting on what they are playing or will play – a condition which can be described according to Schütz as the non-reflexive attitude of the musician.<sup>18</sup> Along these lines, analytical control mechanisms are “shut off.” Therefore, the musicians experience improvisation as a deliberate “loss of control,” a “deliberate abandonment of the active desire to shape the music,” which enables the music to evolve or “happen.” This kind of “associative, daydreaming condition”<sup>19</sup> is experienced by the musicians as “extremely exciting or animating.” The musicians experience their role as the intermediary of a kind of music, which they cannot deliberately shape; rather, it “emerges from them.” Terms such as *impulse*, *reflex* and *muscle memory*, which are used by the musicians as explanations for their actions, indicate that the body plays a constitutive role in improvisational action. The deliberate abandonment of the desire to shape music when improvising, which is interpreted by some authors as “open access to the unconscious realm,”<sup>20</sup> thus appears to correspond with a shift towards the physical realm.

If improvising action cannot be understood as the realization of an action project, what alternative action theory explanations are there for such practices? I hypothesize that the category of the *material* – as described in the following – plays a central role in the explanation of improvisational actions.

### **The musical *material***

Free jazz improvisation occurs when musicians play (*offer*) musical *material* – as free jazz musicians describe their “sound reserve” – usually in a pre-reflexive manner. This term, which the academic literature has

paid little attention to, is crucial for understanding free jazz improvising, as it illustrates the empirical and theoretical link between individual action, music, and interactions in free jazz improvising.

In the following section I will elaborate on some initial reflections on this category, which is being further investigated in my research project. Alexander von Schlippenbach – a German pianist and main proponent of European free jazz – summarizes the various aspects comprising *material* in the following statement:

“I have found certain positions for both hands on the piano, in which six-tone series are possible, which I then wrote down in chord sequences. Of course I do not want to play several set sequences over and over again. Rather, I want to have this *material*, which I have ready in my fingers – that I have so-to-speak stored –, in order to be able to improvise in entirely different constellations, at different speeds, in different positions and contexts. [...] One must first work at having this *material* freely available.”<sup>21</sup>

This quote shows that *material* encompasses all dimensions of free jazz improvisation: the sensomotoric dimension, and those pertaining to the specific instrument, sounds and the playing process, memory, spontaneous design and modeling, and finally the dimension of the prepared sequences and sequences acquired through playing experience.

The motoric dimension of improvisation (a topic seldom researched in music psychology)<sup>22</sup> pertains, among other things, to the playing technique, i.e. the sensomotoric processes, on the basis of which certain sounds and noises can be produced by a specific instrument. Every musician has different *materials*, which are related to different playing techniques. Playing motorically-automated sequences primarily appears to facilitate improvisation, because they “occur to a large extent without cognitive mediation and thus disburden the ‘central executive,’ which can turn to more complicated tasks, namely problem-solving and planning.”<sup>23</sup> However, in the academic literature such automated sequences are seen as interfering factors with regard to the degree of spontaneity and innovation,<sup>24</sup> as automated, inflexible action is the opposite of flexible, creative action. However, this paradox becomes obsolete when the stored, automated sequen-

ces are regarded as a moment of the *material*, which can be modeled in real-time. I will explain how this is possible in the following.

The *material*, which belongs to the individual musician and cannot be regarded as a collective good, evolves for a specific instrument (or one's own voice), with which certain sounds or noises can be produced and which can both impose boundaries as well as open up non-infinite, yet highly diverse possibilities for the conventional and unconventional creation of sounds. *Material* thus indicates an additional central dimension of free jazz improvisation: the creative, spontaneous, and artistic dimension. Like modeling clay or colors, sounds can submit themselves to a musical "shape" (sound surface), because they are modeled or *kneaded* in "real-time" during the playing process: the tempo, pitch, texture, volume, and so on can be adapted to the current play situation. Thus the *material* cannot be regarded as a series of set sound sequences, which are incorporated on the basis of repeated rehearsal and always applied in the same manner to the improvisation process.<sup>25</sup> The uncertain *material* itself enables improvisation in the contingent situation of free jazz by providing the necessary flexibility to adapt one's own acting to the acting of the fellow musicians. This frequently "automated," non-reflexive type of action – contrary to routinized action – does not trigger and implement any typified projects for action.<sup>26</sup> What characterizes this disposition – contrary to the disposition according to Luckmann – is its uncertainty and the specification in the process of action itself.<sup>27</sup> Improvised music is thus an expression of the moment.<sup>28</sup> An action plan does not exist here or is reduced to a minimum; *material* functions as an impulse, as an approach to keep the music in motion, and is to this extent always a temporary arrangement, which changes in the course of interaction. Therefore, it is clear that it is not a matter of interpreting composed music. Instead, musicians exhaust an enormous reserve of raw material, which is modeled into new forms of music again and again in the process of improvisation.

Since the *material* can be freely modeled to a high degree, it is not decisive, at the beginning of an improvisation in particular, what *material* is applied in the playing process. Rather, the main question is how it is modeled during the process, i.e., how the musician

deals with the *material* and thus interactively creates music by adapting his/her *material* to the situation. These processes of adaptation and experimentation with well-known sounds simultaneously enable new *material* to emerge, with which the musicians in turn start to work to keep it "under control" (by improving their playing technique), and to incorporate it as part of their "language." It then forms a part of their knowledge reserve as experiences and skills that can be retrieved. This sound reserve can be understood as the dynamic knowledge and skills of a musician, which constantly change due to new musical experiences, because new possibilities for dealing with the instrument are discovered over and over again. However, the obvious structural similarity between the *materials* and language demands further research.<sup>29</sup> However, one must not forget that music is non-conceptual communication, which constitutes a fundamental difference to communication by speech.<sup>30</sup>

Because there is no predefined musical structure before playing in the case of total improvisation, the *material* comprises the moment of being unprepared, i.e., the idea that very different *material* can be used in the playing process, to which the fellow musicians react and respond back, and so on. *Material* is thus not yet "music," just like colors are not yet painted pictures. Combined and simultaneously played *materials* from different musicians can generate very different pieces of music, just like the same colors can result in different pictures and textures.

The fact that the free jazz saxophonist Evan Parker describes musical *material* as *tonal imagination* demonstrates not only the numerous creative possibilities permitted when working with the *material*, but also the fantasizing, artistic moment, the moments of leaving behind conventionality and exiting everyday life, as well as the change in the perceptions of reality and time, which are experienced when improvising.<sup>31</sup>

However, the concept of *material* also points to the moment of the prepared musician, because they have a sound reserve due to their practical experience: Although musicians can improvise all musical parameters during total improvisation, they do not invent everything from scratch while playing. They have learned to improvise the *material* that they have on hand. "Erimprovisieren" is a frequent term in the world of free

jazz, which emphasizes the aspect of the material as the result of the playing technique, playing experience and experimenting. *Material* is thus not only flexible and modifiable, but also can be identified and repeated, as is expressed in the statements of the musicians: "I have used similar material to what I previously used," "I wanted to go back to the material I started with," and so on.

*Material* additionally incorporates the interactive dimension of improvisation. Thanks to its flexibility and diversity, it provides the option to tie into what the others are playing: since the *material* being played while improvising has concrete features with regard to various musical parameters, such as pitch, tempo, intensity, volume, etc., it is essentially "correct" to play any kind of *material*, because it provides the possibility to "intertwine" with other *materials* by means of various musical parameters, for example, by analogy. Furthermore, played *material* can bond with different *materials*, which are not "bonded" or related, because the material can simultaneously relate to them. For example, it is possible that the saxophone imitates the piano melodically, while its tempo simultaneously relates to the drums and thus "bonds" with both instruments. In fact, playing one's own *material* as a form of derivation of the *material* of the fellow musicians – for example, by imitating at one or more parameters – is a very frequent pattern of behavior. A saxophone can tie into the musical "offer" of the piano. The saxophone can then respond to the piano or perhaps abandon the *material*. However, the reference to the *material* of the fellow musicians leads to dialogical dynamics, which can be elevated to very eventful processes. These dynamics can result between two or more instruments or voices.

The rules or criteria, by which the simultaneous playing of the musical *materials* leads to a successful form of music and which – in other words – determine what *materials* fit each other, are not explicit. The relatedness of the material, a frequently occurring pattern, is still no guarantee for "seasoned" music. From the viewpoint of the musicians, the general principle applies that one's own material must "comport itself" to that of the fellow musicians – there must be a connection. The phenomenon of repetition seems to play a central role here: as regards the "action options" of the musicians, Noll designed a model of total improvisati-

on,<sup>32</sup> with which he attempts to "answer the question what supersedes motivative relationships in cases of total improvisation and in what more general structures they merge into."<sup>33</sup> On the basis of empirical research on free jazz improvisations, he discovers that repetition constitutes a fundamental pattern of action. He divides this principle into three types of repetition: repetition within one voice (repetition), repetition by another voice (imitation), and changed repetition (variation). These forms result, in turn, in seven additional sub-forms, which lead to a complex model. However, the model of repetition must not disguise that they, as Noll notes, are very different phenomena. For example, repetition pertains to a soloistic process, while imitation is a collective process ("split repetition"). Globokar also develops an improvisational model and divides the repetition phenomenon similarly to Noll into "imitating," "integrating," "doing the opposite," "restraining oneself," and "doing something different."<sup>34</sup> According to Globokar, the "integrating variation" is the actual method applied when improvising.

In the interactive, dialogue-like situation of free jazz additional turn-taking criteria are not determined in advance; rather, they result interactively during the playing process. Due to its "shapability," the *material* provides for diverse ways to "abandon" it, intensify it, or model it in order to meet the needs of the currently and interactively played music. At the group level, the *material* is "negotiated," if group members are responsive to the "material offer" of the fellow musicians, let the music continue as such, or can problematize the music. One "agrees" or "does not agree" on a musical direction in the playing process.

Since the *material* is only "shaped" in the playing process and does not necessarily automatically conform in an aesthetically acceptable manner with what the fellow musicians are playing, *controlling* and *adjusting* are relevant procedures for improvisational actions, which point to the central component of cooperation and coordination when improvising. They allow the *materials* played by the musicians to be "intertwined," which can give rise to a musical "form" and "seasoned" music by the entire group. *Controlling* and *adjusting* cannot exclusively be interpreted as moments of reflexive action, although this can also be the case; instead these processes often take place in an

“automatic” manner. However, these two categories indicate that specific aesthetic criteria allow for a differentiation between “functioning” and “non-functioning” music. Nevertheless, these criteria are very different from musician to musician and depending on the ensemble.

A final, yet fundamental aspect of improvisation is also included in the category of the *material* and impacts all other previously described dimensions: aesthetics. *Material* is not only something that one “can play” and that one knows “how it works,” but also something that the musician “likes to hear.”

In order to understand the dialogue-like dynamics of free jazz improvisation, we must take into account that it is not a matter of playing a set piece of music, rather developing a musical movement. As Alexander von Schlippenbach states:

“But it moves forward, doesn’t it? That is very important for our music, which has been inspired for the most part by jazz [...]. And the art is being able to keep on playing. It is improvised but a relationship emerges and in my view the art is being able to keep on playing in this context. Because [...] a bad improvisation, can somehow produce an interesting sound event and then that falls apart and a new context comes about, and it keeps on moving. But we also strive to give rise to a musical flow. A forward movement – that is very important.”

### **Coordination during free jazz interactions**

In the previous section I have elaborated on all the properties of the *material*, which help explain the coordination of action between musicians under the contingent conditions. In this section, I will introduce some further thoughts to shed more light on this aspect.

Free jazz formations are de-centered interaction groups, i.e., there is no authority that assumes the group coordination, as is the case in an orchestra. This can be traced back to its historical origin (including bebop as a forerunner to free jazz) as a movement that was aimed against the highly hierarchical structures of the swing bands, which were to a large

degree influenced by the economic logic of the record companies and the cultural industry and, among other things, attached great significance to a high degree of standardization.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, the instruments do not follow a predetermined role, as is the case in other genres. For example, the piano may add percussion-like elements, while the drums produce tone-like sounds. On the one hand, the improvisation becomes more uncertain under these circumstances, but also more flexible on the other hand, so that the musicians intuitively react to the *material* of their fellow musicians and can coordinate their actions. In doing so – and this aspect is crucial – free jazz musicians coordinate with one another exclusively during the playing process and not on the basis of predetermined roles and scores. Free jazz is not about the implementation of an idea of musical “order,” which had been agreed upon in advance, rather it is about experimenting and experiencing the process of ordering over and over again. During the improvisation process in free jazz, musical material is “offered” by means of musical communication. Musicians then react to this, which not only produces an automatic moment of coordination, but also “conflicts” or “misunderstandings” which can result from the divergence of the expectations of musicians as well as from the boundaries of one’s own instrument or own body. In retrospect, such “disruptions” do not need to be aesthetically useless. A successful improvisation can certainly incorporate them. In this regard, assumed mistakes in free jazz are not negatively sanctioned, as is the case in other musical genres.

An additional factor that facilitates coordination is the fact that the groups often have many years of experience in playing together. Thus, they can develop certain group-specific playing criteria and their own “language,” which facilitate communication and coordination. However, it is also possible for free jazz musicians who have never played together before to create music together and produce successful improvisations. On the other hand, the fact that musicians have already played together for a very long time cannot guarantee successful improvisation. The perception of what and how the others are *currently* playing is decisive for their coordination. A central component here is listening to what the fellow musicians play. This takes place on a level of concentration, on which listening

pre-reflexively leads to direct reactions. Free jazz – to the extent that it “works” – gives rise to a highly dynamic, multi-faceted whole, which consists of reciprocal musical action. Listening is so crucial because the uncertainty about what the others will play forces the respective musician to concentrate extremely intensely on the music of the others, in order to quickly and spontaneously “make his or her own statement” about what the others are playing. Thus, in this regard, improvisation demands a high degree of alertness.

The phenomenon of improvisatory action, which has hardly been researched on the basis of sociological action theory, is increasingly attracting scholarly attention. Analyses of improvising can provide a new impetus for conceptualizing human action and interactions during aesthetic activities. The reflections in this article shall hopefully provide a contribution to such analyses.

## Endnotes

- The word “improvising” is preferred over “improvisation,” since the object of the reflections presented here is not the final performance but the process of performing an improvisation.
- Cursive words pertain to first-order categories, i.e., categorizes what represents common terms and metaphors in the world of free jazz.
- Becker and Faulkner 2006; see also Pressing 2002, p. 203.
- See Noll 1977.
- See *ibid.*: pp. 3 et seq. and 91 et seq.
- Pressing 1984; see also Stoffer and Oerter 2005, p. 919.
- See Noll 1977, p. 79 and Behrendt 1973, p. 126.
- The fact that a style can be recognized does not mean that every improvisation is predictable. Nor does it mean that formations playing together for many years “always play the same thing” or “always combine the same things,” just as no one could claim that the recognizable style of a painter always produces the same pictures.
- Noll 1977, p. 43.
- Ibid.*, p. 53.
- Ibid.*, p. 72.
- The action theory reflections discussed here draw for the most part from relevant works by Alfred Schütz (in particular Schütz and Luckmann 2003, pp 445–586) and Thomas Luckmann (1992), albeit with a degree of critical distance. They offer detailed descriptions of the internal structure of action and thus one of the few explicit sociological *action* theories.
- See Lothwesen 2009, p. 35.
- This is an empirical, qualitative project directed by Silvana K. Figueroa-Dreher, “Improvisation as a ‘new’ type of action: An action theory explanation of musical improvisation.” Within the project, three free jazz trios were each asked to improvise in a recording studio and were audiovisually recorded during the performances. Afterwards they were confronted with the audiovisual material containing the improvisations and were interviewed. Also, each musician was interviewed individually and asked to reconstruct his action with regard to a specific improvisation piece that the trio had deemed “successful.” The interviews served as the basis to reconstruct the improvising action and interaction processes from the perspective of the musicians. The analysis of the data was conducted with the help of the Grounded Theory method of Anselm L. Strauss (see Strauss 1994).
- Lehmann 2005, p. 923.
- The term “action options” should not be understood to the extent that the different options which arise when playing are considered, compared, and then chosen by the musician. Instead the playing process takes place according to a non-reflexive mode of action, although this is not always the case.
- See Figueroa-Dreher 2008a, p. 397.
- See Schütz 1976, pp. 38–42.
- Lehmann 2005, p. 932.
- See Stoffer/Oerter 2005, p. 932.
- Cit. in Wilson 1999, p. 148.
- See Lehmann 2005, p. 930.
- Lehmann 2005, p. 925.
- See *ibid.*, p. 930.
- See Lehmann (2005, p. 932) for a critique of the simplifying “motive” theory, which assumes that patterns and prefabricated stereotypes are the foundation for improvisation processes.
- See Luckmann 1992, pp. 48–92.
- See *ibid.*, p. 69.
- See Figueroa-Dreher 2008b.
- For the analogy between improvisation and the production of language see Johnson-Laird 2002.
- See Schütz 1972.
- See Rora 2008 and Figueroa-Dreher 2008b.
- Noll 1977, pp. 91–143.
- Noll 1977, p. 91.
- Globokar 1971.
- See Belgrad 1998, pp. 179–195.

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## Abstract

A significant part of the work of orchestras that interpret composed music is aimed at optimizing the coordination of activities between different musicians by means of time-consuming rehearsals, in order to reduce the degree of contingency of their performances to a minimum and thus to remain loyal to the musical composition, whose score has already been largely defined. However, in the case of free jazz we are confronted with a phenomenon, which counteracts this pursuit of certainty because it deliberately produces uncertainty, thereby stimulating the musicians' artistic productivity. By looking at the example of free jazz improvisation, I wish to tie two central topics in sociology into the following reflections: the structure of human action and the mutual coordination of action. Using these topics I will analyze certain aspects with regard to the contingency within a specific type of human action – improvising – and with regard to the related interactions. These aspects have received little attention in the empirical research until now.

Uncertainty plays a decisive role in free jazz improvising in three different respects: a) with respect to individual actions, b) with respect to the music and to the musical material employed, and c) with respect to interactions and their coordination. These three "levels of action" will be explained in the following sections.

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## Title

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