

## Analyzing the Music of the Art Ensemble of Chicago

Recently, ethnomusicologists and music theorists have proposed a new analytical model for improvised jazz, centered on group interaction. In this article, I argue that Art Ensemble of Chicago performances are organized by 'interactive frameworks', compositional-improvisational schemas that encompass the interpersonal, the music-structural, and the extramusical aspects of the group's multi-disciplinary performative methodology. The article concludes with interactive-framework analyses of two Art Ensemble concerts from 1972 and 1981.

*Improvisation is something that we grew up with, not only in music but also in life. We've always thought of improvisation. A lot of people want to deal with improvisation in different ways, but from what I've seen it's a word that never goes away. It's definitely something to be dealt with.* - Roscoe Mitchell<sup>1</sup>

The first, and perhaps best-known, analysis of improvised jazz was Gunther Schuller's 'Sonny Rollins and the Challenge of Thematic Improvisation', which appeared in the inaugural issue of *The Jazz Review*.<sup>2</sup> In this article, Schuller argued that the ideals of 'thematic and structural unity' defined not only the best Western art-music compositions, but also the most successful jazz improvisations. Since the publication of Schuller's influential essay, many music theorists who study jazz have analyzed instances of motivic development in recorded improvisations.<sup>3</sup> Other music theorists have used Schenkerian-style linear-analysis procedures to analyze tonal structures in bebop,<sup>4</sup> or employed pitch-class segmentation techniques to analyze non-tonal melodic and chordal structures in early 'free jazz' and its post-bebop antecedents.<sup>5</sup>

The various analytical schools outlined above map onto some of the dominant methodologies developed for the analysis of Western art music. It is not surprising that this is so. Music theorists who have been trained in the Schenkerian tradition, to give an example, possess considerable facility with Schenkerian analytical techniques, and for them a transcription of a tonal jazz improvisation can be analyzed just as easily as a Western art-music score. Still, there is more to analysis than finding a good match between an existing analytical technique and a piece of music. The act of analysis enables a music theorist to make an essentially empirical claim about a piece of music, a composer (or improviser), a musical style, or a performance practice: for instance, '[W]ith Rollins thematic and structural unity have at last achieved the importance in pure improvisation that elements such as swing, melodic conception, and originality of expression have already enjoyed for many years,' as Gunther Schuller wrote.<sup>6</sup> When music theorists analyze different pieces of music in parallel ways, they are not only contributing to a shared analytical discourse; they

1 Mitchell 2006.

2 Schuller 1958.

3 See Cogswell 1994-1995; Kenny 1999; Kernfeld 1983; Korman 1999; Owens 1974; Tirro 1974.

4 See Larson 1993, 1996, 1997-1998, 1998, 1999; Martin 1996, 2006; Stewart 1973.

5 See Block 1990, 1993, 1997; Kurzdorfer 1996; Pressing 1982.

6 Schuller 1958, p. 6.

are creating a consensus about the common features of those musical pieces (or styles, or performance practices).

In the past two decades, ethnomusicologists and music theorists have arrived at a new consensus view of improvised jazz. For these analysts - Paul Berliner, Robert Hodson, Travis Jackson, Ingrid Monson, Paul Reinholdsson, and Paul Rinzler - the defining feature of improvised jazz is group interaction.<sup>7</sup> In her book *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*, Ingrid Monson asserted that '[a] small jazz band provides a framework for musical interaction among players who take as their goal the achievement of a groove or feeling - something that unites the improvisational roles of the piano, bass, drums, and soloist into a satisfying musical whole. The shape, timbral color, and intensity of the journey [are] at every point shaped by the interacting musical personalities of band members, who take into consideration the roles expected of their musical instruments within the group.'<sup>8</sup> According to Monson, 'meaningful theorizing about jazz improvisation' - including empirical music-analytic work - 'must take the interactive, collaborative context of musical invention as a point of departure.'<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Robert Hodson's recent *Interaction, Improvisation, and Interplay in Jazz* was based on his claim that 'jazz musicians do not improvise in isolation, and that a jazz performance is as much about what happens *between* musicians as it is about each musician's individual improvisation.'<sup>10</sup>

Through their analytical work, the interactionists have ensured that the significance of ensemble interaction - a long-neglected aspect of improvised jazz performance - is broadly recognized among music theorists, historical musicologists, and ethnomusicologists. Still, the interactionist school of jazz analysis shares one notable limitation with the motivic-development, Schenkerian, and pitch-class-set analytical schools: a reluctance to confront newer jazz styles that emerged in the past forty years, from the post-'New Thing' avant-garde to fusions of jazz with rock, electronic music and countless global musical traditions. With very few exceptions, most published analyses of jazz have focused on recordings made before the late 1960s (or new recordings by musicians who perform in 'older' styles). One possible explanation for this lacuna in the jazz-analysis literature is the increasing stylistic diversity in jazz (and jazz-derived forms such as 'improvised music') since the late 1960s. In recent decades, many musicians, ensembles, and collectives in North America, Europe, and elsewhere have created relatively unique 'musical languages' that demand the construction of new listening strategies and analytical methodologies. The members of the Chicago-based African American musicians' organization known as the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), for instance, crafted in the late 1960s and early 1970s 'a hybrid compositional-improvisative discourse,' in the words of AACM historian George E. Lewis, 'that incorporated insights, sounds, techniques, and methods from a variety of areas, including European high musical modernism.'<sup>11</sup>

In this article, I respond analytically to the distinctive 'compositional-improvisative' performance practice of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, an AACM group that evolved

7 See Berliner 1994; Hodson 2007; Jackson 1998; Monson 1996; Reinholdsson 1998; Rinzler 1988.

8 Monson 1996, p. 26.

9 Monson 1996, p. 74. Later in *Saying Something*, Monson contended that '[a]t the moment of performance, jazz improvisation quite simply has nothing in common with a text (or its musical equivalent, the score) for it is music composed through face-to-face interaction' (Monson 1996, p. 80). In a series of recent publications, Nicholas Cook argued that the performance of 'score-centered' Western art music also depends on real-time interaction (Cook 2004, 2005).

10 Hodson 2007, p. viii.

11 Lewis 2004, p. 16.

from a series of 1960s bands led by AACM founding member Roscoe Mitchell.<sup>12</sup> One of the greatest challenges faced by journalists, critics, and academics writing about the Art Ensemble is simply deciding what to focus on. Art Ensemble performance practice is fundamentally multi-disciplinary: their concerts are characterized by elements of theater and ritual, performance art and poetry recitations, and visual displays created by costumed performers moving through space and playing an enormous collection of literally hundreds of instruments. The Art Ensemble references and re-contextualizes sounds and styles from the African American tradition and the African diaspora as well as musics from 'eastern and western Europe, China, Japan, South America - in short, the music of the whole earth,' in George E. Lewis's description.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, since their Paris debut in June 1969, the members of the Art Ensemble have offered eloquent explanations of their work - centering on the band's slogan, 'Great Black Music, Ancient to the Future' - that many writers have regarded as provocative and difficult to synthesize into a unified description of the Art Ensemble's musical and artistic legacy. According to literary scholar Bruce Tucker, 'it is possible to see virtually anything we wish' in the Art Ensemble: 'programmatic Afrocentricity, Pan-Africanist transcendence, sinuous diasporic filiations, avant-garde shamanism, playful postmodernism, avatars of 'authenticity', or - perhaps the easiest way out - a great and mysterious synthesis well beyond the reach of the dead hand of analysis.'<sup>14</sup>

Even in the small international community of music theorists who study jazz and other improvisatory practices, there is no real consensus on how to analyze the Art Ensemble's music. German saxophonist and musicologist Martin Pfeleiderer, in his dissertation on the Art Ensemble's early recordings, constructed *Verlaufsdigramme* - charts delineating how the musicians move from instrument to instrument - in order to show that 'rapid alterations of (...) instrumental combinations and musical episodes predominate' in Art Ensemble collective improvisations.<sup>15</sup> American composer Matthew Kiroff conducted a spectrographic analysis of 'Caseworks', a performance by the Art Ensemble and pianist Cecil Taylor, to demonstrate how the Art Ensemble and Taylor fluctuated between periods of rhythmic 'stasis' and 'active' moments governed by a rhythmic pulse.<sup>16</sup> Finally, American saxophonist and ethnomusicologist David Borgo employed computerized fractal analysis to investigate timbral and dynamic variation in two Art Ensemble recordings (and other recordings of improvised music). Borgo's use of computers to analyze improvisation was motivated, he stated, by his belief that attempting to notate improvisations characterized by 'sonic complexity' would be 'near-impossible', and 'arguably a fruitless task as well'.<sup>17</sup>

My research on the Art Ensemble is guided by my desire to better understand the Art Ensemble's performance practice, as well as by the idea that an analytical methodology designed specifically for the Art Ensemble could shed light not just on the Art Ensemble's performance practice, but also on the broad range of creative traditions that the group draws on, from jazz and improvised music to theater and performance art. I also want to develop an analytical approach that is more comprehensive than the more narrowly focused methods offered by Martin Pfeleiderer, Matthew Kiroff, and David Borgo. Pfeleiderer portrayed two principal components of Art Ensemble performance practice, 'musical idioms originating in Afro-American tradition' and 'free collective improvisation'

12 For more on the Art Ensemble's origins, see Beauchamp 1998. George E. Lewis's definitive history of the AACM, *A Power Stronger than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music*, is forthcoming from the University of Chicago Press.

13 Lewis 1998, p. 87.

14 Tucker 1997, p. 29.

15 Pfeleiderer 1997, p. 157.

16 See Kiroff 1997.

17 Borgo 2005, p. 90.

as absolutely separate, and restricted his analyses to freely improvised passages.<sup>18</sup> In my analytical work, I regard the Art Ensemble's various performative modes as unified by the phenomenon of interactive ensemble improvisation, and accordingly as fully analyzable in the interpersonal, music-structural, and extramusical domains. Both Kiroff and Borgo utilized electronically-mediated analytical techniques - spectrographic analysis and fractal analysis, respectively - to reveal non-transcribable sonic features of Art Ensemble recordings. In contrast, my analytical diagrams incorporate Western staff notation as well as selected graphic symbols that I learned from studying Art Ensemble scores and from my experiences performing with a number of AACM musicians, from Art Ensemble saxophonist Joseph Jarman to Fred Anderson, Mwata Bowden, and Douglas Ewart. Essentially, my notation system sacrifices some visual detail in order to represent certain sonic and interactive features of Art Ensemble performances in a substantially idiomatic way. Finally, all of my analytical work is significantly informed by my conversations and communications with the members of the Art Ensemble, including two recent interviews with Art Ensemble percussionist Don Moye that I will reference later in this paper.

At the center of my analytical methodology is a theoretical concept that I call an 'interactive framework'. I have adapted this term from Ingrid Monson, who (as quoted above) postulated that '[a] small jazz band provides a framework for musical interaction among players who take as their goal the achievement of a groove or feeling.'<sup>19</sup> Employing a linguistic analogy, Monson described the 'groove' as an 'interactional text [or layer] within the ensemble'; other 'interactional texts' characteristic of jazz performances include the composition on which the group improvisation is based, and related intermusical and cultural references.<sup>20</sup> Here Monson is making a theoretical distinction between the interpersonal ('a framework for musical interaction among players') and the music-structural (the 'groove', the composition, and so on), in an effort to construct a general model of jazz improvisation applicable to any group of musicians performing any jazz piece. For the purposes of my analytical methodology, I intend the interactive framework concept to encompass the interpersonal, the music-structural, and the extramusical qualities of Art Ensemble performance practice; the Art Ensemble's years of rehearsing and performing together ensured that by the early 1970s, the interpersonal, the music-structural, and the extramusical were intertwined, perhaps inseparable.<sup>21</sup>

My interactive frameworks are roughly analogous to Leonard Meyer's 'style systems'. In *Emotion and Meaning in Music*, Meyer defined musical styles as 'complex systems of sound relationships understood and used in common by a group of individuals' - in other words, musical structures that are experienced interpersonally among a community of composers, performers, and auditors.<sup>22</sup> Certainly one of the most compelling aspects of listening to the Art Ensemble is hearing the musicians manipulate 'complex systems of sound relationships' along the 'Great Black Music' stylistic continuum. The principal focus of my analytical approach, however, is the improvisatory process, rather than the embodied listening experience that interested Meyer. Meyer's theory centered on the perceptions of a constructed listener whose informed expectations while listening

18 Pfeleiderer 1997, p. 157.

19 Monson 1996, p. 27.

20 Monson 1996, p. 189.

21 The 'classic' Art Ensemble - Lester Bowie, Malachi Favors, Joseph Jarman, Roscoe Mitchell, and Don Moye - was formed in several stages. Bowie, Favors, and Mitchell had been working together as a trio (the 'Roscoe Mitchell Art Ensemble') since the summer of 1967, when their drummer Phillip Wilson left Chicago for California to join the Paul Butterfield Blues Band (Litweiler 1969, p. 21). Jarman joined the group for their venture to Paris in May 1969 (Beauchamp 1998, p. 73). The Art Ensemble hired Moye in Paris during the summer of 1970 (Beauchamp 1998, p. 60).

22 Meyer 1956, p. 45.

create a musically meaningful experience, as syntactical systems of implication and realization play against stylistic norms. In contrast, my analytical methodology adopts an ‘improviser’s perspective’, synthesized from my interviews with the members of the Art Ensemble as well as my own experience as an improviser. Using this constructed improviser’s perspective, I can describe the interpersonal and the structural dimensions of Art Ensemble interactive frameworks (including ‘Great Black Music’ styles and multi-disciplinary modes of performance), and ultimately analyze how the members of the Art Ensemble invoke, reproduce, rework, and signify upon these interactive frameworks through the improvisatory process.

Because of the ‘hybrid compositional-improvisative’ approach to music-making the members of the Art Ensemble absorbed from the AACM during the 1960s, Art Ensemble interactive frameworks often cannot be readily classified as exclusively compositional or improvisational - indeed, the terms ‘composition’ and ‘improvisation’ only hold limited explanatory value in the context of analyzing Art Ensemble performances. During the marathon rehearsals that precede Art Ensemble concerts and tours, the musicians practice their repertoire of compositions without engaging in ‘actual improvisation.’<sup>23</sup> Immediately before a performance, the musicians typically commit to memory a brief ‘set list’ of compositions and improvisational frameworks;<sup>24</sup> during the performance, however, the musicians ‘leave that sketch open to change’ - they may interpret compositions in new ways, omit pieces from the ‘set list’, introduce unrehearsed compositions spontaneously, or freely improvise musical textures that refer to characteristic Art Ensemble interactive frameworks.<sup>25</sup>

A good example of how interactive frameworks function in Art Ensemble performance practice can be seen on *Live from the Jazz Showcase*, a video recording of a 1 November 1981 Art Ensemble concert in Chicago.<sup>26</sup> At the 26:12 mark in the video, Malachi Favors starts playing a two-measure vamp on contrabass, which is presented in Example 1.<sup>27</sup>



*Example 1*

Malachi Favors’s bass vamp.

This particular bass pattern occurs in a number of Roscoe Mitchell’s compositions for the Art Ensemble, including ‘A Jackson in Your House’, ‘Duffvipels’, and ‘Get in Line’.<sup>28</sup> The medium tempo that Favors adopts here (about 150 beats per minute) is best suited for ‘A Jackson in Your House’: ‘Duffvipels’ is often performed as a New Orleans-style ‘slow drag’,<sup>29</sup> while ‘Get in Line’ is normatively performed at twice the tempo of ‘A Jackson in Your House’.

23 Lewis 1998, p. 75.

24 Moye 2007a.

25 Lester Bowie quoted in Bowie and Favors 1994.

26 Art Ensemble of Chicago 1981.

27 With the exception of Example 3, all of the examples in this paper are my own transcription-sketches. The examples represent pitches in the keys and registers native to the instruments being played, as in a transposing score. The text refers to pitches at ‘concert pitch’, and adopts the convention in which middle C is labeled C<sub>4</sub>. The two-letter codes at the left of each staff are the musicians’ initials: ‘LB’ is Lester Bowie, ‘MF’ is Malachi Favors, etc.

28 The Art Ensemble first recorded ‘A Jackson in Your House’ and ‘Get in Line’ for BYG in Paris (Art Ensemble of Chicago 1969a). ‘Duffvipels’ appears on *Live*, which will be discussed later in this paper (Art Ensemble of Chicago 1974b).

29 Moye 2007a.

Of course, Favors's bass line does not have to invoke any of these compositional interactive frameworks; as the prototypical 'march' bass pattern, it can function equally well within a collectively improvised march, a common Art Ensemble interactive framework.

About thirty seconds after Favors introduces the bass vamp, Don Moye starts playing what he describes as 'bird calls' - noisemakers used by hunters to attract game birds - to produce comical laughter-like sounds.<sup>30</sup> Moye usually employs these bird calls during renditions of 'A Jackson in Your House'; by playing the bird calls at this point in the performance, Moye is interpreting Favors's bass line as a component of the 'A Jackson in Your House' interactive framework. However, the rest of the musicians avoid moving directly into 'A Jackson in Your House': Joseph Jarman and Roscoe Mitchell switch rapidly from one wind instrument to another, creating a colorful, fragmented texture and complementing the bright timbres of Moye's bird calls. Lester Bowie falls silent until 28:01, when he fires blanks at the audience with a pistol, then plays a string of non-metric attacks on his concert bass drum. Hearing this, Favors abandons the bass line he has played for nearly two minutes, and moves to percussion - first a bullroarer, then a West African *balafon*. Soon all the musicians are playing percussion instruments (except Mitchell, who continues alternating between various reed instruments and flutes). At this point, the 'A Jackson in Your House' interactive framework has completely receded, along with the related network of 'compositional-improvisative' interactive frameworks that share the bass pattern shown in Example 1. A six-minute percussion-dominated collective improvisation ensues, followed by a rubato version of the Albert Ayler composition 'Bells', led by Bowie on fluegelhorn and Mitchell on tenor saxophone, and supported by the rest of the musicians on percussion.<sup>31</sup> Like 'A Jackson in Your House', 'Bells' is in the key of F major. At the conclusion of 'Bells', Bowie and Mitchell play a lengthy cadenza on the C major 'dominant' harmony; underneath the cadenza, Favors decides to re-introduce the bass vamp that he discarded almost ten minutes earlier (Example 1). Moye quickly responds with the bird calls associated with 'A Jackson in Your House', then switches to drumset to play 'time' with Favors. Within seconds Bowie, Jarman, and Mitchell decide to join the 'A Jackson in Your House' interactive framework, and the band finally plays the composition in its entirety.

This brief analytical sketch was designed to show the connections between the music-structural properties of several interrelated Art Ensemble interactive frameworks and the interpersonal dynamics that emerge in performance, as the musicians collectively negotiate how the group improvisation will proceed. Of course, other Art Ensemble interactive frameworks are circumscribed not by specific tonal and rhythmic information, but by timbral features and idiosyncratic instrumentation: the plucked-string and small-percussion textures underneath Joseph Jarman's poetry recitations on 'Erika' and 'Illistrum', or the gong-and-bell-orchestra passages that appear on dozens of Art Ensemble recordings, for example.<sup>32</sup> In the analytical example that concludes this paper, I want to discuss the structural relationships and historical continuities between distinct interactive frameworks from multiple Art Ensemble performances while also illustrating the improviser's perspective employed in my analytical methodology.

Near the end of the 15 January 1972 concert at the University of Chicago documented on the Delmark album *Live*,<sup>33</sup> the members of the Art Ensemble are engaged in what Don

30 Moye 2007b.

31 Moye 2007b.

32 'Erika' is on *A Jackson in Your House* (Art Ensemble of Chicago 1969a). The version of 'Illistrum' featuring Jarman's mythic poem 'Odawalla' was recorded for the Atlantic album *Fanfare for the Warriors* (Art Ensemble of Chicago 1974a). For the text of 'Odawalla', see Jarman 1977, pp. 46-47.

33 Art Ensemble of Chicago 1974b.

Moye calls ‘an improvisational transition, collective creativity, collective composition.’<sup>34</sup> The band has just finished an extended passage of ‘intense’, high-energy ensemble playing and is in the midst of a pacific Malachi Favors bass solo, accompanied by Roscoe Mitchell on clarinet.<sup>35</sup> The group energy level falls significantly at the end of many Art Ensemble performances, typically just before the band finishes the concert with an up-tempo closing piece such as Mitchell’s ‘Odwalla’. Former Art Ensemble manager Marty Khan suggested that this was a deliberate performance-pacing strategy: ‘They could play a set which could - at best - be described as really mediocre, but if they ended with five minutes of a killer version of ‘Dreaming of the Master’ or a Spanish piece, the audience would go out flying.(...) When that crowd left, you would have thought they walked out of a George Clinton performance.’<sup>36</sup> Perhaps an equally likely explanation for the energy arc of many Art Ensemble performances would be the natural attrition of the musicians’ stamina after a long, physically demanding performance (which, in the case of the 15 January 1972 concert, lasted more than seventy minutes). In addition, a period of relative calm would give the musicians an opportunity to execute the final composition on the ‘set list’ in a coordinated, unified fashion - ensuring the enthusiastic audience response described by Marty Khan.

The last entry on the 15 January 1972 ‘set list’ was the Lester Bowie-Don Moye composition ‘Mata Kimasu’, a short funk-style piece in the key of D. At 70:51 Favors - perhaps in preparation for ‘Mata Kimasu’ - starts to direct his solo toward a D tonal center by playing *arco* harmonics <A4-D5-G5> across the D and G strings of his contrabass (not notated in Example 2). Mitchell responds with a series of faint long tones in the middle register of his B $\flat$  clarinet, then ventures into the upper register to play two slow-paced phrases (beginning at 72:35 and 72:46 respectively) that outline the lower third of the D-minor scale <D5-E5-F5>, shown in Example 2/Audio example 1.<sup>37</sup>

### Example 2

Assembling the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Audio example 1).

After Mitchell’s second phrase Bowie enters on Harmon-muted trumpet, matching the timbre of Mitchell’s clarinet and assuming the lead role in the emerging interactive

34 Moye 2007a.

35 In AACM circles and among the members of the Art Ensemble, the term ‘intense’ (or typically, ‘intensity’) refers to an aggressive post-bebop performance style often associated with the mid-1960s ‘New Thing’ movement that developed in New York contemporaneously with the 1965 founding of the AACM (Moye 2007a).

36 Khan 2006.

37 The audio examples for this article can be accessed via the internet on: [www.djmt.nl](http://www.djmt.nl). I am grateful to Delmark Records and the Art Ensemble of Chicago Publishing Co. (ASCAP) for their permission to use examples from their copyrighted material.

framework (in Art Ensemble performance practice, passages in which Bowie plays muted trumpet almost always feature Bowie as the principal melodic ‘voice’). Bowie’s lines, like Mitchell’s, are in the key of D minor; the D-minor tonality is confirmed when Favors initiates a D5 *arco* tremolo at 73:13 (not notated in Example 2). In the context of the entire concert this passage clearly functions as an ‘improvisational transition’ leading toward ‘Mata Kimasu’; however, as the interactive framework evolves, the music sounds increasingly like an allusion to the Roscoe Mitchell composition ‘People in Sorrow’, particularly when Joseph Jarman joins on flute at 73:17 (see Example 2).<sup>38</sup>

The image shows a musical score for 'People in Sorrow' in D minor, 4/4 time. The score is written on two staves. The first staff begins with a Dm chord and a melodic line starting on G4. The second staff continues the melody and includes several chords: E7, A7, E7, A7, and Dm. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Example 3  
‘People in Sorrow’ score.

‘People in Sorrow’ is based on a somber, aphoristic D-minor theme that in performance is repeated again and again, embellished, and occasionally shrouded (see Example 3).<sup>39</sup> Mitchell’s groups had been performing ‘People in Sorrow’ since the mid-1960s,<sup>40</sup> and the composition remained in the Art Ensemble’s repertoire through the 1990s.<sup>41</sup> Though the melodies Bowie plays in the present interactive framework are not explicitly related to ‘People in Sorrow’, the long tones performed by Jarman and Mitchell strongly resemble aspects of the ‘People in Sorrow’ theme (in particular, its durational profile), as well as the voice-leading structures defined by the three harmonies used in ‘People in Sorrow’: D minor, E7, and A7 (see Example 4/Audio example 2 and Example 5/Audio example 3).

After Jarman’s entrance, the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework can be divided into four sub-sections, each about twenty or thirty seconds in length, shown in Example 4, Example 5, Example 6, and Example 7. Twice during the first segment (in Example 4), Jarman’s Ab4 - Eb4 line echoes the chromatic melody at the end of the ‘People in Sorrow’ theme, where the E7 - A7 - D minor cadential progression is outlined by two parallel, descending contours: G#3 [Ab3] - G3 - F3 and E4 - Eb4 - D4 (in Example 3).

During the second segment (in Example 5) Bowie plays three pairs of angular, triadic phrases, sounding not unlike fellow St. Louis trumpeter Miles Davis; Jarman restricts his flute line to a narrow band around A4, the central pitch of the preceding segment.

38 Regarding the possibility that the musicians are alluding to ‘People in Sorrow’ at this point in *Live*, I am reminded of pianist and composer Vijay Iyer’s suggestion that many improvisers are ‘concerned more with making individual improvisations relate to *each other* (...) [than] (...) obeying some standard of coherence on the scale of the single improvisation’ (Iyer 2004, p. 400).

39 Example 3 is based upon Roscoe Mitchell’s autograph score of ‘People in Sorrow’, which I found in the Art Ensemble archives in Chicago with the assistance of Don Moye and Art Ensemble manager Kevin Beauchamp. For the sake of clarity I have added a key signature to the score.

40 Welding 1966, p. 48.

41 The most famous recording of ‘People in Sorrow’ is the album-length version tracked shortly after the Art Ensemble arrived in Paris (Art Ensemble of Chicago 1969b). For an analysis of this performance, see Borgo 2005, p. 113. Other recorded versions of ‘People in Sorrow’ can be heard on Art Ensemble of Chicago 1970 and Art Ensemble of Chicago 2007 (which was recorded in 1991).



*Example 4*

First segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Audio example 2).

*Example 5*

Second segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Audio example 3).

*Example 6*

Third segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Audio example 4).

Bowie commences the third segment by leaping into the upper register of his horn (in Example 6). Mitchell counters by returning to the lower register, an octave below Bowie, and exits the texture at 74:24, followed by Favors a few seconds later. Jarman interprets Mitchell and Favors’s absence as an opportunity to end the interactive framework and proceed into ‘Mata Kimasu’; he returns to the  $A\flat_4 - E\flat_4$  line he played in the first subphrase, then creates a temporary sense of melodic/harmonic closure by resolving  $E\flat_4$  to  $D_4$  (Example 6/Audio example 4).

Almost immediately, though, Jarman seemingly changes his mind and plays another  $A_4$  long tone (shown in Example 7/Audio example 5). Bowie answers with an upper-register phrase that reaches nearly to  $D_5$  before descending, and Mitchell returns to play one short phrase before exiting again. For an instant only Jarman remains, and once more he tries to cue ‘Mata Kimasu’ by playing his semi-cadential  $A\flat_4 - E\flat_4$  line. However, Bowie

overrules Jarman with a concluding phrase of his own, and ultimately he and Jarman decide to let the interactive framework dissolve (Example 7).

*Example 7*

Fourth segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Audio example 5).

Still, this non-resolution/dissolution ultimately functions just as well as a clean ending to the interactive framework would have, since Favors is poised with the ‘Mata Kimasu’ bass line, which he starts playing at 75:05 (see Example 8/Audio example 6). Don Moye and the rest of the musicians enter in short succession, and within a minute ‘Mata Kimasu’ has ended - the concert is over - the audience applauds.

*Example 8*

‘Mata Kimasu’ bass line (Audio example 6).

In this analytical example, I attempted to demonstrate the usefulness of an improviser’s perspective analytical orientation founded on my personal experience as an improvising performer and my dialogues with the members of the Art Ensemble, while establishing the necessity of analyzing the music of the Art Ensemble in the context of the group’s long history rehearsing and performing together. Group improvisation is at the core of the Art Ensemble’s music and multi-disciplinary performance practice, and accordingly the interpersonal, structural, and historical dimensions of the Art Ensemble’s approach to performance are the focal points of my analytical methodology. In a musical and artistic world increasingly interpenetrated by improvisatory practice, particularistic research - in which the nature of the analytical subject suggests the analytical methodology - on a wide range of approaches to improvisation could reveal much about the unifying features that define the human phenomenon of improvisation, which is only beginning to be understood.

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## Audio examples on [www.djmt.nl](http://www.djmt.nl)

- Audio example 1. Assembling the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Graphic example 2).  
Audio example 2. First segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Graphic example 4).  
Audio example 3. Second segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Graphic example 5).  
Audio example 4. Third segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Graphic example 6).  
Audio example 5. Fourth segment of the pre-‘Mata Kimasu’ interactive framework (Graphic example 7).  
Audio example 6. ‘Mata Kimasu’ bass line (Graphic example 8).