

The Golden Age of Non-Idiomatic (Free) Improvisation

First Year Studies

FYS 129

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The second half of the twentieth century was a period of great exploration and invention in music, including non-idiomatic (or free) improvisation, that is, musical improvisation that isn't associated with any one particular music genre. This course serves two purposes. The first is to introduce students to the music and musicians of non-idiomatic improvisation, including acoustic, electroacoustic, noise, etc., and artists including Derek Bailey, Hans Reichel, Keiji Haino, Peter Brötzmann, Evan Parker, Cecil Taylor, John Zorn, and many others. We will also discuss relevant topics such as social forces that led to non-idiomatic improvisation, the esthetic limits of music, the development of an ear for "difficult" music, the validity of various measures of success or merit, where popularity is largely irrelevant, and the essential presence of failure in experimental art forms.

course website: <http://utkstair.org/clausius/docs/fys129/index.html>

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