

Improvising Around the World

Presentation April 7, 2014 – International Project Week ‘Improvisation’
Dept. Music Education, Prince Claus Conservatoire, Hanze University Groningen

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Improvisation

“Cultural understandings of improvisation vary; absence of fully prescriptive notation and a degree of ephemerality of the phenomenon are common features.” (Impett, 2009, p. 408)

“Making music when not following a predetermined plan of action” (Ashley, 2009, p. 413)

Improvisation

“Jazz musicians themselves know that [‘picking notes out of the air’] is not the case. (...)

It is a skill which takes thousands of hours of effortful practice to develop;

it develops in community rather than with isolated individuals;

and it involves acquiring and becoming fluent with a kind of musical vocabulary or lexicon of patterns, which form the basis of musical expression the same way words or phrases do in spontaneous production of language.”

(Ashley, 2009, p. 415)

Improvisation

“Jazz and its successors provide instructive examples of longer-term musical design emerging through the practice of improvisation. Armstrong’s West-End Blues presumably grew out of his own improvisational style, from a continuous repetitive practice, and having emerged in 1927 remains quite stable through subsequent versions.” (Impett, 2009, p. 409)

“Presumably improvisation contributed to Beethoven’s generation of ideas (...). His cadenzas to his own piano concertos could be seen as composed illustrations of his own creative process.” (Ibid.)

Improvisation

- Invention on the moment
- Using background skills and knowledge of repertoire(s)
- “Degrees of Invention” – a continuum
- “Domains of Invention” – choices from an endless menu

Pakistan – Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (from 17.00)



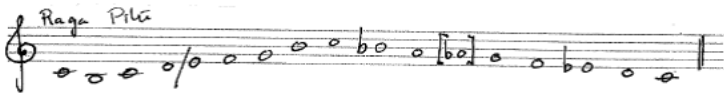
India – North Indian Raga Improvisation



Improvising Around the World

India

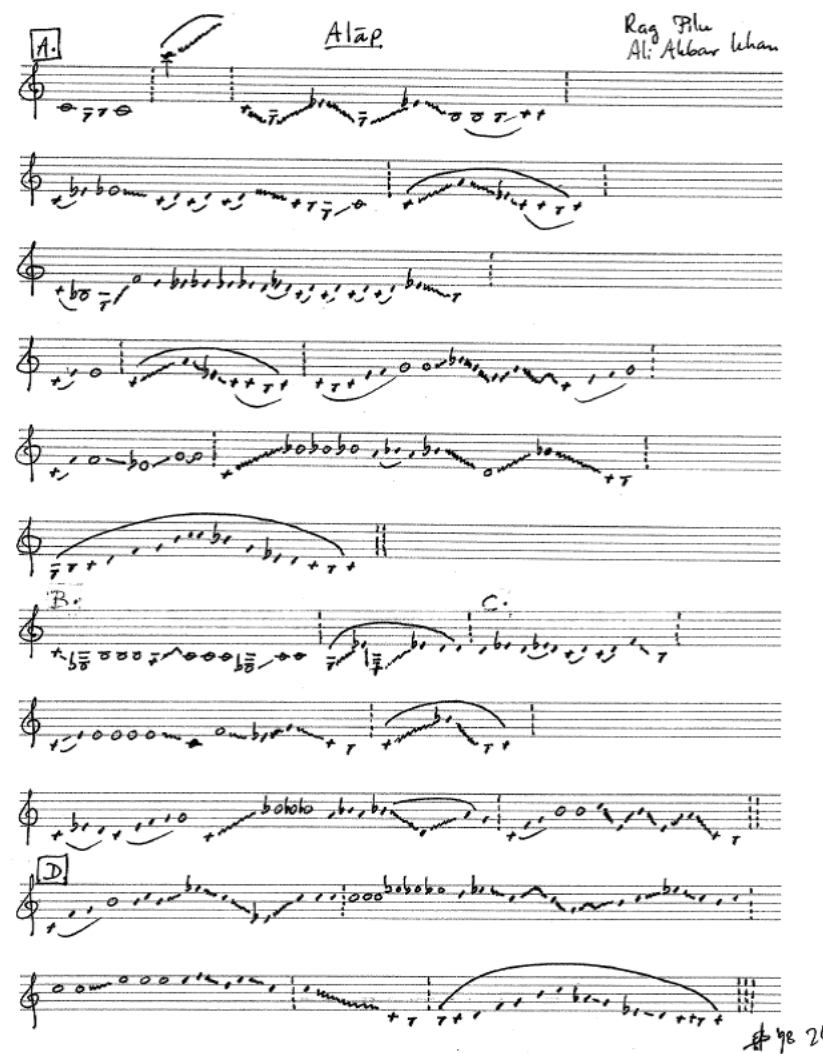
Raga Pihu



A1

Alap

Rag Pihu
Al: Akbar Khan



B:

C:

D:

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