

Thoughts on IMO

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*intro

The IMO since its launch had generated many debates and reflexions. Most of these happened informally between the members and between us. The large and constant numbers of musicians involved in the orchestra reveal the interest the project created.

The evolution in one year, and 13 concerts, is remarkable and the three days residence in August has created a wonderful excitement, but also reactions that have showed the need to discuss and share our ideas and positions with all participants to the orchestra. The discussion held in October and the following text are their results, a kind of current state overview, for us, for the IMO and the practice of big improvisers ensemble.

*intro bis

Any consideration is dated and therefore intrinsically obsolete and intended to be received in a critical perspective. This is snapshot at one certain moment, of our state of mind, an attempt to summarize a practice over a period, some tentative to answers questions raised collectively or individually, the formulation of assumptions and strategies to be experimented in the near future.

*improvisators and improvisation

The IMO is an improvisers orchestra. Being improvisers is our common denominator. We use our improvisational skills and techniques for a project that may take various forms depending on the case, from free improvisation to highly structured / fixed pieces.

*investment

The IMO's objective was to bring together a large number of musicians (meaning, also different practices and stories). For this the IMO is and will always be open to those who are interested (and we are here to present, explain, discuss it, to introduce it clearly, also to defend its approach and choices).

After a year of existence we feel the need to place our exigency level even higher, to make the orchestra an ensemble with a result (its music) exciting and relevant. It is important that participants are heavily invested in when they take part of a concert. We are aware that this investment is altruistic and voluntary, with what it implies - we are the first to give generously our time and energy to this project, and that's also why we have a strong desire to see the IMO moving forward with determination. The issue is not as much to be there all the time, but to bear a form of individual responsibility regarding the quality of a performance. This means among other things to take time to understand what the orchestra is expecting (during various directions for example), to fully accept to play the games (even if you may disagree, take it on yourself, for the benefit of the orchestra), to think his way of playing according to and for the ensemble.

The IMO is not a simple improvisation amateurs appointment, it is a group that works, and does it seriously.

*rehearsal

Rehearsals are crucial moments, the experience - sometimes painful, has certainly proven the need and benefit the orchestra draws out of them. So it is everyone's responsibility regarding the others and their work to be present (we fully realize that each one's life and jobs is not necessarily flexible but we can not allow ourselves to be endangered a concert because of different level investments).

Each concert of the orchestra is different, rehearsals are more than just the preparation of a program,

they are precious moments where the orchestra is (re)shaping, (re)discovering its components, its size, it adjusts to the situation and given conditions, the acoustics, the type of audience, etc.

There should always be some preparatory works before even playing:

- *make silence, ie, try to be collectively aware of the space, of the background noise, then realize that any other sound produced is an addition to it and that the return to the initial state must always be possible.*

- *Play together at the sound level as low as possible, realizing how each action may mask the others, starting in his own listening. feel his own potential for disruption, interference, disorder.*

-*play again even more softly, make that no more gesture / sound is accidental / parasite (scraping of feet, amp buzzes, etc).*

-*try to locate sources, timbers, potentials, in the space / group.*

-*get closer to a common feeling of the sonor.*

From this moment depends the cohesion of our music.

[We will organize rehearsals out of concerts time to investigate further some aspects of the IMO and take the time to try new things.]

*conductions+improvisations

The duality conduction-improvisation is our way of background work. Conductions are supposed to help to demonstrate how the orchestra could sound and play in general. They should open the listening on more subtle forms. It is essential to keep a good balance between conduction and improvisation, and, indeed, spend more time working and practicing autonomous improvisation. This should also go through moments of work and criticism of the way we improvise freely in a large group.

*Openness to new ideas

The IMO is an exceptional and unique laboratory for experimentation. Everyone is encouraged to present new ideas, concepts, etc.. We discuss these ideas during meetings, try to refine them based on our previous experiences, and put them into practice during rehearsals and / or concerts. This whole process is a series of critics phases which should allow us to define more precisely each time our actions fields and our sound identity.

*carte blanche

The carte blanche are special circumstances, apart of the orchestra "usual" practice. Their aim is to provoke surprisingly and further more in a rewarding manner. The person or people who are entrusted with the carte blanche must imperatively consider very cleverly the components and objectives of the orchestra. The IMO is not just a reserve of musicians at the service of anyone or any idea. Each carte blanche is an experiment, a risk we take and everyone, when he engages itself in it, must accept it and potentially let it exceed its own concerns.

*(non) aesthetic

The IMO have no fixed definition of aesthetics. It nevertheless evolves in, and creates, a certain context, which is the result of choices we make (directions, etc). We clearly think that play less and less louder, simple and defined sounds and action in an electroacoustic manner more than expressive, the research of a common sound, etc., are strategies that showed relevant results and go in a way that pleases the majority and over it, personally satisfy and motivates us. It also helps to define the identity and specificity of the IMO, to differentiate it from other improvisers orchestras, to make it interesting in the landscape of experimental music. We also take on ourselves to be the guarantors and responsables for final choices made.

*authorship/open source

Apart of the carte blanche, the IMO does not play compositions in the strict - and paternalistic - sense. The orchestra dedicat itself to some proposals, and do its best to achieve them.

The directions are strategies, more or less restrictive.

As propositions, it is a common material for our work. They are available for all reinterpretations, inspirations, improvements. They should not have copyright, but free to be use.

**ensemble*

What matters would not be the input and the addition of individual discourse, but rather the assembly of the specific features, colors, timbers, of each one. What would make the orchestra's force would not be a serie of talent exhibition, but the combination of these talents, these skills of improviser, to play for a meta-music.

**reinvent*

The orchestra is a world apart, all outside/past experiences and practices would have to be questioned in this new case. One must reinvent its musical individual practice in a very large group in regard to its usual practice.

This repositioning may include going through the selection and the construction of his instrument.

**insubordination*

The word Insub refers to the label and the association by the same name. From the philosophical point of view it implies a questioning of musical forms and contexts / goals of performances. This is a position of the group in front of the rest. This position is non-dogmatic, however, take part to a concert of the orchestra is accept to work in a common direction, sometimes established in advance. Disagreements should be expressed in previous discussions, they should not jeopardize a concert. Do not follow a direction would be a negative form of insubordination against the group and its members.

INSUB META ORCHESTRA

<http://www.insubordinations.net/IMO.html>

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