

ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING VOCAL IMPROVISATION IN JAZZ MUSIC BASED ON SELECTED EXAMPLES

Joanna Świniarska-Szebeszczyk, January the 15th, 2023

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Improvisation is one of the key elements of jazz music. It is a spontaneous and unique act. Its final shape is influenced by the performer's technical skills, awareness, hearing, intuition and creativity. All these factors contribute to an individual language that allows the artist to create an improvised musical expression.

In the dissertation, I seek to capture the characteristic improvisation features of three iconic jazz singers, namely, Ella Fitzgerald, Al Jarreau and Kurt Elling. I also subject my own solo parts to analysis, taking into account the following components: melody (its structure and harmonic context), rhythm, articulation, dynamics, expression and phrasing. While analysing the subsequent creative acts, I also attempt to find the most prominent elements and identify those which make a jazz vocalist's individual artistic language exceptional.

The dissertation consists of four chapters. The first chapter outlines the history of vocal improvisation (scat) in jazz music and the profiles of several of its key figures. The second chapter describes the basic elements of vocal improvisation and the technical aspects relating thereto. The third chapter contains a formal analysis of selected solo parts, which is intended to illustrate the individual characteristics in the artistic language of each of the artists mentioned. The fourth chapter describes the artistic work of the dissertation, thus referring to my own work, with particular emphasis on improvisation.

15.03.2023r.

Joanna Świniarska-Szebeszczyk