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Tactile paths : on and through notation for improvisers

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geboren te San Diego (USA)

in 1981

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Prof.dr. Marcel Cobussen	Universiteit Leiden
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The present document is a redaction of the complete digital version of *Tactile Paths*, available at

<http://www.tactilepaths.net>

The reader is encouraged to refer to the complete digital version whenever possible, where she will find time-based media and scores that cannot be represented here.

Abstract

Tactile Paths: on and through Notation for Improvisers is an artistic research project that articulates and expands the nexus of notation and improvisation in contemporary and experimental music. The project interweaves direct artistic experience with insights from improvisation studies, the social sciences, philosophy, and various scholarship in the arts to reveal methodological connections among diverse artists such as Richard Barrett, Cornelius Cardew, Malcolm Goldstein, Lawrence Halprin, Bob Ostertag, Ben Patterson, and the author. By focusing on how notation is used, rather than on what it represents in an abstract sense, the author shows how written scores emerge from and feed back on ongoing improvisational processes. Thus, it is argued, they are not fixed texts whose primary purpose is to prescribe and preserve, but rather tactile paths in the improviser's ever-crescent musical and social environment. This practice-based approach aims to lay the conceptual groundwork for theorizing and broadening the creative relevance of work whose importance to practitioners belies its marginal presence in academia and institutions.

Curriculum Vitae

Christopher Williams (1981, San Diego) is a wayfarer on the body-mind continuum. His medium is music. He holds a B.A. from the University of California San Diego, where he studied under Charles Curtis, Chaya Czernowin, and Bertram Turetzky.

As a composer and contrabassist, Williams's work runs the gamut from chamber music, improvisation, and radio art to collaborations with dancers, sound artists, and visual artists. Performances and collaborations with Derek Bailey, Compagnie Ouïe/Dire, Charles Curtis, LaMonte Young's Theatre of Eternal Music, Ferran Fages, Barbara Held, Robin Hayward (as Reidemeister Move), Hans W. Koch, filmmaker Zachary Kerschberg, Christina Kubisch, Maulwerker, Charlie Morrow, Mary Oliver and Roze-marie Heggen, Ben Patterson, Tanja Smit, and Martin Sonderkamp. In addition to appearing in various North American and European experimental music circuits, this work has been presented by VPRO Radio 6 (Holland), Deutschlandradio Kultur, the Museum of Contemporary Art Barcelona, and the American Documentary Film Festival.

Williams' artistic research on improvisation, notation, and his body-mind continuum has been published in *Open Space Magazine*, *The Improvisor*, and *Critical Studies in Improvisation*, and has been presented at major universities and international conferences in North America, Europe, and India. A book chapter co-written with Mathias Maschat is forthcoming in *Experiencing Live* (Routledge), edited by Matthew Reason and Anja Lindelof. Williams has received scholarships, grants, and prizes from the University of California, the Darmstadt Summer Courses, the Arts Council of Catalunya, Goethe Institut, Hauptstadtkulturfonds Berlin, the Festival Acanthes, and the American Documentary Film Festival.

He also co-curates the Berlin concert series KONTRAKLANG, and works with sound experience designer Charles Morrow Productions.

<http://www.christopherisnow.com>

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