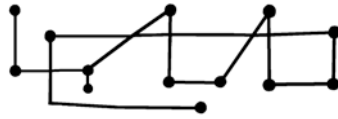


# AFFECT AND IMPROVISING BODIES



CHRIS STOVER

IMPROVISED MUSIC, BY WHICH I MEAN ALL MUSIC when considered from the perspective of its temporal, embodied enactment, involves “force-encounters traversing the ebbs and swells of intensities that pass between ‘bodies.’”<sup>1</sup> The affective forces at play between improvising performers are the results of “alertness[es] to the multisided interactions among people ‘beside’ each other in a room.”<sup>2</sup> We should read “people” here not only as the performers themselves but as the *musical-objects-as-bodies* that encounter one another in affective exchanges of intensities; “beside” as the operators and vectors that bring heterogeneous elements into close proximity and hold them together on a *plane of immanence*<sup>3</sup>; and “in a room” with the full force of Heidegger’s prepositional language.<sup>4</sup> Another way of thinking of “room” is *space*: an emergent space that “does not exist prior to identities/entities and their relations” —another plane in which identities, relations, and space are mutually constitutive.<sup>5</sup> Yet another is *context*, of which room and space might be said to be examples, and which refers, in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, to the singular ways in which *milieus* are drawn together in acts of *territorialization*. The actual ways that bodies come into affective contact with one another provide the conditions for the possibility of a context to emerge. The beside-ness or relationality or context-constitution of affective encounters provides an antidote to analytic frameworks that

ascribe either causal or teleological motivations to improvised musical expression in a way that resonates with Gary Peters's account of improvisational *re-novation*, an always new-again, as a productive framework for thinking about how improvised music goes.<sup>6</sup>

Here are two examples to help explain what I mean here. (1) In jazz, a performer's note choices are not derived from an *a priori* melodic/harmonic plane, but help constitute that plane as a plane of immanence, where communications between stratifying acts (encounters with the histories, syntactic particularities, and other conditioning factors of a practice) on one hand and gestures of coding and decoding (drawing lines between constituent elements in the singular ways that define *any particular* utterance, and drawing lines of flight into new spaces) on the other are enacted. This is Cecil Taylor's space "where patterns and possibility converge."<sup>7</sup> In other words, the temporally unfolding, performing/performed subject is in dialogue with the historically and textually bounded nature of the musical material, and the acting out of this dialogue is what defines the context of some specific performed utterance.<sup>8</sup> Each performance, in this sense, unfolds as a singularity, a double selection of active and passive syntheses that Deleuze would describe as the becoming-actual of the virtual space of the performance. (2) In Cuban rumba, microrhythmic deviations are not performed inflections of ideal rhythmic events; their variable metric locations reflect relative speeds or slownesses that communicate affective trajectories across the unfolding of the performance and the steadiness versus nonsteadiness of a virtual metric grid. In other words, microrhythmic inflections are engendered by the *ongoing affective interplay* that creates the conditions for the context of a particular performance. And again, that context also involves communication with historical trajectories (as lineages of performance practices, for example) and with the stuff of the music itself, as physical action and sonic materiality.

All of these connections—all of these *relations*—are irreducible in the sense that none takes priority over any other; performing bodies, historical contexts, sonic materialities, and affective forces exist in an ongoing flux of mutually constitutive relations. In both the jazz and rumba cases, we can map out territorializing networks of relationships that conspire to define the improvisational plane as always-ongoing, always in the process of being defined, immanent to itself, unfolding a double action of territorialization and deterritorialization through which the emergent identity of the context is inscribed. In other words, the context of improvised music "is one with the dynamic form of its coming to fulfillment," which is to say it is ever-emergent, founded on the multiplicity of factors that condition the possibilities for its emergence.<sup>9</sup>

This essay is concerned with the kinds of improvisational spaces where some degree of discursive identity is agreed upon by cultural insiders: jazz musicians generally agree that what they are doing *is* jazz; baroque continuo players agree roughly where the boundaries of that practice are drawn, etc. But it intends to radically invert *how* identity is formed, considering what improvised music is and does from an affective perspective. While there are genres of improvised music where conventional ontological questions might not even be askable, at least if we want a clear and unimpeachable answer (say, the radical free improvisation of AMM), I suggest that even in more straightforward settings those fundamental questions are highly contentious, that we can easily problematize what we assume we know about them, and that in any event we should consider inverting our gaze to focus, rather than on the frames that shape, contain, or direct the temporal flow of improvised music, on the behaviors of and encounters between entities and the affective forces that proliferate through their interaction.<sup>10</sup> Many frames have been invoked to define and limit improvisational spaces, from essentialized metric and formal structures, reified melodic and harmonic conventions, and both generative (productive) and *a posteriori* (hermeneutic) theoretical frameworks to systematized notions of improvisational gesture, codified strategies, and stylistic, genre-bound, or historical contexts. We might call these *grounds* for thinking about (or doing) improvisation. By defining a ground in terms of these sorts of associated constellations of concepts, however, notions of emergence and fluidity—Cecil Taylor's *stretchable strata*—are bracketed. Instead of an essentializing or reifying account of improvisational ground, a theory of improvisational context begins with encounters, actions, and meaning-constitutions in time. Context, here, is the emergent space where what Lawrence Grossberg calls conjuncture, territory, and ontology co-constitute one another in the flux of an ongoing dialogue; where coding and decoding, territorialization and deterritorialization, and stratification and destratification assemble to define a Deleuzo-Guattarian plane of immanence; where the middle or milieu or in-between-ness that characterizes the relation between expression and content becomes the affective space in which bodies interact and identity proliferates.

## AFFECT

There are many theories of affect that resonate with musical thinking. The position from which this essay stems is the affective thought of Gilles Deleuze and a number of his intellectual inheritors and

interlocutors. Deleuze's conception of affect derives from Spinoza, and refers to the forces that emerge from encounters between bodies, and the degrees to which they variably increase or decrease one's capacity to act.<sup>11</sup> Affect is an *event* that occurs between bodies; it is something that *happens* in the in-between as a result of interactions of forces that derive from actions and activities. Affect is always already in a doubled state of *transition* or passage; the transitional nature of the event in turn effects a transition of the bodies in question from one affective state to another. For Deleuze, there are no states other than transitional states; there is only, always, passage. All of these concepts—encounter, event, occurrence, happening, in-between, transition, passage—come together to constitute what Deleuze means by affect. What happens when we turn to affect is we invert the starting place of our inquiry by beginning “in the middle . . . , with the dynamic unity of the event” rather than with the objects that comprise the nodes connected by an encounter.<sup>12</sup> As Brian Massumi describes, this “cuts transversally across a persistent division” like that of the traditional subject/object distinction or, as we'll see shortly, of individuated syntactic objects in contexts, like chords in tonal spaces or rhythmic gestures in temporal ones.<sup>13</sup>

Deleuze asks what he considers to be two equivalent questions: “*What is the structure of a body?* And: *What can a body do?* A body's structure is the composition of its relation. What a body can do corresponds to the nature and limits of its capacity to be affected.”<sup>14</sup> This means that a body, for Deleuze, is first and foremost constituted through its actions (or capacities for actions: what it *can* do) and its relations. We do not begin with bodies and then consider the ways in which they may be related (and what happens when they relate), but rather the ways in which a body progresses through time—as *transition*—stems from the nature and effects of its relations and its contexts. Again, there is no way of being for Deleuze other than in transition—a body's being is relational (in contact with other bodies, and modified by those contacts) and temporal (impinged upon by a conditioning past<sup>15</sup> and open onto a virtual future). This is an important key for thinking through the affective question as it pertains to the relational nature of process, how structure is back-formed from process, and the role that improvisation plays in this move. Deleuze borrows from Spinoza two generalized categories of affect's effects: joy, referring to an increase in a body's capacity to act or a proliferation of potentials for action, and sadness, referring to a diminishing of a body's capacity, or a foreclosure of potential.<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere Deleuze equates these two dimensional flows with Nietzsche's active and reactive forces, respectively (as defining poles of a typology of the

states of forces of which everything encountered is a sign or symptom), which play out in turn through the Will to Power and *ressentiment*, respectively—this move brings Spinoza’s and Nietzsche’s conceptual apparatuses into productive dialogue.<sup>17</sup> Affect as conceived by Spinoza and developed by Deleuze unfolds as the double movement *affectio–affectus*, sometimes translated as “affection” and “affect,” respectively.<sup>18</sup> The way Deleuze invokes these terms is as a co-constitutive function: affect is “the continuous variation of someone’s force of existing,” and affection is “the nature of the modified body”—how the encounter leaves “traces of another body on my body.”<sup>19</sup> Or another way to say the same thing: affection refers to “a state of the affected body,” implying “the presence of the affecting body,” and affect is “the passage from one state to another, taking in account the correlative variation of the affecting body.”<sup>20</sup> A similar double movement is found in the characterization “to affect and to be affected”; this refers to the fact that affect is always in-between, constituting a *milieu* or middle defined by the active space in which intensities come into contact with one another. And those intensities flow in two directions: I am both in a state of affecting and being affected by that with which I am coming into contact.<sup>21</sup>

There are two reasons why Deleuze’s concept of affect is valuable for thinking through what happens in musical improvisation. The first reason is the irreducible connection between the affective encounter and *time* as Deleuze conceives it. Massumi makes this connection in a way that is clear and forceful. In his description of the affective moment as the sensation of a “momentary cut in the mode of onward deployment of life,”<sup>22</sup> Massumi foregrounds three interrelated themes. First, that affect is felt before it is cognized—this is Massumi’s “shock” and Deleuze’s “dark precursor,”<sup>23</sup> the brief physical sensation that precedes understanding about the cause of a stimulus; its momentary unreachability is precisely why it is a middle—it occurs, we sense it, and from our ongoing experience of it we *then* develop a sense of what it is. Furthermore, what it is a precursor of is the internal self-difference of the event: how the event singularly plays out through the forces of affective relations that condition its possibility for being, and how the event’s temporal nature necessitates its internal self-difference. This has powerful implications for thinking through the context-constitutive living present of improvised music, which will be developed in the analyses below. Second, the event is a *cut* in time that assembles time into asymmetrical series of before and after—marking a moment in time around which we can conceive of before and after. This is Deleuze’s third synthesis of time, which describes the way in which the living present, engendered by the past, moves forward into the future.<sup>24</sup> And

third, what the cut marks is a moment of *change*. Even if nothing salient or obviously significant changes, everything changes in its contextual relation, since there is now a new ordering of before and after, and since the event itself folds into and becomes part of the always ongoing past, now altered in relation to an emergent next event in a new living present. This folding-into-past of each new living present is Deleuze's second synthesis. Massumi calls this a "rebeginning," doubly rediscovering the past and opening onto a virtual future:

the body, in this eventful rebeginning, carries tendencies reviving the past and already striving toward a future. In its commotion are capacities reactivating, being primed to play out, in a heightening or diminishing of their collective power of existence. The body figures here as a cut in the continuity of relation, filled with potential for re-relating, with a difference.<sup>25</sup>

Massumi's characterization implicates bodies in the formation of events: the interaction between bodies is where events occur. But he also makes clear that bodies and events co-compose one another: bodies enact events; events inscribe bodies. Affective thinking dissolves the dualist distinction between subject and object not by eliminating them as categories, but by considering them from an action-first perspective; "the 'subjective' is not something preexisting to which an event occurs: it is the self-occurring form of the event."<sup>26</sup> Subjects emerge at the intersection of affective trajectories—of passage and variation on one hand and instincts, inclinations, and the force of the past on the other. What a subject is is the "subject of an experience," and this intersection constitutes a field of conditions for the *way* in which the subject emerges. In other words, by thinking in terms of the affective forces that condition an event, we can consider the subject (and, we'll see, the object) from the perspective of what it does rather than what it is.

What is important to keep in mind here is that *everything* is an event, and that there are multiple events occurring at a multiplicity of temporal levels and interacting with each other (affecting and affected by one another). Deleuze introduces the cut of the third synthesis of time through readings of "big" events: Hamlet's encounter with his father's ghost; Oedipus's tragic discovery. But this is a heuristic for Deleuze; he quickly moves from the shock of the big event to the rich process of continual discovery that plays out when we think of all of life's passage as overlapping series and strata of events.

Massumi's second theme involves how a "collective event" is distributed across bodies when they come together in a context.

Deleuze's affect articulates a space in which every body can, and indeed must, react differently to the same stimuli. This is precisely because each body brings its own history, inclinations, desires, and wills, which means each body will be affected differently. "Since each body will carry a different set of tendencies and capacities, there is no guarantee that they will act in unison even if they are cued in concert." But, "however different their eventual actions, all will have unfolded from the same suspense [or nexus of suspenses]. They will have been attuned—differentially—to the same interruptive commotion." Massumi calls this *affective attunement*, following psychologist Daniel Stern, which he suggests reflects better than other accounts of intersubjectivity and interaction "the complexity of collective situations, as well as the variability that can eventuate from . . . the 'same' affect. There is no sameness of affect. There is affective difference in the same event."<sup>27</sup> I concur with this claim: the notion of affective attunement resonates with the ways in which, say, a jazz musician can respond in any of a countless number of ways to an affective stimulus—this is both a powerful proposition and an explanation for why analyses of musical interaction present so many challenges.

A turn to affect, in short, does not, cannot focus *exclusively* on the middle, since there still are bodies that occupy the nodes between which a middle is drawn—bodies which participate in the encounter and affect and are affected by one another. Those bodies have emergent contexts—histories, capacities, tendencies, habits, desires, wills, attunements—that partially determine *how* encounters between bodies can play out.

## IMPROVISING BODIES

Deleuze describes a body as the locus of affective forces; "when a certain composite or complex relation . . . of movement and rest is preserved through all the changes which affect the parts of the body . . . , taken to infinity."<sup>28</sup> A body, in this reading, has infinite extension, which is both temporal and relational. But again a body locates within a context, or in a multiplicity of contexts, which it also participates in producing. "The body is the seat of bare activity: the region of indistinction between the human and matter where something doing is always already just stirring, before it starts to take definitive experiential form."<sup>29</sup> Again, this is the space in which the subject, never predetermined or *just-there*, is drawn.

This essay is concerned with two categories of improvising bodies.<sup>30</sup> First are the embodied selves of improvising musicians, in all of their corporeality, temporality, perspectival orientation, performativity, and

potential for affective conjunction. This last point is most important, and speaks to Sedgwick's beside-ness constituted by alertnesses to multi-sided interactions: the beside-ness "of people together in a room," read literally as the actual "rooms" (that is, actual physical performative spaces), and "a room" cast metaphorically, as musicians occupy the space in which musical activity is acted out; that is, the music itself in all of the ongoing-ness of its virtual-becoming-actual. This "in a room" is a Heideggerian "being-in"—"I am familiar with," "I am taking care of," "it is for the sake of," etc.; the room is very much a Heideggerian "dwelling" that is being constituted by acts of existing-in, and the actions that comprise that dwelling involve a Heideggerian "clearing," cutting through the infinitely thick tangle of proscriptions and possibilities in order to make room for the emergent identity of this particular performance. It is also Deleuze and Guattari's *refrain*: the repeating ritornello through which milieus are territorialized and deterritorialized.<sup>31</sup> These are all different perspectives from which we can consider how the ongoingness of multiplicities of encounters and beside-nesses constitute the singularity of a life—its particular plane of immanence, the this-ness of this life as opposed to any other.

Second is what I call *musical-object-as-bodies*. By musical-objects-as-bodies, I mean conventionally-construed musical objects—notes, chords, rhythms, motifs, gestures, and so on—and also larger formal structures and processual trajectories, and even performance practices and histories and cultural and political contexts. I read all of these as one would read human bodies: material, temporal, perspectival, performed, world-constitutive, and engaged in and defined by exchanges of affective forces.<sup>32</sup> A musical-object-as-body takes account of the impingements of its influences. As Massumi describes, this taking-account means "an event inflecting the arc of its becoming as a function of its feeling the influence of other events."<sup>33</sup> In a music-improvisational context, this responds to two questions: (1) what sort of musical-object-as-body best expresses the impingements of affective forces constituting a context so far (there are many right answers to this question, by the way), and (2) why *this* musical-object-as-body? Just as performing bodies (and performative spaces) might be defined in large part by their intricate and fluid webs of connections and the activities that constitute those connections, musical-objects-as-bodies can be similarly constituted. By beginning with affective forces, in-between-nesses, and (de)territorializations, we can imagine a proliferation of musical-objects-as-bodies that might potentially be able to fulfill a given affective need. Note that by unpacking this concept/context I will eventually move back to the first category of actual, corporeal improvising bodies, blurring the line between performer, performative



gesture, and performance. This move may appear at first to be problematically ascribing agency to those musical objects, but what I mean is that the actions of those musical objects are directly and possibly irreducibly related to the actions of the performer as she or he enacts some musical gesture or other.

#### INVERTING THE ANALYTIC GROUND

By beginning with affect and *then* working toward the musical objects that interact and impinge on one another to constitute affective forces, we can begin to imagine a new starting place for music-analytic inquiry. This amounts to rethinking that inquiry as action-first, followed by the bodies that perform those actions (including musical-objects-as-bodies), with those bodies themselves constituted by a horizon of such actions, flows, and encounters. Massumi describes this as back-forming structure after movement: a sense of structure is itself an emergent event; something that is constituted through the process of its own invention or evolution.<sup>34</sup>

Let us consider a small example. A conventional analytic orientation would regard the two-chord progression  $V^7 \rightarrow I$ , in the context of a conventional tonal syntax, as objects in an ordered string  $\langle a, b \rangle$ , where some property or bundle of properties intends  $b$  from  $a$ . We can affix simple taxonomic labels to each, and we can intensify our focus to consider a number of part/whole relations: of each object and sub-object (say, the constituent pitch-classes that comprise each chord), of dependent and teleological relations between objects (such as voice-leading behaviors that direct  $a$  to  $b$  under a socially agreed-upon syntactical rule), of relations of objects and chains of objects to larger musical structures and processes (their location, for instance, along and within larger voice-leading trajectories, harmonic paths, and other contexts and recontextualizations—we might call this the *through-ness* of a harmonic object), and of qualitative change: thinking of the entire structure as a single syntactic object with internal motion, only partially reducible to its component parts. Example 1 shows a simple taxonomic account with minimal analytic commentary—this is the “lead sheet” notation popular among jazz performers. In Example 2, harmonic identity is ascribed to the two objects, based on their roles in a larger harmonic context, assuming that one exists (that is, assuming that we are engaging a small slice of some larger musical activity). The larger context here is “the key of G major,” within which the first chord is referred to as the dominant and the second as the tonic. By adding an arrow between the nodes occupied by “V7” and “I”, as shown in

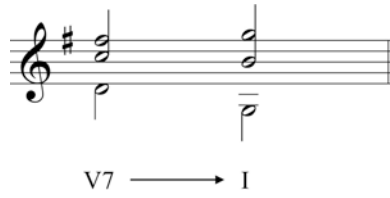
Example 3, we describe this motion as a *function*; that is, we assert some kind of transformation that maps information from the domain of the first node onto the range of the second node. This is the point at which we can consider the temporal implications of the function: V<sup>7</sup> goes to I following some path for some *reason*.<sup>35</sup> We might then show how that function is constituted by smaller motions; in this case by three voice-leading trajectories ( $\hat{7}$  to  $\hat{1}$ ,  $\hat{4}$  to  $\hat{3}$ , and the bass motion of  $\hat{5}$  to  $\hat{1}$ ), as shown in Example 4, which also includes an arrow projecting I back to V<sup>7</sup>, since in this syntax, tonic has a crucial role in constituting dominant's function and proscribing the way(s) that dominant orients toward its immediate future. If this is how we characterize this particular function (as tonic-defined-dominant-mapping-onto-tonic, with its smaller bundle of constituting projections), then we can strip away redundant orthography to consider variations on the objects shown thus far (different chord spacings, orchestrations, and so on) (Example 5), and then other types of objects that we might plug into the nodes (other dominant-functioning chords like vii<sup>o7</sup> or a tritone substitution, for example, or another chord standing in for tonic, all depending on the degree of substitutability allowed within whatever micro-syntactic space our example locates in) (Example 6). Finally, by removing the nodes, we can consider the encounter between dominant and tonic more abstractly, as shown in Example 7. Here we shift our focus entirely away from the nodes to the in-between-ness of the space in which their encounter is enacted.<sup>36</sup>



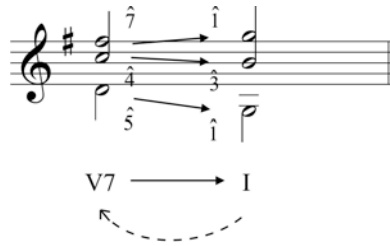
EXAMPLE 1: LEAD SHEET NOTATION



EXAMPLE 2: BASIC HARMONIC FUNCTION, RELATIVE TO A TONIC KEY



EXAMPLE 3: V<sup>7</sup> TO I AS A FUNCTION



EXAMPLE 4: BEHAVIORS AND RELATIONS THAT CONSTITUTE THE FUNCTION OF EXAMPLE 3



EXAMPLE 5: ABSTRACTING THE FUNCTION TO ACCOUNT FOR PLURALITY OF DOUBLINGS, SPACINGS, ORCHESTRATIONS, ETC. OF V<sup>7</sup> AND I



EXAMPLE 6: ABSTRACTING FURTHER, TO CONSIDER DOMINANT AND TONIC IDENTITY MORE BROADLY



EXAMPLE 7: REMOVING THE NODES: PURE IN-BETWEEN-NESS

Deleuze scholar Constantin Boundas would push for a theory that ends right here: “a process philosophy, in order to support a purely heterological thought, has to be capable of doing without subjects steering the process (or being steered by it), without substantive names designating ‘blocks’ in motion, and without points of origin or destination marking the allowed trajectory.”<sup>37</sup> I do not wish to go that far, and suggest that Boundas’s claim, while compelling, is not quite in the spirit of the Deleuzian processuality that he is aiming for, since in Deleuze’s thought, actions, the bodies that perform them, and the temporal spaces in which those performances take place are very much in communication, rather than one being purely constitutive of the other—bodies are not wholly constituted by affective forces, nor the reverse; as Heidegger would say they are equiprimordial. This is because Deleuze’s philosophy is a philosophy of action, and there is no action other than that engendered by encounters of actual bodies in actual contexts—there is little room for abstraction in Deleuze’s thought (even the virtual is real), there is no micropolitics that stands outside of the affective relationships between actual agents.<sup>38</sup>

By describing dominant and tonic as an encounter, or as a co-constitutive exchange of affective intensities, we gain at least five valuable perspectives. First, we can reconsider what it means for something to have a quality of dominant-ness apart from the objects that fulfill that role in conventional syntactic spaces—this is more or less Drew Nobile’s move in his recent work on harmonic function in rock music.<sup>39</sup> Second, by shifting provisionally to the middle, to the in-between of the arrows, we can think in terms of pure action or pure exchanges of affective energy. This invites questions like: what kinds of codings can be enacted in a territory that engender the affective trajectory of X, and what kind of machinic assemblage might we invent in order to perform that coding?<sup>40</sup> Third, we can consider issues of what it means to *mean* musically, engaging a musical hermeneutics where meaning derives from affective encounters within the ongoingness of the music—meaning that is immanent to the music’s now-unfolding context. Fourth, we can back-form the *structure of dominant-going-to-tonic* as derived from those affective encounters; inventing a machinic assemblage that creates a desired affective trajectory. From this we can, paraphrasing Benjamin Boretz, invent a *theory of the structure of dominant-going-to-tonic* that is immanent to the singularity of the musical utterance under consideration.<sup>41</sup> And fifth, we can consider how relations between nodes-generated-as-affective-agents constitute conditions like being-in-a-key—I suggest that it is precisely the co-constitutive encounter between dominant and tonic that defines what it means to be in a key, or at least that gives us a sense of doing so.

Furthermore, a turn to affect inverts both an object-first orientation and causal or goal-directed aspects of temporality and sequence to consider qualities like (in this case) the notion of dominant-ness—what does it mean to “have the quality of being a dominant,” and what sorts of objects might usefully project that quality? It presses us to think about the in-between-ness or through-ness of musical behaviors—to read affect as transition between or passage through larger complexes of contexts.<sup>42</sup> It demands that we think seriously about the interdependence and co-constitution of musical objects via their affective encounters—reading affect as in-between-ness, middle, or milieu, and considering a multiplicity of arrows projecting in a number of directions from that middle. Stemming from all of these, it forces us to acknowledge the existence of multiplicities of relations that could connect multiple potential objects of different sizes and in different temporal locations, including transversal relations across co-acting bodies. And it suggests something like an affect of musical agency: starting with an idea of what is to be accomplished and *then* staking out appropriate agents for that task.

It is important to point out that if we feel the need to validate such a turn to affect in order to rethink musical process, to an extent we already do this in music theory—ascriptions of musical behaviors are entirely driven by context (e.g.,  $\hat{4}$  as the root of a IV chord versus the seventh of a  $V^7$  chord, or accounts of sonic criteria that determine what gets to count as an accent), and if we believe Schenker, those contexts are determined in large part by dialogues between what I’ll describe below as conjunctural codings and ontological ascriptions, between the expressions and contents that shape the interior and exterior milieus that are territorialized by singular acts within a syntactic field.

Encounters between musical-objects-as-bodies result in affective exchanges of intensities (which in turn combine to define the emergent subjectivities of those bodies). In improvised music, ongoing-ness, contingency, future-oriented-ness, and potential-for-becoming-real all collude to define a space of emergent identity-formation. This, then, constitutes a plane upon which we can consider how improvised music “goes,” or how the improvised aspects of *all* music “go.”

#### ON BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

So what is the space in which improvisational actions take place? How is that space constituted, and how does its constitution direct us to think in terms of an emergent process of identity-formation? Toward a

*nomad* identity? Heidegger describes our being-in-the-world as a being that begins with relations between the objects encountered in the world<sup>43</sup>, and ethnomusicologist Steven Friedson has compellingly argued for a kind of relational *being-in-meter* that reads the flow of rhythmic and metric events in certain southeast African ceremonial musics in Heideggerian terms.<sup>44</sup> I would like to turn to some of the recent work of Lawrence Grossberg in order to zoom in from Heidegger's world to the kinds of contexts that emerge and are constituted in that world.<sup>45</sup> Grossberg begins by unpacking a productive paradox that defines what a context is. On one hand, "context is spatial, defining a bounded interiority," a *place* that we can think about in real or metaphoric physical terms. On the other hand, "context is relational, constituted always by sets and trajectories of social relations and relationalities that establish its exteriority to itself."<sup>46</sup> This double movement, between spatial interiority and an always proliferating relationality, defines a *conjuncture*:

a singularity that is also a multiplicity, an active organized and organizing assemblage of relationalities that condition and modify the distribution, function, and effects—the very being and identity —of the events that are themselves actively implicated in the production of the context itself.<sup>47</sup>

In musical contexts, the material bodies of human performers and listeners, instruments and spaces, and more assemble with sonically material musical-objects-as-bodies, and all participate in and are determined through the contexts they create.

Grossberg describes three ways of constituting a context, or three logics of contextualization. First is the *conjunctural*—thinking through relationships or structures and the phenomenological implications of existing within those multiplicities of relations and to imaginatively "produce knowledge that illuminates the conjuncture."<sup>48</sup> Conjunctural formations connect milieus or middles—bodies and contexts themselves in processes of becoming—and in doing so produce codings and decodings whereby the virtual impingements of pasts and transversal presents that determine the condition of a body or context are continuously interrupted and redirected. Grossberg's conjuncture tacitly orients toward Deleuze and Guattari's productive, proliferating *and*—"a new form of redundancy, AND . . . AND . . . AND . . ."<sup>49</sup> The second logic of contextualization involves acts of *territorialization*, to which I would add the deterritorializations that are irreducibly implicated in such acts.<sup>50</sup> These acts select milieus—themselves

products of the relational trajectories of conjunctural formations—and bring them together to form new expressions. This is a kind of context of contexts, the now-ongoing context, in formation, that expresses its multiply-determined genealogy in a singular way. The third logic of contextualization is *ontological*, referring broadly to the ways in which machinic assemblages constitute reality. Note that this is a *process* ontology, for which Massumi likes to substitute the compelling term *ontogeny* to reflect the lively, transitory, always-in-between nature of being.<sup>51</sup>

This triad maps onto Deleuze and Guattari's three modes of machinic assemblage as Grossberg characterizes them—coding formations, territorializing formations, and stratifying formations—that respond to questions about what sorts of machines produce what sorts of configurations of reality: “what are the machinic apparatuses or regimes of discourse that are constituting the ways in which we live our lives?”<sup>52</sup> It is important to extend each of these terms to include its inverse as well: coding/decoding, territorialization/deterritorialization, stratifying/destratifying. It is also important to understand that the relation between each pair of terms is neither dialectical nor strictly temporal at all: both coding and decoding (for example) are parallel processes that swirl in and out of one another, neither negating the other, but rather both participating in the production of a creative differentiation.<sup>53</sup> These are interconnected but not equivalent, nor should our orientation necessarily attempt to subtend them (and we should be careful not to conflate them<sup>54</sup>).

Grossberg locates affect in the middle term. An act of territorializing is where there is “a resonance or rhythm that articulates, coordinates, or communicates across milieus,” and it defines a plane of immanence as it brings together heterogeneous elements of heterogeneous milieus (codings and stratifications *as* milieus, for instance).<sup>55</sup> The act of territorializing, or the staking-out of the territory, casts the components of a milieu as dimensional rather than directional; qualitative rather than quantitative; it seeks out the qualities of a milieu that can be developed in and through a new expression. Here is how Grossberg describes the in-between-ness of the territory, the interconnectedness of milieus, and the co-constitution of all of these:

The identity of the territory is not defined by its inside alone, nor does it simply negate its outside. Expression constructs porous and mobile boundaries, an inside (of “impulses” and activities) and an outside (of “circumstances”) and, in the process, it reorganizes functions and regroups forces within the milieus. A territory is a consolidation across milieu-contexts, a holding-together of

heterogeneity by the expression of a rhythm among the elements. It is not a bit of space-time but an articulation across space-times to produce something else. Its interior is a dynamic site for carrying out actions and producing a place and a sense of belonging (an abode); it opens onto other territories and milieus, making it a space of passages and relays.<sup>56</sup>

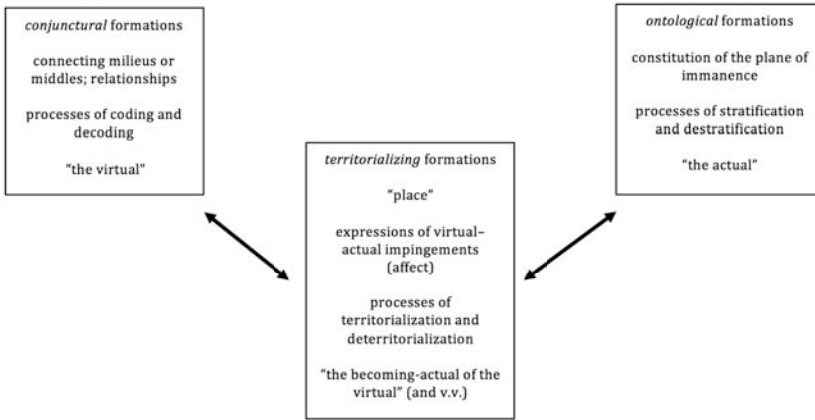
A territory, then, is a “context of lived reality” that brings together conjunctural or coding/decoding formations and ontological or stratifying/destratifying ones. “The ways it connects to the material specificity of the location are always contingent, overdetermined, and unpredictable.”<sup>57</sup> As Sedgwick would suggest, this expresses the fluid nature of reality: “endlessly changing, permeable, and entirely unsusceptible to any definitive articulation,” and this reality subtends the virtual (as overdetermined potential) and actual (as acted-out realizations of potential).<sup>58</sup>

Two statements stand out here. First, the notion that “expression constructs porous and mobile boundaries”—“porous” conjures ideas of permeable membranes or spillings across borders, to which we shall return soon in terms of the protean nature of phrases, barlines, beats, and rhythmic “shapes” that emerge through improvisational utterances. And “mobile” suggests Cecil Taylor’s “stretchable strata” once again, and also resonates with Charles Keil’s intimation that “the matrix is not stable” and with what I characterize elsewhere as *beat span*, as a fluid and contingent metric construct.<sup>59</sup>

The second suggestive phrase, “an inside (of ‘impulses’ and activities) and an outside (of ‘circumstances’),” calls to mind the protean *roda* of Brazilian capoeira or the bustling, ever-shifting activity that comprises Cuban rumba’s performance terrain. These impulses and activities begin with affect, and *then* determine what the proper gesture to best communicate that affect might be. It also lends another nuanced gloss to the concept of context, which now reflects the way that the intentional and extensional come together for Deleuze on the plane of immanence, and the transcendental nature of Deleuze’s immanence—immanent because it is consonant with the context itself; transcendental because of the always-emergent ontological nature of the context.<sup>60</sup>

Example 8 offers a graphic representation that slightly modifies Grossberg’s structure for theorizing context. I have included Doreen Massey’s term *place* under territorializing formations: for Massey, places are “meeting-places of multiple trajectories whose material co-presence has to be negotiated.”<sup>61</sup> The active, lively nature of Massey’s





EXAMPLE 8: GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF GROSSBERG'S THREE LOGICS OF CONTEXTUALIZATION

place resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's "becoming-actual of the [virtual] real" as an orientation toward contexts—the "ontological foundations of change itself."<sup>62</sup> This is territorializing's *potential*—what Massumi describes as "the immanence of a thing to its still indeterminate variation, under way,"<sup>63</sup> which Massey casts as a geography of interrelations, an emergent context that "does not exist prior to identities/entities . . . , the relations 'between' them, and the spatiality which is part of them."<sup>64</sup> In other words, both Grossberg's context and Massey's place describe the contingent range within which an act of territorializing (as affect, and as in-between-ness) enacts the becoming-actual of the potential-for-being of contents and expressions along the plane of immanence. This has everything to do with the pro-tensive (in response to a singular mode of engaging the contingencies of the now-ongoing context) range of possibilities available to the improvising performer, or (transcendentally) immanent to the musical-object-as-body—possibility recast as the potential-for-becoming-actual.<sup>65</sup>

The affective, active coming-together of bodies to constitute a context or place, to bring milieus together in an expression of territorialization, is an *event*. An event is a singular expression on the plane of immanence that selects affective forces and holds them for taking-up by a next event, staking out a new context. Multiple events coexist and concatenate; multiple contexts co-determine one another.

A next event can take up the affective implications of a previous event in any number of ways, including not taking them up, or turning them over in creative acts of deterritorialization.<sup>66</sup> Deleuze describes the event as a sign for the ways in which pasts and futures contract into the present: “every sign is a sign of the present, from the point of view of the passive synthesis in which past and future are precisely only dimensions of the present itself.”<sup>67</sup> The event, then, is the expression of the particular ways in which multiple pasts and futures (and multiple presents; viz. the now-ongoing presents of multiple affective interactions, operating transversally on one another) impinge on present action. This characterizes Deleuze’s first synthesis of time, in which the contractions of past and future into a living present are actions that determine conditions for its identity. Massumi develops this event-concept further, describing two dimensions of every event: the relational (“the event under the aspect of its immediate participation in a world of activity larger than its own”) and the qualitative (“the specialness of its holding itself together in just the way it comes to do”).<sup>68</sup> Each new event can take up into its own formative aspects of this “relational–qualitative arc”<sup>69</sup> in any number of ways, just as any body can take up the affective implications of a context differently, according to the singularities of their affective attunements.

In music, the event, as a sign that expresses the affective impingements of bodies as they come into contact with one another, is the space or place or context of improvisational action. The event is an action or constellation of actions involving transverse flows, force-encounters, territorializations. That action seizes affective forces from a multiplicity of pasts and concurrently ongoing living presents and assembles them, creating a new expression that holds traces of the affective encounter, newly interpreted and ripe for a new encounter with a next event. The next event, in the singular way in which it is affected by the complex of previous and concurrently ongoing events, constitutes the phase of the musical-object-as-body with which it is coextensive, and at the same time projects new affective implications into a virtual future, to be taken up in some way by a new next event or complex of events. In musical performance, those events and the musical-objects-as-bodies that comprise them are also performed by human bodies, with individual complexes of histories, tendencies, wills, and affective attunements. Process philosophy tells us that the human performer is not the subject, is not implicated in a subjective act of performing. The subject, instead, is *the way in which performer and performed act are constituted through their interaction in the singular ongoingness of the event*.<sup>70</sup> There is a human body, there is perspective,

there is agency (often), but those are conceived around the orbit of the event. The same is true of the listening body. The listener exists in an affective relationship with the experienced sonic data, and has a capacity to affect and be affected that increases or decreases according to the eventful terms of the relationship.<sup>71</sup>

#### MUSICAL-OBJECTS-AS-BODIES, AND THEIR ACTIONS

In much music theory there is a tendency to consider actions as engendering, enacting, enabling, or inviting next actions in a temporal succession, based on causal or teleological force-relations. I have characterized these kinds of actions as concatenated chains of calls and responses such as shown in Example 9, where each response is transformed into a new call, thereby engendering a next response.<sup>72</sup> The notation in Example 9 modifies Christopher Hasty's (1997) projective orthography.

Call and response, however, is an insufficient concept, for a number of reasons. First, bodies and musical-objects-as-bodies interact and impinge on one another in a multiplicity of ways that go far beyond the merely temporally linear or genealogical. Second, following from this, it is important to bracket the dual identity of the response-as-new-call (that is, as the now-actualized virtual horizon *and* as the bundle of virtual intensities that projects the next range of potential responses) in order to consider the encounters of musical-objects-as-bodies from a vaster range of perspectives than the simple temporal flux shown in Example 9 suggests. For example, an action might be the result of an intention toward an anticipated future event, or toward something that happened a few events back, or toward something that is currently ongoing, an additional layer of living presence that problematizes and enriches the eventfulness of the current one.<sup>73</sup> Deleuze and Guattari refer to this process as involution, reflecting both the multi-directional impingements that occur in a complex ecological context and the creative role that one plays in constituting that context.<sup>74</sup> Third, the way call-and-response is usually invoked does not sufficiently account

$$C \rightarrow R \rightsquigarrow C' \rightarrow R'$$

EXAMPLE 9. CONCATENATED CHAINS OF CALLS AND RESPONSES,  
FROM STOVER (2009)

for the plurality of imaginative ways that a call could be picked up by differently affectively-attuned responders, and by multiple concurrent responders, thereby enacting proliferations of new call-trajectories. And finally, fourth, there is the possibility that a *new* affective agency can be introduced—possibly from whole cloth, but perhaps more interestingly from some other, perhaps more distantly connected part of the larger improvisational context that impinges on the now-actual living present. This could play out as a line of flight that takes us from the ongoing-ness of improvisational activity to somewhere unexpected, as when a jazz soloist's quote of another tune goes on to engender further referential trajectories, or when an improvised salsa *moña* inspires a frenzied response from the audience, which in turn inspires the musicians to “ramp it up a notch” in intensity, or when, in a recent recording of their song “Ta Julián,” Los Muñequitos de Matanzas invoke contemporary popular influences like *timba* via a sudden tempo increase and key change, thereby inverting conventional accounts of historical trajectories and influence.<sup>75</sup>

I am still invoking “next actions” that seem to be engendered, enabled, enacted, or invited by earlier ones, but it is important to be able to imagine a de-temporalized “next” that takes larger protensions and retensions, concurrent strata of events, and radically deterritorializing lines of flight into account. At the level of immediate encounters—temporal closenesses, including conventional calls and responses such as those that occur in the Cuban *rumba guaguancó* examples that follow—and in many collaborative improvisational settings, the “next action” engendered by a now-ongoing action does locate within some sort of protensive range of potential responses. This is not to say that a next action will necessarily fall within that contingent range, but that we will be surprised if it does not do so. But again, we have to account somehow for gestures that recall much earlier gestures, or that predict future gestures, or that are misremembered, or that reference other aspects of the performative space, or that are introduced anew as deterritorializing acts, conscious or not.

We should not lose sight of two crucial points. First, musical-objects-as-bodies, engaged in actions that constitute encounters between and among one another, are performed by actual bodies that, to some large extent, are making strategic decisions about whether to perform this or that action as the result of the web of encounters being spun out. That some of these actions are less than fully conscious—products of layers of cultural conditioning, learned behaviors, instinctive acts, psychomotor activities, details subsumed within larger gestures, and so on—is not insignificant, and in fact many (most?)

affective encounters play out at the passive level of instinct or habit. Second, these encounters are ongoing and mutually constitutive, enacted as performing bodies interact within the territorializing space, and both performing bodies and musical bodies are being drawn through them.<sup>76</sup> In view of these two points, let us turn to the plane of immanence that conditions the performance space, using *rumba guaguancó* as a metonym for the kinds of spaces (or places, or contexts) in which musical improvisation is acted out.

Guaguancó is a Cuban music-dance genre, performed by three drummers (each playing a single drum; from low to high, *tumbador*, *segundo*, and *quinto*), three percussionists playing claves (two small wooden sticks, played by hitting together), *catá* (a horizontal piece of bamboo or wood played with drumsticks), and *chékere* (a gourd shaker), respectively, a lead singer and chorus of accompanying singers (some of whom are also percussionists), and at any given time a pair of dancers, who act out a playfully seductive courtship ritual. Traditionally, guaguancó is performed in public or semi-private spaces (a neighborhood street, a backyard, etc.). The line between performer and non-performer is very blurry: many onlookers sing along, some enter the performance arena to dance, some (if invited) might swap in to play clave or a drum. In a typical performance, percussion and drums begin (as we shall see below), establishing an initial context through a series of interactive improvisational gestures that territorialize the constellation of milieus that comprise rumba guaguancó. The lead singer then joins with a selection from a large repertoire of songs, some deeply entrenched in the history of the genre, some reaching into other Cuban music genres, some more recently composed and perhaps familiar only to that micro-community. After an introductory *diana* (a wordless melody that among other things established the song's tonality), the *cuerpo* or "head" of the song is sung. Processes of coding and decoding, territorialization and deterritorialization, stratification and destratification are already underway. A transitional *estribillo* follows; this then gives way to an extended call-response (in the conventional use of the terms) structure, where the lead singer improvises new melodies and text, trading phrases with a recurring refrain from the chorus of accompanying singers. The dancers enter the performance spaces around this time as well, the *diana* and *cuerpo* considered a warming-up of the performance space in preparation for their entrance. Throughout, the drums are engaged in a three-way improvisational dialogue, which also includes conversing with the lead singer and dancers.

These are the performing bodies that enact a guaguancó performance. In turning to affect, however, we can no longer simply grant

them body status, since bodies are always already in a process of being formed by the actions they take part in performing, in relation to other actions and other bodies. So from here we should begin to consider the interactions of improvising bodies (and musical-objects-as-bodies) first of all in terms of their affective engagements. This means we begin to *construct* those bodies through encounters, intensive forces, affective exchanges, milieus, strata, territorializations, and deterritorializing lines along the plane of immanence of the now-ongoing guaguancó performance: as codings and decodings, constitutions of strata, and destratification. This is, again, subject-formation as an ongoing process; the subject emerging through the ongoing communication between the now-actual phase of the creative constitution of this performance (and the musical-objects-as-bodies that comprise that creative constitution), the larger living present of the performance as a temporal unity (the context of its contexts), and the temporally-fluid performing subjects that comprise the nodes between which affective forces flow.

We should also consider some essential musical objects—some aspects of the musical surface that are necessary for a performance to be regarded by insiders as guaguancó—as bodies.<sup>77</sup> These include the periodicity of the metric cycle (the onset of which is defined by a number of interrelated factors, including especially the dancers' feet, but for now, over-simply, marked by the *chékere*), *clave* (as a manifestation of an asymmetrical timeline characteristic of much West-African and diasporic West-African music), *catá* (an embellishment of the clave timeline), and the *guaguancó* melody (distributed between two drums, the *tumbador* and *segundo*, each played by a single drummer in dialogue), all of which are shown in Example 10.

guaguancó melody distributed between two  
drummers (T = tumbador; S = segundo)

The musical notation consists of three staves. The top staff is labeled 'chékere' and shows a single note with an 'x' above it. The middle staff is labeled 'catá' and shows a sequence of notes with accents. The bottom staff is labeled 'clave' and shows a sequence of notes with accents. Above the chékere staff, the letters T, S, S, T are aligned with the first four measures of the music.

EXAMPLE 10: SOME BASIC MUSICAL STRATA OF GUAGUANCÓ

We can call this an internal milieu of syntactic scaffolding, or a *syntactic milieu*—a middle of normative or determinant syntax that will be territorialized (and deterritorialized) through the singular act of an interactive performance. Note that we can easily problematize the inarguability of even these fundamental aspects of the musical context, which are among the first performative details learned when one is coming into contact with this music. For example, it is not at all clear whether the metric frame should be heard as one “measure” of 8/4 or one “cut time” measure of 4/2 or two measures of 4/4 or two measures of 2/2. Or all of these in some sense. It is not clear if clave should be felt as three events followed by two events, or two events followed by three events, with the third notated onset grouped cognitively with the second half of the clave cycle. The cycle defined by clave and meter, by the way, is not fixed: some other performative action can engender a shift that suggests a new cyclic beginning-point (or “downbeat”); this could be a melodic phrase from the singer, an accented emphasis from the drummers, or the particular emphasis of a dance gesture, and may be real or perceived (which of course is also real), long-lasting or fleeting. We’ll also find that the so-called grid constituted by these strata is hardly grid-like: it is itself fluid and contingent.<sup>78</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari write, “the points of reference themselves are in motion: there are only fixed points for convenience of reference,” which suggests that the elements that constitute the grid exist in the virtual realm of expression until they are actualized in performance.<sup>79</sup> We heard this in the “Ta’ Julián” example above: clave and catá were stretching the grid in compelling and clearly salient ways (see endnote 75). We can experience it in certain historic recordings, such as those by Havana *rumbero* Alberto Zayas, where the two-drum guaguancó melody is articulated on the three-side of clave.<sup>80</sup> And we can continue problematizing even these fundamental musical objects and their relations, especially the improvisational nature of the guaguancó melody, which will be the focus of the last part of this paper.

But of course describing these layers of musical activity, even in generously and sensitively problematized form, only begins to touch on the multiplicity of encounters and interactions that constitute the improvisational plane. Entering via the the basic background structure (but always taking care to remember that this is only one possible entry point—Deleuze and Guattari suggest that we “enter . . . by any point whatsoever, none matters more than another, and no entrance is more privileged”<sup>81</sup>), we must consider:

- the ongoing-ness of the dialogue between tumbador and segundo, which unfolds as a continuous flux of improvisatory

variations on the basic guaguancó melody, and how that dialogue contributes to the singular identity of the performance,<sup>82</sup>

- how the lead drum, the *quinto*, contributes to this dialogue,
- encounters, interactions, and affective exchanges between drummers and the lead singer or *sonero*,
- the role of the chorus, or *coro*, when it enters, and the way that its recurring refrain interacts with the sonero's improvisatory utterances,
- encounters, interactions, and affective exchanges between musicians and dancers,
- the conventional structure of a guaguancó performance: introduction, vocal *diana*, the *cuerpo* or main body, the transitional *estribillo*, and so on,
- the particular song being performed: its narrative content, the protensive range of its narrative arc, its history and performance practice, and so on,
- the immediately present performance arena: the “protean circle” described above, the street or square or *solar* or room on or in which it is taking place, the time of day, the nature and status of the party, how long the party has been going on, how excited / tired / drunk / etc. the participants are,
- drawing larger borders around social connections; families, friends, neighbors, participants versus observers (another protean distinction), musician versus non-musician (yet another), etc.,
- interweaving histories: of rumba, of *música cubana*, of race relations, of socio-economic conditions, and how they engender different performative entrainments,
- trajectories of folklorization, nationalism, repurposings, and reclaimings as acts of de-/re-territorialization,
- lines of flight: to and from other Cuban musical traditions, and to jazz and other “outside” traditions like the “rumba tap” collaborations of Los Muñequitos de Matanzas and Max Pollock.<sup>83</sup>



Each of these constitutes a Deleuzo-Guattarian milieu or complex of milieus. Any singular performance, then, unfolds as a process of territorialization and deterritorialization that brings these milieus and more into affective communication with one another.

The remainder of this essay will focus on improvised actions of performing bodies, of musical-objects-as-bodies, and of the roles of the affective forces of their encounters in constituting the fluid metric, rhythmic, and melodic ground of a performance. To do so I would like to consider three occasions of context-formations by examining the opening 45 seconds or so of three different guaguancó performances. For ease of comparison, and to limit the parameters somewhat, I have chosen three performances from the same recording by the renowned rumba ensemble Los Muñequitos de Matanzas: their 1992 Qbadisc release *Rumba Caliente*, which compiles tracks recorded in 1977 and 1988. By focusing on the admittedly artificial world of the recording studio, I can limit the number of milieus that are coming together in each ongoing act of territorialization: there are no dancers, the performances are comparatively short, the environmental stimuli are minimized as compared to a performance from a Matanzas street party, and presumably something relatively close to optimal listening conditions were provided for the participants. The reader should understand that I am treating this as something like a controlled experiment, which should be followed up with a number of next steps beginning with relocating performances into their proper ecologies, with the resulting proliferation of affective factors that would arise from such a return.

#### 1. “LA POLÉMICA”<sup>84</sup>

Example 11 shows a transcription of the opening of “La polémica,” the opening track on *Rumba Caliente*. In this and the transcriptions that follow, the vocal parts are in the top staff, the three drum parts, quinto, segundo, and tumbador, are given in the second, third, and fourth staves, respectively, and catá and clave are in the bottom staff.<sup>85</sup>

This performance begins, as does nearly every rumba performance, with clave, and then the rest of the ensemble follows. Typically, catá and mazacote enter together after one iteration of the clave cycle, or else they enter in turn but still articulating the cyclic beginning-point. In “La polémica,” however, mazacote enters a half cycle early, and before the catá begins. This has at least two affective implications that play out in the music that follows. First, it calls into question where the

perceived cyclic downbeat should be felt: is the just-heard clave cycle beginning-point the felt downbeat, or has it shifted to a new location? The interaction between the two downbeat orientations, neither asserted particularly conclusively, creates what we might call an unsettled metric context. Second, its comparatively early onset imbues the music with a sense of being *rushed*, which is balanced by a long, likely orchestrated, call that unfolds between tumbador and segundo. So the compressed action of the early mazacote entrance projects an affective response in the elongated call—or, conversely, the anticipation of that elongated call (again, likely predetermined by the performers) resulted in a decision to compress the initial action. There are two themes to consider here: first, the exchange of affective forces between performers and musical-objects-as-bodies (those bodies in this case being, among other things, mazacote and call, constituted in this singular way by the affective exchange of anticipation–response and unfolding as the double movement “early–long”), and second, the listener’s experience of this exchange, which unfolds as a double surprise (again, “early–long”) that affects the experience of the music’s continuation beyond this opening gesture. In both cases, early and long need each other: they are co-constitutive.

When the voice enters (m. 12), the mazacote’s cyclic alignment is confirmed: we are, at least for now, conclusively aligned with what insiders call the “two-side” of clave.<sup>86</sup> Even this new orientation, though, is metrically ambiguous. The quinto, which first made its appearance one two-side cycle earlier (m. 10), initiates a four-bar hypermetric layer that is displaced with regard to the vocal phrasing: the latter asserts a metric beginning-point in the third of the quinto’s four-bar periodic structure. The quinto’s four-bar phrases are only perceived retroactively, perhaps around measure 15 when its repetitive nature begins to be made clear. This hypermetric layer *does* reinforce the two-side orientation of the phrasing, but at the same time it unsettles the metric groundedness just enough to keep the two-side orientation an open question. This openness turns out almost immediately to have further affective implications, as a metrically ambiguous vocal phrase in measures 23–24 (is m. 23 an anacrusis?) is answered sharply by a *clave lock* from the quintero: this is a common downbeat-initiated gesture that in this case quickly reorients the metric frame to a three-side onset and at the same time elides the quinto’s four-bar hypermeter into a new phrasing alignment. The singer follows suit, the affective implications of the quinto lock proving irresistible.

The image displays a musical score for the opening of "LA POLÉMICA". It consists of several staves of music, including a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The score is annotated with several key features:

- mazacote enters early (on 2-side of clave)**: An annotation pointing to the beginning of the piano accompaniment.
- protracted exchange between tumbador and segundo**: An annotation with arrows indicating the rhythmic interplay between the two percussion parts.
- 2-side clave downbeat confirmed**: A label indicating the specific rhythmic structure of the clave.
- quinto joins**: A bracketed annotation marking the entry of the quinto player.
- intensified motion**: An annotation pointing to a section of the piano accompaniment.
- repetition engenders 4-bar hypermetric pattern (emerging)**: An annotation pointing to a specific rhythmic pattern in the vocal line.

The lyrics of the piece are: *Qui - sie - ra can - tar con - ti - go sem - pre que yo can - to me'en-ten-*

EXAMPLE II: "LA POLÉMICA" OPENING, TRANSCRIPTION BY THE AUTHOR

des, a - par - te que'e-res mi'a - mi - go - y'yo sé (me) que me com - pren-des, Di - ce'el sa - bi-o Su-lo - m'oh,

17  
 17  
 17  
 17  
 17  
 25  
 25  
 25  
 25  
 25

embellishment  
 repeats  
 (suggesting a reorientation to 3-side clave downbeat)  
 "clave lock" fills space left by vocal phrasing  
 Eh, lo que hom-bre le ma - tan, son los ce-los que - ar - re-ba - tan,

EXAMPLE 11 (CONT.)

(cadence)

33 la - vi - dū y el co - ra - zōn. Por - es - ta - mi - me - di - cōm. —

33 (1)

(but not a "real" cadence)

41 no - di - cen - tem - pe - on - gūer - re - ro.

41

41

41

41

41

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for Example 11 (continued). It consists of two systems of music. The first system starts at measure 33 and includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics 'la - vi - dū y el co - ra - zōn. Por - es - ta - mi - me - di - cōm. —'. Above the first measure of this system is the instruction '(cadence)'. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes. A circled measure number '(1)' is placed above the piano part at measure 35. A bracket spans from measure 35 to measure 39, with the instruction '(but not a "real" cadence)' written below it. The second system starts at measure 41 and also includes a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics 'no - di - cen - tem - pe - on - gūer - re - ro.'. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar rhythmic texture. Measure numbers 41, 41, 41, 41, and 41 are written below the piano staff in the second system.

EXAMPLE 11 (CONT.)

Two more affective implications are worth noting in this early passage. First is the careful and controlled way that tumbador and segundo interact. Both players are content to outline the basic guaguancó melody for large stretches—perhaps in support of the hypermetric stability asserted by the quinto’s regular phrasing; in fact, in general there is a relatively even dialogic distribution from the three drums—each contributes to a smooth improvisational surface by interlocking with short riffs, carefully avoiding any one voice dominating. This is evidenced by passages like that beginning in measure 17: an embellished tumbador figure prompts the segundo to respond in kind with a double onset. Tumbador repeats, and segundo follows, and then both immediately return to their basic roles. This stems from the in-between-ness of the affective space generated between the two players and the smooth surface that has resulted from the interactions between musical-objects-as-bodies: balance and sparseness define this layer of the musical texture. Toward the end of this excerpt, the singer (now clearly articulating a three-side clave alignment) arrives on a melodic cadence (m. 34). But this is not the “real” cadence—there is still much text to go before the cuerpo ends—and the tumbador seems to signal this by omitting the basic melody note that immediately follows (m. 35). This is a move that is both subtle and radical; the missing melody note suspends the ongoing action just so. But since there is another line of text coming, segundo and quinto resist the urge to fill the space left by the tumbador omission. The next vocal phrase occurs, and this time tumbador plays three sharp bass tones, as if to urge the other drummers to join in. They do so (mm. 39–40), the singer sings the consequent phrase, and tumbador wraps up this brief episode with a strong downbeat-directed gesture (mm. 42–43).

## 2. “PARECE MENTIRA”<sup>87</sup>

An annotated transcription of the opening of “Parece mentira” is shown in Example 12. After one iteration of the clave cycle, “Parece mentira” begins with a typical mazacote, from which emerges a long, complex tumbador call (m. 5). This is a signature call for Los Muñequitos, used in many performances through the group’s long history and even invoked by other, younger ensembles when they want to reference their predecessors, and, unlike the ambiguous interplay of “La polémica,” clearly articulates the three-side of clave (although not for long). This is followed by a correspondingly long segundo

response, but the *segundo* response is crowded out by the *quinto*, as if *quinto* is anxious to get things moving. This is perhaps because the *segundo* did not respond earlier to the *tumbador*'s invitation, as would have been expected—witness the space left in m. 8, where the *segundo* would have typically begun; because of this omission and the flurry that follows in m. 10, the onset of the *guaguancó* melody is delayed by two full *clave* cycles. An affective reading of this brief exchange points to a rapid proliferation of long improvisational gestures, each adding some new quality. For example, the *quinto* plays a series of slaps and open tones (mm. 15–17) that push increasingly toward the front end of the beat span (indicated by the left-pointing arrows in the transcription; this gives the illusion of a tempo acceleration), which influence a series of doubled onsets from the *segundo* where the second of each pair of onsets is commensurably early, compressing the musical gesture as it spans the beat (mm. 22, 24, 26, 28—again indicated with arrows). We might also note quickly how the vocal chorus ebbs and flows, and how the drummers, especially *quinto*, fill the space left by the singers. The long series of straight quarter-note *quinto* onsets invite the singer to cut in with a syncopated phrase beginning in measure 16, but the vocal melody peaks on beat 3 of the next bar, in rhythmic accord with the *quinto* but syncopating against *clave*: this is a powerful and effective way to subtend the metric and *clave* strata, rich with affective implications. In fact, perhaps predicting that beat 3 vocal arrival, the *segundo* plays a single onset there, reinforcing its syncopated status against the *clave* grid. The voice continues, spilling into a descending sequence that in turn incites the *tumbador* to join in the action with elaborate embellishments in measures 19–20.

Unlike “*La polémica*,” no consistent *clave* orientation is asserted through this opening passage; the music's phrasing shifts its *clave* alignment several times. Beginning, as always, on the three-side, the flurry of activity in measure 10 marks the first salient shift to the two-side, which the singer picks up with his initial *diana* phrase. The *quinto* riff starting in measure 15 reorients immediately back to the three-side, and the singer follows suit two bars later. The brief bit of repose that follows does nothing to challenge this orientation, but then singers enter with the harmonized *cuerpo* back on the two-side. Their entrance is problematized by the *quinto*'s riff in measure 27, but the *quintero* seems to make up for this rhythmic discrepancy with a long response figure that ends with a *clave* lock (m. 33); *tumbador* hears this and affirms the *clave* lock's cadential status with a resounding response in the next bar. However, all is not completely clear: the

engenders this flurry of activity

no segando here

long tumbador call

invites enthusiastic quinto response

and then Diana's early entrance

synopton against clave, reinforced by segando

(anacrusis)

sequential pattern leads to build-up of energy from tumbador

The musical score consists of two systems of staves. The first system has four staves, and the second system has five staves. Annotations include arrows pointing to specific musical features and boxes highlighting certain passages. The annotations describe the relationship between the music and the dance, such as 'engenders this flurry of activity' and 'invites enthusiastic quinto response'.

EXAMPLE 12: "PARECE MENTIRA" OPENING, TRANSCRIPTION BY THE AUTHOR



to lead to cadence

(beginning of cuerpo)

Pa-re - ce men - ti - ra mi a - mi - gos—

= stable basic melody

quinto responds to vocal phrase

Pa-re - ce men - ti - ra mi - a - mi - gos—

clave lock to align with voice

(and tumbador joins in)

21 21 21 21 21 31 31 31 31 31

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for Example 12 (Cont.), consisting of two systems of staves. The top system starts at measure 21. The first staff is a vocal line with lyrics 'Pa-re - ce men - ti - ra mi a - mi - gos—'. Above the first few notes, there is a bracket labeled '(beginning of cuerpo)'. A box highlights a specific melodic phrase in the vocal line, labeled '= stable basic melody'. The bottom system starts at measure 31. The first staff is an instrumental line, with an annotation 'quinto responds to vocal phrase' pointing to a circled section. The vocal line continues with the same lyrics. A box highlights a section of the vocal line, labeled 'clave lock to align with voice'. Below the vocal line, there is an annotation '(and tumbador joins in)' pointing to the start of a new instrumental line. The score includes various musical notations such as treble clefs, a key signature of one flat, and time signatures of 8/8 and 3/8.

EXAMPLE 12 (CONT.)

quinto's response to the first cuerpo phrase seems to have suggested a pair of three-bar phrases (three bars of vocal melody followed by a commensurate quinto figure); one might say that the quinto entered early and intruded on the terrain of the vocal melody. And in fact, when the repeated vocal melody enters, quinto plays the same problematizing figure as the first time (m. 37), but with the last two notes of the figure pushed back a half beat (m. 38; compare to m. 28). As if to synthesize the various aspects of the complex, playful relationship that has unfolded thus far, quinto continues with another clave lock, this time pointing toward a strong unison arrival with the vocal melody's last note (on the last syllable of "amigos"—not an insignificant point).

To summarize, a rich array of affective impulses plays through this opening passage. The actions performed early on—the initial long tumbador call, the delayed segundo response, the way quinto crowds impatiently into the segundo's space, the ebb and flow of clave alignments as different parts assert different temporal orientations—all of these conspire to create an in-between space that affects future actions. Some of these future actions involve further concatenations and overlaps, unsettling the phrase structure in a way that recalls, but is distinct from, that given in "La polémica." The affective space is itself an emergent process, of course, and next actions build upon and enrich its array of implications. Questions that might come to mind, were a performer to be thinking overtly in these terms (recall, though, that affective spaces are largely passive phenomena, representing the "dark precursor" that precedes conscious thought, although they do not end when conscious thought begins), might include, "what kind of performed gesture continues the trajectory of event overlap that early stages in the affect-flow engendered?" This type of question could elicit a response like the measure 15–17 quinto figure, which transfers an event like a metric overlap, already figured elsewhere at the beat level as syncopation, to the microrhythmic level as repositionings along the beat span.

Another way to think of this is that, through this opening passage, a context is being constructed: the context of *this* performance of "Parece mentira." This context is being constructed by the ongoing flux of singular acts of territorialization and deterritorialization that select forces from multiple milieus and set them into play on the plane of immanence of this performance. As with all of the songs under examination in this study, "Parece mentira" has been a repertoire staple for Los Muñequitos. But as with all rumba performances, the details of any particular performance unfold through a process of

improvisational variations—or, better, through a process of interactions between improvisational variations and loosely predetermined materials (the characteristics of guaguancó, the song, etc.). In the case of “La polémica” above, I focused on the context of shared contribution to the musical surface on the part of the three drummers, of nuanced response in what seems like a highly participatory manner, of hypermetric and metric overlap. In “Parece mentira,” the context is more obviously complex: moving back and forth between clave orientations, more radical moves across beat spans (especially those that align toward the earlier part of the beat), disjunctive gestural material recontextualized later as conjunct. In both cases, the context established early in the performance has resonances that reverberate through its entirety. In both cases the identity of the work is emergent—a nomad ontology. “In many ways Deleuze’s nomadism is our improvisation, just as his nomad is our improviser.”<sup>88</sup> In both cases it is the flux of events, events parsed into sub-events, and events folded into larger events that generate conditions for response-behaviors. Performed actions leave traces on the ongoing context, to be taken up in singular ways by next actions as passive or active responses. The sounds that comprise the materiality of those actions constitute the space—musical-objects-as-bodies and the performers that instantiate them are in a sense inseparable, but this depends on perspective; my experience, for instance, as a listener many years later, attending carefully to a recording, orients me more toward musical-objects-as-bodies than to the unseen performers, but this is a quite different experience from when I hear Los Muñequitos perform live, or when I myself perform rumba. But either way, it is the eventfulness of the performed actions, the in-between-ness of affective forces that the context of those actions helps define, and the ongoingness of creative takings-up of affective implications into next actions, that creates the singularity of this performance, this time.

### 3. “EL TONELERO”<sup>89</sup>

One more example, “El tonelero,” follows, representing the first of the recording sessions documented in the Qbadisc release. An annotated transcription of the opening of “El tonelero” is shown in Example 13. “El tonelero” proliferates quickly: a simple three-note call from the tumbador invites a counterbalancing six-note response from the segundo. The diana begins right away, overlapping with the segundo response, which the tumbador seems to take notice of with a quick

2-side diana entrance, crowding segundo response (pitch creeping up)

(no tonic resolution of diana) (minimal response activity) (NB pitch settles back down)

To - ne - le -

EXAMPLE 13: "EL TONELERO" OPENING, TRANSCRIPTION BY THE AUTHOR

The image displays two systems of musical notation, each consisting of five staves. The first system begins at measure 17 and ends at measure 24. The second system begins at measure 25 and ends at measure 32. The notation includes treble clefs, a key signature of two flats, and various rhythmic values. Annotations include circled notes, arrows, and text labels such as "now dense response from all three drums", "bass tone added", "ro.", "le", "minimal, supportive activity from quinto", "segundo joins", and "tumbador assumes primary response role". The lyrics "To - me" are positioned above the top staff of the first system.

17 To - me

now dense response from all three drums

bass tone added

ro.

17

17

17

17

17

25

minimal, supportive activity from quinto

segundo joins

tumbador assumes primary response role

ro.

le

25

25

25

25

25

EXAMPLE 13 (CONT.)

reinforcing “secondary bomba” in measure 6.<sup>90</sup> Quinto, meanwhile, waits patiently, contributing only two brief gestures through the first eighteen measures of the performance. The sparse context that stems from the *diana*—very little quinto activity, *segundo* outlining its basic melodic role, *tumbador* suppressing its bass tone—provides a double counterbalance: first, as textural response to the compressed action of measures 5–8, and second, as a continuation of the non-resolution of the *diana*: rather than the expected descent to a cadential tonic, the singer ends on a melodically dissonant  $\hat{4}$ , suggesting a continuation of kinetic energy into the next phrase, which we might expect to be a consequent *diana* statement. That the drummers do not respond by filling in the space creates an unusual affective relation for this type of music: patiently biding time; perhaps a sign that we are hearing older, more patient players. When the consequent statement turns out, surprisingly, to be the first phrase of the *cuerpo*, the drums respond anew: *tumbador* adds the bass tone to articulate *bomba*, and both quinto and *segundo* join with dense overlapping gestures (mm. 18–22). Here we might consider what it means affectively to create a complex, dense sonic space—what sort of gesture might best effect that, from the perspective of an individual drummer and from that of an encounter between all three? On closer inspection it turns out that the *tumbador* is holding steady, playing its half of the *guaguancó* melody with almost no variation. It seems as if the *tumbador* has anticipated the flurry of activity from the *segundo* and quinto, and has chosen to balance that with a simple groove. In the corresponding spot after the second vocal iteration, the *tumbador* announces a different kind of intent with two offbeat onsets (m. 26) before the singers have finished, as if to signal that a new line is opening for further improvisational consideration. What follows is an inversion of the last drum response: a busy three-bar gesture from the *tumbador* with subtle support from the other drums: a pair of eighth notes from *segundo*, embellishing its melody note, and a single slap from quinto.

As the excerpt continues, the types of interactions that take place support the notion that the improvisatory flux of the performance is playing out within the context constituted by these early encounters. An accumulation of intensive energy builds beginning in measure 37, where quinto again crowds up against the vocal melody and *segundo* and then *tumbador* respond in kind, ending together with a strong unison gesture (leading to the downbeat of measure 39). This is balanced by the next encounter: the drummers relax while the singers sing the consequent phrase of their short *cuerpo*. Quinto waits this time, letting a full *clave* cycle pass before repeating the same triplet

from eleven bars earlier; now doubly decontextualized through this separation and its new location on the two-side of clave. Of course decontextualization seems to be a key aspect of the context of “El tonelero”—the deterritorializations that are always already at work within the context of a territorialization. This is amplified in the next exchange. A forceful tumbador figure is answered mimetically by segundo (mm. 50–51), while at the same time a quinto clave lock transforms into a *very* long cross-beat pattern. Note how segundo reacts: with an embellished repeat of its tumbador-response that aligns with salient events in the quinto figure. Perhaps most interesting through this passage, though, is the way that the singers begin their *estribillo* (the next section in a rumba performance, which among other things invites the dancers to participate): they come in strongly with the end of the quinto clave lock (m. 51), but the quintero chooses not to clear space for their melodic statement. The cross-rhythm emerges as a deterritorializing line, itself a product of the particular ways in which the context of the performance had been invented thus far.

Much is revealed from a comparative closer look at the two drum passages in measures 18–22 and 26–30, in response to the question posed just above: what does it mean to generate a context from an affective encounter? Or, how far can we go in describing a detailed array of actions that increasingly determine a context? The passage that stems from the first cuerpo phrase is rich with such implications. The single *bomba* onset from the tumbador suggests continuation, which the tumbador resists in deference to the sudden burst of activity from the quinto. The quinto’s response itself unfolds as a two-part gesture: each a slap followed by three isochronous open tones, each slap in accord with clave. The segundo joins, but not merely adding an additional dense layer of activity. The segundo’s figure suggests close attention to the quinto layer: a single open tone, a pause, and then three pairs of onsets, themselves isochronous when taken as small gestalts. It is easy to hear this as a projection from one temporal level (the off-beat quarter note) to another (the half note, following the interonset interval of each segundo gesture). This is mitigated by the fact that the segundo’s gestures are themselves initiated on the offbeats. Threes reverberate through the passage that follows—a context has been established and is taken up variably: the tumbador melody (mm. 26–27ff), the triplet quinto riff that happens twice, the mimetic figure in the last system of Example 13, ornamented in its third iteration, the quinto cross-rhythm that articulates three-eighth-note IOIs. Even the cuerpo has an inbuilt three-ness: “El tonelero” is repeated three times before the consequent phrase wraps things up.

\* \* \*

Acts of territorializing involve “how you can move across . . . relationships, where you can and cannot invest, where you can stop/rest and where you can move and make new connections, what matters and in what ways.”<sup>91</sup> By shifting our focus to the actions that constitute an improvisational space, we construct a context in Grossberg’s sense. This involves, among many other activities, conjunctures of milieus producing proliferations of codings and decodings; territorializing expressions within improvisational languages and across performances practices, and the deterritorializing lines that interrupt and transform those expressions; and constitutions of strata and processes of destratification (constructing an ontological ground that is already implicated in its own deconstruction). Territorializing, the production of the this-ness of a singular performed context, involves communications between conjuncture and ontology, virtual and actual, coding and stratifying, and expression and content. It foregrounds the identity-defining force of relations, encounters, affect, dialogues, and feelings, and demands that we think of identity itself as *always in the process of being constituted*. Deleuze characterizes this as “essence as a degree of power.”<sup>92</sup> This means thinking *action* first as *in-between-ness* (“action occurs in a milieu”<sup>93</sup>), through which meaning is constituted; meaning is imbued in the object by virtue of action, and the resulting effect of that action on other objects (and their actions) with which it comes into contact. By focusing on the interrelationship between this and the flux of performative/performed decision-making, we can think of multiplicities of objects as *unities*, constituted by ontologizing forces of affective encounters. All of this points, finally, to the *embodied* nature of affect, engendering those actions but also as constituted by them: as Suzanne Cusick has suggested, this might lead to an orientation toward the embodiment of music-making and, ultimately, to “a theory that would then be worthy of the music itself.”<sup>94</sup>



## NOTES

1. Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth, “An Inventory of Shimmers,” in *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 2.
2. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), 9.
3. See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 323 for more on the ways in which codes, decodings, and transcodings act as such vectors, bringing heterogeneous milieus together on a plane of immanence. I will develop aspects of this process throughout this essay.
4. I will unpack all of this in detail, but for now should emphasize that I am not describing musical objects as bodies in a metaphoric sense, nor am I anthropomorphizing musical gestures by imbuing them with metaphorical agencies. By describing objects and gestures (and by extension processes) in affective terms, I deliberately conflate a number of mutually constitutive processual frames from a number of phenomenological perspectives, with the dialogue between listener’s perception and performer’s production being only the most primordial one.
5. Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, Ltd., 2005), 10. Massey’s “geographies of relations” between entities are essential for the constitution of space, which will become a significant part of my argument below.
6. Gary Peters, *Philosophy of Improvisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). Briefly, Peters is responding to the work-drive or the form-drive suggested by standard accounts of improvisational practice, suggesting instead a “tragic” account where the ongoing is continuously destroyed to make way for a new beginning—an ontology of always-beginning. There is no “is” in Peters’s reading of improvisatory process (nor in mine): there is only a radical becoming-other, a perpetual flux of new-again.

7. Cecil Taylor, "Sound Structure of Subculture Becoming Major Breath/Naked Fire Gesture," liner notes to *Unit Structures* (Blue Note 84237, 1966; CD reissue 1987). This is part of a longer passage, many facets of which resonate with affect and particularly with the current project; viz. "from *Anacrusis to Plain* patterns and possibility converge, mountain sides to dry rock beds, a fountain spread before prairie, for is possibility; content, quality, and change growth in addition to direction found. . . . The paths of harmonic and melodic light, give architecture sound structures acts creating flight. Each instrument has strata. Physiognomy, inherent matter-calling-stretched into sound (Layers) in rhythms regular and irregular measuring co-existing bodies of sound." I unpack this passage further, and demonstrate its relevance to Taylor's improvisational syntax, in a forthcoming essay.
8. See endnote 70 below for more on how I am defining "subject," which derives from Whitehead's conception.
9. Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurent Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 27.
10. The contentiousness of these questions is nowhere more stark than when we feel the need to draw a line between what does or not get to count as improvised music. In this study, I refer to musics where the degree of improvisatory accountability is quite high—where a pre-existing script, if there is one, is much more obviously a rough sketch for how the music *could* go (for example, where a performer's note choices are not at all, or only loosely, determined, as in jazz) than some others (for example, where notes are determined but their precise temporal placement, dynamic interpretation, and so on are determined by the performer, as in much score-based music). But, I reinforce: by "improvised music" I really do mean all music; this study, therefore, marks a turn to what makes a musical utterance improvised.
11. For an excellent general overview of the connection between Deleuze and Spinoza, on the ground of music, see Amy Cimini, "Gilles Deleuze and the Musical Spinoza," in *Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Theory and Philosophy of Music*, edited by Brian Hulse and Nick Nesbitt (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 129–144.
12. Joel McKim, "Of Microperceptions and Micropolitics," *INFLExions: A Journal for Research-Creation* 3 (2009), 2.

13. Transversality is a concept that Deleuze derived from Guattari's work at La Borde, involving moves that cut across traditional hierarchies, communications between different strata, and displacements and undos of concentrations and flows of power. In the case of the social space of the improvisational musical moment, this amounts to "a structural redefinition of the role of each [participant] and a reorientation of the whole" as a creative flux (Félix Guattari, *Psychoanalysis and Transversality: Texts and Interviews 1955–1971*, translated by Ames Hodges [Semiotext(e), 2015], 80).
14. Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, translated by Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 218.
15. But also conditioning that past: this is a process that unfolds in Deleuze's second synthesis of time. See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, translated by Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 81–83.
16. Deleuze describes how a body's "power of acting or force of existing increases or diminishes" when the affective power of another "mode is added to it . . . or . . . withdrawn. . . . The passage to a greater perfection, or the increase of the power of acting, is called an affect . . . of joy; the passage to a lesser perfection or the diminution of the power of acting is called sadness. Thus the power of acting varies according to the external causes for the same capacity for being affected" (Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, translated by Robert Hurley [Eugene, OR: City Lights Books, 1988], 50).
17. See Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson (London: Athlone, 1983), especially pp. 39–42. The way Deleuze reads Nietzsche's force is from the perspective of a selection, replace the classical ontological question "what is . . . ?" with "which one is . . . ?" where in this case "one" is equated with an event (an *act* of selection) that engages "the forces in their various relationships in a proposition or phenomenon" and the "genetic relationship which determines those forces." (*Nietzsche and Philosophy*, xi). Elizabeth Grosz extends this point about the genetic constitution of forces in relationships: what returns is not the identical but "the extreme, the active, that which, in going as far as it can, brings about its own changing, changing into something else, metamorphoses itself" (Elizabeth Grosz, *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely* [Durham and

London: Duke University Press, 2004], 141). This reading of Nietzsche (through Deleuze through Grosz) has had a significant impact on how I read improvisational spaces in music affectively (see Stover 2017). Genetic here refers to both the ongoing, *ontogenetic* (c.f. Massumi 2002) forces at play in the timely constitution of a performative utterance, but also in the way that, through acts of territorialization and deterritorialization, aspects of a performance's multiplicity of contexts are brought together in the singular way that this performance, this time is playing out.

18. See Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, translated by Edwin Curley (New York: Penguin Book Classics, 1996), especially Part III (p. 68ff).
19. Gilles Deleuze, "Lecture Transcripts on Spinoza's Concept of Affect" (1978), 4–5.
20. Deleuze, Spinoza: Practical Philosophy, 49.
21. In English-language literature, the distinction between *affectio* and *affectus* is elided as the two words are rolled into the single term *affect*. Deleuze has been careful to retain the distinction—see Deleuze, "Spinoza's Concept of Affect," for a clear explication of its importance. But there is also, I believe, something gained by blurring the distinction, by erasing the bifurcation between the force of affective encounter and the traces that the encounter leaves on a body, and I would argue that this blurring is itself a fundamentally Deleuzian move. Another way to think of this is breaking down the distinction between affect (as action or encounter) and its effects, which is essentially to break down the distinction between force-encounters and the bodies that both constitute and are constituted by those encounters. I will follow this line of thought, using the single term affect to mean both the force-encounters between bodies and the ways in which those encounters variably increase or decrease each body's capacity to act.

One compelling way that this plays out in musical terms is as a blurring of the objects and object-constellations that comprise the sonic materiality of music and the meanings—the affective implications—that arise when those sounds encounter the ears of attuned listeners. See endnote 71 below for more on the degrees of presence of affective forces in different cultural listening situations.

22. Massumi, "Of Microperceptions," 4.
23. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 119–120.

24. See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 88–91. For an examination of the possibilities that Deleuze’s three syntheses of time hold for understanding improvised music, see my “Time, Territorialization, and Improvisational Spaces” (*Music Theory Online* 21/3, 2017).
25. Massumi, “Of Microperceptions,” 5.
26. Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 8. This line of thinking derives from Whitehead’s conception of eventful (or event-oriented) subjectivity and objectivity, where subject and object do not represent knower and known, but where both are co-implicated in the *occasion of experience*, constituting one another in the context of that event. See Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 175ff. Massumi has recently invoked the term “activist philosophy,” which has a powerful double meaning in the way it foregrounds action (as process philosophy’s ontological starting place) and activism from a political perspective. Both of these meanings have significant resonances with the current project, since the “collective event” that describes the living present of interactive improvisational music-making is an essentially political category, and since, as activist musicians from Sun Ra to Cornelius Cardew to Fred Ho would like us to consider, collectively improvised music-making serves as a powerful metonym for all sorts of intersubjective political structures. See Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 13 for more on activism and “the politicality of process.”
27. Massumi, “Of Microperceptions,” 6.
28. Deleuze, “Spinoza’s Concept of Affect,” 5–6.
29. Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 27.
30. See my “Musical Bodies: Corporeality, Emergent Subjectivity, and Improvisational Spaces” (*M/C Journal* 19/1, 2016) for an account of how different kinds of bodies interact in order to engender improvisational contexts.
31. As an act of territorialization, the refrain involves taking up the affective implications of milieus (as bodies, meaning as things which can be taken up in affective relations (*that is, as events*)) and drawing them together in some singular way—the something-doing of the here-now. What repeats in Deleuze and Guattari’s refrain is what repeats in all of Deleuze’s thought—the eternal return of difference. “Only affirmation returns—in other words,

the Different, the Dissimilar” (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 299). The act of territorialization is “eternally self-creating” (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale [New York: Vintage Books, 1967], 550), eternally opening onto the future, eternally repeating that openness onto the future. Keith Faulkner writes: “the repetition of the future, or of the ‘after,’ cannot be expressed as an anticipation of the future, which places a limit on chance; it would envision, in advance, what would count as a winning move. This phenomenological explanation has no place in Deleuze’s conception of the future. . . . The repetition of the future . . . always appears as the affirmation of all possible outcomes” (Faulkner, *Deleuze and the Three Syntheses of Time* [Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2006], 131). What does this mean for a consideration of the ways in which the improvisational moment opens onto a future of virtual possibilities? First, that every living present is always already an opening onto the future—this, again, is the action Deleuze lays out in his third synthesis of time. But more important, perhaps, is how it forecloses the viability of anticipation—the protensive field of phenomenology—in favor of an ever-newness, a re-novation in Gary Peters’s language. Why is this important? Because it takes into account the affective conditions of the ongoing space of the event; in particular the different ways in which bodies are affectively attuned and by extension the multiplicity of individual ways that a body might respond to an affective stimulus, which cannot be known ahead of time.

32. But not, of course, with agency—at least in the sense that musical-objects-as-bodies are somehow making determinate decisions, autonomous from the human bodies enacting them. But to deny agency is to (re)assert connectivity: there are no musical-objects-as-bodies without the performers that produce them. Furthermore, I submit that when we consider the passive nature of affect—its pre-sensorial stirrings and how the passive synthesis of the past into one’s living present as habit (*Deleuze, Difference and Repetition*, 79–81; see also James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze’s Philosophy of Time: A Critical Introduction and Guide* [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011], 38–41) engenders certain kinds of responses to affective stimuli—that prefigures subjective agency, that something very much like a pre-personal agency is bequeathed on the objects that condition the affective space. This, again, is in no way to anthropomorphize musical-objects-as-bodies, but is intended to invert what is even meant by agency in pursuit of an affective perspective.

33. Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 26. Massumi goes on with a series of compelling examples:

An electron is an occasion of experience. . . . It “takes account” of the electromagnetic field of the nucleus of the atom in the dynamic form of its orbit and in its quantum character (the unity of the dynamic form expressed as its orbit and energy level). The electron registers the “importance” of its fellow creatures of the nucleus, and expresses it in the dynamic unity of its own pathmaking. The tree along a river takes account of the surrounding mountains in how they are able to take in the rain washing down from them, negotiating with their shadows for their growth, or availing themselves of the mountain’s protection from the wind. The life of a tree is a “society” of occasions of experience whose taking-account of other events—weather events, geological events, the earth’s gravitation, the sun’s rising and setting—contributes to a continual growth pattern. (26)

34. Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002), 6.
35. In Deleuze’s arrow-of-time characterization, this is an asymmetrical relation; the becoming-I of V7 is an *event* that assembles the two objects in series of before and after, or past and future. See *Difference and Repetition*, 89.
36. This in-between-ness is much like, but not exactly like, Deleuze’s *milieu*, a middle with neither beginning nor end. It is milieu-like because it begins with the in-between-ness of affective forces and from there constitutes a pair of actors that appropriately generate the affective exchange desired. This is an excellent, if simple, example of how acts of territorialization can function as a desiring-machine—see Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 283–288. It is unlike a true Deleuzian milieu because of the boundedness of its nature; there is room for proliferations of and variations on dominant-to-tonic function, but there are certainly limits beyond which no such function can be asserted, at least within the confines of ordinary syntactic conventions. A line of flight that radically dislocates this function is a compelling Deleuzian concept, but I am skeptical of its, say, musical-compositional value, since it is precisely the fact that the co-constitutive status of the two nodes is

“coiled up” in the act of deterritorialization (to borrow a turn of phrase from Martin Scherzinger) that makes the function work for us affectively (in a more conventional, non-Deleuzian, or non-Spinozan, sense of the term). The fact that no matter how radically we push the notion of what can fruitfully occupy the nodes, there are still only two co-determinate actions, in a temporal order, also problematizes a purely Deleuzian reading here.

37. Constantin Boundas, “What Difference Does Deleuze’s Difference Make?,” in *Deleuze and Philosophy*, edited by Constantin Boundas (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 3.
38. In other words, the way that I interpret Deleuze is that he would not want to erase the nodes; rather, he would want to see a nomadic engagement, a becoming-nodelike, that foregrounds the fluidity of our focus and an affective notion of identity. In what sorts of creative ways can we imagine an object that is constitutive of dominant-ness? This effectively deterritorializes enculturated notions of what dominant-to-tonic is supposed to do: rather than the objects and qualities that comprise “dominant,” the ways in which they go to tonic, and what that gesture *means* (from semantic or syntactic perspectives, or in terms of signification, or from the perspective of a purely musical meaning, starting with meaning and *then* creatively considering the objects that can embody that meaning. This resonates with Nicholas Cook’s entreaty in “Theorizing Musical Meaning,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 23/2 [2001]: 170–195).

While beyond the scope of this paper, I would suggest that this was the singular problem that Schoenberg wrestled with through his later career—how to generate a musical structure that reflects the kinds of expressive needs that a tonal dominant-to-tonic satisfies, without resorting to conventional harmonic or melodic idioms. Schoenberg’s need seems motivated by a Lacanian *lack*—the lack of the kind of teleological drive, and commensurate dramatic arc, that characterized the formal processes of what he considered to be the best tonal music. Webern’s music, on the other hand, could be described in Deleuzian terms as a desiring machine characterized by a need unmotivated by lack (*Deleuze, Difference and Repetition*, 78; Tamsin Lorraine, *Irigaray and Deleuze: Experiments in Visceral Philosophy* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999], 117), where a micropolitics of relationships between musical-objects-as-bodies proliferate through the very unfolding of the musical structure: structure and process are one



and the same in Webern's music. Given the particular thrust of Deleuze's interest in the expressive potentials of modernist art and music (see, for example, *Difference and Repetition*, 56, on modern art as "a veritable *theater* of metamorphoses and permutations"), a comparative study of form and process in Schoenberg's and Webern's music would be a fruitful topic for future research.

39. Drew Nobile, "A Structural Approach to the Analysis of Rock Music" (PhD Dissertation, City University of New York, 2014).
40. This may seem in direct conflict with the essential co-constitution of bodies and affective forces that I assert in the preceding paragraph, but I mean this creatively: what other bodies can we place in those nodes, and then how do they engender the affective flows that in turn constitute the flux of their ongoing identity?
41. I extrapolate this concept from Benjamin Boretz, "What Lingers On (, when the Song is Ended)," in *Being About Music: Textworks 1960–2003* (Red Hook, NY: Open Space, 2003), 421–428.
42. Note that in isolating  $V^7 \rightarrow I$  in the examples above, I've (strategically, but somewhat dishonestly) bracketed whatever way the dominant node is itself approached; the dominant node also has a characteristic quality of *through-ness* as it marks one span of a larger passage. A more complete account that takes in a multiplicity of beside-nesses in a room and the proliferating affective encounters that result must take into consideration further connective layers, up to and beyond the level of the entire piece of music under scrutiny.
43. Relationships of "being wrapped up in," "having to do with," "tending to," and "care" reverberate through Heidegger's *Being and Time* and characterize the type of being that Dasein is and has. Dasein, as the type of being that human being is, is always already relational with and in the world; the world in turn is defined by that very relationality (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson [New York: Harper and Row, 1962], 134–148). Dasein dwells in a world constituted by relationships, nearnesses, and bodily orientations, and Heidegger's fundamental project, which should be taken seriously by music scholars, is a radical move of de-severing or de-distancing (138), of restoring the closeness of, and attending to, relationality that, for Heidegger, had been lost through the modern history of philosophy. Furthermore, Heidegger's analytic of everyday-ness (68–76) emphasizes the

attention to ordinary details of the relationships that comprise the world; in the case of improvised musical spaces, the interactive goings-on of the inhabitants of that world, from as de-distanced a perspective as we can imagine mustering.

44. Steven Friedson, *Dancing Prophets: Musical Experience in Tumbuka Healing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
45. Just like a rhizomatic conception has bundles of arborescences (and vice versa), a consideration of world as networks of affective encounters composes into networks of *contexts*, which can be read as self-contained even if that reading is ultimately impoverished; after all, we have to start somewhere.
46. Lawrence Grossberg, *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 30.
47. Grossberg, *Cultural Studies*, 30–31.
48. Here Grossberg draws lines between his context-building project and Donna Haraway's theory of situated knowledge as "a map produced by the trajectory one follows, a map that 'fabricates' the real" (see Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14/3 [1988]: 575–599). He also characterizes Foucault's genealogy as an example of radical contextual thinking, "(1) as understanding events as the articulation of singularities within relationships of force; (2) as a theory of contingency; (3) as seeking out events 'in the most unpromising places'; and (4) as counter-memory, to transform the temporality of history itself" (Grossberg, *Cultural Studies*, 297). See Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 139–164.
49. Deleuze and Guattari's substitution of the conjunctive "and" for the ontological "is" derives in part from the wordplay between the French *est* and *et*: "It is only in appearance that these two terms are in accord and combine, for the first acts in language as a constant . . . , while the second places everything in variation . . ." (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 98). Likewise the transformation of *je* ("I") into *jeu* ("play"), which Arnaud Villani develops in a beautiful account of how Deleuze's thought bends and folds traditional concepts in fundamentally playful (but serious: "more serious even than the compunction of those who find a ready-made real . . . serious . . . because it is joyful") ways. For Villani, Deleuze's

philosophy “is a machine whose function is to bend, to fold concepts, to make them ‘follow the tangent’, to transform all the poles of rectitude into a witch’s broom, to change our thought *vis a tergo* into a missile, and to make it dance the gigue” (Villani, “Why Am I Deleuzian?,” translated by Constantin Boundas and Sarah Lambie, in *Deleuze and Philosophy*, edited by Constantin Boundas [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006], 232).

50. See endnote 66 below.

51. Massumi, *Parables*. Massumi derives the concept of ontogeny from Gilbert Simondon, *L’individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d’information* (Grenoble: Millon, 2005).

52. Grossberg, “Affect’s Future: Rediscovering the Virtual in the Actual,” in *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 314. The way Deleuze and Guattari define machine assemblages goes a long way toward erasing the binary between body and musical-object-as-body that might be said to problematize the nature of the current narrative. An assemblage, for Deleuze and Guattari, involves “an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another” (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 88), but as Nick Nesbitt has carefully elucidated, the content and expression that determine assemblages transcend human subjective enunciation to reorient toward the space of the expression itself. Nesbitt offers three possible consequences of this way of thinking:

First implication: to analyze any musical event as an *agencement* of productive forces is to describe an a subjective sound experiment, a creative network without a center of consciousness. Second consequence: this network will be immanent and singular, including the concepts that participate in its self-fashioning, devoid of abstraction, generating its own criteria for successful expression. Third, and following from the former two, any musical event will be expressive, generative, and creative, but not, or not primarily, a human-centered result of the metaphysics of productivity. (Nesbitt, “Critique and Clinique: From Sounding Bodies to the Musical Event,” in *Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Theory and Philosophy of Music*, edited by Brian Hulse and Nick Nesbitt [Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2010], 163–164.

Note that Nesbitt prefers the French *agencement* to assemblage, to foreground its *active* creation. All of Nesbitt’s consequences are

reflected in the current study, but none as much as the second—the singularity and self-generation of an improvisational space, as the ongoing territorialization of the multiplicity of milieus that it draws together, but also the particular nature of its immanence: following Deleuze, an open immanence that includes change and the virtual as part of its reality through the three syntheses of time.

53. See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 210–212. For more on the non-binary movement of Deleuze’s paired terms, see my “Time, Territorialization,” especially footnote 32.
54. Grossberg warns that “many analyses of the contemporary world conflate the different configurations of contextuality. For example, they equate the material processes and structures of power (milieus) and the embodied ways they are lived (territories). Or they substitute an ontological analysis (region) . . . for the empirical description of the milieus and territories: they assume that a rhizomatic ontology guarantees that rhizomatic nature of the territory or that ‘flat’ (immanent, horizontal) ontology denies the empirical reality of verticality” (Grossberg, “Theorizing Context,” in *Spatial Politics: Essays for Doreen Massey*, edited by David Featherstone and Joe Painter [West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013], 35). This last point resonates with my earlier comments about Boundas’s pure, nameless process, and seems to be the mistake made by both Hallward and Žižek in their critiques of Deleuze and Guattari—see Steven Shaviro, “Hallward on Deleuze,” *The Pinocchio Theory* (2007) for a sensitive engagement with Hallward’s critique that also touches on Žižek’s.
55. Grossberg, “Theorizing Context,” 36.
56. “Theorizing Context,” 36.
57. “Theorizing Context,” 37.
58. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 6. Throughout the foregoing narrative, the middle term (territorialization or expression) is shown as the space in which meaning and understanding are constituted. This has important ramifications, especially for thinking through ontology. Deleuze and Guattari locate the ontological as another concept that can be (that *must* be) captured and territorialized: ontology, for Deleuze and Guattari, is but one perspective from which understanding can be derived, and it can only be derived through the apparatus of capture, through the expressions that result from acts of territorialization and deterritorialization. (see *A*

*Thousand Plateaus*, 25, on overthrowing ontology through the productive force of the “AND”; see *Difference and Repetition*, 195–196 on the inadequacies of modern conceptions of the term). While Grossberg ultimately locates the territory—or the double movement of territorialization and deterritorialization—as his middle, Deleuze and Guattari would say that *all* of these contexts are middles (there are only middles), and are rhizomatically connected and therefore co-constitutive of one another in a multi-dimensional, boundary-less space.

59. Charles Keil, “Participatory Discrepancies and the Power of Music,” in *Music Grooves*, edited by Charles Keil and Steven Feld (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 106. See my “A Theory of Flexible Rhythmic Spaces for Diasporic African Music” (PhD Dissertation, University of Washington, 2009) for an explication of beat span.
60. Deleuze’s immanence emphasizes connections over forms of separation, expressions over things, and internal self-differentiation over external difference, and his plane of immanence is essentially emergent, contingent, and in actual or virtual dialogue with a multiplicity of other planes. This is a theme that traces through the entire arc of Deleuze’s writing, from his first publication on Hume to his final essay, “Immanence: A Life” (in *Deleuze, Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, translated by Anne Boyman [New York: Zone Books, 2001]), and is arguably the concept upon which all of the rest of his thought is built.
61. Doreen Massey, *World City* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 207; also cited in Grossberg, “Theorizing Context,” 38.
62. “Theorizing Context,” 39.
63. Massumi, *Parables*, 9.
64. Massey, *For Space*, 10.
65. I should take care to clarify the difference between potential and possibility here. Possibility suggests an openness, an unknowability about what might happen next. Potential is a present orientation where the ongoing-ness of present experience (in all of its temporality and horizontal extension) is immanent to future experience. This is Husserl’s protension, and it is also Deleuze’s virtual that is also real—the virtual that may or may not ultimately be actualized.

This is also how Deleuze can arrive at an apparently contradictory concept—a plane of immanence that is also transcendental. Deleuze’s transcendentalism does not exist outside of reality; it is immanent to reality but virtual. Its virtuality is wrapped up in the temporal constitution of reality, the nature of which is revealed through an unfolding understanding via the three syntheses of time and through the ways in which our senses structure experience in ways that are increasingly apodictic with the nature of what is experienced (and our affective relationship with what is experienced). “The ideal series enjoys the double property of transcendence and immanence in relation to the real” (*Difference and Repetition*, 189), meaning both are bound up within one another and defined by one another; “the unconscious, non-actual and virtual character of . . . elements and relations, along with their double status of transcendence and immanence . . . ; the double actualization of . . . differential elements, the double incarnation of . . . differential relations at once . . . ; the complementarity of sense and structure, genesis and structure, where this takes the form of a passive genesis which is revealed in actualization” (204).

66. In Deleuze and Guattari’s territorialization / deterritorialization complex, the latter is always already bound up in the former: there are deterritorializing lines implicated to greater or lesser degree in every act of territorialization. This is crucial, and often misunderstood in Deleuze scholarship: the act of territorializing is itself the radical act as it involves creatively bringing together milieus and deriving from them what can be—what must be—entirely new expressions. Perhaps the difference between them could be said to be a qualitative difference in kind, a “virtual and continuous multiplicity” (Deleuze, *Bergsonism* [New York: Zone Books, 1988], 38) rather than the dialectical operation that the terms themselves seem to connote. Because territorialization and deterritorialization exist in a co-constitutive state of continuous dialogue (see *A Thousand Plateaus*, 311–323), I would argue further that there is no particular need in Deleuze and Guattari’s thought for reterritorialization, since it, too, is wrapped into the original territorializing act, already ongoing. There is no need for the return implicit in reterritorialization (even, or especially, for return with a dialectical difference). We can even account for specific invocations of reterritorialization in their work, such as in this statement: “The fact that there is no deterritorialization without a special reterritorialization should prompt us to rethink the abiding correlation

between the molar and the molecular: no flow, no becoming-molecular escapes from a molar formation without molar components accompanying it, forming passages or perceptible landmarks for the imperceptible processes” (303), without the “re-”—I suggest that those molar formations are exactly the territorializations that exist in a continuous differential relation with the ongoing deterritorializations, together constituting the ongoing act of territorialization (with its implicit and necessary actions of deterritorialization) that gives an event its identity, and that we don’t return to them since they never went away in the first place, except to the extent that like everything else they are constituted in and through time and that, therefore, their identity is exactly an identity of becoming.

67. *Difference and Repetition*, 77.

68. *Semblance and Event*, 3.

69. *Semblance and Event*, 15.

70. Massumi (*Semblance and Event*, 14) makes this point in an explication of Whitehead’s use of importance and expression in constituting “techniques of existence” (see Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*). These techniques are “*inventive* of subjective forms in the activist sense: dynamic unities of events unfolding,” which I read as a continual process of creative, relational subject-forming. Subjects are always in the process of being formed; in this sense they cannot in any way be given *a priori* as much of the Cartesian or Kantian philosophical lineage would insist. At one point Massumi suggests that this is an artistic process (“*an occurrent art*”; *Semblance and Event*, 14), which aligns with Deleuze’s thought about inventing a *theater* of philosophy—see *Difference and Repetition*, 8–11. It is in part because of these sorts of claims that I suggest that a study of affect in and through improvised music is a potent entry point for considering Deleuze’s thought in general—a theme that Gary Peters also suggests. See Peters, *Philosophy of Improvisation*, especially 145–154, and my “Review: *The Philosophy of Improvisation by Gary Peters*,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 35/2 (2013), 266–267.

71. Here I might make a polemical proposal, which is that the recent history of concert etiquette in conventional Western art music performance settings has diminished the listener’s capacity to affect, taking affect out of its milieu and recasting it as a one-way force that flows from performer to listener. Other modes of, and

contexts for, listening—dance music, ritual music, rock concerts, the participatory affirmations encouraged of audiences in Indian classical music performance, or Balinese gamelan, or the Black American church, or the jazz club—speak more directly to the double movement of affective force, and therefore serve as more useful entry points for working through how musical experience can be a metonym for affective (and aesthetico-political) thought and action.

72. “Flexible Rhythmic Spaces,” 179–198; this extends Christopher Hasty’s (1997) theory in a subtle but important way, imbuing all aspects of the ongoing musical flux with the potential for projective agency.
73. As Deleuze describes, “two successive presents may be contemporaneous with a third present, more extended by virtue of the number of instants it contracts” (*Difference and Repetition*, 77) but also that the articulations and segmentations that leads us to even think about some duration as a present is a creative act that originates in the imagination and through perception (76). Whitehead would call this *discernment*, from the (unacknowledged) Spinozist position that the entire unfolding of the universe is a single event, *the* single event, any bit of which is potentially discernible, but that any passive or contemplative act that seizes some aspect or aspects of the singularity in order to ascribe to it event status is an entry into some facet of its nature. See Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 88–89.
74. *A Thousand Plateaus*, 273.
75. A recording of this passage can be heard at [www.chrisstovermusic.com/ta\\_julian.mp3](http://www.chrisstovermusic.com/ta_julian.mp3).
76. In both senses of “drawn”: creatively designed, and pulled through a space by affective forces.
77. By this I mean that there are prototypical roles played by various instruments in the ensemble: the actual performed musical surface unfolds as a series of improvisational embellishments of this prototypical background. It is crucial to distinguish between these structures as syntactic limits on improvisational expression (partially determining the borders of what does or not get to be including in a genre, for example) and a Platonic, idealized construct in which performed utterances are merely simulacra of ideal events.



78. See “Flexible Rhythmic Spaces” for a discussion of the malleability of the grid in rumba and other African and diasporic African musics.
79. *A Thousand Plateaus*, 48.
80. Several examples can be heard on the compilation CD by Grupo Afro-Cubano de Alberto Zayas, *El yambú de los barrios* (Tumbao Cuban Classics, 2001), which features recordings from the second half of the 1950s. Another example can be found on the seminal *Patato y Totico* (Verve CD reissue, 2004), recorded in New York City in 1967. The position of these recordings in the history of the evolution of what we might call an emergent normative guaguancó syntax is an important topic for future research.
81. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, translated by Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 3. The passage goes on: “we will be trying only to discover what other points our entrance connects to, what crossroads and galleries one passes through to link two points, what the map of the rhizome is and how the map is modified if one enters by another point.”
82. This will be the specific focus of the analyses that follow.
83. One such line of flight can be demonstrated by comparing Grupo Yoruba Andabo’s recording of “Perdón” with the original version by Beny Moré—we generally think of the trajectory of influence as flowing from folkloric to popular (think Simon and Garfunkel’s “Scarborough Fair,” or the many country music examples that Jocelyn Neal investigates), but in this case the rumba version acts as a commentary on the original ballroom bolero. An excerpt from each can be heard at [www.chrisstovermusic.com/perdon\\_yoruba\\_andabo.mp3](http://www.chrisstovermusic.com/perdon_yoruba_andabo.mp3) and [www.chrisstovermusic.com/perdon\\_benny\\_more.mp3](http://www.chrisstovermusic.com/perdon_benny_more.mp3).
84. A recording of the opening of “La Polémica” can be heard at [www.chrisstovermusic.com/la\\_polemica.mp3](http://www.chrisstovermusic.com/la_polemica.mp3).
85. In these transcriptions, standard noteheads refer to open tones on the respective drums; “x” noteheads refer to slaps; “Δ” noteheads mean a bass tone in the middle of the drum head, “^” a bass tone accompanied by lifting the drum with the knees, and “▲” is used for muff tones, including those that articulate the *mazacote* (the steady eighth-note patten from which more salient events “emerge”—see Stover, “Flexible Rhythmic Spaces,” 169–171). The opening mazacote is shown in each example, but once the improvised

interaction begins, only salient melody notes are given—this is for orthographic clarity, but it should be understood by the reader that a number of very quiet timekeeping strokes continue in all three drum parts.

Also in the interest of maximal clarity, some rhythmic and pitch inflections are not given in the transcriptions. These include numerous projections along the beat span that are incidental to the main points being made in this reading (which is one of many co-occurrent readings that can and should be made), and some micro-pitch interpretations that depart from the equal-tempered frame that the transcription seems to suggest. All of these are part of the standard performance practice of rumba and, I argue, do not represent deviations from an essentialized norm. A few of the beat span projections are foregrounded in this analysis, to the extent that I am reading them as deriving from the affective implications of the particular way a performance is unfolding.

86. “Two-side” and “three-side” refer respectively to cycle orientations that begin with the second or first measure of the original shown clave configuration. “Two-side” means that the clave cycle reorients in order to begin with an unarticulated downbeat—a silent event (although far from completely silent—at the very least *catá* is articulating the downbeat). This sort of downbeat reorientation is extremely common in clave-based music from Cuba and the Cuban music diaspora.
87. The opening of “Parece mentira” can be heard at [www.chrisstovermusic.com/parece\\_mentira.mp3](http://www.chrisstovermusic.com/parece_mentira.mp3).
88. Peters, *Philosophy of Improvisation*, 150.
89. The opening of “El tonelero” can be heard at [www.chrisstovermusic.com/el\\_tonelero.mp3](http://www.chrisstovermusic.com/el_tonelero.mp3).
90. David Peñalosa, *The Clave Matrix. Afro-Cuban Rhythm: Its Principles and African Origins*, edited by Peter Greenwood (Redway, CA: Bembe Books, 2009).
91. Grossberg, “Affect’s Future,” 313.
92. Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 78.
93. *A Thousand Plateaus*, 313.
94. Suzanne Cusick, “Feminist Theory, Music Theory, and the Mind/Body Problem,” *Perspectives of New Music* 32/1 (1994): 22.

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