

## Benjamin Smith: Improvisations

*Early in 2009, Seattle composer J.C. Combs started a loose weekly sharing of people's playing. Called "ImprovFriday" ( <http://improvfriday.ning.com/> ) for the original time frame (since expanded to two days, and defined by each participant's time zone), it provides a simple way for musicians to post improvisations and other work, freshly made, share, comment on, and even remake each others' efforts.*

*Benjamin Smith, an improvising musician from West Orange, New Jersey, was on of the early few to sign on; it didn't take long everyone to be impressed with his musical sensibility. Smith ventures far beyond the standard idea of jazz improvisation, into a sound world equally influenced by modern classical, ambient and ritual. All of the pieces are free improvisations on this CD invented at the time of recording, and feature Smith alone at a Yamaha P-70 digital keyboard.*

*I'm proud to offer this collection of improvs Ben made these past few months for our "ImprovFriday" sessions. Together they show a whole range of exploration, and a kind of absolutely clear honesty in their conception, execution and recording.*

*-- Steve Layton*

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I am a music feeler and improviser interested in spreading the learning and practice of music improvisation (not only jazz) in the world. In 2006 I decided to awaken my musicianship and find an organization that shares and promotes improvisation in music for anyone interested, so I joined David Darling's Music for People -- a nontechnical, non-genre community -- and am a Mentor in the leadership program.

I am interested in expanding and facilitating improvisation, collaborating with others who passionately share what they do in art, health, or any field that promotes healthy collaboration in a community.

Influences:

The sounds of the universe. The feelings, colors, nuances, and scents of the sounds of the universe.

Those that are brave enough to be themselves at an early age.

Memorable movies and all involved in making them so.

Poetry, just a few names are Pablo Neruda, Rumi, Robert Hughes, Maya Angelou.

The speech and meaning of people like Martin Luther King, T. N. Hahn, Gandhi, so many others.

Music of artist who show vulnerabilities, like Ludwig Van Beethoven, Tom Waits, Cat Stevens, Miles Davis, Alfred Schnittke, Krzysztof Penderecki, Dimitri Shotstakovich, Jimmie Scott, Milton Nascimento, so many others.

Calypso, the Mighty Sparrow, J.S. Bach, lyrics and music of Jim Croce and Don McClean, Roberta Flack, Aretha Franklin, Sarah Vaughn, Ella Fitzgerald.

Lori Cotler, Glenn Velez. So many musicians I've not listed. David Darling, Julie Weber, Mary Kynsh, Jim Oshinsky, Lynn and Eric Miller, Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli, Michael DeMaria of Music for People. Arthur Hull, Baba Olatunji.

Kora (African string instrument). The human voice.

Mountains and areas that overlook landscapes. Selflessness. Trains. Places. Not knowing. Time unnoticed. Love.

*-- Benjamin Smith*

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Improvisations



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|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 - Oct 8th, 2009     | 7 - Oct 5th, 2009      |
| 2 - Oct 2nd, 2009 (2) | 8 - Sep. 30th, 2009    |
| 3 - Oct 7th, 2009     | 9 - Jul. 21st, 2009    |
| 4 - Oct 6th, 2009     | 10 - Oct 20th, 2009    |
| 5 - Sep. 20th, 2009   | 11 - Oct 2nd, 2009 (1) |
| 6 - May 4th, 2009     | 12 - Oct 15th, 2009    |

All tracks freely improvised // keyboard: Yamaha P-70

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