

Vol 16, No 2 (2025): Improvisation Matters: The Vision, Scholarship, and Legacy of Ajay Heble

Issue Description

Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études critiques en improvisation is pleased to present Issue 16.2: “Improvisation Matters: The Vision, Scholarship, and Legacy of Ajay Heble.”

This special issue includes a kaleidoscopic array of reflections on the ongoing legacy of Dr. Ajay Heble: founding Artistic Director of the Guelph Jazz Festival and the Guelph Jazz Festival Colloquium; Director Emeritus of the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation (IICSi); and one of the founding editors of *Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études critiques en improvisation*. These reflections take the form of articles, stories, musical performances, poems, photographs, and visual artworks from colleagues, collaborators, students, and community members—all of whom have been inspired by the work and life of Ajay Heble.



This issue is only a snapshot of Heble’s legacy: « un legs qui s’est constitué avec soin, au rythme des rencontres et toujours en phase avec les enjeux du moment, » as Eric Fillion writes in this issue’s final piece. Just as an album of recorded music is merely a record of a particular confluence of musicians in time, this issue is merely a record of Ajay Heble, offered on this occasion by a constellation of colleagues, friends, collaborators, students, and community members who have been inspired by him. Though a mere drop in the ocean, we hope these essays, stories, and artistic offerings provide you a sense of just how far the ripples go.

This issue is available to read in two formats: 1) you can read this issue’s individual articles and artistic contributions below, or 2) you can read this issue as a formatted PDF, featuring all the issue’s contents as well as archival photographs and additional artistic materials.

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Editorial

Improvisation Matters: The Vision, Scholarship, and Legacy of Ajay Heble

Sam Boer, Daniel Fischlin, Kevin McNeilly, Alyssa Woods, jashen edwards, Eric Fillion, Chris Tonelli

PDF

Celebrating Ajay Heble

Thresholds (For Ajay)

Daniel Fischlin

PDF

Composing Community: Improvising with Ajay Heble

George Lipsitz

PDF

Improvisation and Freedom

Joel Bakan

PDF

Building Community

Kimberley McLeod

PDF

Improvisation for Ajay

Matt Brubeck

Audio File

Glisten and Glint: The Ajay Way

Mervyn Horgan

PDF

For Ajay

Jesse Stewart

Watch Video

Encouragement, Patient Perseverance, Community, and Surprise: Four Entangled Lessons from my Advisor, Dr. Ajay Heble

Ben Finley

PDF

INEXHAUSTIBLE

Daniel Fischlin, Ajay Heble, Lewis Melville, Ted Warren, Aimee Copping

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Message for Ajay

Dong-Won Kim

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Two Haiku for Ajay & Sheila

Stacey Bliss

PDF

To Hear With The Eyes

João Franca

The Bare Sensitivity That Lies at the Heart of Improvisation

Benjamín Mayer-Foulkes

PDF

Ajay Heble Tribute

Jane Bunnnett

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And After Landing Wrong?

Mark Lomanno

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Ajay’s Law

Sara L Ramshaw

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Note for Ajay

Scott Merritt

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Papillon

Marianne Trudel

Audio File

Do All Jazz Musicians Wear Berets?

Brent Rowan

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Pursuance Étude (Piano), for Ajay Heble

Kevin McNeilly

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Performance for Ajay

Reza Yazdanpanah, Jesse Stewart

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Three for Ajay: Learning at “The Other Side of Nowhere”

Paul Watkins

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Showing Up, or, Ajay as Accompanist

Sam Boer

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Improvising Joy (January 2020)

Justine Richardson

PDF

Improvising Friendship

Jesse Stewart

PDF

Coda

CODA

Eric Fillion

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