

**Dr Simon Benjamin Partridge**

### **‘Music Improvisation Magic’ (Book) - Contextual Statement**

This book builds on Partridge’s successful doctoral thesis on group musical improvisation (2023) which reported on a sustained period with a single participant group. Aiding the research’s long-term aims to articulate functionality beyond technique in order to assist musicians and music educators in their improvisations, it translates thesis findings into accessible language and is updated to incorporate initial trialing of findings with a wider range of players through his ongoing public workshops.

Responding to extensive pedagogical experience, the format is innovative, not telling musicians what to do, rather, informing, inspiring and challenging. Intended as a primer, with heavy emphasis on practical exercises, diagrams, colour and original paintings, focused text gives potent advice on 34 key points. Prominence is given to Partridge’s ‘Offers System’ - providing a method to engage group improvisation. Whilst such systems are not unheard of (see Philip Morton’s ‘System 50/50’). Offers provides a unique six element breakdown - Active Listening, Engaging the Idea, Developing the Idea, Realizing an Idea is Tired, Finding a Way Out or to Move on and Ending. Ideal for teacher/facilitator use, this approach methodically develops individual and group practice. The text reinforces that how musicians learn vitally impacts their improvisations, particularly their work with pitch. Also highlighted is the need for improvisers to audiate – meaning to think in music. Partridge acknowledges the possibility within improvised music of what he labels ‘place’ - periods of time where the music identifiably stays around a musical idea, sound, rhythm or mood.

The book’s production significantly enhances research dissemination, enabling worldwide access via eBook and mail-order. Further aiding significance and contextual framing are interviews with 22 improvisers, from Partridge’s band members to Carl Palmer of ELP. Impact enhanced by a public launch in the Preston Jazz Festival, workshops inc. Blackburn College and a presentation at Huddersfield University.