

JAZZING AN ENDING: CONDUCT AND KNOWLEDGE AT A JAM SESSION

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IMPETUS FOR THIS STUDY

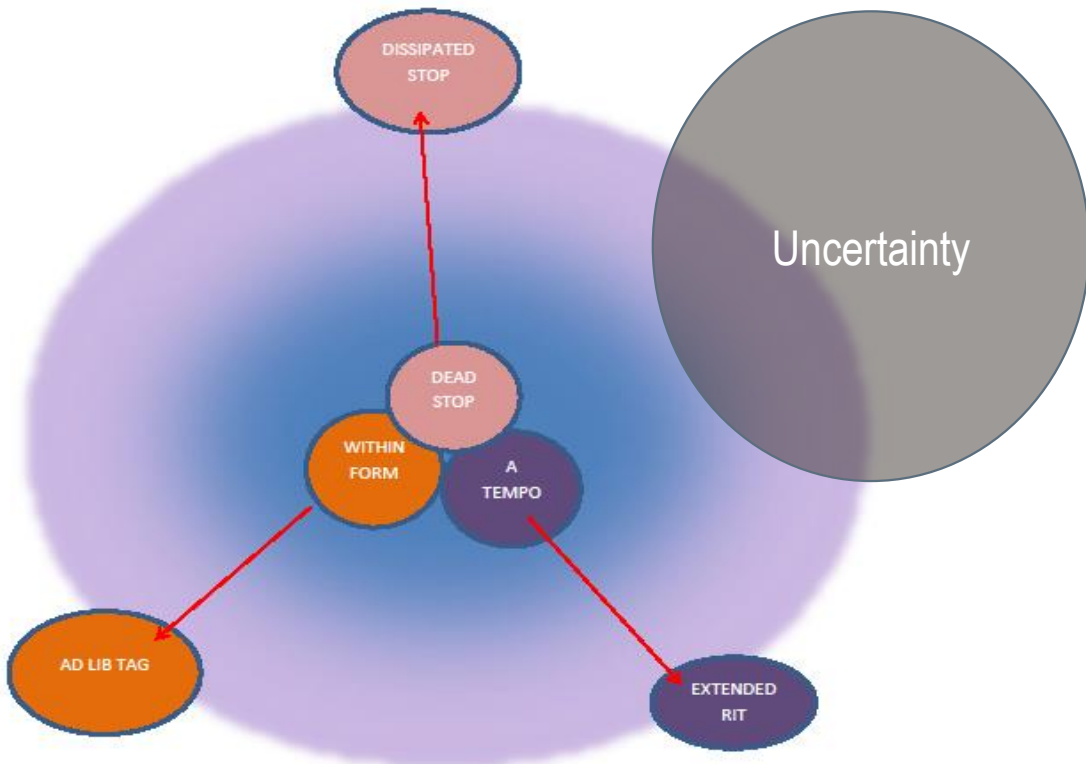
- My interest in
 - Creative work as a collaborative achievement
 - Unscripted performance (improvisation)
 - What do people need to know? (knowledge)
 - What do people need to do? (conduct)
 - The tension between creative work as mundane practice but within a tradition of creative excess – jazz.

How do knowledge and conduct get deployed in this improvised forum?

ENDINGS AS IMPROVISED ENCOUNTERS

- Endings are INTERESTING !!
 - Occupy Turner-esque liminal moments in performance – points of transition, affective punctuation of performance.
 - We need good endings: when accomplished well, they offer closure (they don't simply end)
 - Moments of high uncertainty / attention for musician
 - YET relatively lo-status in jazz as functional musical objects
- In the context of improvised music, they shine a light on
 - The relations between cultural scripts and agents at work with them, between being part of a tradition and the pragmatics of getting a group of musicians to end together.
 - The relations between social and musical roles in performance.
 - (The nature of keeping time together)

WHAT SORT OF ENDINGS?



IN OTHER WORDS



SPICE OF LIFE SESSIONS

- The context
 - Sunday afternoon sessions
 - House band – open session – house band
 - Paying audience
- Musicians
 - Young aspiring jazz musicians
 - Older amateur/semi pro
- Session culture
 - All welcome
 - No covert choice of players
 - Not a networking session eg Ronnie Scott's nor after-hours 'hang'



SUNNY

- 'Sunny'
 - Bobby Hebb
 - 16 bar standard
- This performance
 - Quartet of guitar, piano, bass and drums
 - Musicians came to the sessions but may not have played with one another in this line-up
 - Generic bossa nova style groove
 - Discussion of *key*, *tempo*, *chord changes* but not of ending.



METHODS/ANALYSIS

- Methods:
 - Documentation of the performance using 2 cameras plus separate audio
 - Post-performance interviews with the guitarist and pianist
- Analysis
 - Video analysis [The Observer behaviour analysis software]
 - Patterns of gazing towards others/ away from others
 - Use of instrumental gesture ('batons')
 - Timing at the breakdown of the groove

THE ENDING OF A SONG - OUTHEAD

16 bar outhead

The musical score is arranged in four staves. The top staff is for guitar (G), the second for piano (P), the third for bass (B), and the fourth for drums (D). The guitar part begins with a first ending bracket over the first two measures. The piano part features a melodic line with some triplets. The bass part provides a steady accompaniment. The drum part consists of a consistent rhythmic pattern. Dynamics markings 'p' (piano) are used in the guitar and piano parts.

- All players gazing towards guitarist at start of head
- Relatively sparse gesturing or gazing
- Gazing towards another – about 1/3 of gazing
- Groove maintained throughout

THE ENDING OF A SONG – THE TAG

The image shows a musical score for guitar and piano. It is divided into two systems, measures 17-20 and 21-24. The guitar part (G) is written in treble clef, and the piano part (P) is written in bass clef. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (p, b). The piano part features a prominent bass line with chords and a melodic line with triplets. The guitar part features a melodic line with triplets and a bass line with chords. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat signs.

- Larger field of possibilities opens
- Increase in conducting behaviour – the panic of improvising – the role of role in the guitarist's leading.
- Gaze towards others rises to half of gazing behaviours.
 - Knowledge is not enough
- The pragmatic moment and the traditions of creativity in jazz...
 - Pianist – extended ending
- When I'm playing it ['Sunny'], it generally tends to go on for a long time after but I think he was trying to do a sort of 'repeat the last phrase three times and end'. But, probably because I was getting a bit self-indulgent, I just wanted to carry on.
 - Guitarist – 3 x ending
- Normally, either a phrase at the end is repeated three times, called a three times ending – which everybody does and which is very boring – and I think in this instance I was trying to be safe and go for that...and that didn't happen
- Different 'ending aesthetics' at work – being in the moment and the scripted tag.

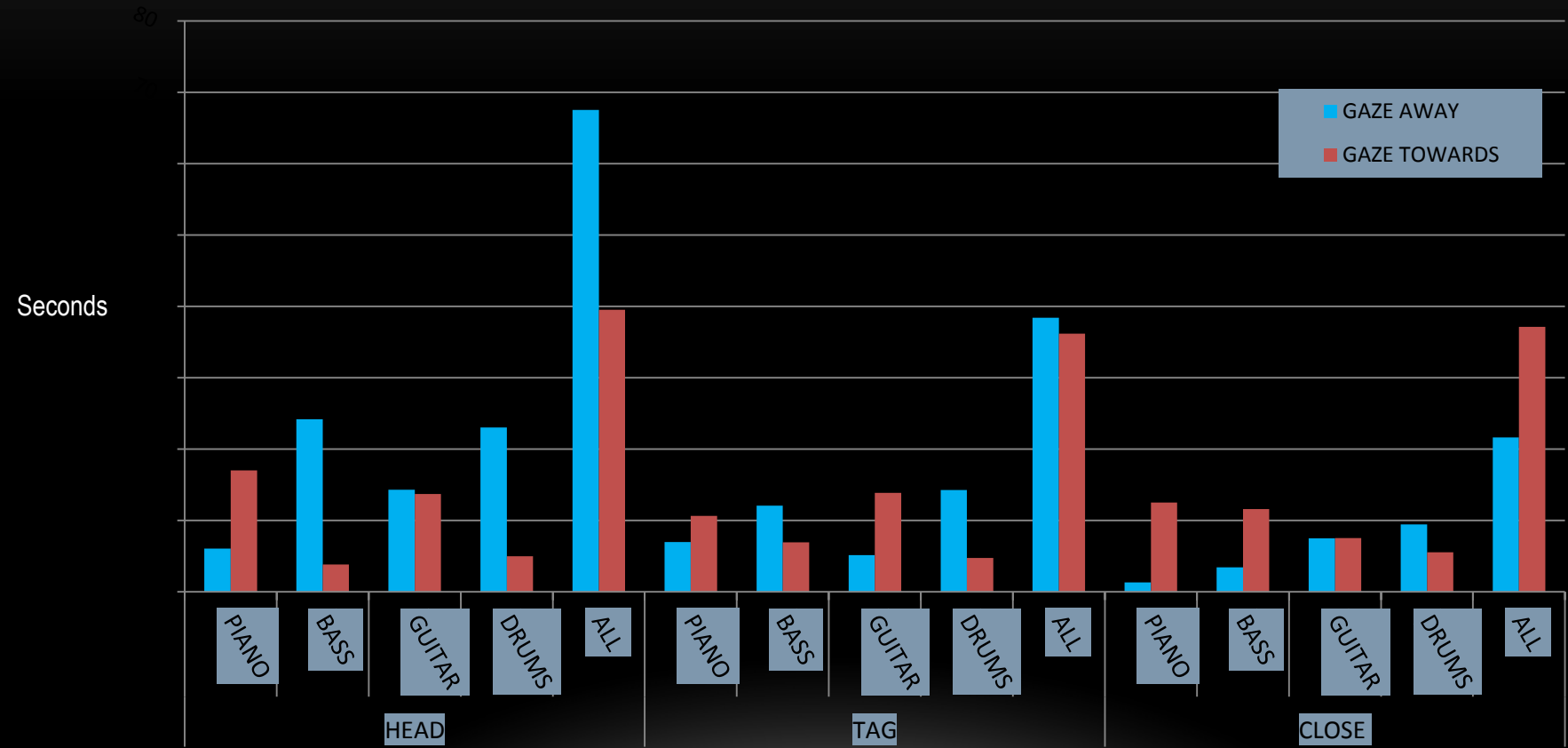
THE ENDING OF A SONG – TAG INTO THE CLOSE

The image displays a musical score for a four-piece band, consisting of guitar (G), piano (P), bass (B), and drums (D). The score is divided into two sections: 'TAG' and 'CLOSE'.
The 'TAG' section (measures 9-12) features a guitar melody with notes and rests, and a piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note rhythm. The guitar part includes dynamic markings: **p**, **B**, **p**, **PV**, **p**, **B**, and **D**. The piano part has a **G** marking. The bass and drums parts provide a consistent rhythmic foundation.
The 'CLOSE' section (measures 13-16) begins with a guitar melody that includes a triplet and a final note marked with a triangle. The piano part features a triplet of eighth notes and a final chord marked with a triangle. The guitar part includes dynamic markings: **D**, **B**, and **D**. The piano part has a **D** marking. The bass and drums parts continue the rhythmic pattern.

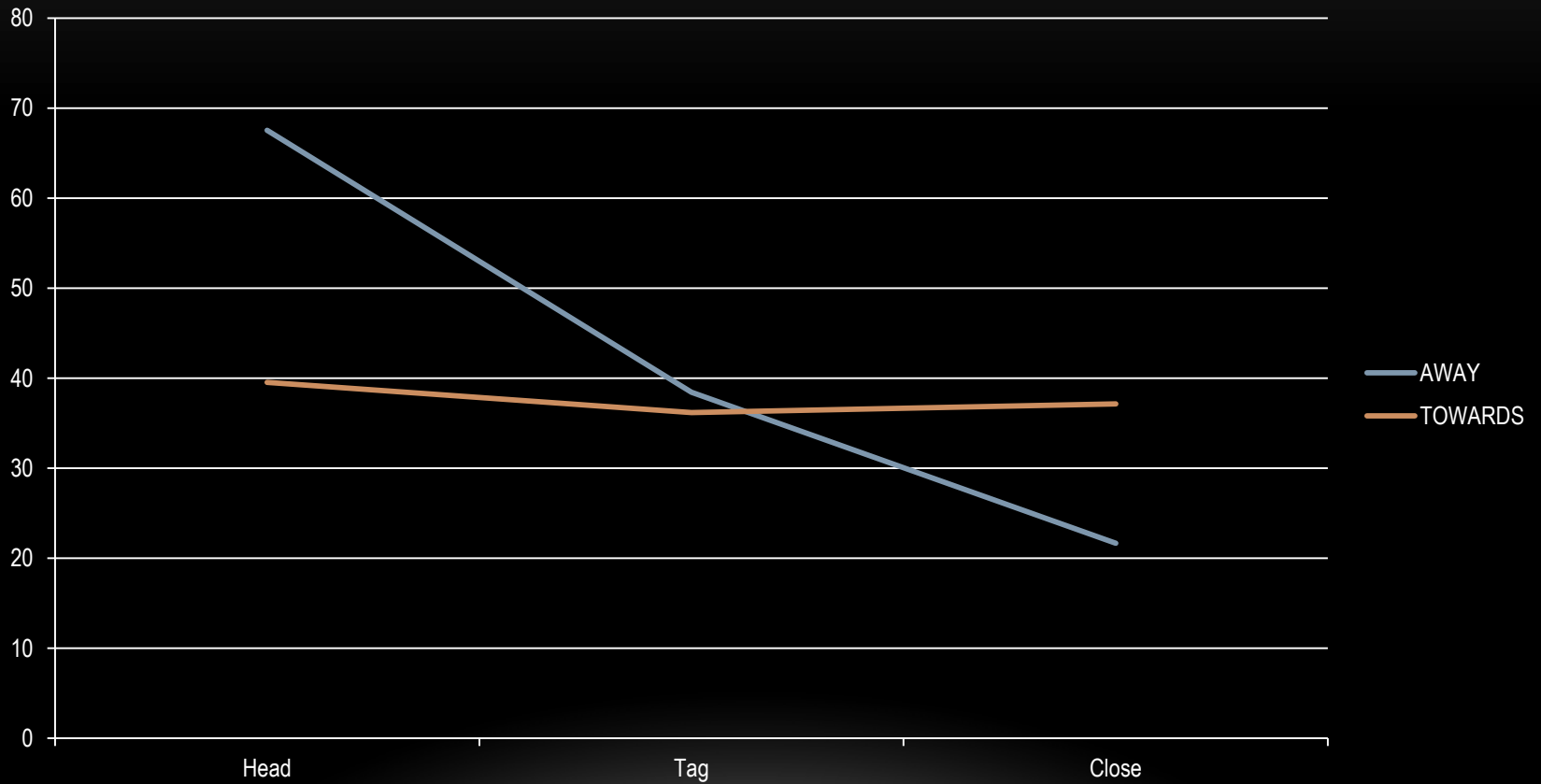
Overall management and leadership of the ending increases strongly in the final moments

- verbal instruction (!)
- Use of guitar as a baton – strongly defined rhythm
- Gazing towards others – about 2/3 of gazing

GAZE PATTERNS ACROSS ENDING



SUMMARY OF GAZING



SUMMARY

- The embrace of knowledge and conduct shifts moment by moment – here, conduct replaces knowledge.
- The jazz tradition demands
 - creativity but also coherence
 - taking risks but also closure

See:

Doffman, Mark (2011) 'Jammin' an ending: creativity, knowledge and conduct amongst jazz musicians' *twentieth century music*, 8 (2), 203-225.