



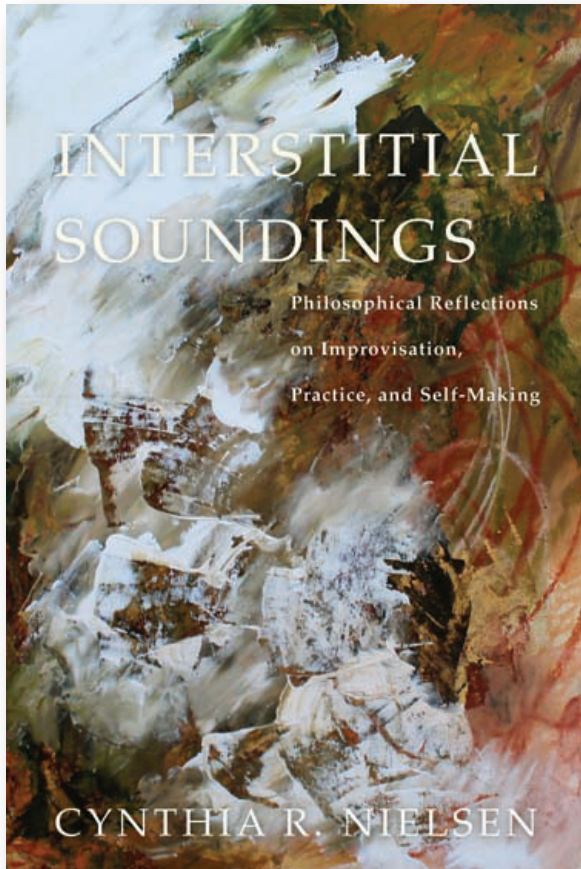
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INTERSTITIAL SOUNDINGS

Philosophical Reflections on Improvisation,
Practice, and Self-Making

CYNTHIA R. NIELSEN

In the present work, Cynthia R. Nielsen brings music and philosophy into a fruitful and mutually illuminating dialogue. Topics discussed include the following: music's dynamic ontology, performers and improvisers as co-composers, the communal character of music, jazz as hybrid and socially constructed, the sociopolitical import of bebop, Afro-modernism and its strategic deployments, jazz and racialized practices, continuities between Michel Foucault's discussion of self-making and creating one's musical voice, Alasdair MacIntyre on practice, and how one might harmonize MacIntyre's notion of virtue development with Foucauldian resistance strategies.

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DR. CYNTHIA R. NIELSEN is an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Dallas. Nielsen's work is interdisciplinary and her research interests include ethics, social and political philosophy, philosophical hermeneutics, philosophy of race, and the philosophy of music. She is the author of *Foucault, Douglass, Fanon, and Scotus in Dialogue: On Social Construction and Freedom* (2013).

"The nature and boundaries of music are continuously being reshaped by musicians and audiences alike. In this book, Nielsen nimbly articulates this inherently dynamic ontology, using it to bring the compositional structures of both self and society to center stage. Through careful and incisive readings, she harmonizes aesthetic and race theory with Foucauldian genealogy and MacIntyrean virtue ethics to produce an excellent synthetic work that will be of interest to readers across multiple disciplines."

—**Michael Barnes Norton**, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

"In her exciting and important text, Nielsen employs jazz theory to make multiple, complex schools of thought simultaneously accessible and challenging. . . . By applying a thorough and engaging application of jazz improvisation, Nielsen succeeds in doing what so few have: to make Foucault's work on epistemology clear while adding to our understanding of his contributions."

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"What is so great about this book is that Cynthia Nielsen performs for us the very thing she is writing about—hybridity, creativity, improvisation, and above all, the fearless practice of thinking along the edges of thought. . . . She shows us in this book how to make thinking an art."

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"Nielsen wedges herself between the pillars of Kant, Nietzsche, and Foucault, and as a jazz musician herself, performs a piece of writing which preserves and expresses her own original thoughts. Her understanding of performance art and the nature of interpretation and improvisation is as substantially profound as it is personal."

—**Zenos Frudakis**, sculptor

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