

Improvisation; The Living Architecture of Music

Michael Jones and Stephanie Winters

In this keynote presentation the artists, pianist/educator Michael Jones and cellist/educator Stephanie Winters, explore the living architecture of music and community.

Description

The tangible structures of music--notes, measures, beats and bars--are familiar to most. Yet what shapes an authentic musical experience is not only in the technicalities but in what emerges in the intangible complex of presence, empathy, beauty, longing, grace and the expressive power of one's own voice that emerge from them.

These qualities of the imagination can rarely be pre-determined or planned. They arise naturally when we are alive to the moment, when we feel most the uniqueness of the situation at hand. Improvisation celebrates this state of being finely attuned and deeply connected to another, listening for the dynamics of tone, flow, nuance, atmosphere, stillness, space and time, inventing, reinventing, and adapting fresh and new interpretations and possibilities that have not been rehearsed or prepared beforehand.

In this presentation, the artists explore this inner knowing through music. The audience will share in their willingness to align listening with the heart. The purpose is to inspire leaders and the communities they lead to trust in the spirit of co-creation and fellowship, risking the unknown as they explore an empathic connection with one another. Jones and Winters believe that people who can trust this spirit hold a distinct advantage over those who, through analysis and logic tend to frame their priorities solely in economic, technical or business terms. In this context, improvised music serves as an enabling metaphor for helping communities, and those that shape them, listen deeply for what the moment calls them to do, a core skill for navigating wisely in times of complexity and sudden change.