

Seven General Theses on Improvisation and Film

Improvisation as the realization of something not provided, unforeseen and unknown takes place in every creative process: It is a door opened for the unconscious.

Improvisation in this sense happens in every art, no matter whether it is an performative or an work-oriented art.

Improvisation ranges from the minimal degree of spontaneity in the material execution or performative interpretation of a work of art to the maximum degree of a completely improvised happening.

Improvisation also takes place on different layers of an art, which should be carefully differentiated – especially in an art as complex or hybrid as film.

Basically, the making of a film can be understood as a combination of four processes: pre-production, production with the work in front of the camera and the work with the camera, and post-production. Each of these processes, with its specific layers, can include improvisation.

The analysis of improvisation in art is a counterpart to the analysis of aesthetic techniques in the sense of cultural techniques – while the latter focuses on general functions in the production of aesthetic communication, the former focuses on the artist and his individual dealings with himself, other people, the world and art.

Improvisation is most powerful, productive and innovative when it seizes the technical proceeding and thus leads to an art that, in its inner form, objectifies and communicates the artist's personal behavior, attitude and orientation.