

A Literature of Non-Idiomatic Improvisation A Condensed Statement

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With the publication of [The Faerienomicon](#) by the Poison Pie Publishing House and the corresponding claim that the writing within the book was generated via a non-idiomatic, improvisational process, we at the Poison Pie Publishing House have been virtually inundated with virtual requests for clarification of the term. While a [lengthy article](#) on the subject written in a scholarly style is available, most folks want a short and to-the-point description.

Non-idiomatic, improvisational writing is a creative process by which a writer generates passages outside existing genres of literature without the aid of either a previously written draft or extensive post-editing.

Non-idiomatic, improvisation originated in music and the musical analogy remains useful in understanding its application to literature. Music is generated via both improvisation and composition, two forms that typically have readily identifiable differences and relative strengths and weaknesses. So too can writing be generated via improvisation and more traditional composition. The same characteristics, both thematic and stylistic, that distinguish improvised music from composed music are apparent in the comparison of the analogous literatures. There exists a freedom and spontaneity in improvised writing, which attracts those with “an impatience for the gruesomely predictable” ([D. Bailey](#)). At the same time, improvised writing may be vulnerable to a lack of complexity, unless the writer engages in an intensive regimen of practice, which maintains the improvisational creative faculties at the ready. Such a model is again taken from the explicitly stated practice habits of non-idiomatic, improvisational musicians.

Some musicologists eschew the term, “non-idiomatic improvisation”, since, once a non-generic style is created and invoked multiple times, it becomes a new idiom. The Poison Pie Publishing House embraces the term “non-idiomatic improvisation” as an ideal toward which one strives, an endless process in which each subsequent creative act is disconnected from the previous. An appealing way to think of non-idiomatic improvisation is as a Zen riddle. Once you create a non-idiomatic process, it no longer exists.