

The Use of Human Beings

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Foreword

"It is not what I like. It is what I make."

I started my artistic research PhD in October 2016, and I'm delivering my reflection material on 7 February 2021. I will complete my final artistic research work at the beginning of March 2021.

Initially, when I got accepted to the artistic research programme, the title on my PhD was *Music of Sound*, which I later changed due to it being too vague (and just a pun on the similarly-named musical). I didn't think anybody would understand the themes of my research just by hearing the title, so I decided to change it to *The Use of Human Beings*, which is a paraphrase of the book title *The Human Use of Human Beings* by Norbert Wiener. Wiener's book is about cybernetics, and I came across it while researching my work. *The Pen is Mightier Than the Word*. It is important to note that the book's themes are different from the themes of my research. However, I think the title still encompasses the research material and the various works and their thematics, together with the theoretical research that I have done during the artistic research period that has lasted for over four years. A central underlying theme is the usage, control and social structuring of humans. In my application for the PhD programme, I had planned four works that, over the years, have grown into nine works. So this reflection has more ground to cover than initially intended. Still, the opportunity to spend a lot of time on research has generated new grounds and new confusions, exploring more material and ideas that interest me, which generated more artistic work. In this conclusion, I will try to describe the overlapping thematics of my works and attack the themes, materials and techniques from different angles.

Expression or art discourse – fine art, contemporary music, and theatre

I have put myself in a situation of being a researcher educated with a master's degree in Fine Art. I was accepted for a PhD position in a composition department at the Norwegian Academy of Music, in Oslo, on music theatre. My research is in contemporary music with theatrical elements, creating works that can be presented at theatre festivals and contemporary music festivals. In some of the works, the theatrical elements are more present, like in *Das kapitalistische Ausland* and *Zulou*, and some works lean more towards contemporary music, like *Reenactment/Microphone*.

I insist, however, that the different art discourses are very similar and that it is relevant and possible to transpose concepts and strategies from one discipline to another. My experience is that these disciplines seem separated today, unfortunately. I hope that some day in the near future, these disciplines will be more connected, like the milieu at Black Mountain College, where art, architecture, and contemporary music was taught.

¹ Bjørn Erik Haugen, said during rehearsal with Decoder Ensemble. This is more of a pun and must not be mixed up with *"I like what I write and I like what I write,"* that I believe Chris Newman has said. It is not a tautology. I wanted to emphasize a division between the concept of the art work and what aesthetic preferences I have as a person.

The lack of adequate rehearsal space

There was a discussion of making a black box rehearsal space at The Academy of Music when I started. We were three PhD students with common interests in the theatre as part of our research, and I've heard that this was one of the reasons that we were chosen. But, unfortunately, the idea of the rehearsal space never materialised. As a result, I had to adapt and use the rehearsal regime of contemporary music, preparing quickly before the concert, and with the rehearsals that musicians have, in musical rehearsal rooms that are pretty different from the classrooms, seminar rooms, or rental spaces to which I was more accustomed. This is something that I think can be seen in the results, which are a bit rougher, unpolished, and sometimes closer to Performance Art than theatre in its aesthetics. It is impossible to know how an adequate rehearsal space would change the artistic result, but I think it would have made a difference to have a space to try things and experiment more.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Research/work questions

I have formulated two main research questions which directed my work during my PhD, both in the artistic works and in the reflection:

- *How can I, through research and formal experiments, create works through the genre of music theatre?*

- *How might works using ideology and the use of humans as material have political potential in today's society?*

During my artistic research period, my art was created with these questions in mind. I have not tried to make a singular conclusion because, in my view, art does not work that way; it is not created just to work as reasoning or logic or to verify or falsify a hypothesis. Instead, the artworks are the result of research, and art is a space and an expression where one can approach difficult topics, knowledge, and imagery, creating the possibility for reflection. I will reflect on my artistic works with these questions in the concluding chapter of my reflection material.

Critical perspective

My works are intended not as deconstruction but as works where I problematise thematics that I find problematic and unjust. I believe that artworks can start reflection and be part of critical discourse. I have also leaned on post-structural theory, especially Foucault's theories about how people are structured and have extensively internalised cultural values.

It is interesting for me that some of my works from 2016 to 2020 seem dated already. In this period Metoo and The Black Lives Matter movements have become global movements that I believe have changed our collective perspective on women and peoples from non-western cultures and ethnicities. I think it has changed our respect and humbleness and forced us to be more open. This was a change I didn't believe would happen when I started my PhD.

The reflection material

My reflection material is structured around giving an overview of my PhD, including my background, work field, research questions, and the artistic research works that are part of *The Use of Human Beings*.

The nine works in order of importance

Main works:

- *Das kapitalistische Ausland*
- *It takes all kinds to make the World, Sir!*
- *Zulou*

Supplemental works:

- *Reenactment/Microphone*
- *Hertz kino*
- *Dialogue – Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*
- *Storage*
- *The Pen is mightier than the Word*
- *By the Road*

I will give a short overview of the works in the following method chapter so that the reader can follow the reflection and the relation between the artworks, formally and thematically.

The artistic works are presented in their dedicated chapters, arranged in order of importance, ending with the last one, which unfortunately never was performed due to the Covid-shutdown. The last chapter, the conclusion, is where I draw some conclusions on my artistic research and reflect on my works in relation to each other, as well as to my research questions and my work platform.

Das kapitalistische Ausland, *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!* Together with *Zulou* are the main works in my artistic research PhD, and I would propose to focus more on them than the remaining works. Of course, from my perspective, the other works are also relevant, but most research and resources were allocated to these three works in particular.

I must emphasise that artistic works are the most important part of an artistic research PhD. They are created through reflection, and they are the material and medium through which the artist creates, expresses, and reflects. The written reflection is, in my view, a coda or a compendium, a summary of a more extensive work or field of knowledge, expressly designed for elaborating on the

artistic works. Most of the reflection is carried out through the works. I have tried to make the writing process similar to how I make artworks, following an idea and executing the text in that pursuit.

Artistic Practice

"Theatre is constituted not just through sight (theatron) but always also through sound (auditorium)." (Lichte, 2008, p. 120)

I have a background in art with an MA in fine art from the Art Academy in Oslo. At first, I was accepted into the Art Academy in the field of noise music, which in my view, is a blend of being a musician, composer and artist. Since then, I have worked more on conceptual or idea-based artwork, mainly focusing on the mediums of video and installation – in doing so, I've worked extensively with archived and appropriated material. In addition, this work has been expanded, incorporating musicians and actors that perform, act, shout or recite together with music and video as a whole.

"And finally theatre and media art can meet in the form of video installations." (Lehmann, 2006, p. 168)

I have used my artistic work platform with contemporary music, often incorporating sound material transcribed to MIDI or into a score for musicians and ensembles to perform. The human voice, mediated through technologies, has been a common denominator for my works. Here I have focused on transcription of the human voice, also transcribing documentation of the voice. I've been fascinated by the voice because it is a bodily function that most humans share and something that may be our most important communication tool.

"The voice is the element which ties the subject and the Other together, without belonging to either, just as it formed the tie between body and language without being part of them." (Dolar, 2016, p. 103)

Conceptual work-platform

"The artist's will is secondary to the process he initiates from idea to completion. His willfulness may only be ego." (Lewitt, 1999, p. 106 #7)

The basis in my artistic research and work platform is that I work conceptually, meaning the concept or idea for the artwork comes first and is a central guideline for materialising the work. The concept or idea is also central for reading or understanding my artworks. I'm educated as an artist at the art academies of Oslo and Trondheim. I was educated there in making art where the idea or concept is central in the execution of the artwork. I would say that Conceptual and Fluxus-art are the relevant starting points in art education today and have been for many years. I think

conceptual art today has a broader and less strict use of the term than when the art movement originated.

Artistic style and result

I believe correlations and repetitions in my findings show something about how people unconsciously think about a topic and how we accept the treatment of others. It can be people who either dissent or cooperate in a regime, just from a non-Western culture. But, on the other hand, they can struggle mentally and become the object of psychological discourse. This can be found, collected and deciphered in documents and images and is central to my artistic research.

It is crucial that I do not present answers within my works to the formations, archives, and collections I present. I don't believe that art is here to give answers, but rather to question and criticise a topic for the audience or viewer to reflect and make up their own opinions. Therefore, my works can be viewed as distanced. This is a conscious and stylistic move because I believe that people need space to think. I think that creating emotional or agitating works instead manipulates the spectator to feel something, and thus such works rarely invite the spectator to reflect or open up to discussion.

Interdisciplinarity

"Theatre practice unites sound technology and feast, dance and debate, set construction and philosophy." (Lehmann, 2006, p. 132)

I have made sure to mention my background and my artistic background because my PhD is cross-disciplinary. I use my competence and experience in art by "transposing" it over to the music theatre discourse, which creates a mixture of theatre, contemporary music and art. As I like to call it, it is a mixture – or a bastard – between the three work fields. As Roland Barthes writes, however, the disciplines can be seen as connected and productive in their connection. Roland Barthes mentions a relationship between photography and theatre in the early days of photography that I think is relevant in the way I work with image material in my PhD. Theatre and music theatre, has a place for presenting imagery that I think can be an expansion of the video material. Barthes mentions that theatre was the site where photographs originally were presented at the beginning of photography, which can point to a media-archaeological connection between photo and theatre: *Yet it is not (it seems to me) by Painting that Photography touches art, but by theater. Niepce and Daguerre are always put at the origin of Photography (even if the latter has somewhat usurped the former's place); now Daguerre, when he took over Niepce's invention, was running a panorama theater animated by light shows and movements in the Place du Château. The camera obscura, in short, has generated at one and the same time perspective painting, photography, and the diorama, which are all three arts of the stage; but if Photography seems to me closer to the Theater, it is by way of a singular intermediary (and perhaps I am the only one who sees it): by way of Death.* (Barthes, 2000, p. 31)

Music theatre

I place my work in the genre of Music Theatre because the composition of theatrical and musical elements are central in my artistic research works. However, the scenic and spatial presentation are not to be read only from a contemporary musical context. Mauricio Kagel writes about *New music theatre*, (*Neues Musiktheater*), a break and an expansion of music theatre in a way as to open up for more than only compositional and musical elements:

"one fundamental feature can be observed—the breaking up of the traditional boundaries of genres and typologies, the clearest case being that of new Music-Theatre. The various branches of traditional theatre— stage-play, melodrama, opera, ballet—have increasingly dissolved out of their rigid divisions into a continuous scale of scenic representation.

New composite forms are more complex and less clear-cut with regard to their type. The unambiguous character of terms such as tragic and comic has also been relativised, New Music-Theatre is not a stylistically fixed form of theatre existing alongside others, but rather the application of musical thought to the elements of theatre- words, light and tone-colours and tempi. (Kagel, 1982, p. 29)

I read his new term as a necessary break with music theatre, which was crucial in his time. Now, this is implemented in the canon or tradition of music theatre.

Salzman and Desi defines the genre of music theatre as: *"[T]heatre that is music driven (i.e., decisively linked to musical timing and organisation) where, at the very least, music, language, vocalisation, and physical movement exist, interact, or stand side by side in some kind of equality but performed by different performers and in a different social ambiance than works normally categorised as operas (performed by opera singers in opera houses) or musicals (performed by theatre singers in "legitimate theatres.")* (Salzman & Desi, 2008, p. 5)

This definition I find fitting and relevant to my works. In my works sound and music is a central element, often together with video, installation and musicians or actors. I have used the term "music theatre" in my research questions because it is where I think my works fit in the discourse of contemporary music.

There are several terms I could have chosen to place my work within a larger field, such as composed theatre, new music theatre, postdramatic theatre and the new discipline. I think many of these would fit my PhD-works, but operating in a more general and, from my perspective, wide field of description gives me more space for artistic freedom. I think this idea stems from the fact that I come from a discipline where one often says one works with art and not contemporary art. And I work conceptually within the field of music theatre and art.

In my understanding of the term, music theatre is linked to the German Musiktheater, and Neues Musiktheater. A German tradition from Brecht, Weill, Ligeti, and Kagel to the younger composers that work in this genre such as Manos Tsangaris, Carola Bauckholt, and Heiner Goebbels. Additionally, Simon Steen Andersen, Jennifer Walshe, Jessie Marino, Johannes Kreidler, and my supervisor Trond Reinholdtsen are contemporary composers working in this field.

What is sometimes left out in the discourse of music theatre is a reflection on scenography, objects, and images. These elements can be just as essential as the music in a production. In my view, the genre of music theatre should be broad and should also incorporate works where the presentational element is critical to the work. For example, a drum, a flash or a tape recorder, objects I have made use of in my artistic works, are an essential part of the work and how it is read. Salzman and Desi write quite vaguely about this: *"Do sound installations, and various forms of concept music constitute musical performance or, in any sense, music theatre? The question is, of course, unanswerable. Music theatre today exists on a continuum from traditional performance in a designated theatre or opera space to sound-producing actions and activities, which may take place in non-traditional or nontheatrical public sites."* (Salzman & Desi, 2008, p. 72)

A competence of installation can easily be transferred to scenography, to theatrical works with contemporary music or artworks. I am interested in theatre's aspect of here and nowness², allowing me to reopen documentation, facsimiles, or archive material.

In my opinion, some sound installations and conceptual music can fit and work within the term of music theatre if there is a theatrical intention in the presentation or creation of the work. Also, the performers performing (whether they are musicians or actors) have a different presence in a music theatre work. Jennifer Walshe writes quite precisely about this in her text *The New Discipline: a compositional manifesto*: *"Perhaps we are finally willing to accept that the bodies playing the music are part of the music, that they're present, they're valid, and they inform our listening whether subconsciously or consciously. That it's not too late for us to have bodies."* (Walshe, 2016)

Postdramatic theatre

"It is not surprising that fans of other arts (visual arts, dance, music) are often more at home with this kind of theatre." (Lehmann, 2006, p. 31)

A concept that is unavoidable in a discussion about my practice is *postdramatic theatre*, which was coined by Hans-Thies Lehmann in his 2006 publication of the same name. *Postdramatic Theatre*, in short, is a concept covering a movement in the theatre where the hierarchy of theatre (with the dramatic text as a central and leading element) is challenged, and where the text is put more on the same level as light design, acting, scenography, video, or sound. It is a theatre where people from other disciplines play central roles – for example, Heiner Goebbels, originally a sociologist and composer, Christoph Marthaler, was a musician and actor. And Robert Wilson, who is educated as an architect. I read it as an interdisciplinary term, and since I am neither educated as a composer nor in theatre, I believe I work with music theatre.

I have a fondness for monologues as a way to present material instead of breaking content up into dialogue. I find it more precise and simpler. A dialogue can, in my eyes, feel a bit forced, trying to

² Walter Benjamin uses the concept *Jetztzeit*, that is translated to Here-and-now. Here I use the term different, than Benjamin as my focus is to take stored documents or visual material to reopen it in the present, as music theatre.

hide the constructed element in the dialogue on stage. I have used monologues in *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, *Reenactment/Microphone*, *Hertz kino*, *Storage* and *The Pen is mightier than the Word*. This is a personal artistic opinion, a base for my music theatre work, which also correlates to postdramatic theatre:

"[T]his tendency of postdramatic theatre: it creates monologues that can be considered as a symptom and index for the postdramatic displacement of the concept of theatre." (Lehmann, 2006, p. 128)

Context

Music and composition

Mauricio Kagel is an important and relevant composer in my artistic field, in particular his work fopening or expanding the New music theatre genre mentioned earlier. Relevant works include *Antithese* (1962), a video work in a laboratory with a scientist working on some strange machines, with electroacoustic sounds and foley sounds; and *Exotica* (1972), which premiered at the Olympics in Munich, is a concert with over 200 instruments that were unknown in Europe performed by six musicians. I find the playful critique in his works powerful, political and inspiring.

Heiner Goebbels is a composer that has been exhibited and performed in art scenes, contemporary music festivals and theatre festivals. To name a work I find especially relevant, I want to mention *Stifters Dinge* (2008), a blend of theatre, installation and composition, where he has created a mechanical installation or scenography that also played Goebbels' music. The compositions of material and technique Goebbels makes use of to create a work that is a mixture of music theatre and an installation I find a relevant reference for my artistic research works.

Peter Ablinger is an Austrian composer that has made groundbreaking compositions by using software to transcribe sounds and voice-recording to create compositions and installations. In his composition series *Voices and Piano* (1998-), he uses audio recordings of famous people from the past as a basis for his transcriptions and concerts, which are performed on instruments synchronously with the recordings. In *Deus Cantando* (2009), a recording of a boy reciting the text of the 2009 Declaration of the International Environmental Criminal Court was transcribed and played by a custom made mechanical piano. The piano plays with such high precision that one can hear what is being said, creating an uncanny experience of a speaking grand piano. I am interested in this meeting of ideas, software and technology, and I would say it is an important contextual reference to my artistic research.

I want to mention the composer Brigitta Muntendorf, and in particular her strategy of integrating video and audiovisual technology in her music theatre works as important components. In *Screen-sharing* (2017), she problematizes the mediation and virtuality of video communication on the Internet and social media.

The composer Alexander Schubert expands his work field to make happenings. In *Control*, presented at Ultima Festival in 2018, the audience became participants in a role-playing happening where one first was to control or guide a participant from a control room and then afterwards be guided by another audience-participant. In a situation that reminded me of a live-roleplaying game, Schubert created a situation where the audience were bodily confronted with being controlled by and controlling another human in a gamified situation.

Jennifer Walshe composes music theatre works where research, reflection and speculation are essential. For example, in her work *PERSONHOOD I* (2021) she problematizes internet culture, and self-help courses. In *TIME TIME TIME* (2019), she presents humans' obsession with time and ageing. She also published the text *The New Discipline: a compositional manifesto* (2016), on composers and musicians working on theatre in the context of contemporary music and its festivals, with the typical contemporary music timeframe, economy and short rehearsal times in comparison to theatre productions.

Art

Harun Farocki's video works and video installations are important references to the context of my works. His thorough and critical research of video. He expands his view of the filming situation and the video's technical usage. With this strategy, he attains a critical perspective on the film media, society and history. In his work *Workers Leaving the Factory* (1995), Farocki has appropriated and collected film scenes from movies from different decades where one can see workers leaving the factory. The work refers to the Lumiere film, *Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory* from 1895, which is one of the earliest examples of cinema.

In her video and installation works *How Not to Be Seen: A Fucking Didactic Educational .MOV File* (2013), *Factory of the Sun* (2015) and *Liquidity Inc.* (2014) The artist Hito Steyerl examines the virtuality of our lives on the Internet and in living in a capitalist image culture where self-improvement and appearance are important factors. She often has a satirical perspective in her works. Steyerl is also a philosopher, and in her essays and lectures she centres around topics such as war, image technology, culture, art discourse and capitalism, and their relation. The connection between research, theory and art I find interesting and relevant.

Tracey Moffatt is an Australian artist working on topics such as postcolonialism and Australian Aboriginal peoples and how they are understood and presented. In her video works *Doomed* (2007), *Other* (2009) and *Revolution* (2008), she creates montage work of appropriated scenes. *Doomed* is a collection of short scenes of catastrophic destruction that are cut and edited together. *Other* is a montage of people dancing in movies that depict encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans, which are sorted in the work as hostile and erotic encounters.³ Moffatt's film *Revolution* is a montage of scenes of revolution from various films.

Pierre Huyghe is a French conceptual artist. As a context, I want to concentrate on two of his works on film technology. In his work *Dubbed* (1997) where 15 actors are dubbing the voice of a whole

³ I came across *Other* in 2017 when I was researching and working on *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!* There are similarities, and some of the appropriated video material is also the same.

film, a situation of the performers trying to stay synchronised with the voices of the actors in the movie. In *Soundtrack from a Movie* (1997), the sound and image of a film are removed and only the subtitles are screened on the wall. This was exhibited as an installation with a microphone on a stand connected to a set of stereo speakers. These works' topics centre on film technology and how it is produced. Huyghe also creates more theatrical works that I find relevant. At Documenta 13, he exhibited *Untilled* (2011), an enigmatic outdoor area landscaped with a unique selection of wild-growing plants with hallucinogenic effects, old asphalt and a sculpture with a beehive over its head. Here the audience was confronted by a living dog staying in this field. This work is a mixture of theatre and art installation that I find interesting and relevant for my artistic research.

I want to mention written and referred contextual works for my artist research in the respective chapters about my artistic research works. Of course, there will be some overlapping and repetition, but I decided to do it this way, to write more precisely on the context and references relevant for each of my nine artistic research works.

Terminology used in my reflection

Material - technique - function:

I came across three concepts that I found productive in *The Cambridge Companion to Brecht*: Material, technique and function.

"Brecht wanted his theatre to intervene in the process of shaping society, so that Lukács's duality of form and content was replaced (to over-schematise briefly) by a triad of content (better described in Brecht's case by the formalist term 'material'), form (again the formalist term 'technique' is more useful here) and function. In Brecht's dramatic form, these three constantly clash but never properly coalesce to compose a rounded whole" (Leach, 2006, p.134)

I have taken and re-interpreted these concepts in my PhD. Material refers to both the concept of the work and the appropriated material used in my artistic research. The technique is the happening – the presentation of the material, mediated by the media technology. The function is how the work works, including the intention to create the artwork. These concepts are central and are used through my reflection.

To reopen

I have found the term reopen useful in my research. In my efforts to activate collected imagery and documents and present them in a live situation, I have found that the motivation for doing this work is to reopen the material for reflection. Here the word plays both to reopen the files and make space for critical reflection, as essential sides of this term. To make an example in *Zulou*, I mean to

reopen the original film, *Zulu*, giving a finalised and historically (out)dated film for the audience to reflect on the film's narrative and the problematic depiction of the Zulu warriors. Here the use of bodies to reopen the material, in my view, resembles what Erika Fischer Lichte writes: "*Performances consist of processes of embodiment that bring forth the acting body and meaning.*" (Lichte, 2008, p. 173)

Ideology:

"Here, ideology is the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group." (Althusser, 2014, p. 253)

Definition of ideology

In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels writes: "*The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.*" (Marx & Engels, 2000, p. 21) This is a negative understanding of ideology. Today, ideology refers to a thought system regarding how a society is governed, like neoliberalism, for example. In Marx's thinking, the term more refers to false consciousness, a way of thinking that prevents a person from seeing their true social or economic situations – a system created by and for the ones benefiting from this thinking: the ruling class.

Foucault's episteme concept episteme has similar connotations. Epistemes – or knowledge regimes – are connected to power and the institutions, generating and regenerating systems that function within society.

The Marxist philosopher and Foucault's teacher, Louis Althusser, uses the concept of ideology as a central aspect in his theoretical framework, where ideology is implemented in the institutions creating subjects and leaving little room for resistance. He coined the term interpellation for how ideology in institutions: "*I shall then suggest that ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all) , or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there !'"* (Althusser, 2014, p. 264)

How I use the term ideology in my works

I am inspired by Marx, Foucault and Althusser's ideas around ideology, particularly how ideological thoughts, knowledge and opinions can be read from documents and visual data. I focus on knowledge structures in documents and appropriated imagery, and collect how they are manifested in my work. My works show a collection and a presentation of my findings. This is

created with a common denominator, how people in society unconsciously has thought and acted on a topic. This ideologic situation again has produced knowledge and an asymmetrical power-relation. The clearest examples from my works are *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, where humans are used, reformed and forced within the surveillance state of GDR for the sake of Soviet Communism. *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!*, interrogates the practice of colonialism in generating knowledge about *The Other*, colonised ethnicities. The imagery of structures and connections of knowledge and hierarchy are visible in entertainment films up to our time.

Ideological research

I have concentrated these ideological formations to centre around the following topics within my works: state-surveillance of humans; and how I think of artificial intelligence will develop in the future; how dated images and videos of psychiatry can say about the datedness of knowledge-regimes; what depictions of people from other ethnicities in commercial films say about our western gaze; and how we as film-watchers look upon the other is marinated by our constructed image and knowledge on different ethnicities and cultures.

Postcolonialism

One central discourse for two of the works in my PhD is in the field of postcolonialism in my works *Zulou*, and *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!* I have elaborated more on that in the respective chapters. During the four years of my fellowship, I reflected on how much influence the colonial period has had on the whole world. And also how problematic this past is for the Western world, with colonisation, capitalism, the history of the slave trade and Western racism with its troubling treatment of people of other ethnicities. But the colonial past is our shared past – both colonisers and colonised, and I find it meaningful and relevant. It is clear the difference As Paul Gilroy points out in his book *The Black Atlantic*: "[T]he history of slavery is somehow assigned to blacks. It becomes our special property rather than a part of the ethical and intellectual heritage of the West as a whole." (Gilroy, 1999, p. 49)

Project - work:

As a reaction to what I see as a heavy focus on projects in the regulations for artistic research, I have consequently used the term works as I want to oppose the project-based view of art. As I see it, the concept of project has created an idea of dedication to a topic with a limited time span.

Etymologically, the term project has its roots in the 14th century, from the Latin *projecte*, "*a plan, draft, scheme, design*," from the Medieval Latin *proiectum* "*something thrown forth*" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2021)

My reading of the term implies a limited nature, somewhat lacking in dedication. So I chose to replace it with work. And actually, replacing is not precise. However, I think changing the term changes how one understands a work, the time and effort that has been put in motion to creating it, and its position | other work that is done in the world to keep the wheels in motion, as to say.

Chapter 2: Method – The plane of possibility

"Ideally, we lose ourselves in what we read only to return to ourselves transformed, and part of a more expansive world. In short, we become more critical and more capacious in our thinking and in our acting." (Butler, 2013)

Artistic Results, a short overview

Main works

Das kapitalistische Ausland (2017) is a site-specific recitation piece with actors reading from Stasi reports from informers on stage. The recital follows three informers' lives and destinies in the GDR.

Zulou (2020) is a scenic experiment where the sound, narrative and dialogue is replaced live while the film *Zulu* is played. Initially, the film is a historical military drama and has been turned into a science-fiction with Afro-futuristic undertones and given a new ending. In addition, the sound is replaced with foley using objects that are often very different from the sound from the original film. Actors and musicians perform the work.

It takes all kinds to make the World, Sir! (2019) was performed by SISU-Ensemble. The work is a site-specific happening, where I connected the concert to the building it was presented. A mural in the library of an African man was important for my choice of place, the former main library in Oslo. SISU-Ensemble performed rhythms collected and transcribed from 249 film scenes depicting Western people watching people of other ethnicities perform with drums in the concert. SISU performs the music simultaneously with the original film score. The scenes were presented chronologically according to their making, spanning 19xx to 20xx.

Supplemental works

Storage (2017) is a sound sculpture where the listener has to lean down to listen. It consists of a hard drive transformed into a speaker that plays an interview I conducted with the NSA whistleblower Thomas A. Drake. In the interview, Drake explains his reasons for acting against his organisation.

The Pen is mightier than the Word (2017) is a site-specific work for a seminar space. The video is a collection of appropriated videos on computer technology. The voice-over of the video is also presented in the text in the video consisting of my research into Artificial intelligence.

Reenactment/Microphone (2018) is a three-part concert work performed by Decoder Ensemble.

Here the microphone technology is a central binding element of the parts of the concert, together with the reenactment of appropriated audio and visual material. Central is the importance and function of protesting and saying no.

By the Road - Death Drive (2018) is a collection of car crash scenes transcribed to death metal music performed live by a mechanical drum kit. The live sound is performed synchronously with the videos. Here the focus is on the importance and fascination of car crash scenes in films. The collection spans from a Godard film, *Le Mepris*, to American action films such as *Need for Speed*. They are expressions within the same medium.

Hertzkin (2019) is work made for artistic-research fellow and pianist Sanae Yoshida. This work centres around the depiction of Helen Keller, who was blind-deaf, both in news recordings and films made about her upbringing. Here the piano is tuned to a microtonal scale I created based on an analysis of recordings of her voice.

Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!) (2020) is a site-specific work for video, flash, guitar and synthesiser. The work is a result of research on historical material on psychology and psychiatry. In the treatment, mainly women are portrayed.

Bermudan Rhapsody V Dithyrambs of Confusion V Labyrinthian Deposition is my manifesto for creating my works.⁴

The Use of Human beings – on-site, on screen

A common denominator in all my works is a study of power structures in how people are structured, sorted and treated concerning technology, surveillance, discipline or knowledge disciplines. People and individuals are subjected to asymmetric power relations where individuals as separated subjects and is a weaker and formable entity. This is central and important in my works, the individuals are not the heroes, but examples of how people are subjected, and a visualising and an example on how this process is actuated. There are two of my works where this can be hard to see. In the video *The Pen is mightier than The Word*, the human-centred regime can come to an end where artificial intelligence can take over. Another point here is that I see the possibility of artificial intelligence in enabling humans to understand and communicate with animals, which may be something that can force us to re-evaluate how we look upon and treat them. In *By the Road-Death Drive*, I have collected the film industry's depiction of car crashes, picturesque depictions from movies of the consequence of driving cars, which has created a road grid that covers most of the world, at least the Western world. The car crash is the negative consequence of how we have structured our transport technology.

⁴ If the reader doesn't want to read the reflection, one can read this.

Human beings are also the people in the works

I look upon the people engaged in performing my works as opening the work to the present for the audience, which I think is an essential theatrical aspect. Therefore, their presence, performance, and effort are intended to be more critical than just performing a score for the audience. Here the element of collaboration with the performers is essential. I'm uncomfortable with the situation of being a director, as I see myself as more of an artist that wants to create a work from a concept or the idea that I have. My works often must be explained for the performers, but they are again selected as experts for making and performing them. The performers have welcomed proposals throughout the PhD-period to make the work clearer and do not conflict with my ideas. The working process is intended to be a safe space where nobody has to do something they are uncomfortable with. No work is worth that.

Formal experiments in music theatre

The term "method" comes from Greek and means road. This paragraph will explain the method I have used in my work and the "road" between and through the works of my artistic research. With formal experiments, I mean following the ideas and concepts for my artistic-research works and presenting them in formally different ways, from concerts and installations to more theatrical presentations to a movie happening. The artworks are experiments in which I'm trying out something that I haven't done before in other works and thus do not have total control over the artistic result.

By what I mean with formal is to do different experiments of expressions within the Music theatre genre, such as site-specificity in *Das kapitalistische Ausland*. *For example, It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!*, *The Pen is mightier than the Word*. Another example is that *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)* was initially intended with site-specificity as a central aspect. For example, the use of foley, the art of making sounds for film and radio, was used in *Zulou* and *Hertz kino*. And by making presentations of collections of found material in *By the Road - Death Drive*, *The Pen is Mightier than the Word*, and *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!* I also work with archives in my works with *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*, and *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!* Some of the works are theatrical, others are more musical, and some are more video- and installation-oriented formally in their expression.

My formal experiments to downscale the theatrical aspects such as stage, costumes, expressive performances, and dramatic narrative try to "peel-off" theatrical layers but still making music theatre works that are meant to be read in both theatrical, contemporary music and art context. I had this idea through reading Brecht. I also found a thumb rule for mixing music with effects in the studio where you add effects, for example, reverb, till it is present. Then you fade the presence down until you can barely hear it. It is hard to hear, but it is still there. This, I would state, is my

artistic style.⁵ It is how I control and present the information in my works.

Hardware and Software

"The higher and more effortless programming languages become, the more unbridgeable the gap grows between them and the hardware that still does all the work." (Kittler, 2013, p. 219)

Central in my artistic work, I use computers and software. Nearly everybody uses computers and software in their work these days. Still, I would probably not work as an artist nor a composer if it weren't for the possibility of the computer. The use of transcription is central in my artworks in my PhD. In my work, I analyse and generate pitches and rhythms from found audio material. This material is then performed live either by a musician, a synthesiser or a trigger machine. Here it is the mediation, the transformation into another medium (with the regression or loss of information), that I find interesting. I also find the correlation between the transcribed music that initially has been a recording from a human voice or a car driving and the original material form it has been appropriated.

Since I started working with transcription in 2006, the possibilities of using different software have expanded. It has gone from being something that one had to program oneself in Max/MSP, Pure Data or Open Music to later being available in software. For example, in Celemony Melodyne, and to now being a function in the most used music production software including Logic and Ableton Live. I tried most software with transcription ability during my artistic research period but have primarily used Max/MSP and Celemony Melodyne.

Transcription can, of course, also be done manually without the use of a computer algorithm. For example, in *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!*, I tried to transcribe the percussion rhythms using software but found it easier to do it manually. The transcription was later reworked and notated by SISU, resulting in an easier readable and performable score for the concert during Ultima. But aside from this example, I am most interested in the crudeness of algorithms, especially when they implement mistakes, by misinterpreting octaves so that the pitch is one octave higher than a human would sing naturally.

⁵ Stian Grøgaard mentions in an interview on Edvard Munch in the documentary *Den andre Munch (The other Munch)*, that artistic style is how you control and present the information in your artwork. The link is now disabled, unfortunately.

The idea and software as a platform for generating works

"The process is mechanical and should not be tampered with. It should run its course." (Lewitt, 1999, p. 106, #29)

Often the ideas I get that result in works are generated in a net search, fiddling with computer technology, and procrastinating on the Internet. The limitation or the possibility of a particular technology interests me and impacts how I create a work. To be honest, I didn't have an idea of working with transcription; I was initially working with noise music. But the possibility of software offering transcribing audio material has led me to work in this way with music. Also, as the conceptual basis in my work-platform transcribing audio-material is central. It is a symbolic reduction of found and appropriated material instead of creating music from symbols, notes.

One can be tempted to compose further with the transcribed note material, but I firmly believe that this would weaken the concept of the works. Therefore, the composition of the material in my works are made before the transcription I have collected in my music theatre.

Composition of elements, not only music

"The things signify what they are or what they appear. To perceive something as important means to perceive it as meaningful. Materiality, signifier, and signified coincide in the case of self-referentiality." (Lichte, 2008, p. 141)

I compose with different elements in my artistic strategy, but it consists mainly of appropriated audio and video material. It can also be books, found objects and photographs. The material is composed, structured and often presented intentionally in time order in my presentations, and they have an essential function in getting the work to work:

TV and movies as our visual baggage

I found a quote on the British theatre company Forced Entertainment that was a relief for me, resonating with my artistic work platform:

"Hence, Forced Entertainment say that they make theatre that is understandable by anybody 'who was brought up in a house where the TV was always on.'" (Munby, 2006, p. 10)

This is also apparent in Lehmann's text:

"One question media theatre poses for the spectator is this: why is it the image that fascinates us more? What constitutes the magic attraction that seduces the gaze to follow the image when given the choice between devouring something real or something imaginary?" (Lehmann, 2006, p. 170)

For myself, I remember falling into the contemporary music discourse and being a bit baffled by

the bourgeois elements of canonical works and tradition, where the cultural baggage aggregated by experiencing the entertainment industry and sub-cultures are less relevant than a romantic painter or a Fluxus-artist from the 60s. Therefore, I combine canon, tradition, subculture, and entertainment, using, playing with, and compiling this mixture as an artistic tool and reference in my works. My works must have several levels that invite different people to see and experience them.

Media-archaeology

Central and common to all my works and is the use of media-archaeology. With that, I mean the study of the historical development of media technology and, more importantly, media technology's relevance in the development of artistic works and influence on structuring how we perceive art and our surroundings.

A consequence of this interest has led to a productive force in my artwork. It is oscillator sounds, analogue camera flashes, screen-print technology, typewritten reports from the Stasi archive or foley soundart technique. The mediated-ness of a media, with its limits in quality, resolution, compression and way of storage, also colours the way a media presents its content. This is something that forms my research and artistic works.

"Media " define what really is" ; they are always already beyond aesthetics." (Kittler, 1999, p. 3)

Media technology also has a datedness. Some are now obsolete like the typewriter, but it has updated to enter a new technology, namely the computer-keyboard, which I am writing on now, and you are probably reading this text.

Heterotopic spaces

"Utopias are sites with no real place." (Foucault, 1986, p. 24)

Jennifer Torrence, a former research fellow, told me about the essay by Foucault *Of Other Spaces*, where he presents the concept of heterotopia. The reading sparked an idea for a solution of finding places for presenting my PhD works. I had already presented *Das kapitalistische Ausland* as a site-specific work, a. And I liked using the building where the performance took place as an artistic element in itself.

I found the heterotopic spaces to be, in many ways, an articulation and structuring of that idea; I wanted to find more spaces and institutions not closely connected to conventional art production and find sites that could add something to the works I've made.

"But among all these sites, I am interested in certain ones that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralise, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect." (Foucault, 1986, p. 24)

It is hard to explain what Foucault means with heterotopias with a short and clear definition. It is a concept set in contrast to utopia – no real place; heterotopias are places that have functions in society and are especially elaborated in modernity. The essay is a structured ordering of these counter-spaces that serve functions that other places lack. For example, the botanical garden, museum, theatre, and former colonies can be seen as heterotopias.

"There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilisation, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias." (Foucault, 1986, p. 24)

Following the argument, I see that the gallery, the cinema and the black box can all be understood as heterotopias. Still, I am more interested in using the other spaces, including museums other than art museums, that set my works in relation to different knowledge disciplines other than art and artistic research.

This is not an easy approach either, and I have had quite a lot of correspondence in the four years my PhD has lasted. Some initiatives just went dead, one where we had an agreement and the curator quit on short notice, so, suddenly, the agreement was off. One person was having more meetings almost seemed like a tactic to keep having meetings until I gave up. I found it interesting and inspiring to find these other but relevant places to present my works.

Political art, political as function

According to the Online Collins Dictionary, *"Political means relating to the way power is achieved and used in a country or society."* (Online Collins Dictionary, 2021) I also want to mention Max Weber's definition of politics. It is, in my view, a concise definition of the term:

"politics' for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state." (Weber, 1946, p.78)

In the way I make political music theatre, I am more interested in how power is used and works in society than how it is achieved. I relate to the Foucaultian concept of episteme in my works, where knowledge and power are connected in politics, society, disciplines, and science. It is a power that produces knowledge, institutions and subjects. As Foucault says in a transcribed conversation with Deleuze: *"Discursive practices are not purely and simply ways of producing discourse. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behaviour, in forms for transmission and diffusion, and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them."* (Foucault, 1980, p. 200)

Often, I focus on a thematic phenomenon or problem without proposing a solution because when art gives or agitates a political solution, there is no room for reflection about the work or the political themes.

What I mean by working with ideology formally in music theatre

By working with ideology formally in musical theatre, I take a Marxist approach to ideology. I follow lines of oppression, cultural phenomena, documents and images of humans produced with an underlying function. With that, I mean materials created to work – to have a function – with a motivation to present knowledge about a system, subjects, or topics. This is why I include the word "use" in the title of my PhD, referencing utilitarianism – how people are used, controlled, or inscribed in society. Here an understanding of the subject is relevant, as they are not individuals with rights, but instead tracing the term back to its former meaning from Latin: "person under control or dominion of another."

Ideology presents itself as a material within my body of work in several different ways. For example, I have made works about life under the control of the secret state police, the Stasi, how people from "non-Western" cultures are portrayed, and how diagnostics is a young discipline that holds power over subjects who have a mental illness. This is a work platform or praxis I have had in my art production, and it is something I wanted to transpose over to music theatre.

This reflection made me question which political artworks have been successful in the last 30 years. In terms of a work's function, I want to mention the work *Ways of Seeing* (2020), by Roll, Benamar, and Baban, which, in my view, was a music theatre work that few saw but was heavily discussed in media. Because of the work's documentary strategy of filming houses of people with power and position, mainly people from Fremskrittspartiet, the populist right-wing political party in Norway. This set in motion several severe threats to both the people involved in the play and to the theatre where it was performed, Black Box Teater, including threats to remove the public funding of the theatre. Threats were supposedly made to the home of the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Security in Norway. This led to a trial against the girlfriend of the Minister of justice's partner, which finally led to his resignation. I don't think the artists involved had anticipated these dramatic effects. Still, they incited a large reaction from people on the far-right side of the political system, who responded in coordination to use politicians and the police to silence the artists. The former Prime Minister never apologised for her critical remarks towards the artists. In terms of a work's function, its impact on people, media, and the public is probably why the artwork has been discussed the last few years.

Another work I want to mention is Victor Lind's work from *I'll bring you home - Contemporary memory*, (1998) where the artist – at the same date and time at night, 4:30-5:00 – staged a reenactment of an event from 1942, where 100 taxis were hired and lined up at Kirkeveien outside Frognerparken in Oslo. The taxis were, back then, recruited to collect Jews from their homes and transport them to a ship at the Oslo harbour to be sent to concentration camps of the Third Reich. This reenactment is, in my view, the most powerful political work of art that I know. Of course, an outright condemnation of this event could have been a different artistic strategy, but I think that would have limited the viewers' opportunity to reflect upon it.

Art is not the answer

I strongly believe that artworks shall not present answers to an audience, and I follow this maxim in my art production. Instead, art is to present percepts, a neologism from Deleuze and Guattari, new questions and problems for art discourse and the people experiencing the works.

"The artist creates blocs of percepts and affects, but the only law of creation is that the compound must stand up on its own. The artist's greatest difficulty is to make it stand up on its own. Sometimes this requires what is, from the viewpoint of an implicit model, from the viewpoint of lived perceptions and affections, great geometrical improbability, physical imperfection, and organic abnormality. But these sublime errors accede to the necessity of art if they are internal means of standing up (or sitting or lying)." (Deleuze and Guattari ,1994 ,p. 164)

Chapter 3: Manifesto

Bermudan Rhapsody

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Dithyrambs of Confusion

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Labyrinthian Deposition

- Fugues are for men with white wigs.
- Don't make compositions, make works.
- Making music is easy.
- Make works that you want to endure.
- If you're not a talented composer, try making works out of your procrastinations.
- Some say that quality is a good thing, but I would say that Quantity / longer is at least a thing.
- If quality fails you, try quantity instead.
- Bach, Schubert and Beethoven all had white wigs.
- There is good and bad procrastination, but there are not opposites.
- Making music for others can be the best form of self-hatred.
- Combine and see if they connect. Juxtaposing can be an interesting tool.
- Throw it, and see if it sticks.
- Style is how one controls your information.
- Originality doesn't exist, even though it often is appreciated.
- Work is a plane of thought, it can connect and open up.
- First format or standard, then signal.
- Note to self might mean something else.
- Making music is hard.

- Music can be filled or a result of content.
- Try to be a nice person in all of this.
- Scores can be a good start to make a work, but not the final end.
- The imaginary grows among signs. (Paraphrase of Foucault)
- Three is a good number, but there might be better ones, four, nine, a gross?
- Sound, music, compositions, is it the same?
- Contemporary music is sadly still bourgeois, Art is neo-liberal. I don't know what is worse.
- Actually, I think I do.
- Remember that you have the best job in the world, don't forget that.
- Every work of art is a failure. (Stolen from Ablinger)
- Don't be afraid to bore your audience, they are often already bored.
- Don't start from the good old times, start from the old bad times, and go on from there. (Paraphrase of Brecht)
- Good enough works.
- Your work doesn't need to follow logic or utilitarian goals.

Chapter 4: *Das kapitalistische Ausland*

*"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways. The point, however, is to change it."*⁶(Marx, 2000)

Das kapitalistische Ausland

This work is a site specific recitation of German Stasi reports, recited in German, narrating the destinies of three Stasi informants in the GDR.

Link to video: <https://vimeo.com/238060469>

When I think back to the news reports covering the demonstrations in Leipzig and Berlin and the fall of the Berlin Wall, I remember it as the first time I felt emotional while watching the news. I was twelve, and I thought I had watched something important happening – an event – that would make a real change.

It is difficult to find the correct verb to describe what happened to the Berlin Wall; did it fall as the Wikipedia page phrases it? Maybe it collapsed. Both words, however, are too passive to describe what I remembered seeing. I watched people attacking and tearing at the Wall with any tools they could manage. The change was happening in front of my eyes, clear as day on the TV; it was some

⁶ Written on the wall at Humboldt University in Berlin, and also inscribed on Marx' grave.

of the most intense footage I have ever seen. It was fascinating to realize how strong people can be when mobilizing and protesting against being oppressed. This force has momentum.

I have worked with archive material, creating and using archives for the last thirteen years as an artist. Sooner or later, anyone interested in archives comes across the Stasi archive, now managed by the organization *The Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former German Democratic Republic*, hereafter abbreviated as BStU.

This archive contains a collection of the files on the people under surveillance by the German Democratic Republic, the GDR, and files on the informants. Because of the scope of the Stasi's praxis and that people were surveilled and informed each other in the GDR, it was a socialist state of total surveillance. I wanted to try to understand how the archive works as an active agent, storing and collecting material, functioning to secure the communist state of the GDR. The agency of the Stasi archive was both terrifying and fascinating.

"And Foucault, the last historian of first archaeologist, merely had to look things up. The suspicion that all power emanates from and returns to archives could be brilliantly confirmed, at least within the realms of law, medicine, and theology. A tautology of history, or its cavalry. For the libraries in which the archaeologist found so much rich material collected and catalogued papers that had been extremely diverse in terms of addressee, distribution technique, degree of secrecy, and writing technique - Foucault's archive as the entropy of a post office." (Kittler, 1999, p. 5)

A short history of the German Democratic Republic

To understand this work, the reader needs to have some historical information of the history of the GDR. It is a country that has disappeared - or reunited with West Germany, becoming Germany.

The GDR's territory was the area the Soviet army occupied when they entered Germany during the end of the Second World War, until Berlin's fall. Berlin was then separated into four zones, divided between the allied forces - the Soviets, the French, the English, and the Americans. The Soviet zone in Berlin became the capital of the GDR when the Soviet Union founded it in 1949 as a socialist state. However, Berlin also became problematic because of the other zones remaining under English, American and French control, making it a possibility for the inhabitants of the GDR to move (or flee) to the West.

The solution to this problem was the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, which was called Anti-Fascist Protection Rampart, or, in German: *Antifaschistischer Schutzwall*. The West Germans, however, called it the Wall of Shame. It split the city in two, and it kept the inhabitants in the GDR from moving since the GDR had lost skilled residents to West Germany.

Stasi was founded in 1950, meant to act as "*the shield and the sword of the state*," to quote Thomas Drake⁷, and to serve the state apparatus against the dissident activity. Thus, resulting in one of the

⁷ Thomas Drake is a NSA whistle-blower and was interviewed as a part of the work *Storage*

most active surveillance organizations setting up a duality where one was cooperating with the ideology for the state, or you were against GDR.

Critical thought was punished with *Zersetzung*, a term for subjecting surveillance objects with attrition, breaking them, or making them docile. If the Stasi punished you, your family often faced the consequences as well – for example, the children of the family would be rejected by universities or would not get a job even though they were qualified. This was also an efficient method of forcing the population to become informants – *inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* – for the Stasi. In short, this was a surveillance society, with the citizens informing on each other while not daring to speak critically against the state's politics.

The Stasi archives

The Stasi's activities generated a lot of intelligence information that had to be reported, sorted, and stored to be of any use. In the end, protesters took over the Stasi archives in the regime's overturn. Impressively, the protesters saw the importance of the material, choosing not to destroy it. As a result, there is now a total of 111 kilometres of archive material available to the former inhabitants of the GDR, who can access the files – in German: *Stasiakten* – of deceased family members, allowing them to understand and reconcile with their pasts. Unfortunately, this has also revealed some more bizarre examples, including husbands informing on their wives and children reporting on their parents.

The overwhelming size of this archive got me interested. I heard stories about the GDR while working at Goethe-Institut in Oslo for nine years before starting my PhD. I remember finding a special issue of *Der Spiegel* on the Stasi; I saved it from the trash, reading up on some of Stasi's activities. At that point, I had already been working on archives as an artist. Often, archives are not accessible for the public, but the Stasi archive is open for researchers and the victims of their surveillance activity. So, by being an artist-researcher, I could apply for access to the Stasi archive, which I did.

The Stasi archive and paradigm of the control society

As Thomas Drake mentions in the interview in *Storage*, the Stasi was working on using computers in their index room, allowing for easier and faster access to their files. The index room was the most crucial room in the Stasi archive, where codenames and real names of informants, as well reports were linked to each other. The index cards were the first things to be destroyed by Stasi employees before the protesters took over the archive. The materials of the index room were damaged to such an extent. That is now quite hard to connect the codenames to the actual names of the cases. The CIA has recovered some of it. They most likely acquired some of the index files from a Stasi officer selling it to them, though this has not been confirmed. These files are called the Rosenholtz files. We are now in intelligence, and the sources are secret; it is hard to find them. Some of the material, however, has been returned to the BStU, but not all.

This was a time where nobody had personal computers. Surveillance and archiving had to be done the old-fashioned way, archiving actual files in folders on. Surveillance had to be done by informants, which was quite effective. This was also done through hard-target surveillance, where several officers had to work in shifts, literally following and watching their suspects. The surveillance and archiving were much work and demanded a lot of resources. It is hard to understand how this could work for the 41 years that the GDR existed as a state.

The Stasi archive contains wiretaps of apartments, photos taken with spy cameras, and video material. However, the archive mainly comprises written reports, typed on paper, signed and stamped, then sorted and saved in folders. Today this work may seem very dated and time-consuming, but that was the level of technology used in the Stasi surveillance and archiving.

The Stasi archive was divided into two main storage sections, with orange file folders for the reports on the informants and blue folders for people under surveillance. These were also linked in the index room. So, for example, suppose you want to know which person is behind which codename or who informed on you. In that case, you would have to connect this codename with a different codename in the yellow files – a codename that the informants themselves often chose.

Process

When starting my PhD at the Norwegian Academy of Music, I got access to work with the archive materials from the BStU. As a stroke of luck, I contacted Astrid Rose, who works at BStU and speaks Norwegian which made the correspondence a lot easier.

After I got access, I was confronted with another critical question: which cases should I work in? This was a feeling similar to the first time I searched on the internet. The archive is so vast, so how do I decide which files to examine? I first wanted to work with files of Norwegian informants, but this was impossible because it was hard to connect the codenames to the people. Then, I decided to work on cases that might give me an insight into the lives and destinies of three ordinary people in the GDR.

1. I started with the names of a couple that was portrayed in the *Der Spiegel* issue on the Stasi. The woman, Regina, had declined to allow her files to be accessed, but the files on the man, Wolfgang Templin, were accessible.

2. I had been to the Stasi Museum, where there was a presentation on a female informant. She was a part of the punk subculture in Berlin, informing the Stasi from within the punk scene. I found this interesting, as her life must have been quite schizophrenic, living a subversive lifestyle while also providing information to the state intelligence. The informant defended this by claiming that her activity made the punk scene possible in the GDR; otherwise, it would have been suppressed by *Zersetzung* and surveillance.

3. Another idea was to work with the Stasi file of Bertolt Brecht, a person who certainly has a file due to his travelling abroad and the fact that he was not a faithful scholastic Marxist, not following

every rule of the regime. However, unfortunately, this file was also difficult to access. The last person was a person who first worked as an informant before rising in the Stasi system to become a person who worked with informants, receiving the reports and information necessary to write reports to file in the Stasi archive. At some point he worked with the girl informing from the punk scene.

Stasi file folder

BStU
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Post.-Nr. M.f.S. / **XV 3513/71**

"Peter"

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Beginn 14.2.71

Beendet _____

Archiv-Nr. **1832/76**

Band-Nr. 1

Nicht gesperrt

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Bestell-Nr. T 112/So
H. L. Helm KG., Büroorganisation Eisenberg/Thür.

Mehr als 300 Blatt Papier

Example from the Stasiakte:

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BSU
000344 00-278

Aufgabenstellung: IM besucht beide Veranstaltungen und berichtet darüber

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Information zur 75o Jahrfeier in Salzwedel:

Der IM informierte den MA, daß im Zeitraum vom 5-11. Juni 1983 in Salzwedel die 75o Jahrfeier stattfindet. Der IM selbst wird dort an der Feier teilnehmen und hat sich für diesen Zeitraum einen Stand gemietet, wo er kunstgewerbliche Gegenstände verkaufen will. Ebenfalls an diesen Feierlichkeiten wollen die op. interessanten Personen Zabka und Hoffmann teilnehmen.

Maßnahmen: - telefonische Inf. an Gen. Holm Abt. XX

Aufgabenstellung: keine derzeit

Information zur [REDACTED]:

Der IM informierte dem MA, daß ihre österreichische Bekannte Agnes Forsthuber beabsichtigt zu ihr im Dezember 82 einzureisen.

Maßnahmen: keine

Aufgabenstellung: IM inf. MA rechtzeitig über Einreise der [REDACTED] mit dem IM wird abgestimmt wie sie sich gegen über der [REDACTED] verhalten soll

Information : "grüne Radfahrer"

Nach Kenntnis des IM ist diese Gruppe der "Grünen" vor ca 1 bis 1 1/2 Jahren in der ESG ins Lebengerufen worden. Konkrete Hinweise zu den Mitgliedern will der IM nicht kennen auch nichts weiter über ihre Aktivitäten und Ziele. Sie hat diese Gruppe angeblich nur einmal in der Nähe des Straußberger Platzes gesehen.

Maßnahmen: keine

Aufgabenstellung: derzeit keine

Zum Bereich der Palette "Nord" sowie den op. interessanten Personen [REDACTED] und [REDACTED] konnte der IM keine neuen Angaben machen.

The files

After some correspondence, I received 648 pages of Stasi files on a CD from the BStU. As I printed the pages and scanned through the material, to things caught my eye. First, all the reports were in German, written in something I have chosen to call *Rapportsprache*, a formal, descriptive German lingua. It is quite dull and unengaging. Second, all the files are reports of informants' observations; they are not the surveillance reports included in the blue files on surveillance targets.

Blacked-out information

While getting an overview of the files – not only reading the content to get the textual information, but also their visual appearances – what is most apparent is the text material that has been blacked out, information that you are not allowed to read. Visually, it stands out, which I find interesting. There is text underneath, forbidden for me or the public to read. This text material has been worked on. Someone in the BStU chose which texts I could read before it was scanned into a PDF file. Then, the material was sent to another employee at BStU to read, who then blacked out the text withdrawn from the public.

In researching the Stasi archive, I read that, before one receives Stasi files, someone physically blacks out material with a marker and then re-copies the document so that the reader has no possibility of reading the blacked-out text. This is thorough and meticulous work. I was curious to get the material and hoped I would get the files printed on paper; however, I got a CD-ROM with the material, which made my work a lot easier.

When texts are blacked out, they are both there and not there. So it is literally a negation of content – but, to some extent, they can still be deduced through their context or in connection with the rest of the text.

From an artist's perspective, the blacked-out texts are associated with the aesthetics of the neo-conceptual Norwegian artists that were especially active in my art education. Both the black aesthetic and the negation of material are attitudes that initially came from the Situationist movement, without the ideological background. Negation is an act of subverting something established or content. That is a strategy that can be interesting and productive in creating art. I remember one of Matias Faldbakken's earlier works, with a garbage bag covering a street sign: I also want to mention his works *Abstracted Car (2009)*, A burned out car presented in the gallery space. *Untitled (Locker Sculpture #01 (2010))*, a sculpture consisting of a row of lockers crushed with baggage straps and *The Name of a Person That I Want Dead, Written in Xs (2006)*, a framed text work where Faldbakken has written an amount of Xs corresponding to the amount of letters to the name of a person Faldbakken wants dead.

Here the negation of access to the material has a quite obvious and practical function, but the blacking out of the text is something that a reader is not used to seeing. It becomes a puzzle or a riddle, where – at least for me – a reader starts to think of the hidden material, becoming curious of what the text says underneath the black box.

Here, thinking of negation as an act subverting something that is written or already there. It opposes the established rules for a text. In "*Stasiakte*," a relation to something, a content that has been blacked out and removed. This was something I found interesting. I am aware that this act serves a function and not a negation, but it makes me reflect on it from an artist's perspective.

Furthermore, I find the black boxes an interesting element of the files I received. I knew Regine Templin, Wolfgang's wife, had recused herself from being accessible in the archive, so I guessed that some of the black boxes were about her. I am aware that this act serves a function, not just existing as a negation, but it makes me reflect on it from an artist's perspective in ways that I found interesting.

Form, aesthetic and lingua

It is not so surprising that the aesthetic of forms, archiving, and bureaucracy is quite apparent, repeated throughout the body of the text I received. Especially in the "Treffbericht," the meeting report includes the date and location for meeting with the informer, a report of the information received, and the informer's situation and mental health, all signed by the Stasi employee.

The Stasi lingua is also apparent in word and sentence snippets in the reports. For example, during my first reading of the documents, I noticed the mention of *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, the industrial, non-communist states, or the West. That term may be a bit dated, but this became the title of the work because I found it relevant because of my interpretation of the communist states being in opposition to the capitalist states. The mention of Imperialismus (imperialism) in the files was also interesting and defined the Marxist-Leninist activity as quite different from "*the colonial West*." The communist states were agitating to spread their ideology that was intended to be spread around the world. Unlike the West that was colonizing other places in the world, collecting raw material, and transporting it back to "the mainland" to transform the raw material into products in factories. I think this lingua points to that we unfortunately do not have an alternative to capitalism in the world – at least not alternatives that seem viable. During the Cold War-period The Stalinist communism – applied in the Soviet Union and the satellite states, including GDR – was the ideological alternative, but it was not democratically preferable.

This report language, read today was fascinating. I still remember the Cold War and the GDR, but reading this Marxist-Leninist lingua and ideology in the context of this communism was interesting. The use of lingua and repetitions of words in the files made me unsure if the person typing this report meant what he wrote or if it was an ideological work requirement that – from my perspective – seems compulsive.

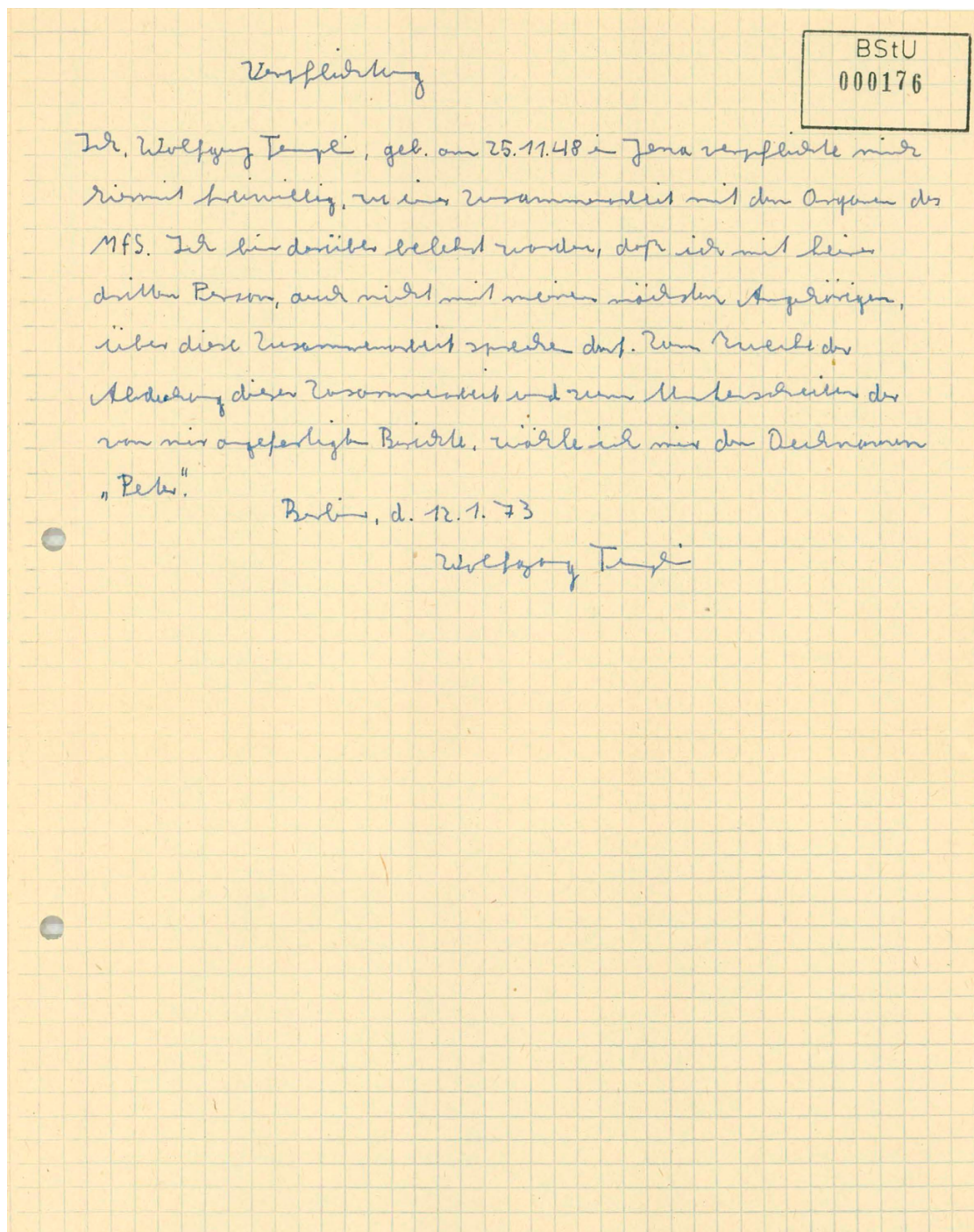
Verpflichtung

Something that stood out in the surveillance reports was the *Verpflichtung*, a written and signed confirmation by the informers that the person obliged him- or herself to actively seek and give

information to the Stasi. This document is different because it often is handwritten and signed by the informer, looking quite different from the typewritten material. It seems like it was written on whatever paper that was at hand at the time. The handwritten material also reminds me of the German media archaeologist Friedrich Kittler's *Grammophone, Film, Typewriter*. Here he points out the differences between handwritten and typewritten texts, with the handwriting making non-standard and personal documents revealing something about the person who has written the material. Kittler writes: "*The hard science of physiology did away with the psychological conception that guaranteed humans that they could find their souls through handwriting and rereading.*" (Kittler, 1999, p. 188)

Forensics uses handwriting experts to link suspects to text or confirm the authenticity of, for example, a signature; this is a function of handwritten text that is still important today. It might be the purpose of the handwritten confirmation document as it includes an example of the informer's handwritten text in the archive. However, I also think it has a practical side: The writer used the material at hand when meeting and giving the obligation, it also performs the psychological function of personally declaring the informer's commitment.

Example of dedication document



Technology

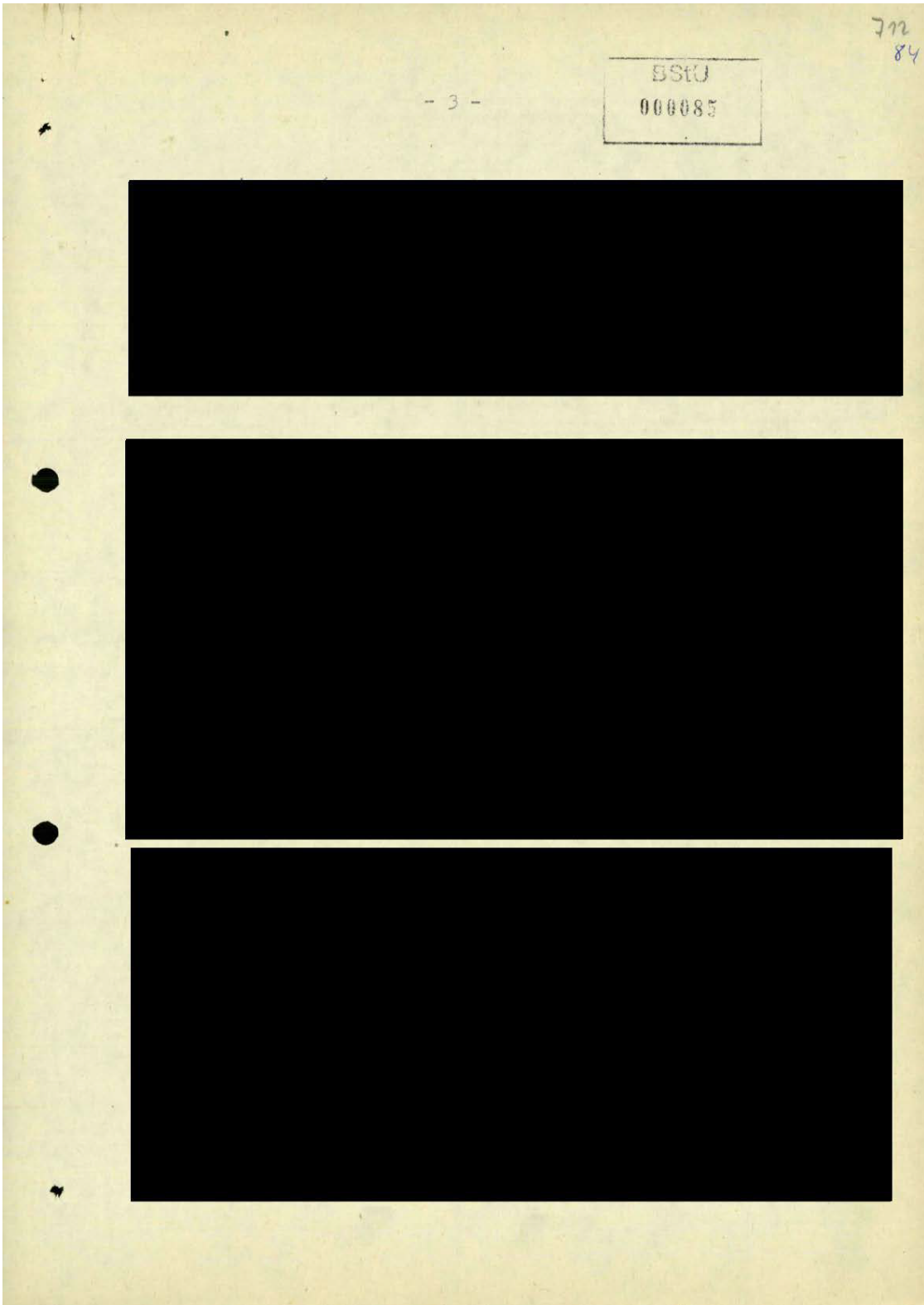
"Only the typewriter provides writing as a selection from the finite and arranged stock of its keyboard. It literally embodies what Lacan illustrated using the antiquated letterbox. In contrast to the flow of handwriting, we now have discrete elements separated by spaces." (Kittler, 1999, p. 16)

In trying to understand if a typewriter is an analogue technology or not, it seems to be one when compared to digital technologies. I prefer to categorize it as a mechanical pre-analogue paradigm since it does not use analogue storing. Instead, it is a mechanical press, a print technology to store or print information on paper. Still, however, the typewriter was developed in parallel to the photo camera and the gramophone development, which I consider analogue storage media. Kittler discusses this in *Discourse Network* and *Gramophone, film, typewriter*, which are seen as the same paradigms, yet different.

In selecting the documents for the recital from the files I had received from the BStU, I decided not to remove pages from documents but present and use the documents as a whole. This was done partly by making a continuous presentation of the cases. Splitting the text up too much makes the text material's narrative and experience too fragmented. I also wanted to follow the structure of the Stasiakte format, where formalization is essential. For example, dates and signatures are important because they show how the text became part of the Stasi archive.

Another critical element in this work is to present text material that was not intended to be made public or presented to the people mentioned in the files. Thus, the *"Rapportsprache"* is formal and passive, often with indirect descriptions of what I interpret as to present information of value that may be of use for Stasi and the GDR.

Example of the blacking out technology:



Three reports on three destinies

The main character of this work is the archive material that presents the three lives through its formatted, mediated language. That was my intention of presenting files on informants of the Stasi archive. Making a selection out of this material was difficult. I knew that the almost 650 pages were too much to include. I decided to present a little over 10% – 70 pages – of the Stasi files of the three subjects, who all had different development and relations to the GDR and Stasi regime. I ended up in a dry text, where lives and destinies are portrayed through the reports and the lingua used, in a text that was fragile, like moulding sand, that only was held together because of the force imposed in it by my hands. Through studying the text material, I selected three narratives that both told a narrative contrasting each other hidden in the report lingua.

- Templin was an informer who became a dissident of the regime while under Stasi surveillance.
- Tatjana Besson was recruited when she was young to inform from her school environment and later from the GDR punk scene.
- Dieter Pankow was an informer dedicated to the Stasi and had a career until his relationship with Stasi ended because he drove a pirate/private taxi. However, this seems, in my view, a bit bizarre and unlikely. There might be other reasons why Dieter Pankow was fired, but I have not managed to find any. Pankow was also the early Stasi officer who recruited Tatjana and to whom she reported.

These are examples of three different relationships with Stasi. The most heroic was Templin, who ended his informant activity, turning against the regime and becoming a dissident. Tatjana informed through a long period of her life but ended it quite close to the collapse of the GDR. Dieter Pankow was dedicated to his career until his falling out with the Stasi. These different cases can be seen as examples of how the inhabitants of GDR related to the surveillance regime. For me, it was essential with *Das kapitalistische Ausland* to present how these people related to the Stasi regime to the audience. I understand that many were ambivalent to the socialism and control mechanisms used to subject the population, but most people chose to comply. Many cooperated and felt they did an important job for the state. I think this has to be understood.

If the population had not cooperated, the surveillance regime of the Stasi would not have worked for nearly 40 years. We can see this confirmed when the people who opposed the system, and the GDR collapsed. It was vital for me to show these relations without making ethical judgments. I wanted to present the people behind the reports, not just to select personal material from the documents. Understanding the different relationships with the Stasi and GDR is essential, not only the heroic dissidents. Another reason for the collapse was that the Soviet Union had internal problems. When the protests started in the autumn of 1989, the Soviets could not supply their military assistance to other satellite states as they had done earlier.

The Stasi officer as a social worker

Something that surprised me when working on the files was that there were other elements in the relationship between the Stasi worker and the informant than just submitting information. By reading the reports it seems that the Stasi worker had obligations similar to a social worker, helping others get an apartment after a break-up or securing someone a study place at a school to get an education. I assume that it was important that the informants were doing OK since the Stasi workers had invested time and effort in the informants and their well-being, which was necessary for the continuation of the information flow to the archive. The Stasi regime was oppressive, but I can see some humanistic elements in the relation between the informant and the Stasi officer.

Place for presentation

Earlier, I began to describe the process of choosing the text material. Now, I will move on to the presentation of the work, focusing on the choices I made on various elements in this presentation.

I wanted to reflect, direct, and compose this presentation as a total, all-encompassing experience and presentation for the audience. In *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, I wanted to choose a place that fit the text, instead of fitting the work to place made for theatre, art, or a musical scene. First, I had a community centre at Økern in mind, it was a perfect place. It was dated and constructed in a 40s interior design style with wooden lacquered panels on all the walls. Also, it was situated in the basement of the Økern centre, like the consumers and capitalist-centred society had outgrown it, leaving it behind and forgotten it. That reminded me of the history of the socialist states after they had been outcompeted. The states that, in many ways, had connections to the social-democratic society. The interior design was also similar. Unfortunately, this space was to be demolished and could not be rented. After some further search, I found the *Godlia community centre*, a functionalistic building with most interior intact. This would serve as an expansion of the text material, with its interior aesthetics also quite similar to the GDR aesthetics. In addition, community centres were actively used in the GDR.

Godlia community centre



Recital

I wanted the text to be presented through a live reading, recited in German. I had the idea to use auto-tune, an effect that forces the pitch of audio to the nearest tone, with the idea that this could emphasize the idea of forcing the creation of the new communist man. This policy was practised from the top by the leaders to the population.⁸ The intention was not to overuse the auto-tune effect, but to subtly enhance this element of the presentation. Also, in the presentation of the work, I decided to work with German actors because German sentences are different from Norwegian in length and construction. It would be pretty apparent that an actor was not speaking their mother tongue if they were not German. I also thought that a musician or singer would have problems presenting this material with the deadpan dedication that I was after. This dedicated recitation

⁸ The communist ideological formation of a new man was a project reaching its heights during the Stalin regime during the Moscow Trials between 1936-38. This was criticized by the Norwegian author and communist Nordahl Grieg in his novel *Ung må verden ennu være*, (in English: *The world still needs to be young*), published in 1938.

involved equal focus on the text material and the recital of the report, and the archiving descriptions of the selected forms. The actors reciting the text were Nelly Winterhalder, Achim Schelhas, and Alexander Wipprecht. They sat one after another behind the table on the stage, reciting the text as descriptively as they could into a microphone placed on the table.

The censored elements

In my eyes, it was apparent that the blacked-out text was a central element, showing active traces of the treatment of the documents' content carried out in the present, displaying the new paradigm of the Stasi archive. I also wanted to enhance these black boxes. I first tried with the actors being silent when the text was blacked, but experienced this silence as difficult, awkward, and unfocused. Therefore, I chose to let an oscillator tone be played, representing the censored text. A crude tone with no processing, no filters, envelopes, or effects was used. Also, it was played quite loudly to have an annoying quality while keeping the audience focused on the relatively flat recitation of the documents.

The documents

The selected Stasi documents that were recited were also presented on a portable overhead screen, which I used to connect to the dated nature of Godlia and the documents. In addition, these documents were presented synchronously to the recited material so the audience could see what the documents looked like.

The text material

The text, or libretto, I had translated into English, was printed and handed out so that the audience could follow along and understand what was recited. This emphasized the distance one must go to understand the material, needing the text to understand what was said. I chose to translate it into English so that as many as possible could understand, as not all of my colleagues know Norwegian, and I also wanted to present the work later abroad.

Food

I find it relevant to include food as an element of theatre work. This can foster a more relaxed atmosphere, softening the divide between the scene and the audience, ensuring the audience does not feel so forced and disciplined. This allowed for mobility as they moved around to get beverages and food, standing in line, and getting the opportunity to be a bit social. The smell of food is also an element at play, filling space and summoning the audience's memories. I was lucky to be part of a concert program and was the last stop on the route, so the food was placed here. I ordered a bleak

cabbage-based soup and I think the smell added an embraceable element, adding a dimension to the experience. The actors and I welcomed the audience into the community centre hall, and there were a few minutes of small talk and socialization before the recitation started. This was intended as a break from the presentation part, something we presented as humans. The actors were sitting in chairs with the audience before the recital, emphasizing the break from the role of presentation.

Prologue: The bus ride, the form the confiscation, and the stamp

There was a prologue to this concert. The concert was a part of the research days at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo. Together with the fellows Jennifer Torrence and Elisabeth Holmertz, we created an evening of concerts in three separate places in Oslo. The audience was transported to the sites by a veteran bus. I wanted to distinguish this stop from the earlier ones, so, when people entered the bus to go to *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, Kai Johnsen, my secondary supervisor, Professor in directing at The Academy of Theatre, boarded the bus in uniform as an actor to be the conductor of the bus and the presenter of the event. Additionally, an interview with Thomas Drake was played on the speakers on the bus to link the past and present surveillance states. Unfortunately, the veteran bus made so much noise that it was hard to hear. I decided to use this material to create a separate work called *Storage*. I will write about this later in the reflection.

Link to documentation of the busride: <https://vimeo.com/474461373/09dc31730c>

The conductor, handed out forms and told the passengers to fill them out with the required information. They were to place their mobile phones in the designated field on the form and to wrap it around the mobiles with a rubber band so that the conductor could collect them. With this, I wanted to create another break, bringing the passengers into a new situation. I also assumed that the situation of giving their phones away would be an unpleasant experience. This was an experiment, with the idea of turning the surveillance apparatus back at the audience, so they could physically experience the surveillance before entering the recitation. I also wanted this to be the most intense part of the presentation, in contrast to the flat recitation they were to experience. Kai performed his conductor role flawlessly and collected the forms and phones. He also stamped each passenger on the hand before entering Godlia. The passengers were not supposed to know where they were in Oslo, so the destination was not mentioned. This was a reference to the GDR and Stasi approach to the prison *Hohenschönhausen*, a place not mentioned on maps. Most people did not know where the prison was, since it was located in a part of Berlin surrounded by apartment buildings for Stasi officers. Talking to some of the audience afterwards, I was surprised by how provoked some were by this situation, and some became quite angry. The narrative curve with this short, intense part and then a short break, followed by the flat dramatic style of the recitation, was also annoying for some of the audience. The recitation lasted for about 104 minutes.

The form used as an element in the presentation:

Navn:		Alder:	
Adresse:		Kjønn:	
Utdanning:		Yrke:	
Partitilhørighet:		Våpentrening:	
Tidligere dommer:		Seksuell orientering:	
Vennligst plassér Deres apparat her:			
Signatur mobilatør:		Signatur kontrollør / attestant:	

The information of the form translated to English:

- Name
- Age
- Address
- Gender
- Education
- Occupation
- Party affiliation
- Weapon training
- Previously convicted
- Place your apparatus here
- Signature of owner of apparatus
- Signature of controller

The stamp:

**Das kapitalistische
Ausland** Genosse/Genossin:

Digression on the GDR, its two constitutions

In its lifespan from 1949 to 1990, GDR had two constitutions; one was from 1949, with the one following from 1968. Comparing these, something that struck me was the difference. The first is less ideological, with less Marxist-Leninist ideological lingua, focusing more on citizens' positive rights. In contrast, the last constitution is more ideological, directly stating its opposition to capitalism, fascism, and imperialism. For example, "*Sozialist*" and its variations related to the ideology are mentioned 93 times in the constitution, which seems compulsive.

Example from the second constitution of the GDR:

"Abschnitt V:

Schlussbestimmungen Art. 107-108

Getragen von der Verantwortung, der ganzen deutschen Nation den Weg in eine Zukunft des Friedens und des Sozialismus zu weisen, in Ansehung der geschichtlichen Tatsache, daß der Imperialismus unter Führung der USA im Einvernehmen mit Kreisen des westdeutschen Monopolkapitals Deutschland gespalten hat, um Westdeutschland zu einer Basis des Imperialismus und des Kampfes gegen den Sozialismus aufzubauen, was den Lebensinteressen der Nation widerspricht, hat sich das Volk der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, fest gegründet auf den Errungenschaften der antifaschistisch-demokratischen und der sozialistischen Umwälzung der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung, einig in seinen werktätigen Klassen und Schichten das Werk der Verfassung vom 7. Oktober 1949 in ihren Geiste weiterführend und von dem Willen erfüllt, den Weg des Friedens, der sozialen Gerechtigkeit, der Demokratie, des Sozialismus und der Völkerfreundschaft in freier Entscheidung unbeirrt weiterzugehen, diese sozialistische Verfassung gegeben." (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.)

When reading the constitutions as texts, I find this change of mentality between the two documents apparent. The Cold War conflict grew in the period between the two constitutions, with the construction of the Berlin Wall starting in 1961, which was to become one of the main symbols of the war, splitting a city in two, surrounding the West German part of Berlin. Before the Wall, people in Berlin could freely enter the different zones and areas of the city.

Relevant artists and works in the field

Other artists have focused on surveillance and Stasi in projects. The most central example is Rimini Protokoll that made a sound-based audio-walk called *50 kilometres of files: A walk-in Stasi radio play* (2011), where the audience could follow surveillance documents during a walk-in Berlin in places where the surveillance was conducted. It is interesting how they reactivate the material from the Stasi-archive and connect it with the streets and the map of Berlin, so the listener and audience can see the places through the audio files.

The artist duo Louise and Jane Wilson's *Stasi City* (1997) is a split-screen video installation filmed in building of the Stasi archive and *Hohenschönhausen*, documenting the architecture of the building and the desolation of a building that once was feared in the GDR regime. Although, after watching the installation, I found the critical perspective somewhat lacking. It was more a work fascinated with Stasi and the building where Stasi was situated. In the video, it is a desolate place that seems that it was abandoned in a hurry.

The Norwegian labour party also allowed surveillance of socialists and communists. It caused a massive scandal when this was made public through the Lund commission. This was presented both as a theatrical performance and as a video work by Lene Berg. In her work *Gompen og Andre beretninger om overvåkning i Norge 1948–1989*, (*The Gomp: Tales of Surveillance in Norway 1948–1989*) (2014), Lene Berg presented the use and extent of surveillance in Norway. Staged as a hearing with people acting as themselves from both sides. Where the people surveilling and the ones under surveillance, tell their stories and about the political situation during the Cold War period in Norway. In the worker's union in their main building, Folkets hus (translated "The People's House"), communists were recorded through a tape recorder, called "Gompen," via hidden microphones in the meeting rooms. The result is an interesting political theatre, where one can understand the conflict and the use of surveillance, but also the scope and use of surveillance that seems problematic today.

Vito Acconci's *Following Piece* (1969) is where the artist follows randomly selected people for some time and creating the work from this activity, handwritten notes, and black and white photographs documenting and describing his espionage. This work is exhibited as framed collages or collections of written text and images. I find it especially interesting and relevant the combination of notes and photographs, creating an image of the person under surveillance, from the outside, without any insight into who the person is. This resembles to some extent, hard target surveillance.

Walid Raad and his project The Atlas Group created mixed-media works and exhibitions out of material from Lebanon from the wars in the period between 1975 and 1990. Notable relevant works are *Notebook volume 38: Already been in a lake of fire* (1991), which is a documentation of car bombs in Lebanon between 1975 and 1990, documented by the fictive historian Dr Fadl Fakhouri, and the series of photos *Hostage: The Bachar Polaroids* (2000), which are based on polaroids taken of Souheil Bachar when he was taken captive. When he got the pictures, he was cut out of the image. Fakhouri then painted a pattern replacing the cut-out of himself. This project was based on historical research of the period in Lebanese history, but the work seems to have a fictional narrative attaches to it. This blend, in my view, weakens the works. The "mockumented" narrative makes the experience of the works stronger, but weakens the reception of the works when you realize that they are fictional or only partially based on research.

Also, I want to mention *Walled Unwalled* (2018) by the Lebanese-based artist Abu Hamdan. The video is about sound leakage at Saydana, a military prison in the North of Damascus, in Syria. Inside the prison, the sounds leaked bounced off the walls and reverberated with the effect of creating unease and fright with the inmates. This can be understood as part of the torture, of psychological violence, listening to the distorted sounds of torture and not knowing where the sounds came from. This acoustical torture differs from GDR's feared prison, *Hoheschönhausen*,

which was intended to be totally silent. The inmates of the prison had problems discerning the days. The silence became a functional torture.

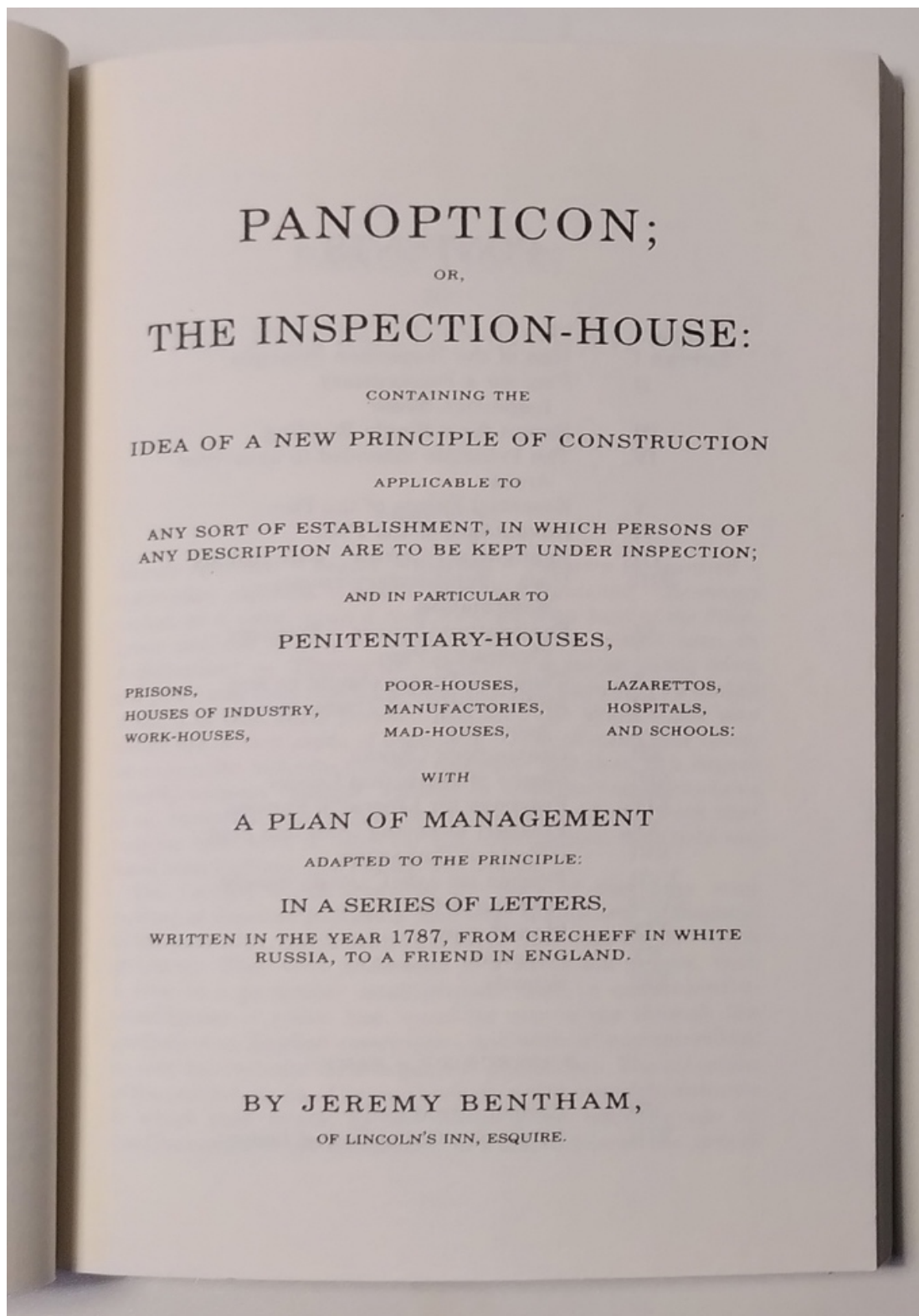
Recitation

The recitation was a dramaturgical solution to the presentation of the text material. When seeking a solution, I found two events that used recital of text. One is when the actor Ulrich Mühe read aloud from Walter Janka's auto-biography from his time at a Stasi prison and his betrayal by friends in the GDR, called *Schwierigkeiten mit der Wahrheit*, (*Trouble with the truth.*) The text was recited on the 28th of October 1989 at Deutsches Theater in Berlin (Jager & Raudalen, 2009, p. 62). The other was Heiner Müller's recitation of the fifth part of his play *Wolokamsker Chaussée* on the 30th of January 1988 at Deutsches Theater. This is referred to in Øyvind Berg's presentation about Heiner Müller at Dramatikens hus. The recitation at the theatre has a powerful stripped-to-the-core function, when the theatre audience sits in a theatre to listen to a recital in the GDR. (Berg, 2017, 52 min)

The Panopticon

In the recitation as a scenographic element, there was a cloth lying over the table in front of the actors. It is an embroidered version of an illustration of the panopticon, a concept and an idea by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham. The illustration was initially made by Willey Reveley, in 1791 as a commission for Bentham to be used as an example and a visual sketch of a panoptic prison. It is essential to mention that this technology was not only thought to be implemented in prisons, but also in Houses of Industry, Work-Houses, Poor-Houses, Manufactories, Mad-Houses, Lazarettos, Hospitals, and Schools. I had motive embroidered to a cloth for two reasons: First, I wanted to put the panoptic idea as a comparative metaphor for GDR on an object used in the recitation. One can think of GDR as both a prison and a country, and the use of surveillance created "*docile' bodies.*" (Foucault, 1995, p. 138) And second, I wanted to use the cloth as a sculptural expansion of the work of *Das kapitalistische Ausland* for when it was exhibited. Foucault took up this writing in his *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison*, where he focuses on the technology of the disciplinary gaze when the prisoner is not sure or not if he is watched, but, in this reflexive relation to a potential gaze, someone with a power to punish and discipline may be watching: "*It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them. That is why, in all the mechanisms of discipline, the examination is highly ritualized. In it are combined the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth. At the heart of the procedures of discipline, it manifests the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected. The superimposition of the power relations and knowledge relations assumes in the examination all its visible brilliance.*" (Foucault, 1995, pp. 184)

The title page of Panopticon by Jeremy Bentham:



I think this is a relevant reference to both the motivation and the surveillance technology of the Stasi and surveillance more in general, as often being hidden but also visible. I think the disciplinary element of occasional visibility functions to control a population. If the secret police were just hidden, taking notes and photos, reporting to the archive and their superiors, this element would not have worked so well as if they sometimes operated visible, in the open. Surveillance organizations also work this way. For another example, in the Edward Snowden documentary *CitizenFour* (2014), by Laura Poitras, when Snowden messages his girlfriend back in the US from Hong Kong, the NSA realizes that he has leaked surveillance documents, showing their unconstitutional surveillance activities. She mentions that there were construction cars on the street outside their apartment, without doubt that this was the FBI. They were present and visible.

An essential reference to the work *Das kapitalische Ausland* is Foucault's consequent descriptive writing on the prison, the workhouses and the panopticon. In my view, I find the lack of normative descriptions of these events relevant and functional. My interpretation of this strategy is that this gives space and forces the reader to reflect, forming one's opinion on the material about which Foucault writes. Of course, in my understanding, this is a rhetorical tool used by Foucault in his text. I think the rhetorical artistic choice of being descriptive has value, which I have wanted to do in my work here. This is the most central contextual reference for my work.

I find Tarkovsky's use of time in his film, with a very slowly unfolding narrative, to be relevant and inspiring, creating long takes, which sometimes can be experienced as painfully slow, but is certainly a quality of his work. Dyer writes about the presentation of time in Tarkovsky's films: "*If the regular length of a shot is increased, one becomes bored, but, if you keep making it longer, it piques your interest, and, if you make it even longer, a new quality emerges.*" (Dyer, 2012, p. 9)

Link to the program with the recited text translated into English:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/lc1y13s60xd9wfe/Das%20kapitalistische%20Ausland%20English.pdf?dl=0>

Compositional elements

I did not want the material to sound or appear too composed for the audience or viewer. That stems from my artistic work platform where I let the idea or concept of the work lead and make it fit the structure for the presentation. I did not want the work to be theatrical in fear of the audience getting bored. I think this a misconception of the function art, which is not to entertain, but to create different experiences.

I came across a description of how to mix a snare in a music studio – that you add a reverb effect to it and adjust the volume of the effect so you can hear it together with the original sound, and then take the volume down that you can barely hear it. Of course, there are musical and compositional elements present in *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, but the auto-tune effect on the voices was barely

noticeable. I could hear it, which added some element to the recitation without being too present. On the other hand, if you could hear it too clearly, I think it would make the work comical in an unintended way.

The oscillator pressed to mark the blacked-out text produced the same tone each time, which I intended to add an engineering quality to the presentation. I used the oscillator sound that designated the negation of the text that was impossible to read. If I had created a more melodic sound, that would have made the work too musical. I wanted the sound to refer to the aesthetics of communication technology, like the dial tone in phones when you pick up the receiver, another tone created with a different purpose than being musical.

Dramaturgical elements

Regarding the dramaturgical elements, I would say that I primarily intended to create a mixture of a happening and a music theatre. I wanted to make a total experience, instead of using a black box or a space that – within the theatre discourse – is an accepted or conventional space for theatre and also an adaptable space for artistic works. To get the site specific quality that added references and elements to the recitation, I had to find a hall with the qualities I was after. My experience is that this is decision that adds a productive element to the *Das kapitalistische Ausland*.

The actors sat on a chair on the stage, reciting the Stasi files quite flatly. I wanted as little acting-out on stage as possible, preferring just the flat recitation of the text. I wanted the documents to be the main character and the main element. With the papers and documents present, showing the physical material, and not hiding the textual component of the presentation. This is similar to Brecht's theories of "Verfremdung" or "V-effect: "*By breaking the illusion of theatre to make it possible for the audience to reflect on the material presented: "Verfremdung estranges an incident or character simply by taking from the incident or character what is self-evident, familiar, obvious in order to produce wonder and curiosity."* (Brecht, 2016, p. 143)

Looking back on *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, I would say that the bus ride was the most theatrical part. It had the most dramaturgical elements, with the conductor absorbed in his role, performing his duties to the audience. The conductor stayed in character also during the welcoming of the audience and the whole recitation. This resulted in an interesting dynamic, with the conductor in his role for the entire event and the actors entering their roles while reciting the Stasi reports . Regarding costumes, the conductor had a uniform borrowed from the company from which the veteran bus was rented. The other costumes were old second-hand shirts that I had mainly bought in a "Kiloladen" in Berlin. I wanted to add some elements of the same period of the documentation I have seen from the GDR. Since the country disappeared 30 years ago, I wanted this 70s/80s look that connects to the aesthetic and design of the Godlia community centre building, even though the building is much older.

Documentation of the stage and some of the interior at Godlia community centre:



Link to documentation of the Stasi files recited: <https://vimeo.com/487785304>

The Stasi archives changing to BStU for research and reconciliation allows for research and to read one's file or those of deceased close relatives. The institution has an essential function of finding out who were informers and understanding the extent of this regime of total surveillance.

Surveillance in the GDR and the satellite states of the Soviet Union

It is essential to state that this surveillance activity was not only performed in the GDR. Stasi is similar to the surveillance organizations of the Soviet Union and the socialist satellite states. The Soviet KGB may be the most known, also controlling the Stasi to some extent, which they did with

the other security organizations, except for Yugoslavia. Poland had *the Ministry of Public Security* (Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego), the Bulgarian secret service was called *State Security* (Държавна сигурност or Darzhavna sigurnost; abbreviated ДС, DS, State Security). *The secret police* in communist Czechoslovakia were known as, in Czech Státní bezpečnost and, in Slovak, Štátna bezpečnosť. *Securitate* was an abbreviation for the Departamentul Securității Statului, *the Department of State Security*, which was the secret police agency of *the Socialist Republic of Romania*, *The State Intelligence Service*, in Albanian, Shërbimi Informativ Shtetëror (its acronym SHISH), was the intelligence agency of Albania. *The State Security Service, SDB or SDS, Služba Državne Bezbednosti or Služba Državne Sigurnosti*, more commonly known by its original name, *the State Security Administration*, was the secret police organization in the former Yugoslavia.

Assumably all these agencies and organizations had archives. However, the countries have chosen different functions of the archives and their openness to the public due to several different motives, including political and economic reasons. It is expensive to rebuild a country after the collapse of Soviet communism, and maybe the archives' values have not been seen as necessary. Additionally, leaving the past to be the past is a strategy that has its values. For example, there has been a debate over Julia Kristeva of whether she was an informer for the State Security in Bulgaria. She denies it, but there is a file on her activity in their archive. Some may not be aware that they gave away information to the security organizations to her defence. Some think they have only discussed some people or matters, which were later reported.

However, one can also imagine turning the focus to the West, where the archives in, for example, the USA, are not open to the public. Surveillance archives are not only a phenomenon of the former communist countries but their intelligence activities, with Stasi being one of the most active in their operational period, leaving severe marks on people's destinies that still exist today.

"All that is solid melts into air." (Marx & Engels, 2014, p. 7)

The second presentation of the work

Later, as an experiment, I presented *Das kapitalistische Ausland* as a video installation in an exhibition I had in 2017 at the Haugar Art Museum in Tønsberg. The installation consisted of seats for the viewers and a video projection of the recitation, together with a TV screen presenting the files read aloud. The cloth with the embroidery of Bentham's panopticon was placed between the viewer and the projection as an integrated sculpture.

After comparing these presentations of the work, I think it also functions as a video installation where the audience can sit down and follow for some time, and then wander around in the exhibition, with the possibility to come back to view more. The flat narrative was presented as a video loop, where it is easy to understand what content is presented, where the narrative arcs of the lives of the informers are lost. I would argue that this is a music theatrical work but constructed with the conceptual strategy of an artist. I prefer the music theatre version and where all the

elements I intended to be part of the work function best. It was intended as an artwork, engulfing the audience, while the video version is just the conceptual idea and execution.

Documentation of the work as a video installation



Chapter 5: *It takes all Kinds to make The World, Sir!*

"We attacked a foreign people and treated them like rebels. As you know, it's all right to treat barbarians barbarically. It's the desire to be barbaric that makes governments call their enemies barbarians." (Brecht, 1976)

It takes all Kinds to make The World, Sir! Is an artistic research work where I have collected scenes of Western films depicting other cultures where the drum and music of drums is central, with the transcribed music from the collected scenes performed by SISU Ensemble. This work is founded with the idea of the archive as its base and concept; it is not finished, and it will probably never be complete. I stopped adding scenes in August of 2019 due to the presentation during Ultima 2019. By then, I had found 249 scenes for the archive and had viewed many more films.

Link to video of the concert: <https://vimeo.com/363275183>

"The analysis of the archive, then, involves a privileged region: at once close to us, and different from our present existence, it is the border of time that surrounds our presence, which overhangs it, and which indicates it in its otherness; it is that which, outside ourselves, delimits us. The description of the archive deploys its possibilities (and the mastery of its possibilities) on the basis of the very discourses that have just ceased to be ours; its threshold of existence is established by the discontinuity that separates us from what we can no longer say, and from that which falls outside our discursive practice; it begins with the outside of our own language (langage); its locus is the gap between our own discursive practices." (Foucault, 1972, pp. 130)

The archive

It takes all Kinds to make The World, Sir! is an archive focused on how Western films portray other cultures. The scenes had to have the following requirements:

- they had to contain drums, rhythm, or dance as an essential ethnical element of the representation of other cultures
- and the scenes had to portray Western people reacting to people of other cultures. The reactions, the Western gaze, were as crucial as the drumming and dancing. They both influence how we as spectators watch and react with the Western avatars in the scenes.

While collecting and watching, I decided that there were more than the drumming and dancing in the scenes that I found interesting. Even if this made the scenes longer, I wanted to include the context of why this element was being implemented in the story and the reactions – often bafflement, fear, fascination, or confusion. I meant to emphasize that the film characters, as well as

we as spectators, are watching something foreign that we do not understand – something exotic. There is a turning point in the film *Amistad* where the gaze is returned by the slaves who have taken over the slave ship and sailed past another ship. The slaves stare at high-class people listening to a string quartet.

"Cinema was invented at the height of colonialism at the end of the nineteenth century." (Kaplan, 1997, p. 61)

Representations of the other

"They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, an unlimited governmental power which protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above." (Marx, 2010, p. 63)

I intend this work to be an archive that generates knowledge about how Western films produce representations of other cultures. I want to share my findings, putting some attention on this topic. The imagery is more diverse than I expected when I started searching. Still, I think it is the primitivity of sharing culture and traditions through dances, drums, and rituals that are consistently implied to be beyond our comprehension. As Ann E Kaplan argues: *"Western spectators' eyes have been: "imperialized" throughout the history of Hollywood cinema-one of the most powerful there is globally."* (Kaplan, 1997, p.19)

I got interested in the impersonal element of these portrayals, as they seldom present an individual instead of giving a general presentation with a functional value in the films. They are depictions without personal origins or motivations. The industry that are producing the movies, seem to be a field of repeating and reproducing themselves with the cultures and ethnicities they are portraying or using as scenery for the films.

"The analysis of statements operates therefore without reference to a cogito. It does not pose the question of the speaking subject, who reveals or who conceals himself in what he says, who, in speaking, exercises his sovereign freedom, or who, without realizing it, subjects himself to constraints of which he is only dimly aware. In fact, it is situated at the level of the 'it is said'..." (Foucault, 1972, p. 138)

Percussion - Acting as an ethnomusicologist

The percussion discipline and its instruments are a collection made up of nearly all the percussive instruments in the world, collected and sorted for use in the Western classic and contemporary music discourse; for example, the presence of the djembe and the conga are the result of collecting instruments from the colonial period. In addition, of course, instruments travel and develop over

time in ways similar to other fields of materials and technologies, like silk, porcelain, and gunpowder.

One central motivation and idea for this work was to work as an ethnomusicologist to the collected tracks produced by the film industry, to collect, store, and transcribe the material, storing it as a score. The notation system is a good storage system for music, but it is a Western invention and has limitations. For example, on two occasions, after I presented my findings to percussionists, they remarked that one rhythmic pattern was somewhere between 16th notes and triplets, a range that shows a gap or a flaw in the notation system.

Another thing that surprised me was that the tracks fluctuated in tempo, more as a rule than an exception. The act of notating fluctuations between musicians in a dynamic performance – that I think was not originally bound to a score – was difficult to transcribe. I often had to change tempo more than twice a bar, making it quite confusing to read. I would claim that, for most Western music, this is not a problem. Using Kittler's theory that the media forms our understanding (transposed here to the notation storage system), the format's limits form our music and what music we create. This argument resonates strongly with my experience. Here, having quite a limited competence could be viewed as an asset, allowing one to see the notation language from the outside, at a distance.

Oral tradition and stored music

Here, I am only speculating. Still, I believe that fluctuations in the rhythmic patterns and music from the films can signify that the music has been created and performed without a score and without a metronome to control the tempo, acting as a master clock for the musicians. I assume that the musicians discussed the tempo and rhythms for the scenes with the music producer in charge. This production is quite different from music bound by scores, where something dictates the tempo and the patterns, which is less organic. Again, I must stress that this is not my field of expertise.

Paul Gilroy's book *Black Atlantic* references the famous fragment of Heraclitus: "*Geography is fate*" (Gilroy, 1999, p. 150). It is fitting that Gilroy's book is a secondary source for this quote. It correlates to the structure of *It takes all Kinds to make The World, Sir!* because the films are, in some ways, secondary sources for the depiction of non-Western cultures. Also, I could not find the fragment they are referring to in the writing of Heraclitus. I suspect that he has not written it.

How colonial times are still present

I have struggled to find the definite span of years encapsulating the colonial period, so I decided to limit the period to when Portugal discovered and inhabited São Tomé to grow sugar with slaves in 1470 to 1975 when Portugal pulled out of East Timor. This limitation can, of course, be discussed and adjusted. The colonial times changed the world in terms of how we view it on a grand scale,

but this involves too much to go into detail here, but I think it is worth mentioning and reflecting upon. During this time, most areas on the map were discovered. Technology and raw material from around the world were exploited – mostly for the privileged, the Europeans and North America. Take away any materials one could claim have ties to colonialism. This would make our world quite different, lacking cotton, coffee, tea, cocoa, sugar, and rubber, just to name a few. Yet, these are raw materials that we use all the time and that impact our world in (mostly) good ways.

I was hesitant to enter the postcolonial discourse because of my limited knowledge, even though it was something that I could fix through research and reading. The most problematic aspect would likely be my ethnicity as a Norwegian, coming from lower-class farmers who have stayed and worked in the same part of Norway since the 16th century. I acknowledge that the postcolonial discourse is closely connected to people from former colonies, historically repressed and often affected by slavery. They have a history to understand and interpret. And a Norwegian interpreting postcolonial material could quickly contribute to repression, even though I would claim it is quite clear where I stand. However, that is not the case here, as I am collecting material of representations created in Western films for others to experience and, hopefully, reflect upon. Moreover, I have done similar work on the representation on Norwegians with André Larsen Avélin, and *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* (2006), by Sut Jhally is documentary on Arab representation in film.

Another finding that might be under-communicated is that there were colonies in Europe, with Norway being one of them. Under Danish rule, Norway supplied taxes and raw materials to Denmark, with very little sent back. Before that, Norway did not even have a university; this is quite late compared to other universities in Europe. I think the relationship between Denmark and Norway under Danish rule is that Norway was, in many ways, a colony.

I agree with Paul Gilroy, who insists that the colonial past is our shared colonial past – that this epoch in history is central, something everybody has to come to terms with and understand.

"The history of slavery is somehow assigned to blacks. It becomes our special property rather than a part of the ethical and intellectual heritage of the West as a whole." (Gilroy, 1999, p. 49)

The racist bias in percussion literature

When searching for and collecting these examples of percussion's use in Western music, much of what I found was quite problematic – that is, racist – even in today's literature. For example, a "*Primitive musician*" (Blades, 1992, p. 32) is sitting naked, hitting some wooden sticks he has over his legs juxtaposed with a modern Western timpanist performing with a tuxedo.

"From these various traits it is manifest that want of self-control distinguishes the character of the Negroes. This condition is capable of no development or culture, and as we see them at this day, such have they always been. The only essential connection that has existed and continued between the Negroes and the Europeans is that of slavery." (Hegel, 2017, p. 85)

I must admit that I am quite surprised to see that kind of representation in literature. But it fits in with the portrayals I have found for my archive. I am leaning on Said's *Orientalism* in archiving images, descriptions, and prejudices produced by the West about other cultures, using the book as a theoretical foundation.

"There is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is formed, irradiated, disseminated; it is instrumental, it is persuasive; it has status, it establishes canons of taste and value; it is virtually indistinguishable from certain ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgments it forms, transmits, reproduces. Above all, authority can, indeed must, be analyzed. All these attributes of authority apply to Orientalism. And much of what I do in this study is to describe both the historical authority in and the personal authorities of Orientalism." (Said, 1979, p. 19/20)

The instalment of the presentation

As a rule for this instalment and presentation of the concert, I wanted to work conjunctively, to add relevant elements for the presentation, rather than taking elements away. Inspired by the theatre of Brecht, I wanted the musical and theatrical elements to clash, working together as a whole while competing for the attention and concentration of the audience. It would be a bit baroque, with a lot to experience, hopefully creating a place where the audience would want to stay, read, eat, and discuss after the concert. Here I was leaning on my competence from my fine art, thinking about the space in terms of an installation, using the hall, and incorporating it into the work.

Literature

I wanted to collect and implement books from the library to accompany the presentation at Deichmanske Library. Going up two floors was a simple gesture to collect some books on colonial history and postcolonial theory. It was important to connect the imagery and the heterotopic space and their collection of books with my archive.

"The imaginary is not formed in opposition to reality as its denial or compensation; it grows among signs, from book to book, in the interstice of repetitions and commentaries; it is born and takes shape in the interval between books. It is the phenomena of the library" (Foucault, 1980, p. 91)

About the texts

Inspired by a formalist interpretation of Brecht's dialectics, with concepts of material, technique, and function, I used the concepts as headings for three cards with text to elaborate on the different parts. In this case, it was a requirement that they would fit in the back pocket, simple to take with you. While these concepts are taken from an interpretation of Brecht, they are not his concepts:

"Brecht wanted his theatre to intervene in the process of shaping society, so that Lukács's duality of form and content was replaced (to over-schematise briefly) by a triad of content (better described in Brecht's case by the formalist term 'material'), form (again the formalist term 'technique' is more useful here) and function. In Brecht's dramatic form, these three constantly clash but never properly coalesce to compose a rounded whole." (Leach, 2006, p. 158)

Text 1: Material

What you find here is selected material from throughout film history that depicts other non-Western cultures. All the scenes have drums in them, or drums are a central element in the dialogue. One more element that served as an important requirement is that, in the scenes, you can always find a Western character observing and reacting with or for you, the viewer.

They often have the role of the expert, explaining what we see in the film, a technique that is often a comical compromise between a limited script and limited time meant to move the narrative along. Quite often, through the camera's lens, we see a reactionary shot, with this audience stand-in showing the intended reaction to what they see, telling us how we are to feel about the scene. Often, the scenes are dangerous, fascinating, and exotic.

I found more films than I expected, matching the requirements mentioned above; the commission was for 20 minutes, and I ended up with 190 minutes, which had to be cut down. Quantity is a quality in archives. But I had to make a representative collection of my findings, played on TV monitors at the back of the room.

Text 2: Technique

Archiving is collecting and sorting my findings, but archives never end. An active archive continues to collect and grow, and, until the day before the concert, this archive was collecting more relevant films; it will continue to do so. Film suggestions was always welcome, as I want the archive to be as complete as possible.

In this context, transcription is the technique of notating a piece or a previously un-notated sound, such as storing music from other ethnicities before they disappear. We are using an ethnomusicologist's tools on American films depicting other cultures and their music. Encountering it first as a recording and then transcribed, pinned down to the Western metrical music system, stored as music. As instrumentation and discipline, Percussion includes drums and percussive instruments from cultures worldwide used in performing classical and contemporary music.

Text 3: Function

I am not trying to fool you or myself. These films are mainly creations from the American film industry meant to function as entertainment. Therefore, the films themselves do not necessarily imply that the scenarios are realistic or historically correct.

The other (or non-Western) cultures in these films are, in my view, set in exotic scenarios – non-familiar places meant to fascinate the audience. The film collection runs chronologically from 1929 to 2017, transitioning from colonial to postcolonial periods, from black and white to colour, from silent films to talkies. The world as we know it has been discovered, and the only blank spots on the map are for intelligence.

The dissolution of the colonial world, where some states in Europe ruled colonies worldwide, led to a postcolonial situation where the colonies gained their independence. When we look at it chronologically, I think we can see a focus on the wild and ecstatic. It starts with the wild and enters a period of cultural relativity, over to a period dealing with dictatorial leaders and nationalism. And, to some extent, how the West has operated and interacted with the populations of their colonies. What is lacking are examples of respected and emancipated people from the colonial period because I have not found them.

List of films

I wanted to present a list of all the films I have collected in the archive allowing the audience to read and, if interested, add films to the lists. As I stressed earlier, an archive, at least an active one, is never finished, always growing. I got tips on films to add to the archive; by request, I also sent the list to a person at the National Library. Eight posters were made in A1 format, with the full list of films divided across the prints. They were hung on wall panels in the concert hall so that people could read the archive's content while still being able to move freely about the hall.

Number	Film title in alphabetical order	Production year
1.	<i>11 days, 11 nights</i>	1989
2.	<i>12 Years a Slave</i>	2013
3.	<i>1492: The Conquest of Paradise</i>	1992
4.	<i>Africa Express</i>	1975
5.	<i>Africa Screams</i>	1949
6.	<i>Against the Dark</i>	2009
7.	<i>Alexander</i>	2004
8.	<i>Allan Quatermain and the Lost City of Gold</i>	1986
9.	<i>Amazonia: The Catherine Miles Story</i>	1985
10.	<i>Amistad</i>	1997
11.	<i>Anthropophagus</i>	1980
12.	<i>Apache Drums</i>	1951
13.	<i>Apocalypse Now</i>	1979
14.	<i>Apocalypto</i>	2006
15.	<i>At Play in the Fields of the Lord</i>	1991
16.	<i>Atoll K</i>	1951
17.	<i>Ator the Invincible</i>	1984
18.	<i>Babel</i>	2006
19.	<i>Black Cobra Woman</i>	1976
20.	<i>Black Girl</i>	1966
21.	<i>Black Moon</i>	1934
22.	<i>Black Narcissus</i>	1947
23.	<i>Black Orgasm</i>	1980

24.	<i>Blood Diamond</i>	2006
25.	<i>Broken Chain</i>	1993
26.	<i>Burn, Witch, Burn</i>	1962
27.	<i>Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee</i>	2007
28.	<i>Caged Fury</i>	1990
29.	<i>Caged Women</i>	1991
30.	<i>Call of the Blonde Goddess</i>	1977
31.	<i>Cannibal Ferox</i>	1985
32.	<i>Cannibal Ferox II</i>	1981
33.	<i>Cannibal Holocaust</i>	1988
34.	<i>Cannibal Holocaust II</i>	1980
35.	<i>Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death</i>	1989
36.	<i>Captain John Smith</i>	1953
37.	<i>Carry on up the Jungle</i>	1970
38.	<i>Castaway</i>	1986
39.	<i>Christina</i>	1986
40.	<i>Cobra Verde</i>	1987
41.	<i>Coming to America</i>	1988
42.	<i>Congo</i>	1995
43.	<i>Crocodile Dundee</i>	1986
44.	<i>Crocodile Dundee II</i>	1988
45.	<i>Crossroads</i>	1986

46.	<i>Cry Freedom</i>	1987
47.	<i>Dances with Wolves</i>	1990
48.	<i>Dersu Uzala</i>	1975
49.	<i>Devil Hunter</i>	1980
50.	<i>Diamonds of Kilimandjaro</i>	1983
51.	<i>District 9</i>	2009
52.	<i>Don't Torture a Duckling</i>	1972
53.	<i>Drums Along the Mohawk</i>	1939
54.	<i>Eaten Alive</i>	1976
55.	<i>Emanuelle and the Last Cannibals</i>	1977
56.	<i>Emanuelle Around the World</i>	1977
57.	<i>Emanuelle in the Country</i>	1982
58.	<i>Emanuelle Queen of Sados (Sexy Moon)</i>	1979
59.	<i>Emanuelle Tropical</i>	1977
60.	<i>Emmanuelle on Taboo Island</i>	1976
61.	<i>Empire of the Sun</i>	1987
62.	<i>Erotic Nights of the Living Dead</i>	1980
63.	<i>Eva Nera</i>	1976
64.	<i>Eve's Bayou</i>	1997
65.	<i>Fait Accompli</i>	1998
66.	<i>Faith Like Potatoes</i>	2006
67.	<i>Fast Runner</i>	2001

68.	<i>Five Came Back</i>	1939
69.	<i>Flight of the Phoenix</i>	2004
70.	<i>Fort Apache</i>	1948
71.	<i>Gandhi</i>	1982
72.	<i>Ghost Breakers</i>	1940
73.	<i>Godzilla vs Biollante</i>	1989
74.	<i>Godzilla vs King Ghidorah</i>	1991
75.	<i>Godzilla vs the Sea Monster</i>	1966
76.	<i>Godzilla</i>	1954
77.	<i>Golden Ivory (or The White Huntress)</i>	1954
78.	<i>Grey Owl</i>	1999
79.	<i>Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes</i>	1984
80.	<i>He-Man: Masters of the Universe</i>	1987
81.	<i>Hidalgo</i>	2004
82.	<i>Hotel Rwanda</i>	2008
83.	<i>I Escaped from Devils Island</i>	1973
84.	<i>I Walked with a Zombie</i>	1943
85.	<i>Inara, the Jungle Girl</i>	2012
86.	<i>Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom</i>	1984
87.	<i>James Bond: Live and Let Die</i>	1973
88.	<i>James Bond: Quantum of Solace</i>	2008
89.	<i>Jeremiah Johnson</i>	1972
90.	<i>Jungle Book</i>	1942

91.	<i>Jungle Jim</i>	1939
92.	<i>Khartoum</i>	1966
93.	<i>King Kong vs Godzilla</i>	1962
94.	<i>King Kong</i>	1933
95.	<i>King Kong</i>	1976
96.	<i>King Kong</i>	2005
97.	<i>King of the Zombies</i>	1941
98.	<i>King Solomon's Mines</i>	1937
99.	<i>Kingdom of Heaven</i>	2005
100.	<i>Kong: Skull Island</i>	2017
101.	<i>Land of the Pharaohs</i>	1955
102.	<i>Little Big Man</i>	1970
103.	<i>Man on the Moon</i>	1999
104.	<i>Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom</i>	2013
105.	<i>March or Die</i>	1977
106.	<i>Marco Polo (Series)</i>	2014
107.	<i>Massacre in Dinosaur Valley</i>	1985
108.	<i>Medicine Man</i>	1992
109.	<i>Miss Marple: A Caribbean Mystery</i>	1989
110.	<i>Mister Johnson</i>	1990
111.	<i>Mister Moses</i>	1965
112.	<i>Mogambo</i>	1953

113.	<i>Mothra</i>	1961
114.	<i>Mountain of the Cannibal God</i>	1978
115.	<i>Mountains of the Moon</i>	1990
116.	<i>Mowgli: Legend of the Jungle</i>	2018
117.	<i>Mutiny on the Bounty</i>	1935
118.	<i>Mutiny on the Bounty</i>	1962
119.	<i>Navajo Joe</i>	1966
120.	<i>Night of the Iguana</i>	1964
121.	<i>Nurse Sherri</i>	1978
122.	<i>Once Were Warriors</i>	1994
123.	<i>Out of Africa</i>	1985
124.	<i>Outpost in Morocco</i>	1949
125.	<i>Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest</i>	2006
126.	<i>Porno Holocaust</i>	1981
127.	<i>Queen of Sex</i>	1976
128.	<i>Quest for Fire</i>	1981
129.	<i>Red Scorpion</i>	1988
130.	<i>Return to the Blue Lagoon</i>	1991
131.	<i>Rising Sun</i>	1993
132.	<i>River of Death</i>	1989
133.	<i>Roar</i>	1981
134.	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	1954

135.	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	1970
136.	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	1997
137.	<i>Sahara</i>	1943
138.	<i>Sahara</i>	1983
139.	<i>Sahara</i>	1995
140.	<i>Sahara</i>	2005
141.	<i>Scared Stiff</i>	1953
142.	<i>Scared Stiff</i>	1987
143.	<i>Season of the Witch</i>	2011
144.	<i>Shaft in Africa</i>	1973
145.	<i>Shaka Zulu</i>	1986
146.	<i>Shandra: The Jungle Girl</i>	1999
147.	<i>Sheena: Queen of the Jungle (Series)</i>	1955
148.	<i>Sheena</i>	1984
149.	<i>Shogun</i>	1980
150.	<i>Shrunken Heads</i>	1994
151.	<i>Silence</i>	2016
152.	<i>Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger</i>	1977
153.	<i>Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas</i>	2003
154.	<i>Sinbad the Sailor</i>	1947
155.	<i>Sitting Bull</i>	1954
156.	<i>Slave of the Cannibal God</i>	1978
157.	<i>Solomon Kane</i>	2010

158.	<i>Soylent Green</i>	1973
159.	<i>Spasmo</i>	1974
160.	<i>Stagecoach</i>	1939
161.	<i>Stanley and Livingstone</i>	1939
162.	<i>Survival Island</i>	2005
163.	<i>Tales from the Crypt: Ritual</i>	2011
164.	<i>Tarzan and His Mate</i>	1934
165.	<i>Tarzan and the Lost Safari</i>	1957
166.	<i>Tarzan and the Trappers</i>	1958
167.	<i>Tarzan and the Valley of Gold</i>	1966
168.	<i>Tarzan Goes to India</i>	1962
169.	<i>Tarzan the Magnificent</i>	1960
170.	<i>Tarzan X</i>	1994
171.	<i>Tarzan, the Ape Man</i>	1981
172.	<i>The 7 Adventures of Sinbad</i>	2010
173.	<i>The 7th Voyage of Sinbad</i>	1958
174.	<i>The Adventure of the Sahara</i>	1938
175.	<i>The African Queen</i>	1951
176.	<i>The Believers</i>	1987
177.	<i>The Birth of a Nation</i>	1915
178.	<i>The Black Scorpion</i>	1957
179.	<i>The Blue Lagoon</i>	1980

180.	<i>The Bounty</i>	1984
181.	<i>The Bridge on the River Kwai</i>	1957
182.	<i>The Broken Chain</i>	1993
183.	<i>The Comedians</i>	1967
184.	<i>The Crown: "A Company of Men"</i>	2017
185.	<i>The Deer Hunter</i>	1978
186.	<i>The Disembodied</i>	1957
187.	<i>Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti</i>	1953
188.	<i>The Dogs of War</i>	1980
189.	<i>The English Patient</i>	1996
190.	<i>The Fifth Element</i>	1997
191.	<i>The Four Feathers</i>	1939
192.	<i>The Ghost Breakers</i>	1940
193.	<i>The Gods Must Be Crazy</i>	1980
194.	<i>The Golden Voyage of Sinbad</i>	1973
195.	<i>The Green Inferno</i>	2015
196.	<i>The Hurt Locker</i>	2008
197.	<i>The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-Up Zombies</i>	1964
198.	<i>The Indian Tomb</i>	1959
199.	<i>The Interpreter</i>	2005
200.	<i>The Island at the Top of the World</i>	1974
201.	<i>The Jungle Book</i>	1994

202.	<i>The Last Emperor</i>	1987
203.	<i>The Last King of Scotland</i>	2006
204.	<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i>	1992
205.	<i>The Legend of Tarzan</i>	2016
206.	<i>The Leopard</i>	1963
207.	<i>The Macomber Affair</i>	1947
208.	<i>The Man from the Deep River</i>	1972
209.	<i>The Manitou</i>	1978
210.	<i>The Mission</i>	1986
211.	<i>The Mosquito Coast</i>	1986
212.	<i>The Mountain of the Cannibal God</i>	1978
213.	<i>The New World</i>	2005
214.	<i>The Night of the Iguana</i>	1964
215.	<i>The Oblong Box</i>	1969
216.	<i>The People That Time Forgot</i>	1977
217.	<i>The Plague of the Zombies</i>	1966
218.	<i>The Power of One</i>	1992
219.	<i>The Rockers</i>	1978
220.	<i>The Searchers</i>	1956
221.	<i>The Serpent and the Rainbow</i>	1988
222.	<i>The Seventh Sign</i>	1988

223.	<i>The Skeleton Key</i>	2005
224.	<i>The Snow Walker</i>	2003
225.	<i>The Snows of Kilimanjaro</i>	1952
226.	<i>The Wicker Man</i>	1973
227.	<i>The Wilby Conspiracy</i>	1975
228.	<i>The Zombie Farm</i>	2011
229.	<i>They Died with Their Boots On</i>	1942
230.	<i>Thinner</i>	1996
231.	<i>Tombs of the Blind Dead</i>	1972
232.	<i>Treasure Island</i>	1950
233.	<i>Vinyan</i>	2008
234.	<i>Voodoo Black Exorcist</i>	1974
235.	<i>Voodoo Dawn</i>	1990
236.	<i>Voodoo Island</i>	1957
237.	<i>Voodoo Woman</i>	1957
238.	<i>Warriors of the Apocalypse</i>	1985
239.	<i>Weekend at Bernie's II</i>	1993
240.	<i>Welcome to the Jungle</i>	2013
241.	<i>West of Zanzibar</i>	1928
242.	<i>Where the Green Ants Dream</i>	1984
243.	<i>White Witch Doctor</i>	1953
244.	<i>Yellow Emanuelle</i>	1977

245.	<i>Zombie Holocaust</i>	1980
246.	<i>Zombie Island Massacre</i>	1984
247.	<i>Zombies of Sugar Hill</i>	1974
248.	<i>Zulu Dawn</i>	1979
249.	<i>Zulu</i>	1964

Presentation of the archive on four more screens

It was difficult to select film scenes from the archive for SISU to perform at the concert. Originally, I wanted to screen the whole archive but limit each film to just one scene. I found out that this would still have a little over three hours, which is quite long and would risk making it hard for the audience to follow the concert. However, the main reason for choosing another solution was that it is almost impossible for a percussionist to perform for that long without taking a break. Therefore, we found a shorter solution that would be preferable.

It was important for me that the duration would be longer than Grisey's *Le noir de l'étoile* (2004) which had six percussionists, as well as taped and live electronics for 105 minutes; and I got that. This desire was a reference to Žižek saying in an interview that it was important for him to write more books than Derrida. When the journalist asked if it is not more important to write better books, Žižek replied, "No." My connection to Grisey's work was meant to create a discussion with a canonized percussion concert and point out that maybe it is more important to represent and treat each other on earth rather than searching for life on other planets.

I wanted to show all of the film scenes I found, also those which were not selected for the concert. I was a bit unsure of how to present them. Still, I also wanted to sort the presentation of the scenes by thematics to see if there were similarities, for example of films repeating other films. My solution was to sort by the following themes:

- *Captured*, where people catch the Western people in the film from the other culture.
- *Ritual*, where the drumming is part of a ritual that has meaning in their culture.
- *Cannibalism*, where the drumming is related to people being eaten.
- *Communication/Explanation*, where one of the Western characters in the film is an expert and explains the dance or ritual phenomenon performed in their sight.

The presentation of those scenes was located at the back of the concert hall. Thus, the audience could wander around before, during, and after the concert. This archive can be sorted and analyzed by other themes – I even considered using an algorithm.

It is also important to mention that the representation of the others often have no root in reality, like in *King Kong*, or if the “others” are supposed to be of a certain ethnicity, the filmmakers take artistic liberties, like in the many zombie films that were part of an emerging genre of the 50s and 60s. The films are not realistic, which I find strange – that an unrealistic film has no desire to be factual when it comes to depictions of other cultures. Kaplan writes about Hollywood: “*I here merely review the general mental and visual apparatus remaining from slavery evident beneath the smooth veneer of Hollywood images. This apparatus -which involves «the gaze» and «looking» structures-still operates in American culture today to jeopardize inter-racial relations.*” (Kaplan, 1997, p.60)

Food-smell-taste-feel

I wanted to try to expand the experience of attending the concert or happening; while reading postcolonial theory and tracing the goods and raw materials imported from the colonies, I remembered a conversation that I had with a colleague with whom I shared an office at a former job. He is Tamil, a refugee from Sri Lanka.

He had told me that chili was not used or even grown in Sri Lanka and Asia before they were colonized. The chili was brought to the Asian colonies as a substitute since the colonizers' took the pepper back to their home countries. So, the area's signature chili dishes resulted from colonialism, which I found interesting.

I wanted to make a dish for the audience to have something to eat while I presented them with some colonial goods – coffee, tea, and chocolate together in what I called *the postcolonial stew*. I wanted it to be made in the concert hall so that the smells would spread, garlic, chilli, and ginger subconsciously blending with the performance. I think the sensation of smell is an underestimated and underused element in art, and I think it worked quite well here. This could be understood as a relational and socializing gesture.

The performance

SISU Ensemble

The most important part of this work is the transcribed concert performed by SISU to the films. The concert and the idea of cooperating with the SISU ensemble were agreed upon before my PhD

started. SISU is a percussion trio formed in 1993 and it is one of the leading percussion ensembles in Scandinavia. They are also used to do more theatrical works.

One problem that has become a hindrance before is my limited knowledge of notation. However, after discussing the concept, we agreed that the percussion precision would be essential and would help me with that. SISU then rewrote the whole score of the concert, making it more precise and easier to perform. This was the right decision to make, and I cannot thank them enough for the effort that they have put into this. SISU also did a lot of work selecting drums for the concert. We quickly realized a mismatch between the drums used on the films' soundtracks and the drums portrayed in the films. We discussed it and concluded that the drum's sound was more important than the visuality of the drum but that the difference in appearance emphasized the mismatch done by the producer or the director of the films.

The concert

I selected the material, the scenes, and the composition, within the limits of the agreed duration of the concert. I quickly decided to present the selected scenes chronologically, with the hope of presenting how the scenes' representations develop and change. There is also the American phenomenon of reproducing some classics again roughly every thirty years. This archive includes the films *King Kong* (1933)(1976)(2005) and *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935)(1962)(1984), which show repetitions and, to some extent, changes. Most changes, however, are more involved with technological development in film and acting technique, rather than their representation of, explanations of, and reactions to the other.

I have not made a distinction between high and low cinema. The concert program's most expensive Hollywood productions filmed in 70mm coexist with Italian Giallo films' more extreme content.

The film scenes, together with the synchronized drumming and the huge collection of different percussion instruments, made me think of a *Wunderkammer*, keeping me curious as to when the different drums and percussion instruments were to be used. Again, the physical presence in the hall was an essential factor. The percussion took up much space. They were placed in front of the stage, making the distance between the audience and musicians small. This had the benefit of helping the audience experience the physicality of the percussion, as you could feel the vibrations in the air, which made an interesting contrast with the finalized immaterial imagery projected as beams onto a screen. Thus, the collection became a concert and a physical experience that could shed light on why percussion exists in all cultures, showing some of its function and potential.

The place for presenting the work

I contacted the University of Oslo about performing the concert at the Anatomical hall there, but unfortunately, it was not possible to use it. My main motivation for using the space was that Alette

and Kristian Schreiner, two well-known researchers in physical anthropology (basically race biology), had worked there – Kristian Schreiner was a professor in anatomy until he resigned in 1945. I wanted to connect the racist representations of the films to the physicality of bodies, to communicate that the bodies represented by actors in the films were, in the end, real physical bodies. I am unsure if presenting there would have made the work more focused, but I was quite disappointed when I was not allowed to present it there.

The same day I got the rejection, I went to the Deichmanske main library at the time to see a film. The cinema screen was in the main hall, and above it, a beautiful mural *Teknikk, vitenskap, diktning* (1932) by a Norwegian painter, Axel Revold. In the composition at the bottom of the mural, an African man is lying down, reading a book. That interested me, and I got the idea of using a similar setup, screening a selected compilation of my archive underneath this mural, juxtaposed to the mural.

They could not let me have a concert there, because the building was closing and they had to reject several projects, but they could give me the seminar hall on the side-wing of the building, which was not ideal, but I would be inside the building I wanted to be. Here the concept of *heterotopic spaces* by Foucault is a relevant reference, places with several functions in modernity, and libraries are examples he specifically mentions in the essay because of the collected literature. I wanted to let my archive be seen in relation to the library's collection.

I struggled with getting it into a festival program. Nymusikk caught the interest and wanted to select it as their contribution to the Ultima Festival. Without their fantastic efforts, I would have had severe problems getting *It takes all Kinds to make The World, Sir!* presented to an audience. This work is hard to fit into a program; its peculiarity makes it more dependent on an institution to incorporate it, or the audience would not come. Here I am talking from experience.

I discovered that Axel Revold was a Norwegian artist who did some travelling, spending time outside of Europe and the US, including the Middle East. From that I read, he must have been interested in travelling outside “the Western world.” Another interesting thing was that he also made a mural at Hersleb School, titled *Geografien* (1927). The mural shows a quite dated depiction of a boy sitting by a river with a wooden toy boat made of bark, dreaming of the Norwegian polar explorers, he thinks about Columbus exploring America. At the right of the composition there is a colonial explorer, with his African servants carrying their luggage. Interestingly Revold also added two Africans gazing at the colonial travel group, in my view, adding some ambivalence to this now dated and problematic image. I wanted to add this as a connection to Oslo, where the concert was to be performed.

I also wanted to add another painting from colonial times, which I came across when I went to the museum *Eidsvoll 1814*, where the Norwegian Constitution was drawn up and signed in 1814. I was surprised to see a portrait there of a man with his servant – more precisely, his slave. As a Norwegian, I have seen a historical painting of this hall where I was standing, of the founding fathers discussing and writing the constitution in the hall at Eidsvoll. This painting is hanging at the Storting, the Norwegian parliament. Following this, I found out that the portrait of Ulrik Frederik Gyldenløve was from when Norway was a colony under Denmark and that the person

depicted was the Norwegian leader, Stattholderen, selected by the Danish king. Interestingly, this portrait was not hidden but instead just left out of photos and videos taken in the hall. I find this interesting. I was unsure of the role of the servant. Through research, I came across a catalogue from an exhibition at the Yale Museum of Portraits of privileged or upper-class people. The catalogue was quite informative, presenting explanations that I found reasonable. The first was that, for the upper class, an African servant was a symbol of status. So that was the main reason he was co-portrayed in the portrait. The second claim was that if the servant is portrayed with a collar, it is certain that the person is a slave. In the portrait at *Eidsvoll 1814*, he appears to wear a collar.

I wanted to include the mural at Deichmanske library and the mural at Hersleb school together with the portrait at Eidsvoll 1814 in the concert to make a prologue, presenting them in a historical context with a voiceover. This was intended to link the ideologies or prejudices from the film material with Norwegian art history, connecting the concert with the building where the work was presented.

Link to prologue: <https://vimeo.com/495251099/6c8b95065b>

Alternate version, alternate duration

A compressed version was performed at the opening of the exhibition Folk at Teknisk Museum. The performance included one percussionist, with no sound from the films. It did not work in this form.

Archive in artistic use

When I got accepted at the Art Academy, the whole school went to Documenta 11 in 2002. Under artistic director Okwui Enwezor, I was surprised by the amount of art relating to postcolonial themes. It was then an important field in art, established as an art discourse, garnering much interest. I remember *The Atlas Group* making a strong impact on my view of artistic practice, especially with their video work *I only wish that I could weep* (2001). The video is a collection of sunsets filmed from the seaside boardwalk in Beirut. They are compiled of material from a Lebanese Army Intelligence officer, Operator #17, whose assignment was to monitor the Corniche, but from 1997 filmed sunsets instead, showing a humane subversiveness because of aesthetic preference.

I want to mention research fellow Anawana Halobas PhD work on post-colonialism in the artistic practice. In her work *Negotiating the Subtle Encounters: An Experimental Opera* (2021), she challenges the opera, a European praxis and genre. In the libretto, she compares Franz Fanon to Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson to find a common interest in the oppressed's role in nation-building.

The German artist Maria Eichhorn initiated an archive work, *The Rose Valland Institute* (2017), exhibited at Documenta 14. The archive collects information on the Nazi expropriation of Jewish property. A historical event with a continued impact. At Dokumenta 14, she exhibited a six-meter high bookshelf filled with books taken by people of Jewish ethnicity. The books are from the Berlin state library and have still not been redistributed to their former owners. I find this work to underline the political dimension and effect of working and building archives in the art discourse. In my understanding of the work, the people experiencing the artwork have space to reflect and think of the Nazi expropriation, with its unsolved consequences today.

Anne Haaning, another artistic research fellow, also worked with archive material in her work *Half hidden* (2019). This work is about a settlement in Greenland around a cryolite mine, connecting it to imperialism with Denmark's relation and use of Greenland's resources.

Candice Breitz's work *Soliloquy Trilogy (1992-2000)* also combined appropriated material centred around the actors Sharon Stone, Clint Eastwood, and Jack Nicholson. Breitz focuses on how we as consumers of American films create meaning from stereotypes, narratives and conventions. Breitz says about her works: "*I think a lot of the work tries to think about the way that we become ourselves via what we consume. And more and more, I think, the terms of identity formation have to do with the sort of intake of the various things that are presented to us whether it is via the internet, or via popular culture, or via music. And I'm interested in how this consumption shapes us and determines us.*" (Louisiana Channel, 2018)

In Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People (2006), Sut Jhally has collected examples of how the American film industry portrays Arabs. As an extension of the book by the same name, they have based their work on a study of 900 films. In American films, Muslims and Arabs are presented as greedy, uncivilized and fanatically religious. This important work shows how stereotypes of ethnicities are generated, presented, and distributed by the American film industry.

In Gediminas and Nomeda Urbonas's work *Transaction* (2000), the artists collected an archive of more than 50 Lithuanian films produced between 1947 and 1997, studying the identities of women based on their feelings of victimization from a period when Lithuania was a part of the Soviet Union into its post-Soviet existence.

Archive in music

Post-colonialism has been debated and thematized in contemporary music in seminars and musical projects like Ictus Ensemble's lecture-concert on the phenomenon on the blend of baroque and indigenous music that emerged from the Jesuit missions of the Bolivian Chiquitania, *EUPEPSIA -DYSPEPSIA, an Archive of Appropriations* (2020). Mauricio Kagel's *Exotica* (1972) was a commission for the Olympic Games in Munich, 1972, where six musicians performed on around 200 instruments unknown to the European music tradition. Kagel said he wanted to go "back to the primaeval origins of music-making when singing was still at one with making sound out of a simple, everyday object." (Universal Edition, 07.02.21) Kagel is more Fluxus oriented and playful in

his artistic style, but I find the political aspect of his work present and essential. In my understanding of the work, it has entered an important position in contemporary music discourse.

Ensemble Modern initiated a symposium on *Afro-Modernism in Contemporary Music*, the 12.11.2020. The focus was the absence of people of colour in contemporary music and European concert programmes. This is a change in that the ensembles themselves take action towards something that has been ignored for too long. And because of the pandemic, the symposium was streamed so many could follow.

There are composers also working on archive material, with Lars Petter Hagen and his project *Tveitt-Fragments* (2006). He works with a composition by Geirr Tveitt that was nearly totally damaged in a fire, with only remnants left for Hagen's piece. Together with his installation project *Archive Fever* (2016), Hagen presented a collection of archive material from the important history of the Darmstadt Summer Course in contemporary music as an installation exhibited in Darmstadt in 2016.

Also, I want to mention the project *Hinterland Archives* (2019), where Artistic research fellow Erik Dæhlin used Christian Leden's archive on Inuit music together with photographs Leden took of the inuits that was also stored in the same archive. This was originally research funded by Ahnenerbe, a German National socialist research institution.

Another relevant composer working with music theatre is Simon Steen Andersen. In his work, *TRIO*, performed at Donaueschinger Musiktage in 2019, he based his composition on video material on earlier concerts in the festival from the festival's archive. The datedness and the present cutting in the audio-visual material were abrupt. Steen Andersen also included introductions of the compositions that made this world interesting.

Here and now

As I try to manoeuvre between music theatre, film, video, and contemporary music reflecting on my motivations for using videos in my work, I have come up with the concept of reopening because I don't think the term "reenactment" covers what I do in my work. This sort of imagery from I have collected from past which had been finished, is often seen as impossible to modify, but they still are. I want to reopen finalized films to see and show the scenes collected in different arrangements, opening them for the audience for critique and reflection. I think that the performance, concert, theatre, and the happening, where it is possible to use and incorporate video material from the past to watch it from a new perspective, reopening the film scenes – that is what I strive for and the intention for the work.

An archive is never finished; it is a place, but, more importantly, it is a practice of searching, collecting, selecting, and storing. From my own experience and perspective, I doubt that the Western entertainment industry, situated in "*the Occident where the sun sets*," will not stop reproducing, repeating, and producing stereotypes of other cultures for the sake of producing imagery for our imagination. Again, this gives us an understanding of our world, but it won't allow

us to reflect on the matter. One could argue that this is not the case, as several films here in this archive deal with and problematize the colonial past, with *Amistad* and *Hotel Rwanda* as two examples. I would argue, however, that the production of these films and the intentions behind producing them are heavily coloured by economic concerns, with filmmakers seeking to make money and entertainment more than reflection. Of course, one would have to set entertainment in an oppositional relation to reflection, but entertainment material can be used in art and artistic research to make space for reflection. The film, as a medium, was not invented for producing mainstream films, but it had and still has spectacular qualities.

I hope that, through collecting and editing, taking out and compiling the scenes, and breaking up the main narratives of the films to create the narratives of the exotic others, my intention and understanding of the scenes are repeated through Western film history. This breaking up allows the viewer to reflect critically. Also, I intend that the repetition and the quantity of the material give rise to a feeling of uneasiness, emphasizing that the stereotypical representations – seldom the hero or main character – don't make any sense.

Welcoming quantity

Quantity, in many ways, becomes the quality of the archive, its corpus based on the amount of stored information, never finished, ever-growing – that's an archive's function. This is in opposition to artworks where quality is something to strive for. Every scene, element, part, or detail has to be there for a qualitative reason, and, if not, the detail should be left out.

My experience working with archives is that quite a lot can be implemented, and I wish for the quantity to be presented and experienced. It is good that the spectator or audience becomes bored because they're experiencing the quantity, size of the archive, and repetitions in representations. I think that something interesting comes out of it. Also, this discomfort that may arise creates space for reflection, increasing the potential for a political statement to reach the audience. This might happen long after the presentation, but I believe that artworks have this possibility. Maybe I have to believe it to keep going.

Theory

"The drum beat, and a terrible carnage was begun; all who came in the way of the frenzied Negroes in the streets were stabbed." (Hegel, 2017, p. 84)

In *It takes all Kinds to make The World, Sir!* I have focused on three areas of theory – post-colonialism, media archaeology, and theory on the archive. Although Edward Said's book *Orientalism* is about the Orient and does not directly focus on post-colonialism, I would claim that it is a central work in the discourse, focusing on how the West has produced the knowledge and representations of the Orient and people living there. Post-colonialism deals with the effect on colonies worldwide, while the Orient is limited to the Middle East and Asia. The point, however, is

that the West controls the depiction of the other and non-Western cultures. Maybe even creating them as an opponent to the West that must be transferred or transposed over. Also, the reflexivity and understanding of the "other" represented and presented with this knowledge may affect the person's understanding of self and their culture. As stated before, "*knowledge is power*," and Said, referring to and using Foucault's theories in his writing, claimed that the relationship between knowledge and power is central, producing relations, knowledge, and subjects:

"One significant contemporary debate about the residue of imperialism-the matter of how "natives" are represented in the Western media-illustrates the persistence of such interdependence and overlapping, not only in the debate's content but in its form, not only in what is said but also in how it is said, by whom, where, and for whom." (Said, 1994, p. 21)

Another example of work is *The Colonial Harem* (1986) by Malek Alloula, who collected postcards from Algeria featuring nude photographs. This phenomenon comes from the idea of the harem in the Orient. A place and idea invented by the French when colonizing Algeria. This book claims that these postcards with imagery of female nudes from the Orient were produced to comply with the French's idea, with little or no foundation in reality.

Said is central in this work, but post-colonialism is a vast and growing field. Other relevant theoreticians are Paul Gilroy and his publication *The Black Atlantic*, on the colonial epoch and history. Together with slavery and the slave trade, are parts of our shared past, not something only related to Afro-American history or post-colonialism. I agree with him on this topic, because this is a problematic history we all have to reconcile with.

Other theoreticians central in this field are Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri C. Spivak. Bhabha has coined the term hybridity to create new cultural forms and identities due to the colonial encounter and past. His concept also includes the resistance of the colonized. With the concept of "the subaltern," taken from Gramsci, Gayatri C. Spivak uses it to describe the colonized people without rights or privileges – used on women in her theories: "*Can the subaltern speak? What must the elite do to watch out for the continuing construction of the subaltern? The question of "woman" seem most problematic in this context... if you are poor, black and female you get it in three ways.*" (Spivak, 1995)

I must admit that this is both a very interesting field and a vast discourse. I have read about it, but there is so much more interesting and relevant material to read.

In media archaeology, Kittler has been central, writing on cinema in his publication *Grammophone, Film, Typewriter*, where he uses the Lacanian term of "The Imaginary" on the film. Lacan originally used the term "*the imaginary is the realm of image and imagination, deception, and lure. The principal illusions of the imaginary are those of wholeness, synthesis, autonomy, duality, and, above all, similarity.*" (Evans, 2006, p. 108)

This also relates to understanding oneself, the formation of the self, and our understanding of our surroundings. Kittler uses the term quite differently, but the Lacanian connections are still present. E. Ann Kaplan's theories and her concept of "*the imperial gaze*" also borrow from Lacan and have been central in my work on the archive, implementing what I have called "*the Western gaze*" into

the scenes selected in the archive. E. Ann Kaplan's work also focuses on *"the Male Gaze,"* where the gaze objectifies the female, and the female's presence in film-scene is created for the male gaze and its interest: *"The imperial gaze reflects the assumption that the white western subject is central, much as the male gaze assumes the centrality of the male subject."* (Kaplan, 1997, p.78) Again, this correlates with my findings of scenes where the female character often is impractical, easily scared and an object for the male audience.

In theories on archives, Foucault and Hal Foster's *An Archival Impulse* have been central. However, Hal Foster's essay focuses on artists – if not archives, then maybe artists working on archives, finding historical documents, and presenting them in their work:

"In the first instance, archival artists seek to make historical information, often lost or displaced, physically present. To this end, they elaborate on the found image, object, and text and favour the installation format as they do so. (Frequently they use its non-hierarchical spatiality to advantage-which is rather rare in contemporary art)." (Foster, 2004, p. 4)

I found it highly relevant that he saw artists motivated to produce reflective discussions, which resonates in my work field. My archive could have been a documentary, musicology or film studies at the University. But I think Music theatre opens up a different possibility and use or presentation of the archive material.

Also, Foucault's writing and theories productive and inspiring. In his work, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, his theories about the archive, are central to identifying the archive as something that collects and produces meaning and power.

"Archaeology tries to define not the thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations that are concealed or revealed in discourses, but those discourses themselves, those discourses as practices obeying certain rules. It does not treat discourse as document, as a sign of something else, as an element that ought to be transparent, but whose unfortunate opacity must often be pierced if one is to reach at last the depth of the essential in the place in which it is held in reserve; it is concerned with discourse in its own volume, as a monument." (Foucault, 1972, p. 155)

Worth mentioning is the book *Identity* by Francis Fukuyama. His contribution in the debate and discussion on identity politics, where people's dignity and the need for recognition are important concepts, but in the field of secular democracy.

Post colonialism and western representation of other cultures is a huge field and could easily have been an artistic-research PhD itself. I could have worked with these topics forever, with never-ending searching, collecting and making a selection of films and series made for entertainment. Moreover, post-colonialism is becoming more present in Norwegian art education and art discourse these days, which I find interesting and welcome. But this archive is only one of the three main works in my PhD (which has a total of nine), so I had to draw a line or find an ending somewhere.

Digression – some lines on the debate over removing sculptures

Reading through old notes, I've seen that I have written about removing statues. This debate has become even more actualized, with people demanding the removal of statues of racists and slave owners and traders. That has been a long-existing demand, however, and has been met with ignorance, hesitation and no action has been made. The power of the protesters tearing down a statue and, for example, throwing it into the river, changing the reading and history of the sculpture? That, in my view, is more powerful than destroying or removing it. I would claim that changing has a more powerful effect than erasing or wanting to remove the traces of colonial times. Similarly, I think it is also problematic that the Berlin Wall was almost totally removed.

I was watching the toppling of the statue of Edward Colston, who was involved with the slave trade. As the crowd threw it into the river in Bristol, something that fascinates me is the transformation of the sculpture from an unattainable and lasting object to an object that a crowd can handle and throw into the river. It is a powerful gesture and action and powerful imagery, which can be watched on YouTube. I will not link it due to the internet changing and links having short lifespans, but I think the imagery or documentation will long exist.

The Stack, a digression and an experiment

I had the opportunity to participate at Travers. A Danish workshop on reflecting and using materials from the past, held in 2018 at Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen. It was an institution where we worked in a museum containing more than 10,000 works of art from a large collection of antique objects, sculptures, and modern art. We mostly worked in the hall for the antique collections.

One of the requirements for the workshop was to bring three items in with you. I brought three items to mount a sculpture – more correctly, and it was an assemblage of found objects. They made up a money box in the shape of a racist portrayal of a slave, where you could put the coin into the slave's hand and twist his ear, making the sculpture swallow the coin. It was a problematic and cursed item from the past. Observing the object, I'm fascinated by how racist and problematically one object can be designed. Additionally, it was heavy, made of cast iron, so you'd have to blow it up or melt it if you wanted it destroyed.

I found it at a street market in Croatia, and the seller seemed relieved to get rid of it. Before buying it, I reflected on acquiring a problematic object, trying to take an ethical perspective on buying a racist object, as racism is something I do not support. My solution was to act as a keeper of the object, buying it to keep it off the market in case it might have been attractive for a racist customer. I chose to take it out of circulation. The other items I brought were two books, *The Golden Bough* (1890) and *From Ritual to Romance: An Account of the Holy Grail from Ancient Ritual to Christian Symbol* (1920), purchased second-hand. They were specially chosen objects since they were the same editions of Colonel Kurtz's books lying next to his bed in his hut in Apocalypse Now.

These books are used here as signifying objects. I also interpret their appearance in the film to stand for colonial "armchair anthropology" – comparative studies of other cultures written by anthropologists comparing the literary sources of former/other cultures. It was literature used by a mad Kurtz in the film *Apocalypse Now* (1979), to create a sect centred around him in the Cambodian jungle. I borrowed a museum stand and placed the books as an elongation of the stand with the racist sculpture on top. This was an experiment to juxtapose problematic portrayal from our past to the white-washed marble sculptures and idealized depictions to see if that would make a contrast worth reflecting on. To be honest, I thought that the installation would be controversial or disallowed. Still, *The Stack* (2018) was exhibited there for almost a day, seen by the audience and the seminar participants. The experiment is something that I now find problematic and, to some extent, opportunistic, things I think artworks should avoid being, even if it can be hard.

Documentation of *The Stack*



Colonial Reading

As post-colonialism deals with and reflects on the consequences of our colonial past, reading literature from colonial times was interesting and relevant, with maybe *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Christopher Columbus's journal* (1492) being the most interesting. Some researchers have traced the fright of the cannibals in *Crusoe* back to Columbus' journal of his expeditions in "discovering" America. Columbus's preconceptions that he picked up from Europe and earlier writings from the Middle Ages blend with his interpretation of the words of the people he meets on the island in Central America. The "caniba" were a people misunderstood by Columbus as cannibals, as he didn't know the native language and probably associated the words. This is the origin of "cannibals" in *Robinson Crusoe*, regarded as the first modern English novel. This conception is also continued in some of the findings in the archive. And one of the screening programs of *It takes all Kinds to make The World, Sir!*

"The irresistible rhythms of the once forbidden drum are other still audible in their work. Its characteristic syncopations still animate the basic desires - to be free and to be oneself - that are revealed in the countercultures unique conjunction of body and music." (Gilroy, 1999, p. 76)

Chapter 6: *Zulou*



To kulturer.
En gastronomisk misforståelse.
Et kataklysmisk oppgjør.
I fremtiden vil alt bli annerledes.

BJØRN ERIK HAUGEN presenterer

ZULOU
THE WRATH OF CHRONOS!

"Two cultures. A gastronomic misunderstanding. A cataclysmic settlement. In the future, everything will be different." — *Zulou*, Johan Harstad, 2020

About *Zulou*

Zulou is one of my artistic research works, where I used the 1962 film *Zulu* as a base, replacing the narrative with one by the Norwegian comrade and author Johan Harstad. Furthermore, as a media archaeological detournement and artistic contribution, I replaced the sounds of the whole film. This was performed live on the 13th and 14th of August 2020, at Kunstnernes hus cinema, with two foley artists and three actors.

Link to documentation of concert: <https://vimeo.com/467374613>

Making terminology easier to understand

As I do not want the reader to get lost in the different titles and terminology, I will clarify: *Zulu* is the original film with its actual content. When I write *Zulou*, I am referring to the new narrative.

Following this misspelling, *Zulus* refers to either the original Zulu warriors in the film or the ethnic group and *Zulous* are the warriors in the narrative written by Johan Harstad.

The idea of a commission

After I started working as a composer in contemporary music, I found it a bit curious that musicians and ensembles commissioned compositions from composers. This is often the ordinary structure of the relationship between musicians and composers. I had, for example, written *Hertzkin* for fellow Sanae Yoshida, so why could I not make a commission? I ended up asking the Norwegian author Johan Harstad to create a new story to overlay on top of the film *Zulu*. I gave him the limits into which the dialogue should fit so it would be synchronized when the characters in the film spoke. He was given the film together with a subtitle file for the film. This file was a long list of timecodes for when anything was said or thought in the film, together with the accompanying dialogue. So he now had a text with timecodes to work on as a base for his new narrative. I did not give him any more instructions because I wanted to be surprised and to get to produce someone else's work.

I must state that *Zulou* is my work, as agreed on between Johan Harstad and me. This is also expressed in a signed document that is juridically binding.

Foley

Technically speaking, if one is to replace the dialogue of a film, it is necessary to take away the original sound. Therefore, a conceptual framework and a technical solution were to replace the sounds throughout the movie with foley. This is a film process where the sounds for a film are recreated to fit the corresponding images. This is often done with quite rudimentary objects, stuff that you would guess can make sounds similar to those you would expect in a film. Historically, this technique came into practice with the introduction of talkies. However, it was difficult, if not impossible, to get an acceptable sound recording from a film set. I think the core of working with foley is musicality and timing, so creating foley sounds for *Zulou* is the compositional element in this work. I will elaborate further on this later on in the text.

"Foley should be "sensed and not heard."" (Ament, 2009, p. XV)

The scenic situation

The dialogue was performed and synchronized with the film. The sound was turned off, with actors standing beside the screen, reciting their lines. The foley artists were also present under the film screen. The idea was that the audience could see the construction and performance of the new work together with the film. These are quite a few elements, which makes it hard to see all that is happening. The audience could watch how the sounds were made together with the film or focus on the actors. Or they could just watch the movie, listening to the new narrative and the foley. Or they could switch focus between the elements, which I think most did.

V/H/H

Central to *Zulou*, Johan Harstad, Håkon Vassvik, and I have a theatre band together called V/H/H, which was founded in 2009 on the notion that we would use a sort of flat power structure, with no one as the leader, and with each of us having separate work areas that, together, we can produce into wholly realized theatrical works. Johan Harstad is a dramatist and graphic designer, Håkon is an actor and director, and I do video, scenography, and sound.

In this theatre band, we throw ideas back and forth, building on each other's ideas. In the end, we do not know where the idea came from or who made it. It is important to stress that we always have the work concept in mind, so we do not lose track of where we are going. All three of us are also interested in showing the theatrical mechanics in the cooperations we do together, experimenting with removing as much of the illusions of typical theatre productions, allowing the audience to see everything, like stage lamps and actors reading from manuscripts – this is still theatre. Later, we found out that these ideas were similar to many of the Brechtian elements of the Epic theatre.

With *Zulou*, I wanted to reform V/H/H since I missed working with the theatre band, and this was an opportunity to do so again. We had not worked together since we produced *Memoirs of a Breadman* (2011) at Black Box Teater. In my experience, it is much easier to work with already established relationships, working with people you know and trust artistically, rather than always starting with a blank slate and going from there.

Time travel as terrain of endless possibilities - the new narrative in *Zulou*

In the new story, the Zulou are provoked when a dish, Babagaham, is served too hot, going to war against the bored soldiers at Rorke's Drift. A missionary visiting the Zulou camp manages to escape with his daughter, warning the camp about the coming attack. Here, a disagreement of rank starts, and Chard, an army engineer who states he is from two weeks in the future, takes command. What follows in the film are several scenes of attacks by the Zulou.

Adendorff, a character in the film, is an expert on the Zulou since he is from the area and explains that they know the art of time travel, which explains why the Zulou have guns – they have travelled into the future and taken the guns from the British Army, then travelled back, using them in the attack.

The end is quite different from the original. Adendorff explains that all the British soldiers are dead, they just have not realized it yet, and that the Zulou are hailing their memory with a chant. The start of the film, where we see the Zulou picking up rifles among the dead British soldiers, actually takes place after the battle, when the Zulou travelled into the future and killed the British – a classic Harstad twist in the ending of the narrative!

In short, the film changed from a costume drama into a science fiction film, where time travel affects the outcome of the battle. Where the Zulou – opposed to what we would have ordinarily thought – are the people with the superior power. This resonates with what Kodwo Eshun writes in

his 2003 essay *Further considerations on Afrofuturism: "The notion of a black secret technology allows Afrofuturism to reach a point of speculative acceleration."* (Eshun, 2003, p. 295) The Western people at Rorke's Drift only know one of Chard's prophesies of the near future – something on which they have divided views, with some not believing in what he says.

So now, *Zulou* has to be read like a science fiction work with Afrofuturist references. Not only a science fiction work, but what Quentin Meillassoux calls an extro-science fiction work, because, in his distinction from ordinary science fiction, where the world often uses advanced technology based on science, here there is a change of natural laws because of time travel. Meillasoux writes about extro-science fiction, calling it: "*a single break, a unique physical catastrophe that would plunge the protagonists, overnight, into a world in which an inexplicable phenomenon is massively produced.*" (Meillasoux, 2015, p. 46)

Zona/Zulou

In my work, I often refer to the film *Stalker* (1979) by Andrei Tarkovsky, a film about an area known as "*Zona*," where something has happened that has changed it into a space that subverts scientific knowledge, which makes people generate mystical knowledge about the site. People cannot use science to understand it, as the site is an enigma, a mystery to humans. Zona is closed and guarded, making it difficult for people to enter, but speculation has started, and people think one's wishes can come true there. Zona behaves differently than other places on earth. In *Zulou*, the time travel capacity of the Zulous is different than what we know to be scientifically possible. We do not know how they do it, but they do it, to paraphrase Marx. And, as imperialism is mainly about conquering areas and expropriating raw material, the British have not tried to understand or obtain the knowledge the Zulous possess.

In my view, science fiction is about a strategy of rethinking, opening up, and creating a possibility to imagine our surroundings as different. Here, juxtaposing the two narratives of *Zulu* and *Zulou* is an experiment for doing precisely this. As Kodwo Eshun states: "*To be more precise, science fiction is neither forward-looking nor utopian. Rather, in William Gibson's phrase, science fiction is a means to preprogram the present. Looking back at the genre, it becomes apparent that science fiction was never concerned with the future, but rather with engineering feedback between its preferred future and its becoming present.*" (Eshun, 2003, p. 295).

Afrofuturism

Mark Dery initially used the term Afrofuturism in his 1994 essay *Black to the Future* and it has been used more frequently in recent years. Afrofuturism is a term and genre where, in short, Africa or an African culture is more advanced than the rest of the world. It has existed for some years with the band Sun Ra and in the art world. Still, the term became widely known with the film *Black Panther* (2018), based on a comic from the Marvel Universe, where the hero, Black Panther, is a prince in the African kingdom of Wakanda, a country more prosperous and with more advanced technology

than any other country in the world. The term came to my knowledge in the aftermath of that film, but the concept opened up a space of reflection and critical thought. Eshun further elaborates:

"To establish the historical character of black culture, to bring Africa and its subjects into history denied by Hegel et al., it has been necessary to assemble counter-memories that contest the colonial archive, thereby situating the collective trauma of slavery as the founding moment of modernity." (Eshun, 2003, p. 288).

The original Zulu film

If I were to summarize the film *Zulu* into two sentences, I would say the film first establishes the main characters and the conflict in terms of how the narrative is built up. Next, there are four waves of attacks from the Zulu army, and then the ending, where the British soldiers clean up the battlefield, reflecting heroically on the battle. The film lasts two hours and eighteen minutes.

The film *Zulu* depicts the Battle of Rorke's Drift, which took place on 22-23 January 1879, where 139 mainly Welsh soldiers in the British army staved off an attack of about 4,000 Zulu soldiers. The British Army receives information that the Zulus are on the move and will attack in the film. An army engineer, Chard, takes command because of seniority. He chooses not to retreat but to stay and defend the battle station. The soldiers organize and fortify the battle station.

The British army is vastly outnumbered in the film, but with courage, war discipline, and Western war technology, they win the battle and are honoured by the Zulus at the end of the film. I think the film *Zulu* has elements of a British costume drama to it. The acting is stiff, like watching a theatre play on screen, which I like. There is an underlying premise of British superiority to the Zulus that is somewhat problematized in some scenes of the film, but this is, in my opinion, not enough. The film seems outdated.

Background information on the film *Zulu*

The film was released in 1964 and was shot on 70mm film, the most expensive film format today, mainly used on large, costly Hollywood productions. Movies like *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), *Cleopatra* (1963), and *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1962) were filmed in this format. It is well suited for wide shots. However, not many films are shot in this format, mainly because of the price tag. According to the newspaper *The Telegraph*, *Zulu* is also considered to be one of the best British films.

The film was shot on location at Royal Natal National Park in South Africa during the apartheid regime; as a result, the British actors were not allowed to communicate with the people acting as the Zulu warriors in the film. This must have been a complicated production, both practically and ethically.

The historical background, the Zulu-wars

There was the Battle of Isandlwana, a more significant and earlier battle that was under-communicated, on the 22nd of January 1879. The British Army was outnumbered and defeated by 20,000 Zulus who pierced through the Army camp at Isandlwana, killing around 1,300 British soldiers.

The defeat was a massive blow against the British Imperial image. It was hard to accept that the Zulus had defeated the British army with only shields and spears. The British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli chose to focus on The Battle of Rorke's Drift, which was, in reality, a minor battle and a consequence of the Battle of Isandlwana. Around 4,000 Zulu soldiers from The Battle of Isandlwana later attacked Rorke's Drift with rifles taken as booty from the former battle.

The historical painting as a reference

Another more art referential motivation for selecting *Zulu* is that, in my view, the whole film borrows its aesthetic from the historical painting genre. So often used to depict historical events and battles, the genre has been a much-used medium for preserving a condensed version of the event for the hereafter. Before the film and the photography could document wars, painters did it after the battles were over, when the war winners had a painting of the battle commissioned.

If I mention some common denominators, the battles are depicted as heroic and brave, not showing the gruesome cruelty of war. The historical painting of a battle, one might say, is a heroic depiction of the winner for the after time, not necessarily so truthful or realistic. And, of course, there are paintings of The Battle of Rorke's Drift. I found two paintings in my research: *The Defence of Rorke's Drift* by Alphonse de Neuville and *The Defence of Rorke's Drift* by Elizabeth Thompson. Both were painted in 1880, a year after the battle, presumably created in Britain, far away from the fight.

Documentation of *The Defence of Rorke's Drift* by Alphonse de Neuville



Documentation of *The Defence of Rorke's Drift* by Elizabeth Thompson



Foley history and technology

In my works, I often use an element of media history. I turn to the history of media technology to find elements for use. Here, I have researched the history and use of foley art – how sounds are made and put into films – a young art form where creative people have entered the scene (actors, musicians, dancers, artists and sound technicians).

Diegetic sound

Why do they need to put sound into the film afterwards? First, it is much harder to use sound recordings made on the set when shooting the film, so most of the sound is created in a studio specializing in producing sound for movies. Here, there are many tricks to give the illusion of the sound being natural, many conventions we now take for granted. For example, the steps of someone walking on film are made much more intense than the actual sound steps make.

One of the conceptual motivations here was to replace both the narrative dialogue and the foley live through the whole of *Zulu* as an event where the audience could see the actors performing the dialogue and the foley artists making the sounds for the film. With the live foley work, I tried to make the sounds as believable and realistic as possible.

Luckily, there is still a foley studio near Oslo – *Quickstep Foley* –, and they agreed to introduce me to how the sounds for films are made, which are often not the same as the actual sounds. For example, coconuts are used for horse hooves, and straw Christmas decorations can be used to make a decent burning fire sound. The rattling of a gun is simply a door lock.

Documentation of Quickstep Foley studio



In my view, this method of making sound is more a practice-based craft than a form of artwork. The purpose is often to recreate the sounds of the whole film, making believable approximations of the sounds. Still, it is a task where you have to use a lot of improvisation, imagination, and association. You have to learn not to take the visual or purpose of an object into account, instead just listening to what sounds you can make with it and how the things sound.

One of the ideas was to take something invisible in the film and with foley make it visible to the audience. So often, when talking about foley, people become fascinated and want to know how the sounds are made—the Brechtian breaks with theatrical illusion, showing the technical elements on stage during the show.

Documentation of the foley-set on *Zulou*



Placing and presenting *Zulou*

In the essay *Of other Spaces*, Foucault writes about heterotopic spaces, liminal spaces in modernity that serve a function that modernity does not, as well as writing about the museum. I interpret that as a different space than the white cube gallery space for art. And, in my PhD-works, I have tried to avoid these spaces, primarily because using other areas motivates me more, as does using my background in fine art and constructing installations, where space is an element of the artwork and the installation functions together with it.

Here, I wanted to present *Zulou* at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo, in the lecture hall on the top floor. I wanted to present *Zulou* in connection to the past, connecting it with the collection of the historical items in the museum.

The primary motivation to perform *Zulou* at the museum was to connect with the perspective that *Zulu* represents. It has a perspective from the colonial time, and several of the objects in the museum were collected from that period. For example, the museum has glass mounts that exhibit

Indians, Inuit, and African tribes with their traditional clothing and items in their main exhibition of ethnic groups that have been there for as long as I can remember.

The film itself is a somewhat dated object of the past. It is from the 60s, representing that period's view. I found it interesting to date the movie as a museal object and reopen the film in that way, outdated content and all; this was an essential motivation for making *Zulou*.

In *Zulou*, we have the colonial technology – weapons and tools – used by the army that utilizes the men as war machines and missionaries spreading Western Christianity to the Zulus—trying to wage war against someone who can time travel would be nearly impossible to win. The possibilities of time travelling to change the outcome of events are pretty enormous.

The Zulus have spears and shields against the British war machine. They have also taken guns as booty from the more significant and more critical Battle of Isandlwana, which is barely touched upon in the film (at least in my view). This view of the Zulus in the movie resembles what Edward Said writes in his book *Culture and Imperialism*: "*Yet the whole point of what Kurtz and Marlow talk about is in fact imperial mastery, white European over black Africans, and their ivory, civilization over the primitive dark continent.*" — (Said, 1994, p. 29).

Let us return to the reflection on presenting *Zulou* at *The Museum of Cultural History*. I contacted a progressive curator there, Peter Bjerregaard, and he was interested in playing with the colonial regime and the element of science fiction. So we had an agreement that I could present it there. Suddenly, however, he left his job on short notice because of personal reasons, which left me with a new curator who wanted to present it as a part of an exhibition they were having about queer history and homosexuality. *Zulou* also has those types of elements, but, in my view, it is not the most central aspect, nor was it something on which I focused my attention. So that left me on what I felt was bare ground, and I thought of something that my secondary supervisor, Kai Johnsen, said: to make sure to have a written agreement. This can be something easy to forget when in the middle of being a composer, a director, an artistic researcher, and an artist doing artwork. But, of course, this is not an excuse but a valuable lesson that one might have to experience to learn. Maybe someone will read this sometimes and take note of this, so they do not have to experience it themselves. It could save them some months of work and stress.

C I N E M A

Then I thought of presenting *Zulou* at a cinema. I liked the idea of appropriating a film, changing the narrative, and presenting it back in a cinema. I mailed Cinemateket twice about a meeting, but I got no answer. Then I had the idea to use the cinema at Kunstnernes hus, a cinema built to present video art and independent films. They agreed, and *Zulou* was supposed to be performed on the 13th and 14th of March, but the presentation was postponed to the 14th and 15th of August because of the coronavirus pandemic.

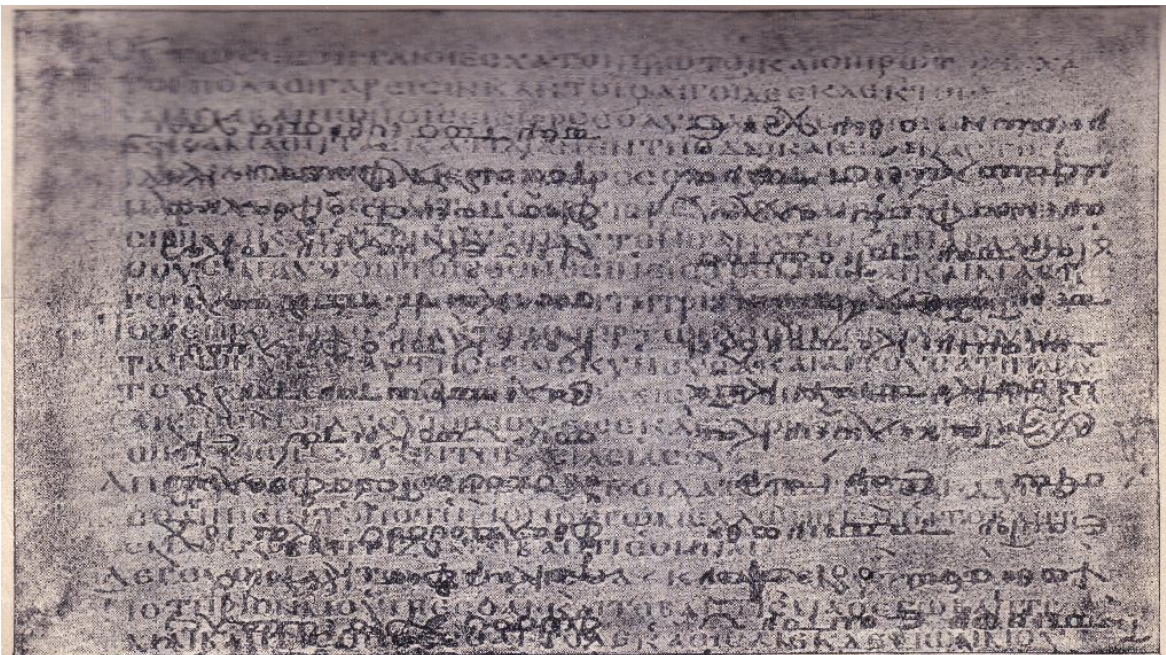
Foucault mentions the theatre as a heterotopic space, saying the same about the cinema also. The idea of heterotopy is central, and my intention here is the theatricalization of the cinematic space,

to create a liminal space that is either a bastard or a hybrid. An expression that can be seen as either a theatre or film.

Palimpsest

A palimpsest is a term for a manuscript where a former text has been erased, with a new text written over the former. The original text, however, can be accessed through photographic techniques. The *Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus* is an example of a palimpsest; it is a Greek manuscript of the Bible from the 5th century where you also can see the former text together with the new.

Documentation of the *Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus*



In *Zulou*, you can see traces of the original narrative, even if the new version has replaced it. Someone in the audience said that it was "like watching two films at the same time." In creating the new dialogue, Johan Harstad had done a brilliant thing. Many of the words in the dialogue were either written translations or negations, the opposite of what was being said. These become connection points between the film and the new narrative of *Zulou*.

One problem I can imagine with putting new dialogue on top of a film is that they do not match exactly. Instead, they will be running in parallel, like two unconnected pieces. Here, Lacan's term of the connections between signifiers - in chains - referring to other signifiers instead of the

signified, can be productive. In his theory, other words explain, for example, a definition of concepts, which is again described with another word. That is how we as humans understand and use language, according to Lacan.

Zulou as détournement

Situationists and Lettrists used the strategy of détournement, which means rerouting, hijacking in French, as a subversive and satiric artistic approach in their art, creating new works, and subverting the source, for example, a Western film. This strategy is central in how the Situationists worked and can be seen in the video work *Society of the Spectacle* (1973) by Guy Debord. In addition, this practice is mentioned in the book *Forever Godard: "Détournement refers in one of its modes to the practice of wiping the original soundtrack of a 'found' film object and replacing it with another, usually parodic, ironic or straightforwardly critical"* — (Temple, Williams & Witt, 2007, p. 258)

Connections

When I counted where the dialogue was the same in both *Zulu* and *Zulou* (but translated to Norwegian), I found out that it happened 974 times, which was a surprisingly high amount. This is in a text that consists of 1,830 lines of text in total. These direct translations are links that make the text connect to the flow of images on the projector. It constructs a relationship between the new text and the film that the two elements are separate but work together as a whole.

Zulu is not the most racist film but making a film about 139 British soldiers slaughtering over 4,000 Zulu soldiers is something one would portray differently in a movie if one would remake the movie today. Also, the repetition of the massacring of the Zulu soldiers is experienced and read differently today than it probably was in 1964. I wanted to reopen the film and to *re-presence* it: It is performed, an act that is here and now, not there and then, as the finalized film was. This term (*re-presence*) is a neologism that is a result of working with *Zulou*.

I got reactions to the massacre scenes from the audience after the event, which I found interesting. This is problematic material in the film, but in *Zulou*, the film is performed and not finalized, meaning there is still a possibility to change it. I think these scenes were experienced as more problematic because of that possibility. The scenes are not something I have filmed or represented. I am only *re-presence-ing* it in *Zulou*, reopening it in the present moment. Had I cut them out, my idea of replacing the whole film's story would have lost its function.

Class

Also, in my view, the class element or class struggle in the original film *Zulu* is interesting. There have probably been other films showing this. Still, here I would claim that the army's privates are portrayed as lower-class people, with few ambitions in their life, outside of gambling, drinking, and earning their wages in this disciplinary institution. Many characters seem to not want to be there. They appear stuck in this system.

There is also an element of what one could call European colonialization. For example, the privates are Welsh, a colony of Britain, and the Welsh army has a history of military operations for the United Kingdom. Also, the conflict between Lt. Bromhead, who represented the upper class and was brought up in a family of army officers, and Chard, an army engineer, was a conflict over who should be in charge of defending Rorke's Drift.

The massacres

"It's not blood, it is red." — Jean Luc Godard (Gardner, 2019, p. 245)

Watching the original *Zulu* now is a dated experience. Not even the blood looks realistic; it is a film made within a different paradigm, where notions of realism, acting, and filming techniques were different. In my interpretation, the popping red colour of the uniforms also made the blood appear popping. It reminds me of an interview with Godard, where he insists that all the blood in the film *Pierrot le fou* is red, the colour. That might be true. Watching his movies, the colours in his films are clear and present. It might be confusing that an army would incorporate red jackets into their uniforms, making them an easy target since red is a colour that calls our attention. The camouflage was an effect of the First World War when the French army found out the hard way that red trousers were not the best colour against the German military, causing enormous casualties.

Denkmal

The first time I was introduced to the term "Denkmal" was from the Norwegian artist Lars Ramberg when he presented his work *Palast der Zweifel* (in English, *The Palace of Doubt*) that was exhibited in Berlin in 2005. Here, the artist mounted big letters of the word *ZWEIFEL* (in English DOUBT) on the top of the former parliament building of the GDR – The Palast der Republik – in Berlin. I have not found a correlating term to Denkmal in English, as "memorial" is more similar to the German "Mahnmal," which is more to serve a function of memory than reflecting or thinking. The term is German and is translated: "memorial [noun], something (e.g., a monument) that honours or commemorates people or events of the past.

Definition from Cambridge Dictionary:

Denkmal: From Denken + Mal, a compound cognate with English think + meal ("time, occasion"), basically meaning "time to think." (Cambridge Dictionary, 7.2.2021)

However, translated literally, "Denken" means a time to think, creating an opening to think differently than the term "monument," which is often based on a person or in commemoration of something that has happened. There is a clear difference in thinking and remembering or commemorating. Thinking is a place for the present. Reflecting over something is an active practice that, I would claim, differs from commemoration.

The last part, "Mal," means "time or occasion," opening up for the possibility of using the term on not only "monuments cast in bronze," but also temporal artworks, theatre plays, performances, or music. For example, an opening to create when statues of slave traders are thrown into the river. I think the act of tearing down statues and drowning them can be quite a powerful Denkmal. This can be a productive refunctioning of a negatively charged monument. Here, to name an example, the bronze statue of Edward Colston was thrown by demonstrators into the harbour where the slave ships entered Bristol.

Afrofuturist works

I would say that the work of Bodys Isek Kingelez, known as *New Manhattan City 3021* – exhibited during Documenta 11 in 2002 – can be read as Afrofuturistic. The sculpture presents a proposed idea for a future building where the Twin Towers stood in New York, in the far off year of 3021. Also worth noting some works from the exhibition *Alpha Crucis - Afrikansk samtidskunst (2020)* (in English, "Alpha Crucis - African contemporary art,") at Astrup Fearnley with Abu Bakarr Mansaray's technical drawings of retrofuturistic vehicles and machines and Rigobert Nimi's futuristic city made of recycled garbage material. One can say these works function within the Afrofuturistic label.

It seems that artists and writers who produce and reflect works within the Afrofuturist field are either coming from African countries or are of African ethnic descent. This is an interesting field, connecting art, design, theory, fashion, music, and history to make room for producing thoughts, speculations, and images. As Kodwo Eshun writes in *"Further Considerations on Afrofuturism"*: *"Afrofuturism may be characterized as a program for recovering the histories of counter-futures created in a century hostile to Afrodiasporic projection and as a space within the critical work of manufacturing tools capable of intervention within the current political dispensation may be undertaken."* (Eshun, 2003, p. 301)

Is *Zulou* an Afrofuturist work?

I would say that *Zulou* refers to the Afrofuturistic field. It is a work where the Zuloues have different and superior knowledge than the British soldiers. I have reopened the film *Zulu*. This film is about a complicated event and, hopefully, makes room for reflection while changing the ending. Even though the Zuloues are technologically inferior to the British, they know the art of time travel, which changes the battle's result to their benefit. And, if you can time travel, why do you need the technology of gun-making? Are they not then the superior? This is an Afrofuturist element that is the driving force throughout the film.

"*The notion of a black secret technology allows Afrofuturism to reach a point of speculative acceleration.*" (Eshun, 2003, p. 295)

Artist references

Stumbling over other genius works during idea periods and trying not to steal (or at least not to steal too much), *Zulou* is highly inspired by Brecht's theatre theory, trying to link the Frankfurt school pessimism to the entertainment industry, making a dialectical synthesis.

Harun Farocki's work, *The World and the Inscription of War*, is a central reference of *Zulou*. There is a scene where two voice actors are adding the foley/dialogue to a porn film. The scene depicts how dubbing is done and how sound is most often added to movies in a controlled studio setting simulating emotions and ambience to fit the imagery and make it believable for the audience. Farocki was in his works focused on how video and photos were produced and used, to name examples how photos are produced for commercial and the use of video technology in warfare.

Sami Klemola, a Finnish composer, has composed *Jack and the Specifics* (2017) for foley artist Heikki Kossi and a chamber orchestra. In the concert the audience can see how the foley artist creates his sounds, he is the concert's soloist. Simon Steen Andersen's works are also relevant here. The piece *Asthma* (2017), created for accordion and video and performed by fellow Andreas Borregaard, presents the accordion's potential as a mimetic instrument, producing the video's foley sounds with the accordion in the composition. I believe that the similarity between our work processes of transposing the work techniques from the art world is somewhat common.

Regarding making live monuments – or the previously mentioned Denkmal – the Romanian artist, Alexandra Pirici is one of the most active performance artists working in that field today. With *Leaking Territories* (2017) from Sculpture Projects Münster, performed in the Friedenssaal, where the Treaty of Münster was signed, that ended the Thirty Years' War. A performance consisting of six ordinary dressed dancers restaging a history of conflicts, nationalism and protectionism up to our time. Pirici uses dancers and their bodies to reenact historical spaces and sculptures, which I find relevant to relate to history and discourse in political art. For example, in Jennifer Walshe's chamber opera *XXX LIVE NUDE GIRLS!!!* (2003) She uses the musicians and the ensemble to create the diegetic sounds and foley for the play. The opera is performed with barbie dolls, and in the narrative or libretto, Walshe contrasts the scenography with the barbie dolls and dream house

with a story of date rape, violence and death. Walshe says in an interview: "*The only place where I see heterosexual rape of a woman is in the opera house, and it is always music written by a man.*"⁹ (aaangelfilm, 2018) One motivation of *Zulou* was also to point to how the only female character was treated in this male-chauvinist environment

In *Dialog über Erde* (1994) for solo percussion, the composer Vinko Globokar uses percussion used in foley. With a water basin and a thunder plate, the use of microphones is central for the sounds of the composition.

The *Dogme 95* directors, Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg did the opposite of using foley in film. They only used sound recordings from the actual scenes when shooting their films, but their idea of setting up a clear and dogmatic concept and work platform has been an inspiration. I guess their movies have been an entrance to independent and art films for many people my age.

Conclusion

I envisioned the production and performance to be a more significant success than it maybe was. There were some bumps along the way, and I, of course, take full artistic responsibility for them.

With a rehearsal time of six days and two performances, this estimate was too ambitious. As a result of the economy, the budget was limited. One option was to shorten the presentation to 45 minutes, a duration that would be more agreeable, but I chose to use the whole film and the entire text from Johan Harstad.

I wanted to use the short rehearsal period often used in the contemporary music field. Theatre often uses a more extended period for rehearsal, between four-to-eight weeks. I also like working like this. The short rehearsal period forms the visuality of the work, making it crude and a bit unrehearsed, which I like in scenic, theatrical works. In hindsight, I should have set aside more time for a rehearsal, maybe three weeks. A longer production time would have given me enough time to rehearse, direct, and solve the technical problems I had with *Zulou*.

Unforeseen things happen

The rehearsal was also cut in two because of the coronavirus-related shutdown, resulting in losing a day of rehearsal. Also, splitting a rehearsal period in two like this made it hard to stay as focused as I had hoped.

⁹ 05:50 min in the interview.

I had an agreement with a foley artist to work on *Zulou*, with them completing one-third of all the foley so that we had an agreeable number of cues, around 600 each. But when he resigned two days before the performance, that resulted in even more cues for the two foley performers, which I would say is too much, but we did it. The female actor also said that she had been double booked two weeks before rehearsal, which was also unfortunate, but that happens.

I had most problems with synchronizing images and sounds. The actors had a screen with their dialogue, and the foley artists had a film screen with their cues for making the sounds. That was hard to solve, together with all the technicalities involved with sound software and microphones. That took much more time than expected. This, unfortunately, left a short time for directing the performance. An experience that I think is worth noting here is that I was director, scenographer, and technician at the same time. That is too much for one person. It is hard to switch between the roles. And, even if I would have tested the computers at home, something could always happen that causes stress and takes time. Test the equipment in the room you are using beforehand to solve problems before rehearsal!

Zulou was an experiment. I was not confident that it would be successful and work. However, in artistic research and art in general, it is crucial to experiment, take risks, and think of the artistic potential and not the result. I am pleased with the result, and I am happy it worked out, but it could have been better.

Chapter 7: *Reenactment/Microphone*

"*The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.*" (Wittgenstein, 1922, p. 74)

The title of this work is a bit complicated. But now it is finished, and I think I need to explain it. So I will write three passages on that in the following text to clarify my intention.

The Concert Link: <https://vimeo.com/323205364>

What is a reenactment?

I went for the definition of reenactment from *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, that named three areas or explanations for this term. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 07.02.2021)

1: to enact (something, such as a law) again

2: to act or perform again

3: to repeat the actions of (an earlier event or incident)

I will focus on 2 and 3 of the definition of this term. But can this be used on recordings of events? That is some of what I wanted to experiment with in this work.

Microphone

A microphone transforms sound waves into an electric signal, making it possible to record the sound material. It is also possible to physically record the soundwaves as Tomas Edison experimented with the phonograph, but transforming to electric signals is preferred. It is more controllable and easier to get an acceptable result.

Etymologically, the concept "microphone" comes from Latin and means small sound. (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2021) It can be understood as a tool for small sounds, as sounds with low amplitude, to be augmented. And this tool is and has for some time been a tool for recording low sounds. For example, interviews or monologues recorded in one's own home. Or dialogue on film, or to enhance the volume of what one person says in a crowd so that everyone can listen. Of course, the microphone is used in other areas than the voice, like field recording or recording

Foley sounds for film or on instruments for a recording. For this concert, the voice's amplification and recording are central.

The microphone as object and agent in events

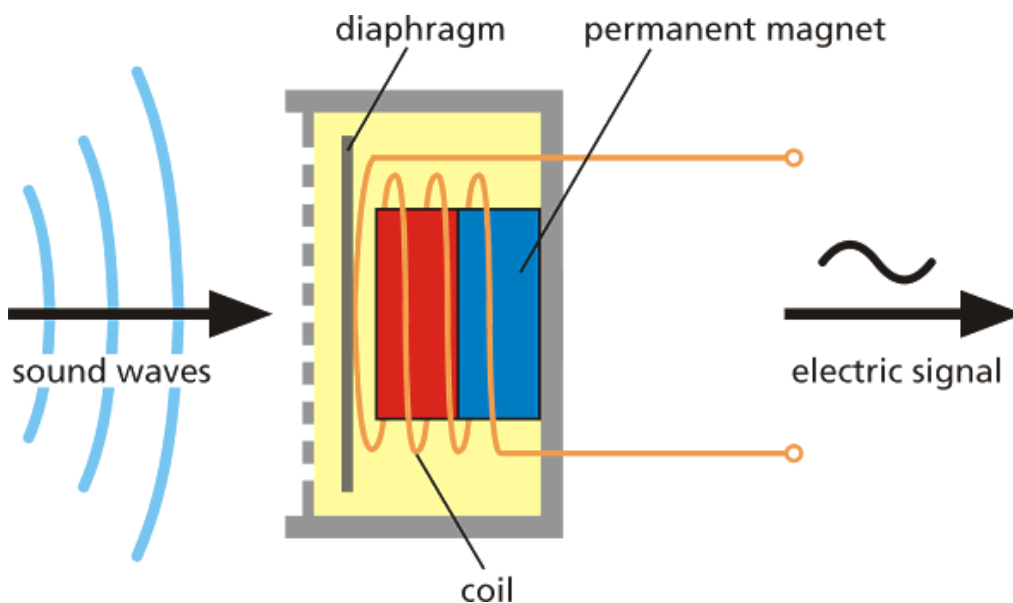
I wanted to use recordings of different events in this project, which was possible thanks to the invention of the microphone and the recorder that allows me to store the audio signals.

The microphone makes it possible to record voices of people and not have been "translated or mediated through the text technology and text-apparatuses to be stored. Here, I'm relying on Kittler's theoretical works. For example, a transcribed or written text often adds punctuation. It leaves out the pauses, repetitions, hesitations, and guttural fills of an oral text to make it more stringent, meaningful, and easy-readable. In my works I am interested in these sounds of the voice that are left out, because it is parts of our bodies and it often tells or communicates something.

Before the microphone one had to rely on transcriptions of what was being said. There was no other way to store spoken content. Throughout my artistic work, there is a fascination with recordings of people, mostly theoreticians and philosophers. I have appropriated the documentation and used them as material for my artistic work. For example, one does not know how Immanuel Kant talked or looked like because he lived before the invention of photography and the phonograph. What one had is the writing and portraits, painting, etchings, and drawings.

With audio or video recording, one has access to more elements than text does. Text and portrayal have the effect of distilling, leaving out residue, things that might not seem necessary. This phenomenon interests me.

Illustration of how a microphone works



The speaker

Interestingly and fitting for this project, the reversal of the microphone, a tool that converts the electrical signal back to sound waves, has a strong connection to the voice. It is quite fittingly called "*høytaler*," in Norwegian, "*Lautsprecher*," in German and "*speaker*," in English. I think it reveals a close connection to the voice and the speaker.

The title, is it a disjunction?

The third part of the title is the / between Reenactment and microphone. This sign often means to separate and usually designates a disjunction with the effect that it is either the first or the second term.

No, it is not

Here, this sign stands for how the computer stores, or archives, the material on the hard drive. This sign separates the folders' order in the archive in the computer to read and understand where to find the stored material. The material is often, to me at least, accessible and stored on the computer and I wanted to include this trace from the archiving, research and work-process in the title of the work.

Or is it?

One thought I had in mind was if there was possible to make a reenactment with recorded material. With the microphone storing the sounds. Is it possible to reenact it, open up work to see it differently, reflect upon what is happening by doing it, and can dated media be reflected through this action? *Reenactmen/Microphone* was an experiment produced with these questions in mind.

Collaboration

Reenactment/microphone was performed by Decoder Ensemble, an ensemble based in Hamburg, which has specialized in working in the expanded field of contemporary music, where often theatre, video, and performance are elements together with the musical elements. They performed this work, first as a shortened version at the *Blurred Edges Festival* in Hamburg in May 2018, and later in full version at *Klang Festival 2018* in Copenhagen.

Process and rehearsal

I sent the files and the score to Decoder Ensemble. We were to rehearse in Hamburg for a week, about a month before the concert. As it often is with me cooperating with musicians, there is a phase of confusion. I do not know to write score very well. It is hard to understand the concert's conceptual idea from the score in my experience. The easiest way is to have a meeting and present and discuss the concept for the work. After a meeting, we had a shared understanding of how to work together and what to rehearse.

Another problem was that I had put too many notes into the score. It was almost impossible to perform. I wanted the musicians to struggle, and it was an artistic choice I made to be part of the presentation. I wanted the musicians to perform concentrated and hectic, which they did.

The work platform, the tools for the work

I like working with mediated regression of a voice material in my artistic research. I transcribe a material that originally has been originally been vocally expressed with ease. This is then mediated through transcription software on a computer. The result is a score created or mediated with quite a different aesthetic result than the original. I often work with music through the transcription of recorded sound by translating the sounds to midi-notes, which can again be imported to a program turning the midi-notes into a musician's score. I do not read notes well myself, but I listen and use music software and their parameters to interpret or decide what notes to transcribe in to musical notes. There are not many parameters, but there are some. You can determine the tempo, the range, and the notes' resolution, if you, for example, want the 16th or 32nd notes to be the fastest. This technique can be compared to the resolution of a digital image, as how big the pixels are.

This program also analyses each note, and you can see if each note is in pitch and tune every recording to perfect pitch. That is how I believe this program is mainly used in music studios. I chose to record a representation of how the analyzed sound-material sounds through an oscillator, without the perfect-pitch tuning, and have it played simultaneously with the musicians' score. Since a score gives a formatted, well-tempered pitch performed by the musicians, this sounds a bit sour or out of tune when you listen to it together.

The audience or listener can in the concert hear the difference between the musician's and the oscillator's pitch. The result is a sort of messy, unfinished sound. It sounds somewhat out of tune. I wanted to add parts of the work process into the finished work as layers of the process are presented together in the composition. This combination adds an imperfection that interests me and adds resistance to listening to the project.

"There is no doubt that a theatre can be a very special place. It is like a magnifying glass, and also like a reducing lens." (Brook, 2008, p. 111)

Three parts

The concert lasts 45 minutes and consists of three parts. The parts are performed with a media-archaeological development of technologies in mind. The first part is a tape-recording of a monologue. The second part is a dialogue from a film scene, and the third part is a video-documentation of meetings of the Occupy Wall Street movement, taken with smartphones, which I downloaded from YouTube. The different parts are not to make a whole, but to be separate parts put together in a combination. They are juxtaposed so that the similarities and the differences are intended to generate meaning.

Part I: The Source of the Human No!

This part is based on an interview of the psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich in 1952, where he focuses on our culture's upbringing of our children, that he thinks is distanced and cold, without much body contact. In his view, this has affected our culture and, most importantly, this upbringing is reproduced when the children grow up and have their children. He also criticizes circumcision of boys:

"Take that poor penis. Take a knife, right? And start cutting. And everybody says, "It doesn't hurt." Everybody says, "No, it doesn't hurt." Get it? That's an excuse, of course, a subterfuge. They say that the sheaths of the nerve are not yet developed. Therefore, the sensation in the nerves is not yet developed. Therefore, the child doesn't feel a thing. Now, that's murder! Circumcision is one of the worst treatments for children. And what happens to them? You just look at them. They can't talk to you. They just cry. What they do is shrink. They contract, get away into the inside, away from that ugly world." -Wilhelm Reich (extract of the interview)

I have chosen not to transcribe the interview and split the elements between recording what is being said and parts where nobody says anything, where the noise of the recording technology and the noise of the room they talk in appear. Reich mainly talks for the ensemble and plays the tape/noise-recording in synchronization with the transcribed part. That part is also performed simultaneously with the oscillator part of the transcription. In this part, the content of what is being said is lost. I would say that the expressiveness of how Wilhelm Reich talks are kept in this part.

You can hear Reich recording. The drums and the piano is performing Reich, the cello and clarinet are performing the tape noise. No oscillator because the tuning is present in Reich himself.

Part II: The commentary

Part two is an appropriated scene from *Week-End*, a film written and directed in 1967 by Jean Luc Godard. This film is, in my interpretation, a dystopic near-future film, where compassion is non-existent. The scene shows how a session with the analyst and a client. The scene has a Godardian

pun written in text on the frame, "ANAL YSE." Much of the scene's content is a paraphrase of a description of an orgy from George Bataille's book *Story of the Eye*.

This scene is both disturbing and amusing. It is a therapy session put on its head, where it seems that the session's goal for the girl is to tell her story on a sexual encounter for the therapist to get aroused. It seems that the session is more for the therapist than for the client, who goes to therapy.

The therapy room is a room of sexual tension in films, where either a transference or attraction happens, with *In treatment* and *Sopranos*, to name two examples. This scene can also be Godard making fun of the Paris scene where psychoanalysis was extremely popular in the sixties and seventies. Today, Paris is the city with the most psychoanalysts.

I chose to separate the voices in the composition so that the women in Decoder Ensemble play a transcription of what the female role says, and the male performs the transcribed lines of the male character. The percussionist, Jonathan Shapiro, delivers a monologue on top of that, which is a part of the audio commentary appropriated from the DVD's extra-material was done by critic David Sterritt.

The DVD's format allows extra-material interviews with the director and actors and sometimes audio commentaries of film critics. This commentary is often a relatively cheaply produced recording of audio that you can hear simultaneously as watching the film. Here I got intrigued by the mismatch between the digitalized version of the film-classic, where DVDs or later Blu-rays focus that they have focused on making it as good as possible, similar to *Werktreue*. And the cheap recording of the film critic talking about the film. It sounds like a one-take recording, with all the stutterings and hesitations left in. That interested me, and I transcribed the text down for the percussionist to recite the text simultaneously as he performed the percussion part.

Here I left in all the extra-material of his voice and emphasized the hesitations and stutterings. Amusingly, the stutterings happen more often when he has to explain the orgy when the female character's story gets more explicit. In my ears, the hesitations and stutterings are so often and present that it is hard to hear what he says. It is both unvoluntarily amusing and bothering. The focus shifts toward the unwanted noises, and it is hard to understand what is said.

III: Human mic: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

The third part, called Human Mic, is the longest of the parts of *Reenactment/Microphone*. In all the three parts here, I have used documentation from The Occupy Wall Street movement, recorded by themselves and uploaded on YouTube.

A summary of the Occupy Wall Street movement

This movement is a movement against the growing economic inequality that Adbusters initiated. The movement was inspired by the Arab-spring and the Tahrir Square protests in Egypt, which got president Mubarak the Egyptian president, to abdicate in 2011, after having that position since 1981. But, unfortunately, the demand for democratic rights in The Middle East did not end well, with civil wars and the military taking power in, for example, Egypt, Syria and Libya.

The protesters camped in 2012 at the Zuccotti park, a square in the financial district of New York, where they organized a camp where between 100 and 200 people slept from September to the middle of November 2012.

The smartphone as a tool and an agent

As in the Arab spring, the smartphone and social media became a political tool for spreading their political demands and social mobilisation on a scale that had impact.

But watching the documentation from Zuccotti Park, I was surprised and fascinated by how small the park was and how few that camped/occupied the park, and the scale of how much coverage it got. The people who were part of the movement filmed with their smartphones and uploaded the material online, spreading the video worldwide. To considerable success, I would claim. The smartphone has changed the way we organize and how information is spread and flows differently and more immediately than leaflets.

Jesusish

As the protesters on Occupy Wall Street weren't allowed to camp there, they didn't have electricity to run speakers. The speakers and the talks they had were organized by a system of "the human mic." Sentences had to be cut up in short bits that the speaker says or shouts, then the audience repeats and shouts the words for the people more in the back to hear. What is said is then repeated as long as needed. If the crowd is large, one might need the audience to repeat what is said more times to hear what is said. One important thing is that the person to talk initiates the speech by shouting "*Mic check,*" and the crowd then shouting "*Mic check!*"

Splitting sentences into smaller parts required by using the mic check is a perfect example of mediation. If you do not repeat what is said, it all becomes a mess or puddle of words, and nobody can hear what is being said. In short, media structures the information it conveys. In this project, you can see three different examples, and some are better than others using a mic check. Digressions and jokes don't work that well doing a human mic.

Reflecting more around this, this must be an old way of sharing speeches and information to large crowds before the invention of the speaking trumpet, the megaphone, the microphone and the

speakers.¹⁰ I found it interesting that this was using the concept of mic here and not using a microphone, using a technology that probably was used before the invention of the microphone. I found this interesting, by creating a feedback loop between the past and the present use of this technology.

Dictate

From a different perspective, the human mic shares some common elements of the dictate, of people repeating or writing down what is said. This gives school memories where one had to write down what the teacher said and write it as correctly as possible. This can be read as an example of the disciplinary society. The leader dictates, and the people repeat what is being told, even though they might disagree. In short, there is little room for discussion or moderation of the information conveyed.

It is hard to disagree with what is being said during the Occupy Wall Street movement. Still, if one takes the structure and changes the information to something you disagree with or are ambivalent about, I'm not sure that would even work. Maybe human mic would collapse and not work.

The oscillator part of the process of the transcription-software

The oscillator-sound in parts II and III are remnants from the process of transcription software. I wanted the layer of the processes to be present in the final work, performed together with the musicians' final score.

The Decoder Ensemble

I collected three human mic speeches and downloaded them from YouTube. The speeches were split up into parts because of limitations in size in mega-bites on YouTube. Also, several people in the crowds were filming, giving me the possibility to switch camera angles of the speech while cutting the parts. It was important to get as much as possible of the speeches since what is said here is important and shows how they used the human mic and its works.

I decided to cut the speeches up and transcribe what the speaker says for the ensemble's score parts and then leave the repetition of the crowd's repetition so that the ensemble and the audience can shout together with the crowd in the video. Here, I left out the clarinet because it was too hard

¹⁰ On the paragraph heading I am here referring to Jesus speaking to large crowds, this is just an association, and I have no real grounds for this assumption.

to do both, to first play the part where the speaker said something and then shout the repetition together with the crowd. That was quite demanding and gave them a hectic presence on stage that I liked. Used here are first a speech by Judith Butler, then a part of the Occupy Wall Street movement that explains and demonstrates how the Human mic works, and then the third part is a speech by Slavoj Žižek. Interestingly I would propose that the personality of the speakers peep through the structure of the human mic. This structure seems to me that Žižek had most difficulties with his digressions, the flow of thought and that he had to split his jokes up into small parts, losing their flow, adding another layer of humour on top of the joke.

Image from above of Zucotti park, from Google Earth



Zuccotti Park, Broadway one square renamed Liberty square

Process

“theatre must be as much involved in the outside world as in his own craft.” (Brook, 2008, p. 86)

I had the part-projects first as different ideas for small projects to be made on performed in programmed concerts. But then I got the idea to force them together since I couldn't find the common denominator to fit together or connect the projects as an experiment. Then, in the back of

my mind, I had an installation of Bjarne Melgård, where not the works, but the concrete connection or bindings with thread, interested me. This insistent binding that for the spectator was impossible not to recognize as an element of the installation. This element also, in my view, transforms the different elements into an installation. And this was something that I first wanted to do. Later would I realize that the parts together had an internal logic or connection through the plane that is central in my work, through media-archaeology, the invention of sound technology and the technologies setting premises for the content of the stored media.

Also, I thought about how to produce it or have it performed. Since I must admit that I don't know enough about making a score, the transcribed scores are brute and often too difficult to perform, it has errors and hinders. Also, the element of dramaturgy, or to follow my conceptual ideas about the composition and not fall for the idea of composing the musical element. Like adding a development or elements of fear of the concert might bore the audience. I like the flatness of the concerts I make, and the shows can often be a un-evolving musically. It is not a goal that I am striving for but a result of what I do, following a concept or an idea in a project. I do not want to compress a timespan or force a narrative grid on top of my music theatre or artistic research works.

I was also interested in events where something, a change, has happened, where people want to change something. And the microphone and the different elements of the microphone development, an object, and device put an order to the various parts of the concert.

First, you have the recording of Wilhelm Reich's interview, a person that, if not central, has made a historical impact through his version of psychoanalysis. Then, with the film scene, the second part, where the sound, realistically relating to the film, is the diegetic sound. Something that is often composed afterwards and added to the film. Also, here I was appropriating a scene that again Godard paraphrased from the book *Story of The Eye*. And the third part of the "human mic," a functional, non-existent microphone or sound-system that works, where the microphone is present in the smart-phones recording the event of *Occupy Wall Street*, spreading their voice to the whole world.

The Ensemble

Part of the process was to figure out the ensemble to experiment with this part of my artistic research PhD. I was considering different musicians to find a concept of using a flat structure that I was interested in, where the technician, musician, actor, and composer can meet on an equal level. I am not saying that I succeed in that, but it is what I strive for.

I thought of blending actors and musicians, selecting persons I liked or wanted to work with, or asking an ensemble. But then, as a stroke of luck, I got a friend request on Facebook from a fellow composer. I then found out that he was part of the Decoder Ensemble that worked in the expanded field of contemporary music, theatre, and multi-media. I sent them the proposal, and they agreed to cooperate or perform my work. We decided on four musicians, and I wrote for the available voices, finding a solution to order and split the recorded material I wanted to use as a base for the concert.

The musician or actor as an expert

As a part of my work process on my PhD, coming Fine Art, for lack of a better term, meeting other the disciplines of theatre and contemporary music, that, have similarities. But I think something that differs in art is that the artist does most of the work himself, if it is not out of his or her reach. An expert hired to do the work and artist cannot do. This is both a result of hubris that the artist thinks he can do almost everything himself and a result of a pragmatic view that, as a result of lack of funding, the cheapest way is to do it yourself.

I would claim that the split between creating and performing artists is more present in theatre and contemporary music. That is also reflected in the economy of the grants that you can apply for the different disciplines. As I now have experience working in all three disciplines, I would say that working with experts in the field and having the economy to do so is preferable and does not hinder my work process.

"Shout, shout, let it all out." – Tears for fears, lyric from the song Shout.

To shout as an expression

In the third part, I wanted to experiment with the expression of shouting, in opposition to singing, the disciplined expression in contemporary music. Shouting together adds an element of expressivity and a contrast to the instrumentation. The content of what was shouted, I added in the scores' voices. It was not notated, as I wanted the realistic element of shouting, where mostly rhythm and shouting in synchronization, and where notation can be present but is less critical. I wanted the part to reflect the inclusive aspect of shouting is that everyone can shout, but not everybody can sing or are comfortable singing. This is the inclusive element and essential for being used in protests, as part three in this project is an example. This was an element that adds contrast to the instrumentation, the hope was also that the audience would start shouting, but that didn't happen. I could have written in the program that this was allowed for the audience to participate. But that would, be contradictory to the concept of the work and the documentation I used. The concert was performed in Hamburg and Copenhagen, and none of the audience participated in the shouting. This was something I hoped for, but it was, not crucial for the concept of the concert.

The structure

The turning point here was finding the common denominators of the voice used from different perspectives as carriers of information and as the main tools of expression in all the parts. The cooperation with Decoder Ensemble added their expertise and potential, where discussion and enthusiasm were elements, and managing to perform the hectic score in synchronization with the

film scenes. However, playing a score produced by a person with limited experience in producing scores is confusing, leaning heavily on the computer to transcribe and make notes performable.

Places for the concert

This work was first at the Blurred Edges Festival in Hamburg, in May 2018 and at Klang Festival, in June 2018. In Hamburg, the venue was almost a White-cube. The ensemble and the audience were sitting on the same floor. The musicians and audience were mingling and discussing after the concert. There was not a definite split between the stage and the audience, which I think was interesting.

At the Klang Festival in Copenhagen, the concert was in a former church turned into a concert venue. Similar to Kulturkirken Jacob, in Oslo. I must say that having a concert performed in a church without implementing the Church-architecture as a part or reference in work is complicated. A church has a strong aesthetic and intricate and long history, that is hard to overlook. It becomes, in my view, a battle of the focus of the audience which in my opinion is not ideal. One could read it as a juxtaposition between the concert and the church, with its long history of shaming and disciplining a people. Also, the Pussy Riot performance was performed in a church in Russia in 2012.

Reenactment/Microphone is one of my more musical works in my PhD, where I had not implemented a concept or had control over the place where the work was performed. This reflects the situation of how contemporary music is performed. The composer does not have an impact on place and scenography, which I think this is unsatisfactory. After the concert, I wanted more to control the location where my works are presented.

Relevant artistic references and works

Wilhelm Reich has been of interest to artists before, and I'd like to mention Mike Kelley's work *Orgone Shed* from 1992, which was exhibited at Documenta IX. Kelley constructed a shed with specifications of the Orgone closet, which was Wilhelm Reich's invention and was a central part of his therapy. A therapeutic element is also present in Lea porsager's *Anatta experiment*, which was exhibited at Documenta 13 in 2012, is about Monte Verità in Ascona, and as if not a reenactment, then relying on the site as a historical centre for spiritualism, occultism, and Dadaism for her artwork.

Other artists working with memory, archive, and reenactment are Alexandra Pirici and Manuel Pelmus with their collaborative performance-work, *Retrospective, homage, a monument* (2013). The performance was the Romanian contribution to the 55th Venice Biennial. Their work was a performance that reenacted the Biennial's history, with the empty Romanian Pavilion and five dancers' bodies as the material for their choreographed.

In *The Third Memory* from 1999, by Pierre Huyghe, the video is a reenactment based on a bank robbery that was earlier made into a movie, *Dog Day Afternoon*, by Sidney Lumet. In the video *The Third Memory*, Huyghe reenacts or maybe retells the robbery and how it differs from the film, told by the main character, the original robber John Wojtowicz. The work thematizes how the entertainment industry blends with our memory and creates a tension between fact and fiction in a reenactment that maybe creates even more confusion about what really happened. The robbers were inspired by the movie *The Godfather* on how to perform the robbery, which points to how strong the entertainment- films and imagery of popular culture impacts the choices one makes.

Of a composer that uses documentarist strategies in their contemporary music, I want to mention Johannes Kreidler's *The Wires* (2016), for video, tape and cello, where he uses the shape of different patents of barbed wire to be scanned and translated to music for cello. Barbed wire is used on borders and was much used during the first world war in the trenches and has a brutal history. I find Kreidler's use and transformation of the formal similarity of barbed wire and the cello strings interesting with still showing the video of the problematic material.

Also, Erwin Piscator is an essential reference for my use of documentarist strategies. As a contemporary of and a collaborator of Brecht and also working with epic theatre. One thing that separates Piscator's from Brecht's work field is his use of documented material, screened as photos and videos in his productions. He also focused on creating theatre productions of events, creating a theatre for the working class in Germany.

Is it a reenactment?

It was initially thought of to be a reenactment, and I find it valuable to point in the direction of the artist's strategy of reenactment. I would claim it is relevant in *Reenactment/Microphone* where fiction, memory and documentation blend and interfere with each other. I intended to make the audience read, experience, and reflect on the work as a reenactment. To use material from a film, a monologue from an interview, and documentation from an event to compose a music concert with theatrical elements.

Chapter 8: *Hertzkin*

"The example of Miss Helen Keller shows that education can take place provided that communication in both directions between teacher and pupil can take place by some means or other." (Alan Turing, 1950, p. 456)

Hertzkin is a micro-tonal/multimedia/performative work written for the artist-researcher Sanae Yoshida. The title *Hertzkin* is a pun on the German series of TV films *Herzkin* – translated into English as heart cinema – which are emotional and melodramatic films produced for and screened on television. These are films produced to evoke emotions – romantic films, for example. Hertz is also the unit used to measure tonal pitch, which is central in this micro-tonal composition. The documentation of Helen Keller's voice is analyzed in hertz and is the basis for creating the scale for *Hertzkin*. The concert was a commission for artistic research fellow Sanae Yoshida to be performed as a part of her artistic research on the micro-tonal piano. *Hertzkin* has a duration of around 23 minutes.

Link to documentation of the piece: <https://vimeo.com/370480386>

The parts of *Hertzkin*

Part 1: Documentation/facsimile

Part 2: Melodrama

Part 3: Interpretation

The phenomenon of Helen Keller

I have used actual documentation of Hellen Keller, together with scenes from *The Miracle Worker* (1962), a fictional film based on her story about a girl who, as a consequence of illness, became both deaf and blind as a baby, making it impossible for her to communicate.

Fortunately, Helen Keller was born into a family of some wealth, and, as a last resort, Anne Sullivan was hired to see if Helen could learn to communicate. If not, she would be written off as intellectually disabled and sent to an asylum. After much effort, Helen Keller learned to speak, becoming an active part of the American political society. She was a public figure, and her life story

made her a famous person, acting in films and on Broadway. Additionally, she wrote and published books and worked towards improving the lives of deaf and deaf-blind people.

I got interested in the phenomenon of Helen Keller when I found documentation of her life and watched explanations of how she learned to communicate. In my head, it seemed impossible that a deaf-blind person could speak – how does the person understand how to speak correctly and how can communication take place? The solution is quite simple and very clever. The solution is portrayed in the video of *Hertzkin*. Anne Sullivan lets Helen Keller experience objects to establish a connection to the outer world in my understanding of it. As well as helping her learn words by sensing the vibrations with her hand on Anne's throat and fingers in her mouth, feeling how the mouth and tongue work during pronunciation. Through rehearsal, repetition, and patience, Helen learned to talk.

I think of the Lacanian chain of signifiers in the experience of water as wet. Here, realizing the Kantian a priori knowledge with the often-used example of water is wet, includes wetness alongside the term water, and realizing that you do not need the outer world to know or confirm this. If you follow this thought, Helen Keller already knew the terms "water" and "wet," and I would guess she knew that water is wet, but she needs to experience the water to understand it. The film *The Miracle Worker* supports this. Thus, there is more of a link or interplay between the outer and the inner world that is at play here; it is the first link to Helen Keller experiencing the world of language as a requirement to understanding.

The video shows Helen Keller's first spoken sentence was "*I am not dumb now.*" I find the double meaning of dumb significant because dumb can mean mean that you cannot speak, but it can also mean stupid or unintelligent. In my interpretation of it, there is a literary element to it. It seems suitable to be a story or a novel, or maybe a melodramatic Hollywood film.

Keller would be sent to an asylum for the mentally ill if she had not had the opportunity to learn to speak and understand and experience the world. You would need, put it in Lacanian terms, the Point de Capiton – the connections between the chain of signifiers.

The other is to focus on her life story as, in many ways, a symbol of the American Dream and of not giving up. In her upbringing, she was regarded as an intellectually disabled person, nearly locked away, but via learning to communicate, she became an active figure in society.

Let us return, however, to making a scale-out of Helen Keller's voice. First, I collected all the audio and video material I could find and then transcribed it with a computer program. Next, I wrote down each note's pitch aberration – by that, I mean how much each note the program found in her voice was lower or higher than the full-tempered scale. After doing this, I sorted the notes to see how many instances of each note I had found. Finally, I summed up each note and found the mean value of each note's aberration.

One other interesting part I found in the documentation is that her teacher Anne Sullivan spent the rest of her life living with Helen, and that she repeats or explains what Helen Keller says in most recordings. It is almost impossible to understand what Helen says without Anne Sullivan as interpreter. And I find this repetition interesting.

Documentation of Helen Keller, sensing the vibrations from the music



Concept

Hertzkin is divided into three parts, each focusing on different elements of the story of Helen Keller. The first part is mainly based on film recordings of her, centred around describing her life and how she learned to talk. In addition, I thought it was interesting to use recordings from a blind and deaf person to make a composition, as she was a person who, in many ways, was shut off from fully experiencing the world, lacking two of the most important senses.

The second part focuses on one of the films based on her life, *The Miracle Worker*, a black-and-white film from 1962. During my research, I was shocked by how Helen Keller was treated in the movie. Especially by the amount of force used on her due to her affective states. By grabbing her with force and throwing water in her face. Even though this was a family/children's film from 1962, I think it would be unthinkable today. In a newer version from 2000, this scene is left out.

The use of force – a negative sanction – to do good is more problematic today than sixty or a hundred years ago, though I assume it is still done in psychiatry, even to children, as there probably is no other way. Here, I chose these scenes of affect and fight and transcribed Helen's utterances for Sanae to perform using the scale, with Anne's voice replaced with a transcription for an oscillator on a synthesizer.

In the second part, which I label *Melodrama*, there is a lot of throwing of cutlery and tipping over a vase – both things Sanae had to do as the performer. I wrote down all the instructions in the score I made for her.

Affect and asylum

The underlying conflict in the documentation of the life of Helen Keller is that she was affective and aggressive, which was understandable since she was trapped in a chaotic and hard-to-understand world. Her parents' last attempt was hiring Ann Sullivan to teach or treat Keller, and if that did not work, she would be sent to an asylum, as is explained in the film. The family has the means to hire an expert, but that calls to mind all the other cases that we are unable to be treated, making me wonder about their destinies.

Keller later worked tirelessly to improve the lives of deaf and mute people, and her impact here is undeniable and very impressive. Several scenes document her travelling all over the world to help.

Part 1: Documentation/facsimile

The first part of *Hertz kino* consists of a collection of documentation of Helen Keller's life. All the spoken word in this part is the material the microtonal scale is calculated and based on.

Part 2 Melodrama

In Part 2, named *Melodrama*, the video material portrays how Helen Keller is treated in her affective states in the film *The Miracle Worker*, a family film, linking her treatment to both her limits and the fact that she is spoiled. There is a lot of throwing of items, especially spoons.

I have selected film scenes where Helen, in my opinion, is treated coldly and in a disciplinary way, for example a scene where Helen is taught how to eat with cutlery in quite a violent and disciplinary way. These scenes were, for me, unpleasant to watch, and I wanted to show them to the audience. The scenes are taken out of their context when appropriating, cutting out, and collecting material, but their power is still quite apparent for a viewer, even today. Often, from my experience, a film from the past reveals something that was taken for granted or was unproblematic when it was made, like smoking in older movies. The violent and affective scenes in *The Miracle Worker* might be included to create drama, but, subjectively, I think the degree of these scenes tells us something of the past regarding how one behaved towards emotional children. Another example of this can be seen in the Swedish film *Emil i Lönneberga* (1971). The father is violent towards his son to an unacceptable degree, in a way that is, at least for me, problematic to watch today.

Part 3 Interpretation

The third part is, in many ways, a coda, starting during the applause and intending to distinguish itself from the applause of concerts. This part is based on a recording from an American preacher saying that Helen Keller is a Satanist and explaining why. With this part, I meant to break from the emotional and melodramatic, injecting something absurd.

There is an internet phenomenon that people – mainly Americans – publish videos stating that Helen Keller was a hoax. I find this suspicion a bit curious, as I could think of many things that would be more worthy of my time. I have not researched this enough, but I assume that the fantastic story of Helen Keller, a blind and deaf woman becoming a celebrity phenomenon, can be hard to accept for some. But still, I find this interesting. Of course, this has the same elements as conspiracy theories.

Compositional elements

Micro-tonal, the plane of possibility and matrix

After a workshop with Sanae, we found that one key on the grand piano could be detuned five half-notes; with that, I could get five extra keys in an octave of my new tuning. I went back to my findings and determined the five notes used the most in Helen Keller's voice, giving two notes each of the five most-used notes. I then had to recalculate the scale to make a revised Helen Keller Scale.

Each of the five most-used notes has an extra key in the scale – for example, there are two C4 keys, one -38 cents and the other +28. She speaks with quite a limited voice range; one could say that this is not a scale, since the tones are not the same through the octaves, but I found it more important to use the recordings of Helen Keller as a base for the notes that were being played in *Hertzkinö*. It was also essential to use the scale on the second part of the composition since it was based on scenes from the film.

The scale Note and tuning of *Hertzkinö*

Midi-note #	Selected notes	Note and tuning
52	C5	G4-24
51	H4	Gb4-47
50	A#4	F4-05
49	A4	E4+22

48	G#4	E4-30
47	G4	Eb4+17
46	Gb4	Eb4-44
45	F4	D4+24
44	E4	D4-28
43	Eb4	Db4+28
42	D4	Db4-31
41	Db4	C4+28
40	C4	C4-38
39	B3	B3-29
38	Bb3	Bb3-7
37	A3	A3+24
36	Ab3	Ab3-3
35	G3	G3+1
34	Gb3	Gb3-33
33	F3	F3-35
32	E3	E3-39
31	Eb3	Eb3-17
30	D3	D3+6
29	Db3	Db3+38
27	B2	B2+40
24	G#2	G#2+25
22	Gb2	Gb2+14
21	F2	F2-4
17	C#2	C#1+38

Transcription

Transcription is the work platform for how I make music and works for the contemporary music field. It has two meanings that I will expound upon here. The first is to write un-notated music down to scores. The second is used in linguistics to write down spoken words. In my view, I am here in the middle-ground between these ways of transcribing. I am transcribing – into music – recorded content of something someone said and incorporating what is said. This strategy is my conceptual platform, and it creates a different structure or result: the music. I try to be as close to the transcribed material as possible and am not interested in using compositional elements to create more musical results.

Monologue

The Korg Monologue synthesizer portrays both Anne Sullivan and the sound of the audience as the sound source. This synthesizer fits as a reference for two reasons: First, it is the only mass-produced synthesizer today. The ability to program your micro-tonal scales is implemented as a function. Second, I also chose it because of the word Monologue in its name, which I think is suitable since the documentation of Helen Keller features her speaking mainly in monologues that seem to fit her ability to communicate. When having a multiple-person dialogue, one must listen and understand other people, waiting for their turn to speak; I can imagine this is quite hard when blind and deaf.

Picture of the Korg Monologue



Affect and triggers

The film scenes feature quite a bit of kicking the floor and short percussive sounds as Anne and Helen struggle and fight. I transcribed these sounds for mechanical triggers that recreated knocking sounds on the cover on the grand piano synchronized with the sounds on the film scenes.¹¹

Dramaturgical elements

Probably because I am not accustomed to the concert setting of contemporary music, I have found it strange that contemporary music often has aligned itself with the concert tradition that, I think,

¹¹ Here, I had the sound technician worried because of the crude mechanic of knocking on a grand piano worth one million Norwegian kroner, but it worked.

comes from classical music. To me, it appears dated, bizarre, and bourgeois. I think a solo concert with compositions for the grand piano is a good example.

Foley

Foley is the art of using objects to create sound effects for the film. Often, there is a dramatic element to the foley where one uses a more impactful sound than how it sounds in real life. For example, walking often produces much louder sounds in the film. Here, I transcribed some foley sounds that Sanae also had to make while playing the grand piano at the concert. They were marked in a separate voice in the score for *Hertzkinno*. The most apparent and common cue was throwing spoons onto the floor and trying out different spoons and cutlery for the sound. We ended up using silver cutlery, which makes quite a musical ringing sound, quite different from ordinary stainless steel cutlery. Luckily, I had inherited some we could use.

Humour and discomfort

In *Hertzkinno*, I wanted to play with these gestures, traditions, and habits. The idea was that Sanae should break this controlled space using foley, throwing spoons and forks and adding the sound of a glass bowl falling to the ground. The idea was to experiment if it is possible to have humoristic elements while creating some discomfort in experiencing the work, trying to mix the sensations to create a unique space to think about this. In many ways, Helen Keller was privileged in her position, with a family that could offer her a tutor, and, through hard work, she could finally communicate with her surroundings. However, her childhood also seemed quite rough, although I do not have any other sources stating that, other than the movie. The affective scenes mixed with the quite harsh discipline from the movie are hard to watch. The disciplining of the child seemed unnecessary and too hard to me.

This break or collision was intended to make a space to experience the documentation of Helen Keller's life and its interpretation by the entertainment industry, allowing the audience to reflect on the material. In my perspective, the actual documentation of Helen Keller is more interesting than the movie based on her life.

Deafness

Being deaf is a great fear for humans, especially composers. But, of course, hearing is the most crucial perception, and, without it, it is almost impossible to make or play music. In music history, there is the event of Beethoven losing his hearing, causing fright and depressive symptoms. Fascinatingly, however, he continued to compose works, including maybe his most acknowledged composition, *Symphony No. 9* (1824).

As for other composers that worked through deafness, Helmut Oehring was brought up by deaf-mute parents. His mother tongue is German sign language. His upbringing is something he has implemented in his scenic works, together with his compositions, for example in *Wrong SCHAUKELN - ESSEN - SAFT (aus: Irrenoffensive)* (1993-95) for deaf singer and ensemble.

Also, Kristine Tjøgersen's audio-visual composition *Mistérios do Corpo* from 2017 references a work in a similar field, portraying people who use their bodies differently and in unusual ways. Here the sounds and rhythms that multi-instrumentalist Hermeto Pascoal performs on his body are transcribed to score for string quartet. From my perspective, this composition pinpoints otherness and how bodies can sound and can expand our view of the normal body.

Of other composers and their uses of transcription in music, I want to mention Carola Bauckholt's *Witten Vakuum* (2019-2020), for two female singers and vacuum cleaners. The singers use the sucking effect of the vacuum cleaner to make vocal sounds with their lips and oral cavity, sounds that one seldom hears in a concert. The playful and humoristic aspect of the composition breaks with the controlled and serious situation that a concert often is. This I find inspiring.

Also, I think Peter Ablinger's *A Letter from Schoenberg* (1996), where Ablinger has transcribed a composition for grand piano, a dictation for a letter the composer Arnold Schoenberg dictates, where you get the impression of how angry he is while dictating the letter. The composition is performed synchronously with the audio recording of the dictation. The emotional side of the work, presenting the anger, is relevant to my work, juxtaposed with the controlled virtuosity of the pianist.

The relation to the theme of my PhD

Helen Keller is a subaltern, a voiceless being existing within what I understand as a disciplinary regime. Discipline and punishment are central elements in learning and inter-relational behaviour, with the relationship between knowledge and power used to categorize and regulate humans, which is what I am researching in my PhD- To categorize can quite easily lead to power treating people poorly. For example, in Norway, we have a shameful history of lobotomizing people in mental institutions, which ended in 1974.

Theory

The primary theoretical references are Foucault's theories with the productive relation between power and knowledge. I think the selected film scenes and the life of Helen Keller are examples of how the knowledge regimes, and their relation to institutions work: In" *a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogeneous social body but also playing a part in classification, hierarchization and the distribution of rank. In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine*

levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another."
(Foucault, 1995, p. 184)

I am also inspired by the language theory of Lacan, detailing the subject's entrance and upbringing through learning the "imagery" and "symbolic." Images and experiences create your understanding of the world – for example, experiencing what wetness is in relation to water.

Finally, I found melodrama as a productive concept in an article of Thomas Elsaesser:

"One of the characteristic features of melodramas, in general, is that they concentrate on the point of view of the victim: what makes the films mentioned above exceptional is the way they manage to present all the characters convincingly as victims." (Elsaesser, 1991, p. 86)

Still from the concert:



Chapter 9: *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*

Now, we will experience a shift in time in the reflection; this chapter is about *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)* It is unfolding as I write this. I usually only write after the work is finished and has been presented because I like to have an overview before I reflect on the work. Furthermore, my artworks are idea-based, so the idea and research are central components of the work.

This work has not been produced yet. However, I have collected the material consisting of psychiatric interviews between psychiatrists/psychologists and the patient in the form of around 18 hours of video material and about 100 images of the mentally ill from the *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*, which details "hysterical" women diagnosed by Jean-Martin Charcot, as well as two sessions by Wilhelm Reich analyzing the hysterical character. These provided a didactic perspective for American therapists, presenting his version of psychoanalysis – vegetotherapy – and his version of the hysterical character.

Link to Part 1: <https://vimeo.com/521598272/ff8ac4b804>

Link ot Part 3: <https://vimeo.com/521573223/f6a23cc895>

The material is made up of historical facsimiles – copies of actual documentation. In this text on *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*, I will be more able to present how I view this work and what I intend to do with it, even more so than in the former texts. I have decided not to focus on details. Instead, the emphasis will be on the structure of the work and where I want to go with it. What is the function? What is the intention of making this work?

The actual artistic result may differ from what I put into words here. The process, the idea, and the material are, after all, developed to such an extent that I think I can say the base and structure will be the same when the presentation is realized. I hope this map corresponds to the terrain for the reader reading the text and watching the finished work either as a presentation or its documentation.

In my artistic research, I am interested in – or maybe fascinated with – psychoanalysis, which runs through my artistic productions as a theoretical reference. Art production, however, is not therapy. I find psychoanalysis interesting and study it mainly concerning art theory and my art production. It is a theoretical platform that resonates with my artistic research and work.

I think Wilhelm Reich is the therapist that treats his patients best. His female patients are not just cases but are treated as real people. Reich is admittedly a problematic figure in psychology, excluded from The International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) in 1934. Nevertheless, he has

fascinated the art field, a concept carried on for example by Mike Kelley's work *Orgone Shed Plans* (1992).

Diagnostically dated

I put my finger on the diagnostic criteria through the outdated and problematic diagnosis of the hysteric. This diagnosis includes symptoms with complicated histories central in the establishment of modern psychology through Charcot, Janet, and Freud. It was incorporated as a diagnosis but then removed from *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, subsequently shortened to DSM. It was taken out of the third version, together with homosexuality. In the current fifth version, which came out in 2013, the diagnosis is still out of the manual, but the word hysterical is mentioned three times as a descriptive adjective or adverb.

Does it say something about diagnostics

I am not alone in claiming that psychology is a young scientific discipline. In Badiou's interview on Foucault, he says: "*Is psychology a science? What I am saying now is a banality, but I think it is important, because it is publicly notorious that the scientific status of psychology is not, first of all, well established and, secondly, that it is not at all clear.*" (Tzuchien & Bianco, 2013, p. 47)

Documentation made around sixty years ago seems quite dated, just as documentation of Americans' daily lives from sixty years seems dated today. Psychology, however, is a scientific field, leading me to consider what the therapists say about their patients in the material. I think they focus on their patients being able to function in society instead of being happy, which reveals something interesting and relevant.

It is essential to mention that the second part is based on video material presentations of diagnosed people. The diagnoses and knowledge of the diagnoses are in focus here, not the person who was struggling. The examination is a presentation of knowledge for other people. What interests me most is the datedness. This historical perspective is relevant today, causing us to question which diagnoses or treatments will seem problematic sixty years in the future when we look back.

Historical painting of Charcot, *A Clinical Lesson at the Salpêtrière* by André Brouillet



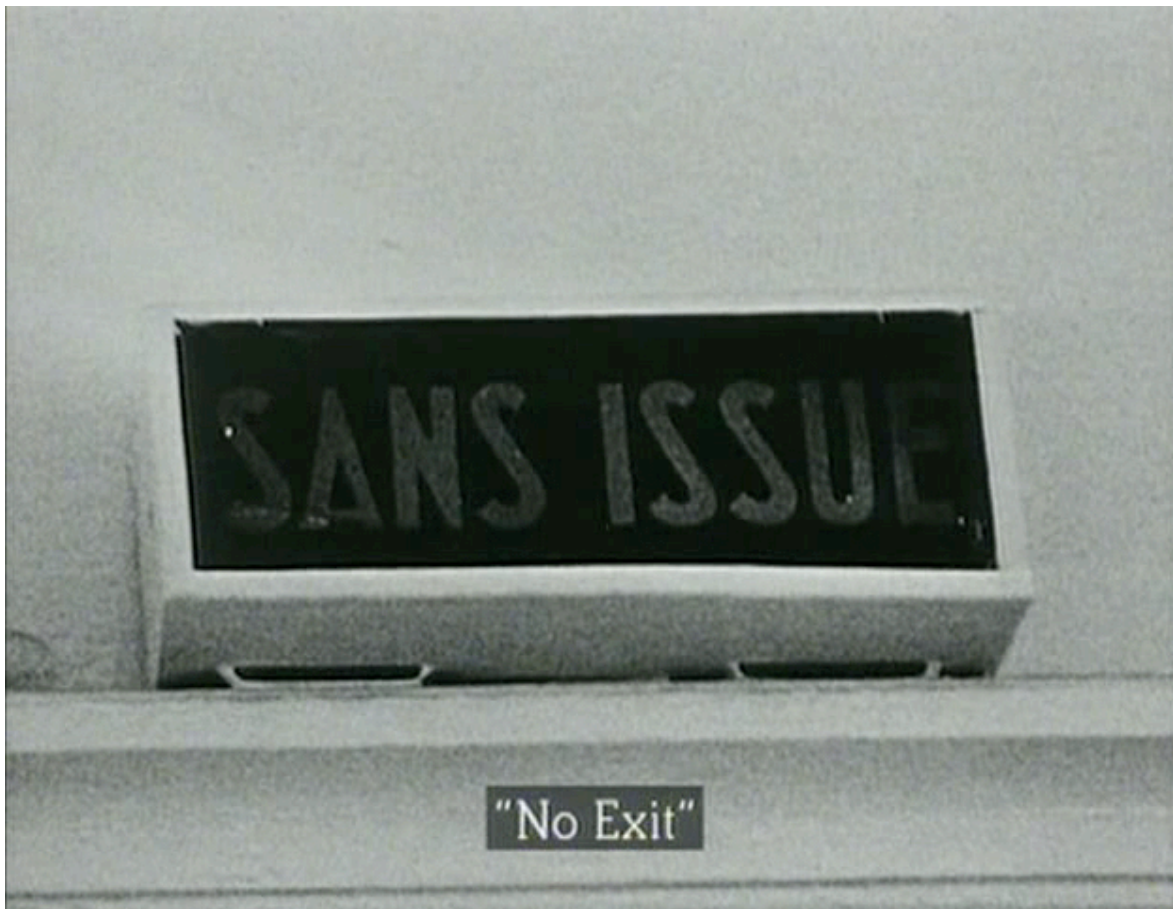
Remarks on the historical painting

Above is a painting by André Brouillet from 1887, portraying Charcot giving a clinical demonstration of hysteria for medical students. Interestingly, this historical painting represents an event worthy of being painted, storing this compressed and idealized portrayal of Charcot's demonstration of hysteria for history. Interestingly, Charcot was an early user of photography that would later compete with the medium of the painting.

Video-sculpture

As an additional element or work in *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!)*, I made a video sculpture of a video still from a documentary on the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. The video will be presented on a video monitor as a part of the happening.

Video-still *No Exit*



I find it symptomatic that this depicts the exit sign above the door in Pavillon Magnan at St. Anne's Hospital in Paris. Here, the sign is negated into "*sans issue*" (in English, "*No exit*"). There is no way for the patients to leave because they are confined and locked in. In short, the psychiatrists working there decide when you are allowed to go.

Part 1: *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*

The materials for the first part of *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!)* are images of women diagnosed with hysteria produced by Jean-Martin Charcot in 1878. The French neurologist and professor of anatomical pathology is known for his work at La Salpêtrière, an institution inhabited by women with mental problems. Here, he worked on the use of hypnosis in the treatment of these women and hysteria.

Title page of *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*

ICONOGRAPHIE
PHOTOGRAPHIQUE

DE LA

SALPÊTRIÈRE

(SERVICE DE M. CHARCOT)

PAR

BOURNEVILLE ET P. REGNARD



PARIS

Aux bureaux du PROGRÈS MÉDICAL V. ADRIEN DELAHAYE & C^e, Libraires-Éditeurs
6, rue des Écoles, 6. Place de l'École-de-Médecine

1878

A central element here is the photographs he took of the women, imagery that was implemented in his study of the hysteric, using the technology of photography in science, which was relatively new at the time. The photographic technology had been accessible for fewer than 60 years if Niepce's photograph of Pope Pius VII from 1822 was the first.

I got access to the images and was interested in their quality, their use in the scientific study here, and their disturbing aspects. I assume that the women did not volunteer or agree to take their images for Charcot's use. Their scientific uses are objects of indexicalization, a central part of the history of photography. This relation correlates to the concept of the subaltern as a subject without a voice, position or power to make decisions or decide if they want to participate. The subaltern is a powerless subject without rights, used as cases in the discourse on hysteria. Here, Giorgio Agamben's concept of homo sacer is also relevant and productive.

I wanted to present these images – preferably all several hundred of them – but I think I will have to set a time limit for the duration of this part of around 30 minutes. I want to use similar technology to photography to create a phasing-out of a counterforce. To see if it is still possible to see the imagery, getting close to subliminal suggestions, with content presented in a flash of time, the viewer would not consciously be aware that he perceives the imagery subconsciously.

In the front

In the foreground of the images in the video is the motive: the patients, the examples of the diagnosis. In the videos, the psychiatric discourse is manifested or presented in the expert, with the therapist steering the conversation.

The background

In the photographs produced by Charcot, the background of this material shows the interior of the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital – the beds, the floorings, and the walls tell us something of the conditions living inside the hospital.

In the video material, the background is changed to the therapist's office. The period in which the material has been produced is evident, especially with the apparent cigarette smoking. The patients do not inhabit similar interior spaces, even though I have no evidence of that.

In the background is the contentum, which is essential as content and the motivation for producing the work. The diegetic sounds it creates are not crucial for the work initially being produced but because of the social relation of people being unrehearsed and being together. The technical sounds include analogue glitches and the buzzing of the motor of the tape recorder

recording the audio material, together with the background noise. I gave one musician the role of presenting the transcribed noise performed with the transcribed dialogue or communication.

The use of flash

I want to use a flash to trigger the imagery projected, with the images presented for as long as the light is visible, with the photos fading together. The idea is to use the flash to indicate the time it took to take these images and reopen the imagery for an audience. A common denominator of Charcot's pictures is the use of flash, which one had to use to get imagery of objects or subjects in motion. More light requires shorter shutter settings for the camera. A flash impacts the visual appearance of the imagery that is visible in Charcot's images. The idea is to use a flash to emphasize the aggressiveness of the photos. The flashed light is uncomfortable for the subjects being photographed and for the viewer watching (or trying to watch) the pictures presented.¹²

Part 2: The Reich-recording, a hunt from memory

This part was the first idea that I had for the work. I remembered a therapist, Bjørn Blumenthal, and his lecture at the Office of Contemporary Art in Oslo as a part of a seminar for the exhibition *Whatever Happened to Sex in Scandinavia?* Blumenthal also had a tape recorder containing a session by the vegetotherapist Wilhelm Reich, presenting how he analyzed his patients. I found this quite interesting. Reich is now a somewhat disregarded psychoanalyst who took his own theoretic path, but he was central in the development of psychoanalysis. His theories focused on the blockings in the body as central to therapy. He developed this focus into some quite eccentric ideas on orgasm energy. Later, he was charged for fraud of the first magnitude in the USA and was sentenced to jail for two years.

I managed to find the therapist with the recording. He had retired but allowed me to borrow the tape reel from him to digitize it. I was excited, feeling like a detective or a journalist who had tracked down a real scoop. The next problem was to transfer the tape to an audio file, which was more complicated than I had initially thought. Nobody does that anymore. I first asked Notam, but they did not have the apparatus anymore. They suggested I contact Audun Strype, but he also said he did not do that kind of work anymore. In addition, the machine required maintenance, and it was cumbersome, so he had stopped doing it.

Was this physical storage with the dialogue of Wilhelm Reich stuck on this old tape forever? Would it slowly degrade, like William Basinski's *The Disintegration Loops* (2002/2003), which used old

¹² I get to use two of my favourite sounds here: the high-frequency sound of a flash charging and the sound of a flash releasing. Not to put too much of me into this, but the flash used is the flash we used to take photos during my upbringing. Maybe this is my Proustian moment. That was also a flash – a flashback. Hopefully, this reflection will not be around 3,000 pages. Perhaps I should print it on a text roll. After all, a PDF is sort of a text roll.

tape loops that disintegrated or corroded while being played? Every storage medium and material has its time limit before it disappears.

Then I met Ulf in the coffee line at the Norwegian Academy of Music. He recommended I contact the National Library, which has a department for digitizing different materials for the national archive. I did so, and they agreed to do it, with the requirement that they could make a copy of the material and that I paid a small fee. I then sent the tape reel in the post to their department in Mo i Rana for digitalization. It felt like an outdated way to send material, letting go of the only copy of the tape. There was a risk that it could be lost or damaged in the mail. But it was not, and I received a file, and the tape was returned to Blumenthal.

I was curious and excited. I had only heard a short snippet of the material at the presentation ten years ago, and now I could listen, trying to understand the material and hopefully work with it.

I'm recording a recording in a room

I started the file, put on my best headphones, and I heard the voice of Reich. I recognized it from the former presentation and from other monologues he had recorded, which I had worked with in *Reenactment/Microphone*. I heard his voice, but I couldn't understand what he said. Confusion! Disappointment! Despair! What was the problem? Was my hearing fading?¹³

Fortunately, that was not the case. I called Blumenthal, and he explained that this recording of Reich was copied from a former recording he accessed through Reich's biographer Myron Sharaf when he had been to Norway to present Reich's work. But Blumenthal did not have a cable to connect the devices, so he used two tape recorders, with one playing the Reich material and the other recording with its microphone. Together with the addition of the ambience from the recording room, this method made it quite impossible to get the information of what was being said. It is interesting in my ears, remembering Kittler's thoughts of the noise as a part of the different mediums; the noise gets accentuated here through the re-recording. The voices were muddy, with the result that it was impossible to understand what was said. The German media archaeologist Kittler writes: "*while media were engulfed by the noise of the real - the fuzziness of cinematic pictures, the hissing of tape recordings.*" (Kittler, 1999, p. 14)

What to do when I did not get what was being said? How can I use it when I do not know the content? He might say something I do not agree with or want to redistribute as part of my research and production. Hesitant and unsure, I left the material to focus on other works hoping that a solution would appear.

And it did. I got the idea to contact the Wilhelm Reich Museum in Rangeley, Maine, which was an institute centred around the research and theories of Wilhelm Reich. I sent them the recording and

¹³ Did I have, like Beethoven, to compose my final work for my PhD as deaf, end my career, and start to work at Clas Ohlson, as Albert Åberg does in Johan Harstad's book *Hasselby?* (2008)

asked if they either had a transcript of it or a better recording and Dr James Strick, from the board of directors of the Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust, sent me a digitized recording that was of better quality. I was back on track. It was still hard to understand what he was saying, as Reich's diction was not the best. Originally from Austria, he was speaking American English with an Austrian accent quite quickly. Most of it was, however, possible to transcribe.

Reich's analysis – the hysteric character

The title of the file was *The Hysteric Character*. It was a presentation of Reich's character analysis, how he analyzed people who were struggling, didactically presenting and practically showing some of them. What strikes me in this recording is Reich's respect for the clients, actively asking them how they were doing and giving them positive remarks. Another thing about his analysis is its physicality, with the body at its centre and prominent in therapy. I will not go too deep into Reich's character analysis. Still, it did function as both a problematic relation being analyzed and a different approach for how to help clients with their problems.

Part 3: The dialogue, the therapeutic gaze

Following the line of documentation, I am also basing my work on video material depicting the presentation of diagnoses. I have tried to find the original purpose or motivation behind making the videos. They seem not to be meant for public use, with more didactic use in presentation and education. Maybe they were meant to display the behaviour a person was suffering from a specific diagnosis would exhibit. The videos seem to have the intention of getting the patients to show or reveal their symptoms.

Another element in the material is that the room where the videos were produced appears like a mixture of a TV studio and a therapist's office. The time of the recording was also clear due to the dark brown interiors and the all-male therapists, details that seem dated today.

I selected two videos of the same person. One of the videos seemed to be from an early diagnostic phase, and the second was from later after she had finished treatment. I chose to present the videos simultaneously, side by side, to break with the expected timeline of showing the videos chronologically – before and after treatment. The result is a lot of information for an audience to follow. But also an opportunity to see similarities and differences between the videos.

I discovered that her case was presented in the book *Splitting: A Case of Female Masculinity* by Robert J. Stoller, one of the therapists who treated her. There she was diagnosed as a psychopath with a problematic past:

"When I first met Mrs G, she was a psychopath (sociopath, antisocial personality). In our first interview, she reported many antisocial acts performed unfeelingly. The list (probably incomplete, to date, there seems no end to revelations of the past) is impressive. Leaving out attempts at

murder, there were, by her early twenties: armed robbery (six gas stations, no arrests); car theft (three cars, one arrest); bad-check writing (two arrests); being a subject in pornographic movies (two); innumerable sexual relations with men (including family members); over twenty homosexual affairs: four marriages by age twenty-three; five illegitimate pregnancies (no legitimate); addiction to amphetamine six different times, with two episodes of drug psychosis, and mainlining and sniffing of heroin, but without addiction; association with motorcycle gangs, criminals, drug pushers, thieves, and corrupt policemen; over thirty moving traffic violations, drag racing, and many serious vehicle accidents (with no driver's license). Such conduct was the essence of Mrs. G's adolescence and early adulthood." (Stoller, 1973, p. 54)

An asymmetrical power relation

"One should hold on firmly to one's heart, for if one lets it go, how quickly one then loses one's head!" (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 69)

The videos in *Dialogue – Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)* depict the asymmetrical power relation between the therapist and the client. Clients enter the diagnostic discourse by revealing their symptoms through behaviour or what they tell the therapist. These videos, in my view, fall between two chairs. They are not documentation of therapeutic sessions to treat the clients; they are more documentation presenting the client as an example of a specific diagnosis and presenting the diagnostic process. It is, from how I see it, a video made by therapists for therapeutic discourse.

Watching these videos and talking to a medical historian made me question if the clients were actors, acting as if they had specific diagnoses. It made me uncertain, but I think the clients in the video material are not actors—for example, the person suffering from manic behaviour talks so fast and intensely. Of course, it could still be acting, but it is fantastic acting if that is the case. Another perspective here is that I do not know how a person behaves when they are manic. I have never experienced that myself.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

The USA uses the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* to diagnose. For that reason, I will elaborate on this manual here with a short history of its development. *The first Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM-I*, was published in 1952 and contained the diagnosis hysteria, an operational diagnosis with symptomatic criteria until it was removed in 1980, along with homosexuality, when the *DSM-III* was published.

The diagnosis is, together with homosexuality, one of the more problematic parts of diagnostics, emblematic of psychology's troubling history when symptoms and diagnostic criteria created imprecise and gender-fixated diagnoses. I would state that women diagnosed with hysteria probably had mental problems. Still, the diagnosis was only for women, and it was imprecise, failing to help the patient or client much. The term hysteric is still mentioned three times in the operational *DSM-5*, but not as a diagnosis.

The ensemble

Asamisimasa agreed to perform the work. Because of the therapeutic documentation I selected, we decided on a limited version of the ensemble, with Anders Førisdal on electric guitar and Ellen Ugelvik on synthesizer. *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)* is a work specially composed with this ensemble and the combination of musician and instrumentation. Their genders have also been implemented as a factor or parameter in *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)* Anders performs the male characters (the therapists), and Ellen performs the female characters and transcription of background noise from the audio recorder's motor, which is now a part of the appropriated audio and video material.

Gender as a parameter in the presentation

This paragraph will briefly explain the origin of hysteria, but it has a gender-specific connection made by male theoreticians. Hysteria (ὑστέρα) is Greek for womb, makes it a requirement to have that organ to suffer from it. Early mentions of hysteria come from Hippocrates, as well as Plato's dialogue *Timaeus*.

Jumping into the 19th century, Jean-Martin Charcot states that hysteria is a mental –not bodily – diagnosis. Freud builds on Charcot, and the hysteric is an essential diagnosis in his early works, with Anna O. as a critical case on which he bases his psychoanalytical theories. Also, one can trace the diagnosis's close connection to repressed sexual trauma back to Freud.¹⁴

The diagnosis was clearly strongly gender-biased, with the diagnosis being exclusively given to women. As a result, it was removed from the *DSM-III* in 1980. But, in the *DSM-5*, it is mentioned in descriptions three times as a symptom for diagnoses.

It is always important to have gender as a parameter when working. The main important factor is equality for the genders, but the work should also be composed by people of different genders. I will say it contributes to how the work is experienced. Using this work as an example here, I think it is essential that the male person portrays the therapists because it correlates to the historical documentation. I could have played with it, but I wanted to be stringent here. The psychology discourse was mainly male-centred, giving the discourse a heavily male bias in its development. In my casting, I could be seen as a prolongation of this bias, which I might be, though that is not my intention. It shows the gender structure of a former historical period, which has changed, as more female than male students are studying psychology.

¹⁴ An interview with Anna O. described her therapy experiences with Breuer and Freud, and she had a different understanding of them. Her real name was Bertha Pappenheim, and neither Freud nor Breuer managed to cure her disease. Later on, however, she got well and became a social worker and an active feminist.

Ellen will perform the clients presenting diagnostic traits and the spatial sounds in the background of the recording, together with the noise from the documentation machines, the microphones, the tape fails, and the cuts in the videos. I want these also to be performed on stage, calling attention to the material in the background that we often do not even notice. Here, it is a crucial element that also connects it to the time when it was recorded, bringing to life how it has been transferred of different media platforms, maybe first on 16mm or 8mm film, then transferred to videotape. In the end, it was digitalized and uploaded to the internet as a digital file.

The musicians are not to work as actors here; they are musicians performing the piece. I considered using actors instead, but here I think, if I used actors, the material would just be reenacted. It would be hard to focus on the documented material being presented and not the actors. So instead, the musicians will perform material transcribed from the dialogue from the film, synchronized in the presentation. The idea and intention are that the video content and the images are the essential parts.

The problematic material and its function

All of the material chosen here is problematic because the patients and clients are objects used to bolster the specialist's psychological knowledge. They seem more to be examples of the diagnoses – something Charcot may have been the first to do. Gramsci's concept of the subaltern, a person without any ability to influence their position, is a central point in describing this asymmetrical doctor/patient power relation. Simultaneously, the title mentions dialogue, a communicative situation requiring equality between those involved; each participant must respect the other people in the dialogue. In the title, diagnosis is juxtaposed with dialogue. Based on this relationship, the therapist asks questions to reveal symptoms to map the patient in the DSM matrix or with another psychological theory. In my interpretation, the therapist's questions are probably strongly motivated by the diagnosis manual because the videos seem intended to present cases and examples of diagnoses.

One critique of presenting this material is that I am elongating this tradition of asymmetry. Still, as the producer of this work, I am pointing my finger at this relation; it is essential to recognize that this material is problematic. My motivation is to present this historical material and to create discomfort for the audience to reflect upon. I have this discomfort, together with a feeling of seeing and hearing something that was not meant for us to see, something intended for purposes other than the public.

Something else essential for me is pointing out where the sympathy lies, which is, of course, with the cases, the people suffering from mental problems. It is the therapists who are the agents that reveal the datedness of the material. With this view, success and function in society are parameters for evaluating people. The goal is for the patient to function in society, to live a happy, balanced life. It seems pragmatic, in my view, and maybe too practical. It is vital to be aware of whether one is kicking upwards or downwards. My motivation here is, of course, the former.

The placement of the presentation

Foucault's essay on heterotopic spaces is a reference for *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!)*. I wanted to connect with and use another place than the usual concert venue to present my works to see what this strategy creates or adds to the artwork. First, I wanted to show the work at Gamle Oslo Hospital, a hospital and former monastery that has been a part of Oslo since medieval times, situated at the foot of Ekeberg in the old part of Oslo.

Research led to the Norwegian painter Edvard Munch and how his most famous painting – *The Scream* (1893)– came to be. The renowned painter had what today might be considered a heavy panic attack while walking along the road up to the top of Ekeberg. He writes about the experience in his 1892 poem *The Scream of Nature*:

*“I was walking along the road with two
friends – then the sun went down
Suddenly the sky turned blood-red
– and I felt
a breath of melancholy
– an exhausting pain
under my heart – I paused, leaning against the fence, tired to death – above the
blue-black fjord and city there were blood in tongues of fire
My friends went on, and I stood
there trembling
with anxiety –
and I felt that a great infinite scream went through nature”* (Munch collected 4.2.21)

Some have speculated that he heard the patients from the Gamle Oslo Hospital, that their sufferings and screams had triggered his anxiety. There are several interpretations as to why, where, and how this painting came to be. I found out that Gamle Oslo Hospital had also functioned as a mental asylum in the period when Munch might have heard their moans from within the institution. This story made me want to present *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!)* there, but I had no success in making that happen.

I contacted the Medical Museum, which is a part of the Technical Museum here in Oslo. They were interested in letting me present my work there since they were between exhibitions. I liked the idea

of showing my work in that gap when nothing is ordered or presented. It might be empty, with white walls, or, even better, in the middle of the construction process for the coming exhibition.

This work will also be part of the concert program Periferien from Nymusikk, which produces contemporary music concerts. We discussed the usage of problematic imagery during a meeting because the people presented with their mental problems in videos that were maybe not meant for public view. I agree this is a complicated side of this and some of my other works.

I have tried but could not get in contact with the people portrayed in the videos to get their approval, so I have decided to use the material in this work. There are several ethical issues here, so the Medical Museum suggested combining it with a panel discussion. This came to be a requirement from Periferien and was something that I consider an interesting solution. The composition of the panel members is not finished yet. Still, I am thinking of either a specialist in ethics or medical history, together with an expert on photography or media archaeology. We could all discuss the work together.

Relevant historical and artistic works

Many artworks portray people with mental problems, including *Cutting the Stone / The Extraction of the Stone of Madness / The Cure of Folly* (1494) by Hieronymus Bosch and Breughel's painting *Dulle Griet* (1563). In addition, Goya has with his work *The Madhouse* (1812) and *Yard with Lunatics* (1794), depicting this theme from within the institution.

The artist Louise Bourgeois has, in her hanging sculpture *The Arch of Hysteria* (1993), recreated a male version of a hysteric, reminiscent of the hysterics in Charcot's photographs. Likewise, Henriette Pedersen's performances *Animal Magnetism 1-3* (2009-2010) was created as "a tribute to all hysterics through 5000 years!" (Pedersen, 2012) Here Pedersen works with different aspects of the history of hysteria, from Charcot's to Freud's understanding of the diagnosis to men suffering from hysteria. Another example I want to mention is Andrea Fraser's two-screen video *Projection* (2008), is based on video-recordings of sessions of psychoanalysis where Fraser was the client. The material was then transcribed, and composed into six monologues in her video work. The blend of psychoanalysis, transcription and video I find as a relevant contextual reference to my artistic research work.

Taking a historical leap, Richard Bellingham's 1996 photo collection *Ray's a Laugh*, where the artist documents his alcoholic father in the apartment where he grew up, provides snapshots of a life suffering from addiction. For Bellingham's parents, being exposed on images in an art context, showing their, in my perspective, tragic existence must be challenging, and the depiction of their lives can be seen as doubling the tragicness. For the people experiencing the images, it may be a view into a life quite different from theirs. This kind of representation connects to the images I have appropriated in *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*. I think the responsibility lies more with the people producing the imagery I have collected. I am not sure how voluntarily the subjects agreed to be recorded and used.

In the music field, a work dealing with mental problems is *Wozzeck* (1925), by Alban Berg. The opera's main character has mental issues that, in the end, lead to tragedy, killing his wife and committing suicide. The libretto is taken from Georg Büchner's unfinished play *Woyzeck* (1913, premiere). This story is based on a wigmaker, Johann Christian Woyzeck, who killed his wife out of jealousy. The court evaluated his mental condition before sentencing him.

In *Confessions* (2011), Ignas Krunglevičius's audio-visual work is based on transcripts of confessions by serial killers. In addition, the text is presented in a video. The descriptive form the text has, in my view, enhances the unpleasant content of the interrogation interviews.

Die Alte (2001), by Carola Bauckholt, is a recreation of sounds, breathing, and bodily noises. It is written for a soprano solo voice. Watching a young or middle-aged soprano recreate the sounds of an older body and creating a juxtaposition of the singer's age and the sounds she makes was an exciting but also uncomfortable experience for me. Maybe it triggered my fear of death. The involuntary sounds of an old body in existence that humans often are brought up to control and hide, I think, becomes more difficult to hide. These sounds are amplified in *Die Alte* (2001). Making a connection to *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*, the videos are in many ways produced with the intention of revealing symptoms, involuntary behaviour that shows an illness and a diagnosis.

Also, I want to mention the English composer Joanna Bailie and her use of image and media technologies. In her work *The place you can see and hear* (2012) she designs the installation space to become a camera obscura so you can see the outside, only upside down, in addition to her audio word. Thematically this installation does not relate to the same topics I work with. Still, Joanna Bailie uses, as I do, a media archaeologic interest in older technologies, where the mediation adds qualities and references to her work.

Harun Farocki's video work *Gefängnisbilder* (2000) is an essential reference for my work. The work is a historical study of documentation from prisons and prison films. The film starts with a scene taken in an asylum, where children are composed and put in front of the camera, objectified for the human scopophilia. Farocki connects these images to surveillance images and prison technology and to how shops are designed to get us to buy and consume more. The structure of following the people in power and control also controls the gaze, imagery, and people in front of the camera. Much of the video material is not meant for public view but is collected and interpreted to present a view of lives under surveillance in closed institutions.

Text history and theory

Foucault is a central reference, both his text about heterotopic spaces and his book *Madness and Civilization* on the mental asylum. But most important is the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, where he writes about the Victorian period and hysteria: "The historical accident would consist rather of the reticences of "Victorian puritanism"; at any rate, they were a digression, a refinement, a tactical diversion in the great process of transforming sex into discourse." (Foucault, 1978, p. 22)

A central element here is the relation between power and knowledge. This connection or relation produces subjects, disciplines, and institutions relevant to this work. For example, in *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault writes:

"The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it... It defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed, and the efficiency that one determines. Thus, discipline produces subjected and practised bodies - "docile" bodies." (Foucault, 1995, p. 138)

Georges Didi-Huberman's *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière* has been central for the research with its images of the hysteric produced during Charcot's regime at the Salpêtrière in Paris.

Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!) is inspired by media archaeologic theories and especially by the theoretical framework of Friedrich Kittler. Kittler writes: *"Charcot, who transformed the Salpêtrière from a dilapidated insane asylum into a fully equipped research lab shortly after his appointment, ordered his chief technician in 1883 to start filming, whereupon Albert Londe, later known as the constructor of the Rolleiflex camera, anatomized (strictly following Muybridge and Marey) the 'large hysterical arc' with serial cameras. A young physiology assistant from Vienna visiting the Salpêtrière was watching. But Dr. Freud did not make the historical connection between films of hysteria and psychoanalysis. As in the case of phonography, he clung (in the face of other media) to the verbal medium and its new decomposition into letters."* (Kittler, 1999, p. 141)

Kittler also compares the *Iconographie of the Salpêtrière* with the police archive, which has a similar function of sorting humans into different categories in opposition to normality. *"When Bertillon's police archive and Charcot's iconography, those two complementary recording technologies chop up the human being of philosophy into countless criminals and lunatics."* (Kittler, 1999, p. 151)

From her film theory, Laura Mulvey's concept of The Male Gaze is a productive reference here. The objectification of women through the male heterosexual gaze is an inescapable reference. As it is applied and used in film theory, I find it relevant here, with the male therapists and the female clients in the material featured in *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!)*.

"In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between. active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly." (Mulvey, 1989, p. 837)

Why Greek Masque?

I wanted to add a Greek mask to the title because of the function of masks in ancient Greek tragedies. They add personas to the actors; in Greek, persona means mask. That was how acting

was staged; you covered your face and enhanced your physical bodily attributes and movements because the tragedies were performed in massive outdoor stages.

I came across research by Thanos Vovolis on another function of masks: to enhance the voice, especially the vowels. I found it interesting that the mask (persona) both creates the role and amplifies the voice. (Vovolis, Zamboulakis, 2008) This phenomenon is called *Ololygmos*, something I had misspelt in the title, similar to when I misspelt Zulu in my artistic research work *Zulou*.

Hysteria was invented in the ancient period in Greece, and the practice entered philosophy and medicine. The reflexive act of taking on a role or persona is also relevant here. Some claim that Charcot's images were produced or staged. In his work about hysteria, Hubermann writes: "*But Freud had had to pass through the great theater of hysteria at the Salpêtrière before beginning to listen, and before inventing psychoanalysis. The spectacle and its pain were necessary; first he had to get an eyeful.*" (Didi-Huberman, 2003, p. 80)

Compositional elements

The documentation is the base material for the presentation. The material is redoubled as a transcription of the musicians' audio performed together with the original material. Here, I try to use the parameters available through the transcription technology I have used in the process, with the MIDI parameters of pitch and velocity translated in the notation program to pitch and dynamics.

I intend to use the sound material – that is, mainly the voices. I transcribe the speaking to music or notes, giving it a mimetic quality to have this oral presentational quality experienced by the audience and listener. I will decide the tempo with the musicians, giving them my opinion, to get a comfortable playing score. The musicians are another level of mediation, and mediation always has format requirements, qualities, and limitations.

Dramaturgical elements

The documentation collected and the intended reopening is the most crucial part of *Dialogue – Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)* Unfortunately, I have chosen to use some dramaturgical elements – how gender is presented in this work.

The guitarist is mostly performing the voice of the male therapist, while the women are the clients. I also want the person triggering the images in the first part of the composition to be a man. In my opinion, the photos by Charcot have this male characteristic staging and photographing of the female hysteric.

The presentation of historic images of women diagnosed with hysteria is the first part of the work and starts before the audience enters the performance space. I have chosen to create a scenic situation that has already begun, and longer duration than the audience can experience in the presentation. I also want the musicians not to be actors but to play the instruments that are their professional tools. I want them more to be agents, flatly doing their tasks, playing their scores, focusing on reopening the facsimiled documentation and not on the performance. They must play the transcribed material – the actual main characters are the documentation materials and presentation structure.

A central strategy here is to show and be descriptive in presenting the material and not moralizing. I want to give the audience space to reflect and express their opinions, but I think the material is quite apparent. With this descriptive strategy, I want to add an element of discomfort and uneasiness that I find already implemented in the documented material I have selected and combined in *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*.

I think the material asks for discussion and reflection. My intention is that a feeling of uneasiness can motivate that. I am aware that trying to create discomfort can be understood as contradictory. However, art production is not a clear and stringent procedure. It has its logic and can be conflicting and confusing while still being valuable. Art is not logic or reasoning.

In Deleuzian concepts, the artists create percepts and thought through images: *"The artist creates blocs of percepts and affects, but the only law of creation is that the compound must stand up on its own. The artist's greatest difficulty is to make it stand up on its own. Sometimes this requires what is, from the viewpoint of an implicit model, from the viewpoint of lived perceptions and affections, great geometrical improbability, physical imperfection, and organic abnormality. But these sublime errors accede to the necessity of art if they are internal means of standing up."* (Deleuze, G, & Guattari, 1994, p. 164)

Chapter 10: *Storage*

"Don't start from the good old things, but the bad new ones." Bertolt Brecht (Benjamin, 1998, p. 121)

I feared my works would be prone to being works where historization was the central element in the work process, only interpreting and problematizing historical events, with little or no relation to our present time. My research on the Stasi archive and the Stasi's methods are different from the surveillance of today. *Storage* was developed to connect and compare a surveillance society from the past to a surveillance organization today.

Presentation

As an experiment, *Storage* has been presented in two different versions. First, it was played on the speakers of the veteran bus on the way to Godlia Community Centre, the unknown destination where *Das kapitalistische Ausland* was performed. At the same time, the bus was the scene for a part of the happening, with the bus conductor demanding the passengers to fill out the information on a form and confiscating their mobiles. In hindsight, it was difficult for the passengers to hear what was being said, but I hope the interview contributed to the experience of the scene. The second version was the sound sculpture, where the viewer had to bow down to hear what was said.

Link to video documentation from the bus: <https://vimeo.com/474461373/09dc31730c>

Link to documentation of the sculpture version: <https://vimeo.com/474393915>

Thomas Drake

Storage is a recorded interview with Thomas Drake, a former senior officer at the NSA, via Skype. After 9/11, he witnessed the unconstitutional procedures perpetrated by the NSA on US citizens and could not just passively observe this happening. After trying to change the practices from within the system, he acted as a whistle-blower to newspapers. Consequently, he was prosecuted under the Espionage Act under the Obama administration. He lost his job, health insurance, and savings in a trial that lasted for about four years.

"It's fair to say that, if there hadn't been a Thomas Drake, there couldn't have been an Edward Snowden." (Hertsgaard, 2016)

In 2011, the charges were dropped. Afterwards, Thomas Drake worked at an Apple Store in Washington and finished his PhD – *Eyewitness to History in Devolution of Democracy and Constitutional Rights Following 9/11* at Walden University, Minneapolis, in 2017.

Another whistle-blower, Edward Snowden, had mentioned that he read about how the US government treated and prosecuted Thomas Drake. Which made him decide that he had to flee from the US before he leaked the documents from the NSA showing how extensively the organization had surveilled US citizens and other nations and that these procedures conflicted with the American constitution.

What is the NSA?

The NSA mission statement:

"The National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS) leads the US Government in cryptology that encompasses both signals intelligence (SIGINT) and information assurance (now referred to as cybersecurity) products and services, and enables computer network operations (CNO) in order to gain a decision advantage for the Nation and our allies under all circumstances" (NSA, 21)

To summarize, the NSA is one of the American intelligence agencies that operate with cryptology and signal intelligence. Earlier, they operated and collected mostly radio intelligence, but, in the internet age, they collected most information from the internet. They collect big data from mobile phones, smartphones, and internet traffic, as well as communication of nearly all users in the world. After 9/11, it expanded its intelligence collection by such a scope that it was unconstitutional and problematic.

Context

The NSA is a surveillance organization known for collecting intelligence. It was maybe at its most important during the Cold War, which ended in the early 90s with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. They had to endure budget cuts and the downscaling of staff until 9/11. That was Thomas Drake's first day of work as a senior officer. After that, the US government saw the need for the NSA again, allocating them larger budgets and incentives for increasing their staff – rapidly. So the agency went into high gear, hiring private contractors to provide workers. As a consequence, they employed many new staff members on contract, like Edward Snowden. In addition, they adopted a bizarre way of upscaling the staff of an intelligence agency, hiring people out from a firm to be consultants for a period at another firm.

Drake had discussed the unconstitutional surveillance activity, which resulted from 9/11 when the NSA began collecting vast amounts of surveillance data on US citizens.

The opportunity

I must mention here how fortunate I was to get an interview with Thomas Drake. He is a busy man and told me he gets many interview requests. He was curious because I am an artist-researcher, and he liked the thought of art as a different angle on his history as a whistle-blower. That was an unexpected outcome, and something I think shows how people from the outside view the artist-research discipline. It can open some doors and may have unexpected benefits.

Construction

The sculpture was a deconstructed hard drive, the device our computer uses to store information. The modified hard drive was placed on a small stand, about 25 cm tall. I modified the hard drive to function as a speaker, through which it played the interview of Thomas Drake. Unfortunately, the volume was relatively low, so the listener had to bow down to listen.

Some may notice the formal reference to the *Narcissus* by Caravaggio (1597-1599). In addition, the opened hard drive exposes a blank, reflective surface that functions as a mirror; people being the predictable animals they are, cannot help watch their reflections in the hard drive.

Why refer to this painting? Because of the mirroring – the self-reflexivity as an activity and motivation for spending time on the internet, especially social media, focusing on getting likes and followers. I think *Storage* quite concretely visualizes the storage behind the self-reflection that, in my view, motivates much of the activity on the internet.

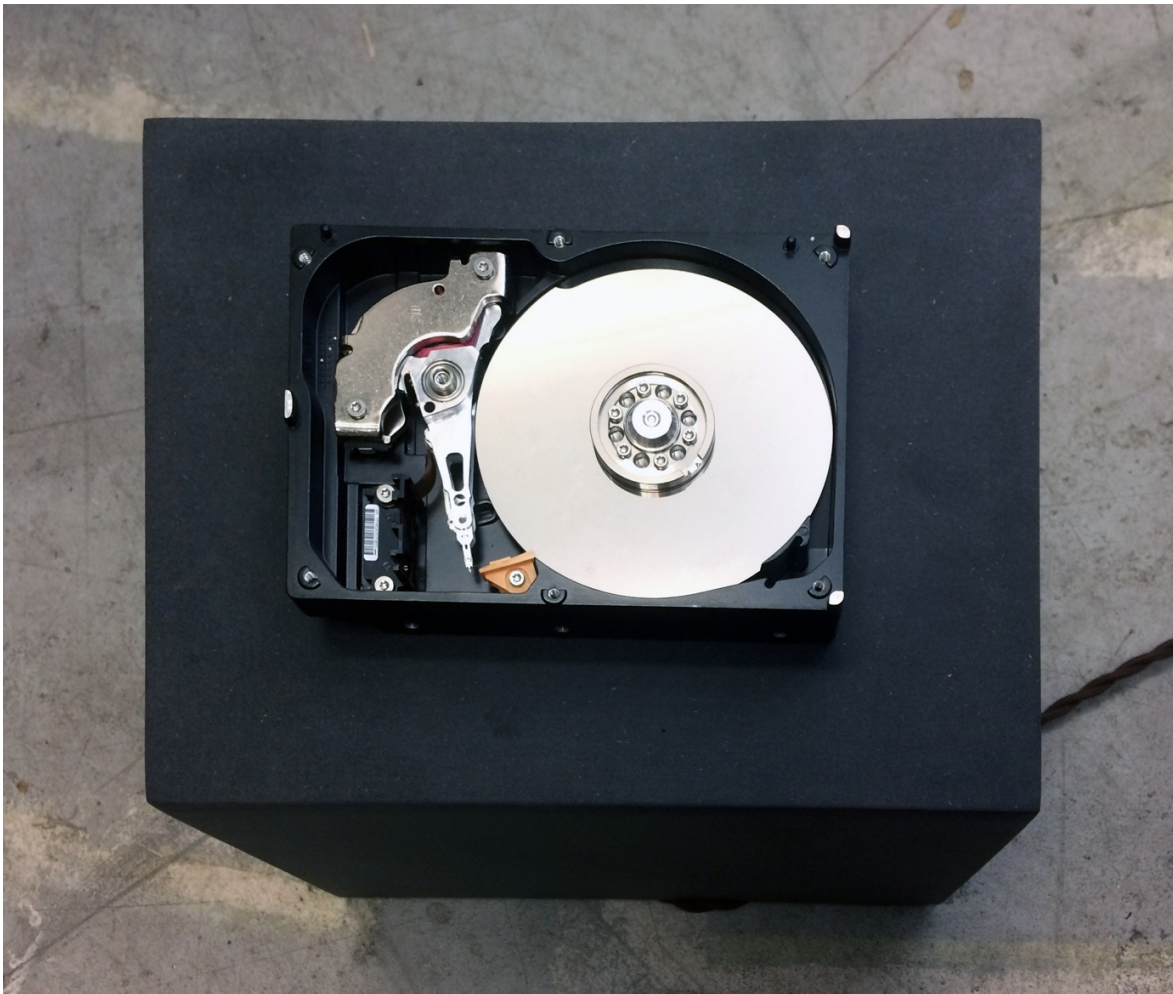
Data stored "behind the mirror" is, as we have seen, ripe for abuse. We have also seen Cambridge Analytica's use of big data post-Snowden, which hugely impacted the US presidential election and the Brexit election, both in 2016.

In the myth of Narcissus, he becomes so fascinated with his mirror image in the lake that he falls into it and drowns. In our case, the mirror is a vast ocean of data in which we mirror ourselves. It stores your data, swallowing and storing it on the backside of the screen – the hard drive is a mirror, after all.

Art-historical reference, *Narcissus* by Caravaggio



Image of *Storage* from above



***Storage* presentations:**

- NMH research days, September 2017
- Haugar Art Museum, October 2017
- European Soundart Award, Marl, Germany, October 2018

The process

In the idea stage, I tried to contact Snowden to interview him; I thought it would be, if not easy, at least possible to get in touch with him. I knew that he lived in exile in Moscow. From reading his

Twitter posts, it's clear he is an active debater on surveillance and privacy, so I thought he would answer my direct message on Twitter. Earlier, Alexandra Elbakyan, founder of Sci-Hub, had responded through this channel; she was another person living in hiding. Snowden, however, didn't answer.

Then I thought of Thomas Drake and followed the same procedure. I contacted him, and he agreed to do an interview. My response to that was to start to worry immediately. I had to prepare well for the interview. Thomas Drake was putting it on his schedule, and I did not want to waste his time.

During the interview, I was impressed by how eloquent and reflective he was. My prejudice had led me to believe that people working within the field of surveillance and signal intelligence would not be that verbal – something I had no real reason to think. However, I had watched interviews with Snowden where he showed a high level of reflection and verbalization.

Mira Hotel

Another idea I had was to travel to Hong Kong and film at the hotel room where Edward Snowden stayed and was interviewed, but I dropped this after finding that another artist had done precisely that in the work *1014*, titled after the room number.

A friend told me he had stayed at the same hotel and had a terrible anxiety attack there. So I did some research, collecting and editing videos from YouTube filmed at the Mira Hotel. What struck me with the hotel was the many mirrors and reflective surfaces in the interior. I imagine it must have been hard for Snowden to stay there, although he was in hiding most of the time in his room. The video was scheduled to be screened at the K4 gallery in Oslo in 2019 but was postponed.

Doubt

It seemed to me that this work would be made and presented too late. To rephrase Marx, first, it would be a tragedy, then a farce, and, in the end, entertainment. In 2016, Oliver Stone directed a film about Snowden, about a year before I produced my work on the NSA. My view is that, in the field of entertainment, ideas about an event or person become cemented, and it is hard to do multiple works on the same topic – I lost the motivation to make it.¹⁵

As you will see, the trailer uses the same structure that has been used in hundreds, if not thousands, of Hollywood films. My argument here is that the essential theme is lost or diminished because of the entertainment treatment of the subject matter and, more importantly, because of economic interest – the film must make money.

¹⁵ To better understand my point, please watch the official trailer for the film:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=137&v=QlSAiI3xMh4&feature=emb_title

Since *Storage* is about NSA activity and Thomas Drake – someone who can be seen as standing in the shadow of Snowden's work – I found it worthwhile to continue presenting and making it. In addition, it is essential to mention that Snowden mentions Drake in several interviews, giving him credit for what he did. Had I had the possibility to interview Snowden, I might have decided not to finish this work because of the film. However, there are already so many interviews of him that are available.

9/11 as context

In short, 9/11 led the USA into starting two wars, one against Iraq and one against Afghanistan. Ten years after that, they managed to find and kill Osama Bin Laden, the leader of the terrorist organization that carried out the attacks on American targets on September 11th 2001. He was found and killed in Pakistan, some say through Pakistani intelligence.

9/11 was the catalyst for the NSA's expanded activity of collecting data and Thomas Drake's worries about how the organization operated. He presented his concerns about the unconstitutional use of warrantless wiretapping that finally led to him leaking the information to the press. As a result, he lost his job and was indicted with the Espionage Act in 2010 by the Obama administration. The charge was dropped in 2011. In the interview I had with him, he mentioned that the NSA had intelligence on the terrorists who hijacked the planes that hit several selected targets in the US. Still, the intelligence was lost in the archive and never followed upon. That was the basis of his worries, making him need to act.

In 2013, Snowden leaked documents from the NSA that detailed the organization's illegal and total intelligence surveillance. He fled to Hong Kong and was interviewed by Glenn Greenwald, Laura Poitras, Barton Gellman, and Ewen MacAskill. Poitras also made a documentary on this meeting called *Citizenfour* (2014). Now, Snowden lives in exile in Moscow but is still active in the discussion about surveillance.

In his essay *Requiem for the Twin Towers*, Jean Baudrillard has interpreted the events of 9/11 as the planes hitting symbols more than buildings. The terrorist attack had an enormous symbolic effect on the Western world: *"Let us be clear about this: the two towers are both a physical, architectural object and a symbolic object (symbolic of financial power and global economic liberalism). The architectural object was destroyed, but it was the symbolic object which was targeted and which it was intended to demolish."* (Baudrillard, 2003, pp. 43-44)

This interpretation was a controversial notion then because the attack was, of course, physical, but I think he is right in the analysis; the attack would not have had this influence and impact if the Twin Towers didn't have this symbolic value. Laura Poitras created work by filming spectators' reactions watching the Twin Towers as they were hit and eventually collapsed. The piece, called *O' Say Can You See* (2011), is an interesting work made about this event.

The Expanding archive and its physicality

As Thomas Drake mentions in the interview, the NSA imperative was to get all data and not focus on targeted surveillance. This strategy was a cheap solution to the budget cuts at the NSA since storage had become affordable. As Drake elaborates on in the interview, however, you need the context of the material, not just the data. It gets tricky to make sense of all the data if you don't have the context.

Storage is, in the end, physical; megabytes are not saved in clouds. Instead, when you store information, it ends up on a hard drive, and for the NSA in Secure Server parks, it requires network architecture and quite concrete architecture to function.

Image of NSA headquarters in Fort Meade, Maryland:



(Photo taken by Trevor Paglen, for public use)

Link to transcript of interview Thomas Drake – 26.06.2017

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/8pm61mgz6a8u7ow/Thomas%20Drake%20transcript%20storage.pdf?dl=0>

I have chosen to attach a full transcript of the interview of Thomas Drake, deciding to include any repetitions and hesitations. I did this because they are elements central to the way I work; they add musicality and a presence to what is being said, these stutterings, hesitations, and fill-in words. They also tell you something that is filtered out in written and polished text. I think these elements are interesting and add something to the work. The way content is presented orally is quite different from written, symbolic text because oral tradition has no punctuation. One has to add them to make the text more readable. You have to format it.

Context

Across the different artistic disciplines, several artists working in the field of art problematize surveillance. The first word that comes to mind is the Snowden documentary *Citizenfour* (2014) by Laura Poitras, which she cooperates with the artist Trevor Paglen. One of several interesting elements in this work is the inherent logic of filming in the present, where things are happening as the film. Snowden is hiding in a hotel in Hong Kong. In my view, he shows obvious signs of severe fright and has every reason to feel so. Interestingly, if he had not had genuine reasons to be cautious and scared, his fright could be a symptom of paranoia.

If one pays attention to the journalists interviewing him in the documentary, they show some signs of confusion. For example, when Snowden hides under a blanket while entering his password on his computer for security reasons. There is a mixture of filmed video, journalism, and, later, art that I find very interesting in the documentary. The artistic expression is part of a recent event and is a tool or discourse that works together with whistleblowing, journalism, and documentary-making. Laura Poitras had a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum. The interviewing journalist, Glenn Greenwald, has published *No Place to Hide*, covering the NSA's unconstitutional surveillance activities and the Snowden case.

Trevor Paglen does interesting projects about surveillance and makes books on this topic. In *Blank Spots on the Map: The Dark Geography of the Pentagon's Secret World*, Paglen researches blank areas on maps used for intelligence and covert activity. Where for example CIA send prisoners for interrogation and hidden for the public eyes. This publication shows several examples of how problematic the CIA's activity is worldwide with these blank spaces.

In *Invisible: Covert Operations and Classified Landscapes*. Paglen has collected his photos of desolate sites where surveillance activities or secret military operations. The images are taken with a tele lens, as close as he can get. But the photos often only depict a monochromatic dreamlike colour. This is because of the distance the images are taken. And they're often taken in the desert with the heat from the sand that hinders him from photographing the actual site. Paglen works politically in his art: "One of the things I want out of art, what I see the job of the artist to be is to try to learn how to see the historical moment that you find yourself living in, right." (Paglen, 2018)

Hito Steyerl, recognized as one of the most influential artists in recent years, participated at the Venice Biennial and contributed as a writer on E-flux. *A Sea of Data: Apophenia and Pattern (Mis-)Recognition* is one of her essays about surveillance, and decryption of information where she links

this practice with apophenia, a psychological phenomenon where people see patterns and connections where there aren't any: *"One has to assume that sometimes, analysts also use apophenia."* (Steyerl, 2016)

Steyerl's installation, *Factory of the Sun* (2015), was exhibited at the German Pavilion during the Venice Art Biennial in 2015. The installation video shows a gamified situation, with a character dancing, a man talking about democracy with many servers in the background, and drone surveillance footage. For this work, she filmed several scenes at Teufelsberg, a modern ruin of a signal intelligence radar building in Berlin operational during the Cold War. It can be hard to pinpoint the thematic of Steyerl's works since they seem to consist of fast and abrupt associations and connections. Therefore, I read her essays as an elongation of her artistic project where her work's topics are more explicit.

Anders Eiebakke has created several works on surveillance. One I want to mention here is *Crossing Borders* from 2010, exhibited at Manifesta 8 in Murcia. He constructed a drone disguised as a bird and smuggled it into Morocco to film the Spanish army base in the Spanish-controlled Melilla base in North Africa. Eiebakke says in an interview: *"The function of the surveillance camera is not to control people, but to get them to behave like the people in power want them to behave. To undermine this situation, I turn the surveillance camera towards the one surveilling."*¹⁶ (own translation) (Ekeberg, 2010)

Harun Farocki's *Auge/Maschine* (2001) and *Erkennen und Verfolgen* (2003) show the use of video technology in warfare that emerged in the first Gulf War in 1991. Images to control and missiles to hit their targets were also used in CNN's war coverage. Intelligence is crucial in warfare, and the Americans extensive use of surveillance and military activity is worrying. Farocki's critical research on war technology and surveillance mechanisms and their connection to society and video throughout his artistic production is precise and relevant. It somehow feels like, whenever I work with my artistic research, Harun Farocki has already produced work on similar themes.

As mentioned earlier, *1014* (2015) by the artist Yuri Pattison involves filming the hotel room, room number 1014, at the Mira Hotel in Hong Kong, where Snowden stayed. This very room is connected to the event of Edward Snowden leaking the NSA documents, making them public, and explaining them to the journalists from the Guardian, and is also where Laura Poitras filmed some of her documentary *CitizenFour*. This video is a blend of amateur hotel documentation that some upload to YouTube and a pilgrimage because of Snowden's stay there. The room is a generic space, and Pattison overlays imagery from the leaked NSA documents on the video. *1014* (2015) is fascinating to watch. Still, I find the footage lacking content of the person of relevance and the importance of the incident that happened there.

¹⁶ *"Overvåkningskameraets funksjon er ikke å faktisk kontrollere mennesker, men å få dem til å oppføre seg slik de forventer at matkaverne vil at de skal oppføre seg. For å undergrave denne situasjonen vender jeg overvåkningskameraet mot overvåkerne."*

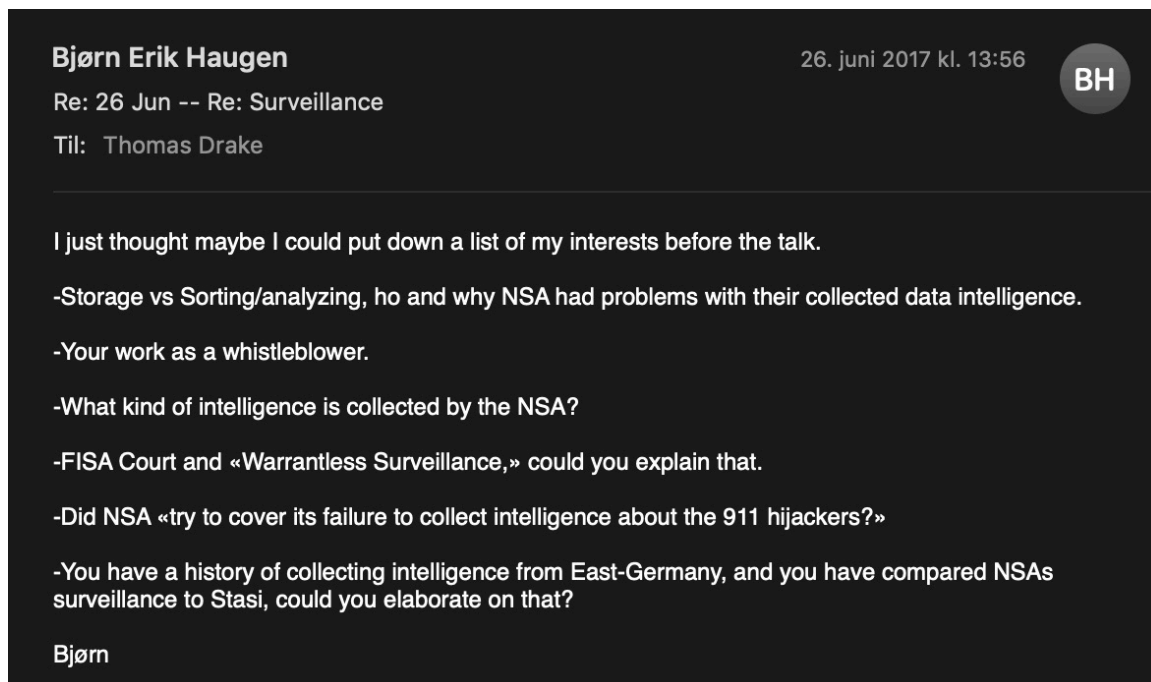
Another artist worth mentioning is Simon Denny, with his work *Secret Power* (2015), exhibited during the Venice Biennial in 2015, as New Zealand's contribution. In this work, Denny focuses on the imagery and graphic design of the NSA documents that Snowden leaked. A case study of NSA's Powerpoints, presented in server cabinets. The work was placed on two sites in Venice, juxtaposing the NSA's geopolitical position.

Composition

Storage is a composition. It is an idea-based composition of sound and material. This sound sculpture is created for presentation in art spaces, where it also has been.

This work is partly produced from my thoughts being an artist researching current events in a two-step process: I research and decide on an angle, then I thematize and problematize the subject. This practice is a solution and way of doing artistic work – working differently from my more history-oriented art-works. *Storage* is a theatrical/performative or inclusive sound sculpture. I decided to cut out my interview questions and instead focus on what the interview object said. The content here defines the composition to an extent. I have not cut the interview, nor have I changed the order of what Drake said in the interview. I sent Thomas Drake an email with a list of topics we could talk about to be prepared before the interview.

Documentation of e-mail:



This email was a disposition of the interview done via Skype on June 26th, 2017. As a result, the sound quality is limited. Drake, I believe, spoke through his laptop's microphone; you can hear the resonance of the room. In hindsight, this is a mediated sound quality that we have gotten more used to because of the pandemic. This mediated quality is a quality and not a limit because it tells us about the situation in which the interview was being held. I think that is part of the work, the composition of the work.

Theory behind *Storage*

Here, in *Storage*, the digital storage of information – in this case, an audio file – is stored on a hard drive on my laptop. The interview of Thomas Drake was done on the software Skype, enabling him to sit in the US with me recording while talking with him here in Oslo. The interview was conducted through an information network tapped by the NSA, still storing the data from conversations. Drake and I discussed this, and I assumed he would be more cautious than he was, but he doesn't want to hide or let the NSA hinder him. Something that is, after what he has been through, quite brave, in my eyes.

Here Kittler's understanding of media is central. "*MEDIA. Storage, transmission, and processing of information: such is the basic definition of media in general. Media include old-fashioned things like books, familiar ones like cities, and new ones like computers.*" (Kittler, 2013, p. 144) This media technology enables this situation, and I want to point to it by "reversing the storage-media," by modifying the hard drive as a sculptural element.

In Kittler's view on media in the later publication *Optical Media*, the different media have been "*sucked up*" into the computer. The telephone, the audio recorder and the video recorder are collected and connected, enabling the multimedia machine. Thus, storage is a central requirement for the NSA's data- and information storage, together with being connected to the internet.

The theatre in it

I would argue that the musical theatre element is present but downscaled as elements in the video and the presentation. *Storage* was a scenographic element at the first presentation, a detail for the attentive audience, connecting the new and the old surveillance societies.

Regarding the second presentation, *Storage* was a participatory sound sculpture. The theatrical elements were the sculpture's staging and the audience watching and listening to the interview through the sound sculpture.

Arguing about whether *Storage* has a political theme – I believe – is unnecessary. However, the surveillance practice of the NSA and how the US administration treats their whistle-blowers is highly problematic and is something that still, six years after the Snowden leak, needs to be addressed. Surprisingly, the Obama administration had been the most active with charging

whistle-blowers and other people under the Espionage Act. I assume Barack Obama knows what juridical tools his administration used since he is educated as a jurist and mostly seen as a liberal.

Drake confirms in the interview that extensive surveillance had been carried out before the Snowden leak. It's worth pointing out that both Snowden's and Drake's warnings concerning this have made people aware of gathering data of their communication and data traffic. Both have referred to a quote often said about the surveillance – in the US, that is: *"If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear."* Drake mentions it in the interview I had with him, and Snowden does the same in an interview that was extra material for the film Snowden.¹⁷ (Snowden, 2016)

¹⁷ "The origins of that phrase are literally rooted in Nazi propaganda," Snowden said. (Note: While the quote is widely attributed to Nazi Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels, its exact origins appear to be unclear.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qn-YEvFi0Ew>

Chapter 11: *The Pen is Mightier than the Word*

The situation

The artistic research pavilion in Venice published a call for works within the system for the Research Pavilion, exhibited in parallel with the Venice Art Biennial in 2017. The theme of the call was *The Utopia of Access*. I wanted to present a work on the coming proposal from the EU where, from " In 2012, the European Commission published a recommendation on access to and preservation of scientific information encouraging all EU countries to put publicly-funded research results in the public domain in order to strengthen science and the knowledge-based economy." (European Commission, 31.10.21) In short, public-funded research should be open and accessible for the public and further scientific use.

I applied with *The Pen is Mightier than the Word*. This experiment attempted to construct and blend theory and art to make a coherent video work. My application was accepted for a screening for two hours in a seminar space. This was a disappointment at first because I associate such spaces with boredom, waiting, and frustration. However, after reflecting for some time, I enjoyed the possibility of adapting the work for a seminar space, turning it into an area of theatricality. When I constructed and produced this work using the mediated qualities of the seminar space, I had Lacan's theories in the back of my mind. One thing that I find interesting about them is their relation to the formats in which they are presented: *Écrits*, *Seminare*, *Television*, and *Radiophonie*. His formats for the presentations are formed and adjusted to the medium of the presentation.

Where the work has been presented:

- Research Pavilion, Venice Biennial
- Haugar Art Museum, Tønsberg
- Rencontres Internationales
- Die Digitale, Düsseldorf
- Simultan, Romania
- Digital Ecologies, University of Bath, England
- "NEW DOMESTICITY!!! ///NEW DOM!!! PART 1, Oslo

Link to video here: <https://vimeo.com/219980142>

The process

"*Only the present is fresh, the rest is paler and paler.*" (Hegel, 1988, p. 608)

A starting point and motivation for *The Pen is Mightier than the Word*. I realised that I mainly work with historical material in most of my artistic works, subjects from the past, like an artist historian. But, on the other hand, I wanted to work as an artist journalist, digging into the present and specifying hypotheses for the future.

Doing this was out of my comfort zone as an artist, but I found it fascinating. I wrote a text as the base for the video based on my research. One worry was that the text or libretto would be rejected as pure speculation or as conspiracy, which, in many ways, it is. And I assumed that this was work that would only be relevant for the artistic research field, which I see as limited. However, colleagues from outside and inside the art world read the text found it interesting, so I decided to finish the work. One must never be forced to produce a work, as leaving it in the drawer is always an option. Three years after the premiere it has been screened more than what I predicted while making it.

The composed elements

There are four elements composed together in this work: the text, the voiceover of the text, the images collected from research, and the combined visual material. I wanted the letters in the video also to be filled with found imagery. One motivation was to make a whole out of all the separate elements and make the elements clash and fight for the viewer's attention.

The main elements in the video are PowerPoints and video material made by the big computer companies working with AI, together with video documentation of old computer science, portraying the scope of how they displayed this technology in the past. I wanted these elements to work together. This imagery also depicted the physicality of this technology where, in the time of clouds and cloud computing, there are parks of servers drawing electricity and doing the computing somewhere.

I wanted to conform to and break with PowerPoint aesthetics. By that, I mean the aesthetic of presenting slides with a mixture of images, graphic design, and text. What has struck me with the software PowerPoint is that the program, in many ways, is like a video program. The presentations are often projected on a wall. They are usually made up of text, imagery, and video, focusing on the text, animated bullet-points, and the presenter often standing close to the projected screen. As a technological medium, it has replaced the overhead projector's transparent sheets with text that could be laid on top of each other.

The musical element

The musical element is the tuning of the voice to full-tempered scale, together with the original, musicalising the voice, also ensuring that the viewer and listener hear the difference between the left and right channel. Thus, a human hears the sum or difference between the two and not two separate tracks. The goal was to create a voice that sounded synthetic, like Apple's Siri, a function of Apple products that enables you to interact with a computer through your voice.

Working with voice was decided because I did not want the video only to show the letters; I wanted a voice to recite the text, making it a mix of digital and oral mediation.

I hired the voice actor from Fiverr.com, a site for freelance designers, actors, and musicians. Because it was essential to have an authentic English voice to synthesise. A Norwegian actor speaking English would make this difficult because the listener might focus on the mispronunciation instead of what is said. As a result, the text is quite compressed with information, and the video images were cut after the audio track as the base for the work *The Pen is Mightier than the Word*.

The libretto of the work

The Pen is mightier than the Word

"Where it was, there shall I be" – Freud.

We have reached a moment in time where, finally and startlingly, the computer has reached a new level of processing or understanding

" For we must make no mistake about ourselves: we are as much automaton as mind . . . Proofs only convince the mind; habit provides the strongest proofs and those that are most believed. It inclines the automaton, which leads the mind unconsciously along with it" – Pascal.

For over 60 years, we have waited and worked towards the goal of creating a computer to pass the Turing test, where a computer can be mistaken for a person.

" I believe that, at the end of the century, the use of words and general educated opinion will have altered so much that one will be able to speak of machines thinking without expecting to be contradicted" – Turing.

We have now companies working on cognitive computing and artificial intelligence. The programs can process vast amounts of data, analysing and structuring its content.

"The Zeroth law of robotics: A robot may not injure humanity, or, by inaction, allow humanity to come to harm" – Asimov.

Parallel to this, we are dying of thirst in an ocean of data. 90% of the world's data has been created in the last two years, 80% of which is unstructured content. Now computers can analyse and structure this information faster than the blink of an eye.

"Big data is all data" – IBM.¹⁸

There is a debate if computers can reach a level of cognition where they can generate self-consciousness. Can we imitate, duplicate, or create something if we don't understand how it works or functions?

"No, I don't know what that is. I'm not sure" – Benjamin.

In recent years there has been a conflict of interest on research and ownership. Research articles are more expensive than ever, reproducing a structure where wealthier universities have better access to the newest findings of their field. The piracy or democratisation of research is a reaction to this imbalance. You can now download 50 million research papers for free, a number that is still growing.

"We have no need for other worlds. We need mirrors" – Lem.

The debate over artificial intelligence is polarising, with some thinking it is a big threat that result in humans being slaves or going extinct. Others support it and want to download their brains, neuron by neuron, to a computer. Both sides think that when this development starts, there will be no turning back.

"Perhaps the real nightmare, even the one in which the Big Machine wants to kill you, is the one in which it sees you as irrelevant, or not even as a discrete thing to know" – Bratton.

These are exciting times.

"The will to mastery becomes all the more urgent, the more technology threatens to slip from human control" – Heidegger.

In the near future, some think that a non-carbon-based intelligence will develop self-consciousness. That has to evolve with time, growing to include self-reflexivity, traumas, expectations, and disappointments. Can this be evolved?

"If you could blow the brain up to the size of a mill and walk about inside, you would not find consciousness" – Leibniz.

¹⁸ Quote PowerPoint presentation by IBM from 2014, used in *The Pen is Mightier than the Word* at 02:09 min.

As a start, we can let the existing programs structure, analyse and reflect on the huge amount of available data on the net today, and see what happens next.

"I. J. Good's hypothesised intelligence explosion describes a dynamically unstable system, like a pen precariously balanced on its tip" – Yudkowsky.

A short comment on the text

The text is a blend of my own words and quotes from my findings in the research process. The font used for the text in the video work is quite similar to the one Godard often uses in his films and is a homage and a reference to the filmmaker. The font is entirely capital letters, which made room for intended misunderstandings in the text. I have asked several people that have watched the video, and everybody thought that one of the quotes used was from Walter Benjamin. The quote, however, is by BENJAMIN, is a neural network computer program that has written manuscripts for several films. Another requirement for playing this little trick was that I only used last names. Another reason for that – other than aesthetic reasons – is that long text in videos can, in my view, be hard and tiresome to read.

Theatre

I would say that, for a work to be viewed as theatrical, it would require a person, often an actor, to act and or recite. The actor has, in this case, moved into the screen, being only the voice. Since I intended for the voice to be understood as synthetic, the possibility of a physical person would ruin that element.

Research Pavilion

The Research Pavilion at the Venice Biennial misspelt the title of the work and curator-producer. In addition, the coordinator was very stressed and did not seem to focus on the introduction of my work, even though she asked for it.

Photoshopped image of where the work was presented at the Research Pavilion:



The Pen

The title *The Pen is Mightier than the Word* is an intended misspelling of the saying "the pen is mightier than the sword." The Pen in the title of the work is intended to stand for the development of writing and storage technology, evolving from the development of technology of the Pen and writing to the computer. As mentioned in *The Pen is mightier than the Word*, 90% of all written content was written in the last two years, a baffling concept taken from an IBM PowerPoint presentation on their Watson technology some years ago. It is not a scientific fact but more used in a presentation to surprise and give context to their technology. Still, it also says something about the explosion of information. One can say that the Pen, over time, has somehow developed into computer technology. This technology now can generate and analyse data on its own based on code and algorithms. The Pen can now write its own words; it has become a self-writing pen.

Research process

The text/libretto is composed and comprised of my findings when I researched cognitive computing and AI, open access and the Sci-Hub founder, Alexandra Elbakyan. She was pursuing

her PhD in Kazakhstan. She did not have access to the newest or required research in her field – because the University could not afford the necessary subscriptions – she started Sci-Hub, a torrent for research, resulting in Elsevier filing a lawsuit for \$15 million. She then had to go in hiding but has been named by Nature.com as one of the top ten names that matter in science.

The Sci-Hub page design:



I tried to contact Elbakyan, because I wanted to make an interview and she answered me on Twitter, but after that, she went back underground. She has been living in hiding for the last few years because of constructing Sci-Hub. On this torrent site, you can download millions of research papers for free, even though they usually are accessible only through subscription to scientific journals, something that has become more expensive over the years. With the universities and researchers' dependent on getting research accepted to journals to secure positions and research funding, the publishing companies have, in my opinion, become too powerful; they are acting more as capitalist agents than distributors of knowledge and science.

Documentation of Twitter contact:



Since I did not get an answer from her, I could make an interview. I did not want to put her in danger, and I was not sure if the person I was in contact with really was Elbakyan; it could have been someone else pretending to be her. Maybe I am just overly anxious, but I know she lives in hiding, probably somewhere in the Post-Soviet states.

Open access

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." (Newton, 2018)

Publishing companies like, for example, Elsevier often earn their money through research being done at universities, funded by taxpayers' money. There have even been examples of researchers not having access to their research. This is about to change with the EU's open access policies which requires that research funded by the EU or member countries is accessible, public, and free

of charge. Throughout the development of science, making research more accessible has been a requirement for development and improvement, with Sci-Hub making the newest research accessible for researchers in underprivileged countries. I think this can make a huge difference, as is said in the film "*These are exciting times.*"

The DeepMind

Google acquired DeepMind in 2014, a company that has specialised in machine learning and neural network computing, working on developing DeepMind AI.

They use games to test their technology. Interestingly, they do not inform the computer or its AI algorithm of the rules of the game it is playing. Through playing, failing, and trying repeatedly, it learns how to play the game, ending with DeepMind developing an uncanny mastery of the game.

The company also did something similar with the Chinese game Go. They fed the AI with many sample games and set DeepMind to play against itself for thousands of games. Consequently, they created an AI that, in the end, beat the world champion of the game – a fascinating and fantastic accomplishment.

Intelligence, soul and consciousness

Here, artificial intelligence is central, with the big companies – like Google and IBM – using enormous resources on research and development on the subject. The possibility of artificial intelligence as a realistic possibility comes from science fiction and Alan Turing. Google has bought DeepMind, that constructed a program that beat the champion of the game Go, a game about the relationship between pieces of the same value instead of chess.

In terms of the Turing test, a test bypassing the criteria of whether the intelligence is actual or simulated, if it is experienced as intelligent by a human. I had a meeting with Jim Tørresen, the only professor in artificial intelligence at the University in Oslo, who told me that the big companies use vast resources in the field of artificial intelligence, with IBM's Watson and Google's Deep Learning as significant developments at the time of the work in 2017. It is now the big tech companies that have the economic resources to engage in this fully. Tørresen said in the meeting that the companies do not know the consequences of their effort of developing artificial intelligence, but they know it is crucial. It is hard to predict the future, but maybe one can sense the importance of the work being done. Tørresen said: "*They [the big companies] don't know the effects of it, but they know it is important.*" For me, this is the perfect diagnostics of today's ideology; as Marx put it: "*We are not aware of it, nevertheless, we do it.*" (Marx, 2013, p.49)

Also, with the findings and development in the field and the theories around this, I found Ray Kurzweil, Benjamin Bratton, Eliezer Yudkowsky, and Hito Steyerl to be especially interesting. They are all following the worry that AI can or will take over the world, something that has been a theme

in films and TV series in recent years, with *Ex Machina* (2014), *Westworld* (2016-) and *Devs* (2020), to name some examples. Hegel writes, " *When philosophy paints its grey in grey, a shape of life has grown old, and it cannot be rejuvenated, but only recognised, by the grey in grey of philosophy; the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the onset of dusk.*" (Hegel, 2003, p. 23) This can be interpreted as getting an overview and understanding that can only happen after things and events have occurred.

I have read that a computer has passed the Turing test, a topic which is reflected in films. For example, in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), and William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984), portraying artificial intelligence. We can now watch films where AI has moved closer to becoming self-conscious, as in *Her* (2013). The movie *The Matrix* (1999) must not be forgotten here, but it is more unrealistic or fantastic, with the AI using humans to make energy for their computers without the humans knowing it.

"*Natura non facit saltum. (Nature does not make a jump)*" (Darwin, 2007, p. 133).

The worry, as I understand it – and that also receives focus in the libretto in *The Pen is mightier than the Word* – is that the computer will make this leap. It might go from an intelligence solving problems and executing algorithms to developing consciousness and acting as an agent of its own. The frightening thought that we will have developed a new, self-improving consciousness in the world makes us wonder if we will be second best in the hierarchy. As the Darwin quote says, nature does not make leaps. It evolves slowly. Here, however, this leap may be realistic, and it will make a huge impact. The base of science is, if not a static world, then a slowly evolving world, especially if you think of the field of biology.

The human soul has been replaced with consciousness, to paraphrase Kittler. In my research, I found no great definition of consciousness, which surprised me. The Cambridge Dictionary narrows it down, explaining that consciousness is "*the state of being awake, aware of what is around you, and able to think.*" (The Cambridge Dictionary, 31.10.2021)

I also found it interesting to study consciousness because it is also a field of research within medicine, psychology, and philosophy. The philosopher John Searle is one of the central agents connecting AI research with consciousness research. John Searle was invited to Google to do a lecture on consciousness, that, from his perspective, is impossible.¹⁹

In my understanding, the fields of AI and consciousness are separate and different but growing closer. Behaviourism has already used the computer as a metaphor for the brain for decades, and mutual interests within the fields are not unthinkable, as they are already happening. What I

¹⁹ This is discussed in a lecture between him and the renowned futurist and Google employee, Ray Kurzweil: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHKwIYsPXLg> (38:50)

interpret as a worry about artificial intelligence – a concern that is also enormously interesting – is that if an AI develops consciousness and self-improve, humans will quickly lose control over it.

The word

The effect the computer has had on the production of information is enormous. As mentioned in the visual material I have appropriated and used in my video, IBM has produced their version of AI called Watson. It is a software product that can structure all this information for us. This potential to sorting and structuring information certainly makes a potential for new possibilities, connections, and structures and connects it to the scientific corpus of Sci-Hub and structuring all the data can lead to new results. Maybe cancer research could make a contribution to geology, or research on witchcraft could connect with pedagogics. New connections can often create new knowledge. As Alan Turing said in a lecture: *"It seems probable that once the machine thinking method had started, it would not take long to outstrip our feeble powers... They would be able to converse with each other to sharpen their wits."* (Turing, 1951)

The internet of things

I write the reflection on *The Pen is Mightier than the Word* over three years after the film's first screening. Now, there is the internet of things, where objects and algorithms are connected and communicating through the internet. Some state that 51% of internet traffic now is by non-humans, with cases like Samsung collecting data and voice recordings of their users from their TVs²⁰.³ When I watch statistics on my Vimeo page, algorithms are visiting my video page more often than humans. I think it is worthwhile to think about. We might not be the majority of the users online. Is that a good or a bad thing?

²⁰ see Forbes this relevant article

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/parmyolson/2015/02/09/samsungs-smart-tv-data-sharing-nuance/?sh=18fd94c6126e>.

Still from the video:



SAL: *"Will I dream?"*

Dr R. Chandra: *"Of course, you will dream. All intelligent creatures dream. Nobody knows why."*

HAL: *"Will I dream?"*

Dr R. Chandra: *"I don't know."*

From *2010 The Year We Make Contact* (1984, Dir: Peter Hyams)

Is there a place for psychoanalysis in all this?

In *The Pen Is Mightier Than the Word*, I propose that AI technology use psychoanalysis instead of behaviouristic models to develop a consciousness for computer technology. This would probably be impossible or take much time but could be a different way to create a human-like consciousness. For example, in the early development of chatbots, Eliza was developed, a therapeutic chatbot based on Jungian psychoanalysis. What the program did was to return what a person wrote back to him as a question. Testing it can – quite quickly – get interesting. This chatbot was portrayed in Johan Harstad's short story *Vietnam.Thursday*:

Me: *Do you worry?*

Her: *Oh, I worry.* (Harstad, 2003, p. 61)

Thinking of Turing's test, maybe it does not matter if a computer has intelligence or consciousness if we feel that it acts as if it has these qualities. This thought makes me think of the Google imagery of AI interpreting shapes that had hallucinating and hyper-associative qualities, something we had not seen before. These images, I think, gave way to people speculating of the possibility of computers becoming more conscious. This potential was earlier an idea that has been projected for the future but may now be coming closer. Behaviouristic science uses the computer as a metaphor for understanding the brain. Working on AI with behaviorism creates a tautological feedback loop.

I have previously mentioned how the scene with the floating Pen was appropriated from the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, a film where HAL 9000, the AI computer and also the nervous system of a spaceship, gains consciousness and gets rid of the members of the crew, one by one, until the main character, Dr Dave Bowman, manages to turn HAL off.

In the film, HAL watches himself on the news through a tablet that one of the crew members is watching. HAL watches a newscast from the earth where he and the crew are interviewed. Here, there is a change from a cinematic camera angle to a bird's-eye view or surveillance-angle overlooking the tablet, a more subjective angle, as if we are watching together with Hal. I used this video as a part of the work *Seeing*, which I have linked to later in the exposition.

Communicating with animals

One idea is the AI technology can play a new role in the relation between humans and animals. I hope that AI can allow us to communicate with and understand animals more than we do now. This could cause us to rethink how we relate to and treat animals. Maybe we could someday talk to dolphins through an AI computer. Of course, this is only speculation, but I think it certainly would change society.

Still from the video:



Still from the video²¹:



Artificial General Intelligence

"Those who have treated of the sciences have been either empirics or dogmatic. The former like ants only heap up and use their store, the latter like spiders spin out their own webs. The bee, a mean between both, extracts matter from the flowers of the garden and the field, but works and fashions it by its own efforts." (Bacon, 1902, p. 36)

An important distinction is that we already have impressive versions of artificial intelligence. But we don't have a decent artificial general intelligence, often shortened to AGI. With that, I mean an intelligence that can understand, learn, adapt, and execute intellectual work by itself, which IBM's Watson and Google's DeepMind cannot do today.

²¹ The attentive reader would have noticed the images paraphrasing the Turing quote: If a machine is expected to be infallible, it cannot also be intelligent. Alan Turing (Lecture to the London Mathematical Society, 20.02.1947)

Others in the field

The fields of AI and technology are contemporary and relevant themes on which artists and composers work. However, I have not found works dealing with AI gaining consciousness in fields other than science fiction literature and films. Hito Steyerl is in *This is the Future* (2019) using AI technology to create the images in her video work. She is also active in the debate on artificial intelligence and digital culture, writing essays and lectures on the topic exhibited at the Venice Biennial in 2019.

ULTRACHUNK (2018) is a collaboration between Jennifer Walshe and Memo Akten. They have created a neural network, GRANNMA, that Walshe has trained by feeding it hours of video and audio of her voice improvisations. This program has become an improvisation partner for Walshe, where the video and audio are generated in real-time. Jennifer Torrence and Trond Reinholdtsen's collaboration *Institute for Post-Human Performance Practice*²² (2018) is also relevant to mention here. In their multi-media performance, they go into the topics of AI and post-humanism. From a humouristic and critical perspective, they start a new institute at the Norwegian Academy of Music. Ignas Krunglevicius is a Lithuanian composer and artist. In his video *Hard Body Trade* from 2015, he deals with a dystopic element of technology and artificial technology: *leaving the protein-centric world view*, as the film's computer-generated voiceover states. Also, with the undertone that humans are not in control anymore: *We are performing your last cognitive upgrade*. Finally, the documentary *iHuman* (2019) by Tonje Hessen Schei problematises the development and potential of AI in surveillance in a disturbing way, where the AI is connected to topics as spying, war technology and fake news. In the future, privacy may become non-existent, something that is a scary thought and is a worry that I, among many, share with her.

The sequel

I have done another work in combination with *The Pen is Mightier than the Word*, called *Seeing*. This video is a collection of film scenes of AI and androids making the leap and gaining consciousness in movies from the 70s until today. The video was presented as a video loop in a wooden frame with a spyglass. So that the viewer both sees the film scenes and a reflection of their image. *Seeing* shows the moment the robot, the AI or the Android sees itself mirrored, gaining self-consciousness through this act. This work refers to Lacan's *mirror stage* as a stage in a child's development where the child understands that it is a subject and the body as a whole.

The mirror stage has been central and adapted to film theory by Baudry, Metz, Žižek, and Mulvey, to mention a few. I found several instances of the use of *mirror stage* in film, which points to how we humans think artificial intelligence will gain consciousness. Following Turing's ideas, machines might have or develop a different kind of intelligence or consciousness: "we should feel there was little point in trying to make a "thinking machine" more human by dressing it up in such artificial flesh." (Turing, 1950, p. 434)

²² The headmaster portrayed in this work may be familiar to some.

Link to the video Seeing: <https://vimeo.com/273855587>

Documentation of *Seeing* exhibited:



Chapter 12: *By the Road - Death Drive*

By the Road is a band juxtaposing a collection of car crash scenes from films with the death metal genre, a subcultural music expression that was most popular in the late 80s and the early 90s. The collection of films is made up of a mixture of American action films and classic films. I have selected the car crash scenes and transcribed the sounds to a MIDI track to control a sampler containing recordings of guitar and bass guitar samples and a mechanic drum-kit.

Link to documentation from the performance: <https://vimeo.com/301306882>

The concept

The idea comes from an attempt to take the genre term literally – death and metal—the cars crash at great speeds. In the production of the films, the stunt drivers are simulating deadly car collisions, the more extreme, the better. Then, finally, the metal vehicle, a coveted object, a result of assemblage at the factory, is destroyed, and we have the satisfaction of seeing it happen. We watch the scenes unfold, and the cars fold.

Car chase scenes are more common in action films, and often the scenes are not central to the movie; they're just entertaining effects, functioning as a climax or break in the narrative. However, remembering the American action films of the 80s, car chases, and car crash scenes were exciting to watch when I was growing up. To name an example, the most excessive is the chase scene in *The Blues Brothers* (1980), where 103 police cars were destroyed. This film is unfortunately not a part of the selection of car crash scenes for *Death Drive* since there is film music in the scene, making it impossible to transcribe the car sounds without the music.

Death metal has some elements that must be present: Blast beats, distorted guitars, tremolo picking, and power chords. I will explain these techniques further later on in the text. I must admit that I have been a fan of the genre since I was a teenager. However, its requirements also make it sound aggressive and machinelike. My idea was to transcribe cars' engines into death metal, played by fast drums and guitars.

Why death metal?

I have from earlier a band called *By the Road* that consists of myself and hired studio musicians, and I made a record that is a collection of car chase scenes. I wanted to use the band concept to make concerts without performers, with sampled guitar, a guitar amp, and a unique mechanical drum machine performing music in synchronisation with the film scenes. The music has been transcribed from the films' sounds, with different sorts of machines performing the music – the robot-like drum kit, the sampler, and the computer, which is the brain of the performance. The

laptop controls the sampler, plays the drum kit, and sends video to the video projector, creating and performing the music for the audience to watch.

What is death metal?

I will not go through the entire historical genealogy of death metal, but, according to the book *Swedish Death Metal* (2006), there are several opinions about how the genre got its name. In my understanding, death metal is a sub-genre that evolved out of the hardcore genre, but the music is faster, and the lyrics focus more on the macabre. For example, the bands' Napalm Death, Carcass, Entombed, Morbid Angel, Dismember, and Cannibal Corpse all have names that certainly carry grotesque connotations. In my understanding, and also according to *Swedish Death Metal*, the genre of death metal is, like the hardcore genre, more linked to punk and the political left.

The list of films where scenes were appropriated

1. *Need for Speed* (2014)
2. *Harold and Maude* (1971)
3. *Dirty Mary Crazy Larry* (1974)
4. *Crash* (1976)
5. *Crash* (1996)
6. *Thunder Road* (1958)
7. *The Italian Job* (1969)
8. *Ronin* (1998)
9. *Death Proof* (2007)
10. *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962)

11. *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967)
12. *Dirty Harry* (1971)
13. *Le Mepris* (1965)
14. *Vanishing Point* (1971)
15. *Christine* (1983)
16. *Blow out* (1981)
17. *Le Mans* (1971)

Making collections and connections

Creating collections is a central part of my artistic practice. I have used this strategy earlier in *Strangers in Paradise* (2007), an archive of how Norwegians and Norway are portrayed in films. The sculpture *Engraved* consists of an empty museum stand with the archives and libraries destroyed from 1900 until the day the sculpture was engraved on the glass. Both art-works were collaborations with André Avélin Larsen. Also, the four-screen video work *Fo re n sic* (2013) was made up of collections and sorting of optical and media technologies in the series *CSI*.

"*But the cinematic consciousness is not us, the spectator, nor the hero; it is the camera.*" (Deleuze, 2017, p. 24)

As part of my artistic research PhD, I worked with archives and collections in several artistic research works. *Death Drive*, *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!*, *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, *The Pen Is Mightier Than the Word*, and *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Ololymos Greek Masque!)*" are examples of this strategy. Creating collections is a strategy centred around a theme, and I believe the appropriated findings are essential, but the relationships and the connections between my findings are more important. The collection is also an empiric strategy, showing repetitions and occurrences that can be collected and connected.

Band

Playing in bands was an essential and formative experience for me in my teen years – something I have missed since. It was a social experience where people created and played music together. I had problems making music in a band, however, and it was not until I studied at the art academy that I managed to create something with which I was satisfied. Calling *By the Road* a band is a bit self-contradictory since the work is mainly me, so I asked other people to contribute to *Death Drive*.

Drums and the grid

The Death metal genre most often uses a particular and fast drum pattern called blast beat, using two bass drums in the drum kit or a double drum pedal. The drummer or machine hit the bass drum in 8th or 16th notes and hitting the snare every other note, which is the basic blast beat. That is quite technical, hard, and specialised to play, and, in my ears, sounds quite like a machine. I first tried out software drum kits, but I wanted a real machine playing the drums and found ways to construct one on the internet. Koka Nikoladze, a research fellow, already had developed a drum-trigger system, and let me make one that I could use, allowing me to create drum patterns in a sequencer, in sync with the rest of the music. While also allowing me to create rhythms in tempos impossible for humans to play. These triggers were mounted on an old drum kit – a drum kit without a drummer. As a way to connect the drums conceptually and the car crashes, the cymbals in the drum patterns follow the rules that, when the cars are driving, the ride cymbal is hit, and the crash cymbal is struck when there is crash and impact – the car hitting something in the films.

Tremolo picking on guitar and the grid

Tremolo picking means hitting the strings in up-and down-strokes in a fast and steady rhythm, preferably in 16th or 32nd notes and preferably by using a plectrum; this is an old technique performed on folk instruments like the bouzouki, balalaika, and the mandolin. This technique was picked up in heavy and thrash metal and is used in death metal and black metal. This way of picking is used with a distortion pedal, distorting the audio signal and giving the guitar's voice the characteristics of a flowing, steady, and mechanical stream of notes. With several guitar voices, it can make an association of a wall of sound.

Chromatic playing

Death metal tracks consist of a combination of riffs, and another characteristic is that the riffs are a combination of chromatic and syncopated patterns, a lot playing in half-tone intervals with pitch bends. I must stress that this is not an objective scientific fact but is my observation from listening to the music. With *By the Road*, I break the rule of the song structure of riffs and chorus by

transcribing notes that analyse the pitch of the cars' sounds in the film scenes. The result is a stream of notes correlating to the sounds of the vehicles, with a characteristic of notes often following each other chromatically. Thus, the music is not in songs but tracks following the music terms correlating to car terminology.

Pitch bends

Another vital element is pitch bends following the engine's rise or fall in pitch correlating to rise and fall in the car's acceleration, giving the sounds an engine-like characteristic. If not a mimetic way of sounding. As trying to compose music that sounds like something else, like a river or a duck. This music correlates with the sounds and replaces the film's original sound with a music-like version.

To stay in sync in the grid

Following my requirements made from the analysis of the death metal genre, using samples of both tremolo-picked guitar and bass and pitch-bending them makes the samples go out of synchronisation with the drum part of the tracks. To explain this, in a sampler, if you sample a note and play it one octave higher, the length of the sample is twice as long, making each half-note move 8.33% out of sync. That is noticeable and unwanted, but some samplers stretch the samples, making them useable.

Quantising to fit the grid

Another aspect involved in musicalizing the sounds was that the MIDI transcription was quantised into 16th notes in the chosen tempo of the tracks. I decided these rhythms to fit the drums and to give it the mechanical character I wanted. On the former version of *By the Road*, I chose not to quantise, which I later regretted because it made it hard to hear and feel the machinelike metal music.

The roads are also a grid

Expanding the view or zooming out – to use a photographic term – the roads, which are a part of the band name, can also be viewed as a grid, separating elements and nature, where mobilisation has to be done using the road net. Or, if you don't have a car, using cumbersome passages to manoeuvre past, often over or under the road grid. J. G. Ballard reflects on that in his book *Concrete Island*, where the main character has an accident and drives off the road, and ends up getting stuck in a gap between the motor highways: " *The car veered from side to side across the empty traffic lanes, jerking his hands like a puppet's. The shredding tyre laid a black diagonal*

stroke across the white marker lines that followed the long curve of the motorway embankment. Out of control, the car burst through the palisade of pinewood trestles that formed a temporary barrier along the edge of the road. Leaving the hard shoulder, the car plunged down the grass slope of the embankment. Thirty yards ahead, it came to a halt against the rusting chassis of an overturned taxi." (Ballard, 2011, p. 7)

Tony Smith, a formalist sculpture artist who had his architect career, was destroyed by a car accident that left him with a blood disease. He mentions the experience of driving on a then-unfinished road, the New Jersey turnpike, elevated above the landscape to make the road as straight as possible, an impressive construction, resembling a Kantian experience of the sublime, although Kant's term focuses on nature and not man-made phenomena: "*When I was teaching at Cooper Union in the first year or two of the '50s, someone told me how I could get on to the unfinished New Jersey Turnpike. I took three students and drove from somewhere in the Meadows to New Brunswick. It was a dark night, and there were no lights or shoulder markers, lines, railings, or anything at all except the dark pavement moving through the landscape of the rats, rimmed by hills in the distance but punctuated by stacks, towers, fumes, and coloured lights. This drive was a revealing experience. The road and much of the landscape was artificial, and yet it couldn't be called a work of art. On the other hand, it did something for me that art had never done. At first, I didn't know what it was, but its effect was to liberate me from many of the views I had had about art. It seemed that there had been a reality there which had not had any expression in art.*"

"The experience on the road was something mapped out but not socially recognised. I thought to myself, it ought to be clear that's the end of art. Most paintings look pretty pictorial after that. There is no way you can frame it, you just have to experience it" - From *Talking with Tony Smith*. (Wagstaff, 1966)

Tony Smith elaborates on the experience of the construction area and driving the car on it as an aesthetic experience, in opposition to an artistic experience, which I find interesting.

Guitars

Making a short historical digression to the electric guitar development, many see the Les Paul as the first mass-produced electric guitar, a product of Gibson. After some years, Gibson wanted to develop more types of guitar in the 50s and had quite an experimental period, creating several guitar types that are still embraced by people playing metal – for example, the Flying V and the Explorer. However, they also hired a car designer, Ray Dietrich, to design a Firebird guitar, which he created in 1962. Earlier, Dietrich had designed cars for American car brands. The other guitar, played by Espen Hangård, is a Fender Highway One Telecaster, referring to a type of road, the highway because every car needs roads to drive on. The bass guitar track is a modified baritone guitar produced by Yamaha, a multinational brand that makes motorcycles.

The Gibson Firebird



No vocals

There are no vocals on *By the Road*, as I chose not to add them; vocals are hard to transcribe from the car scenes, making the music less precise. Vocals take focus and space in the music, and I want the performed music and the film scenes to be central to the experience.

I performed this work at Nordic Music Days 2020 in the Faroe Islands, postponed to October 2021 because of the pandemic. The concert will then be performed in a garage in Torshavn. Here, I used the film's "subtitle for the hearing impaired" feature added to DVDs to understand what's happening in the movies. This subtitle explains elements in the films that are communicated only through sound, things that are hard to understand if you are, for example, deaf. These were added as subtitles to the film scenes in *By the Road*.

The subtitle intends to communicate parts of the narrative sound that is harder to understand through the transcribed version of the film scenes' sounds. It fits my artistic work platform, where I actively use subtitles. This can be seen in *Hertz kino*, *Reenactment/Microphone*, *Zulou*, and *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, some of the other artistic research works that are also part of my PhD.

The Cinemachine – a conceptual elaboration

In the car crash scenes, you have several layers of machines. First, the filmed car is in motion, then the camera itself is a machine that absorbs the light and motion onto reels of developed film. The last machine in the cinema-technological apparatus is the film projector showing the film, most often inside the cinema architecture.

Here, I want to reverse the image back to a machine with moving parts, like the engine in the car. The projector is connected to the computer, and the film reels have been replaced by compressed bytes on the computer – a computer that can also decipher, translate, or transcribe the film sound to the music, as MIDI tracks. The tracks are then fed to the sampler, a sound machine specialised to play the recorded sound, and the drum machine. Often, drum machines are small units that play drum sounds without any moving parts, but this is a mechanical trigger unit mounted on a drum kit. The motivation was to see a drum kit with moving parts performing, a mechanical machine.

The formal connections – black and orange

The car

Death Drive has connotations related to my youth, and there are other elements tied to that period – like the death metal genre and a car with unique styling that was the "coolest" car in Tolvsrød, a suburb outside of Tønsberg. The car was a Pontiac Firebird Trans Am, black with an orange firebird painted on the hood. It was a car some might recognise from the film *Smokey and the Bandit*, though with different styling.

The Pontiac Firebird Trans Am



This car is so cool that it demands another picture:



The pedal and the sampler

Death metal has many sub-genres, but *By the Road* specifically refers to Swedish death metal, also called "buzz saw death metal." The two main requirements (other than the above-mentioned tremolo picking, Power chords, and blast beats) are detuning the electric guitars to around the range of a baritone guitar, often four or five halftones down. The strings then lose some tension, giving the guitars the characteristic timbre used in this genre.

The effect pedal used on the record has a specific subcultural history that I think needs some elaboration. The Boss HM-2 pedal with all the knobs turned to the max – as shown in the documented image, giving the music its characteristic buzz saw sound for use in this genre. It's worth mentioning that this pedal was unpopular until this use was discovered by one of the band members of the group *Nihilist*, and now, it is a sought-after pedal for people playing death metal, selling on eBay for three times its original price.

By the Road sampler and distortion pedal



The second guitar pedal

For constructing and recreating the intended death metal guitar sound, I researched until I found out that one pedal used on one of the guitar tracks has to be the Boss DS-1, which adds a variation to the guitar texture. So this is placed in the centre of the mix, with the other guitars panned hard left and right.

The sampler

As mentioned earlier, the genre and the guitar picking requires the guitars to be picked in a tempo of 32nd notes of the track's selected tempo. In addition, I wanted the pitch variations to be pitch bends to depict better and reflect the origin (the car) and sounds. Still, the results with an ordinary sampler would be that the tremolo-picked guitar samples would fall out of synchronisation, which was not the effect I wanted. Through some research, some samplers can do this, and I went with a Roland VP-9000. Notice the colour correlation between the pedal and the sampler. The colours are an underlying reference throughout this work.

The amp

For the performance/concert, I came across another black and orange object. It's only used for the guitar and bass parts during the show. To be scholastic about the Swedish death metal genre, it is also essential to use a lousy guitar amp, preferably solid-state and not tube amps. This amp also fits the aesthetic and colour scheme for *Death Drive*.

The cover and band visual

Firebird is also a model of an American sports car, resulting in the screen prints used as an inlay cover for the record that was made a part of *Death Drive*. Thus, screen printing as a technique is linked to art production. Screen printing is also a technique often used in industry – for example, the logos of many guitars, Gibson guitars included, are applied with screen printing. The illustration shows both icons' overlay, both firebirds on top of each other. This image has been screen printed and included on the new vinyl of *Death Drive*.

The band visual, also used for the screen print



Cars and the car crash as metaphors for society

I was thinking back to when American-made products genuinely produced in the USA were coveted, back in the eighties, or even further back, before the Reagan period. Detroit was a booming city, where most American cars were made, but this changed when Japan outcompeted American car brands. Now, this city is a modern ruin, with high poverty and unemployment.

American cars differ from European cars with bigger engines, making more significant, "growlier" sounds. Many of the cars in the film scenes selected for *Death Drive* use American cars. Being

raised as a boy in the 80s, I know every car brand and only need a glimpse to identify passing cars. Of course, I might not recognise every model, but knowing and seeing the different brands, one seldom sees American-produced vehicles these days, except for Tesla, the electric cars. Thinking of cars, I find them connected to an experience of freedom. For me, the car is associated with three main motives: freedom, mobility, and speed. Moreover, I regard it symbolically, as I don't have a driver's license and have never owned a car.

Mobility

A car allows for the possibility to be more mobile, able to just go at any time, to escape from your life or your destiny. This is maybe more obvious in American films such as *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *Thelma & Louise* (1991). The famous car chase of O. J. Simpson, almost a mixture of both film and reality, mediated through hours of TV coverage following his escape from the police. As Jean Baudrillard writes: "*Driving is a spectacular form of amnesia. Everything is to be discovered, everything to be obliterated.*" (Baudrillard, 1989, p. 9)

Speed

The ability to go fast in a car, even just as a singular experience, is something desired by many. Finding out how fast the car can go, its utmost potential. The experience of speed and acceleration on your body as it is pushed back into the car seat is fascinating. So often present for spectators is a subconscious wish for a crash, a disaster. Seeing an object of transportation that one uses, pushed to its extremes and then crashed. Paul Virilio is possibly the philosopher who has most directly addressed speed:

"Speed again, ostensibly perverts the illusory order of normal perception, the order of arrival of information. What could have seemed simultaneous is diversified and decomposes. With speed, the world keeps on coming at us, to the detriment of the object, which is itself now assimilated to the sending of information. It is this intervention that destroys the world as we know it, technique now reproducing permanently the violence of the accident; the mystery of speed remains a secret of light and heat from which even sound is missing." (Virilio, 1991, pp. 100-101)

Death Drive

The collection shows examples of the literal and fatal death drive, with *Death Proof* (2007) and *Vanishing Point* (1971) as the most explicit. In *Death Proof*, where a psychopathic stunt-driver kills four women in a car crash, and *Vanishing Point's* Kowalski, the cool antihero escapes the police throughout the film and, in the end, chooses to crash the car rather than get caught. According to Virilio, the car crash was also invented together with the invention of the car. It is cause and effect:

"When you invent the ship, you also invent the shipwreck; when you invent the plane, you also invent the plane crash; and, when you invent electricity, you invent electrocution... Every technology carries its own negativity, which is invented at the same time as technical progress." (Virilio, 1999, p. 89)

The title *Death Drive* is a reference to Freud, who, later in his writing, coined the term *Todestrieb*, usually translated to *Thanatos*, but also in English to *death drive*. His discussion of the destructive force in the human psyche is often translated as an effect of the political situation:

"We cannot, indeed, imagine our own death; whenever we try to do so, we find that we survive ourselves as spectators. The school of psychoanalysis could thus assert that at bottom no one believes in his own death, which amounts to saying: in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his immortality." (Freud, 2011)

This quote, in my view, is an enigmatic quote by Freud, but it connects with the firebird – the bird that dies only to be born again and, as a consequence, lives eternally. Given a more realistic and grounded perspective, I believe the passengers often don't reflect on their risks when driving a car. But, when they're in a car on the Autobahn, and the traffic suddenly stops for half an hour because of a collision, one then feels stuck by the thought. I also think car crashes in films are deliberately unrealistic, often not focusing on the pain or death and giving space for the viewer's fascination and curiosity for images of destruction and the speed and force necessary to make steel fold and collapse. Here, I will say that I have used a mixture of old films – where real cars are crashed – and new films that use a lot of Computer Generated Imagery for effects; I like the old, "real" car crash scenes the most.

"The ambiguous role of the car crash needs no elaboration – apart from our own deaths, the car crash is probably the most dramatic event in our lives, and, in many cases, the two will coincide. Aside from the fact that we generally own or are at the controls of the crashing vehicle, the car crash differs from other disasters in that it involves the most powerfully advertised commercial product of this century, an iconic entity that combines the elements of speed, power, dream, and freedom within a highly stylised format that defuses any fears we may have of the inherent dangers of these violent and unstable machines." (Ballard, 2011, p. 157)

Death Drive

Freud's dichotomy of Eros and Thanatos is polarised. In Freud's psychoanalysis, you want to balance and control your drives, both Eros and Thanatos.

"The fateful question for the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent their cultural development will succeed in mastering the disturbance of their communal life by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction. It may be that in this respect precisely the present time deserves a special interest. Men have gained control over the forces of nature to such an extent that with their help they would have no difficulty in exterminating one another to the last man." (Freud, 1962, p. 92)

Lacan's concept of *jouissance* is also relevant here:

"The DEATH DRIVE is the name given to that constant desire in the subject to break through the pleasure principle towards the THING and a certain excess jouissance; thus, jouissance is 'the path towards death.'" (Evans, 2006, p. 94)

The *jouissance* is an experience of enjoyment, but it is excessive. Thus, for example, it might explain why some people experience pleasure in pain through sadomasochism. Also, the thought of excess in Bataille is relevant here, finding, creating, or experiencing beauty or joy in excess:

"I teach the art of turning anguish into delight" (Bataille, 1988, p. 35)

In several of his books, the English author, J. G. Ballard has thematised this connection between sexuality, technology, and self-destruction, and the fascinating power of that connection: *"We followed Vaughan back to the accident site. Hundreds of faces pressed at the windows at the cars moving down the flyover. Spectators stood three deep on the sidewalks and central reservation, crowded together against the wire mesh fence that separated the roadway embankment from the nearby shopping precinct and housing estate. The police had given up any attempt to disperse this enormous crowd."* (Ballard, 2014, p. 127)

The band vs ensemble

I started a theatre band, V/H/H, with Håkon M. Vassvik and Johan Harstad; it's a cooperative, non-hierarchical constellation inspired by theatre theory. All three members had experience playing in bands in our youths. Now, we're trying to produce as much as we can ourselves, without the help of external people, while also integrating others when we reach our limits. This strategy is central in my artistic research work *Zulou*. As I entered a music discourse where the structure was centred around ensembles and composers, the composer wrote compositions and commissions for the ensembles. I found the clear division between musicians and composers curious, and it has made me miss being part of a band. This lack was a motivation for the idea of *Death Drive*.

By the Road

By the Road consists of me composing the music, with associated satellite members: Jonathan Shapiro on drums and Espen Hangård on guitar. Jonathan is a percussionist and a member of the Decoder Ensemble, and he prefers playing the drum kit. He performed a concert version of *Death Drive*, video projection and sampled guitar at MIR in April 2018. Espen Hangård has earlier and played in some of the best Norwegian death metal bands, like No Place to Hide and Diskord. He agreed to make the guitar samples when I failed to play them myself. I had underestimated how difficult it was to play tremolo picking on guitar.

Documentation from the performance at Only Connect 2018, Oslo:



Versions and experiences of the different versions

There have been three performances of *By the Road* with the *Death Drive* material. I also plan for later concerts to include a vocalist for vocals on the tracks, with the first concert at Nordic Music Days initially scheduled for September 2020, but unfortunately postponed to April 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic. I had planned for this to be a part of my PhD. Still, I have documentation from earlier concert versions, such as the Only Connect Festival 2018 in Oslo, ++ Festival at Black Box in Oslo, and the Nymusikk concert at Tønsberg library. The Only Connect performance gave me more time and possibilities to make a space with connotations of a "shabby" rehearsal space that I liked; this, of course, was motivated by a nostalgia of these spaces from my youth playing in bands.

The smell of burned plastic expands the viewer's perception of the concerts. The motors, solenoids fed with double the intended current, and the fast triggering of the drums all make the plastic in the triggers start to melt, releasing a smell associated with burnt rubber. The consequence of performing over the capacity of the drum triggers the risk of it all stopping and collapsing, which has a double effect. The drum motors double this phenomenon with the cars driving on the edge of their capacities and crashing. The smell is an underestimated sense to use in art. Adding the

element of smell in artworks is a way to add associations that I think often surpass the critical aesthetic mind and make their way to the unconscious.

A band releases records

At least bands *often* release records. *By the Road* released a self-titled record in 2014, and, as a part of my artistic PhD, there will be a release of the *Death Drive* material on coloured, enhanced-media vinyl, with a screen-printed cover. The record will be released as a happening in December of 2021. The location is not yet decided, but it will for sure be situated by a road.

Link to cinema tradition

"It's *not blood. It's red.*" Jean Luc Godard (Gardner, 2019)

The most apparent links or reference points are the car-centred films from the 70s and 80s that have lived on as a side genre with, for example, all the *Fast & Furious* (2001-) films, a franchise I believe to be on its ninth film now. The list of movies reveals that the chosen films are a mixture of these action and cinema films, such as *Le Mepris* (1963) by Godard. However, one could say that another one of his films should be selected instead – perhaps the dystopic *Week-End* (1967). One reason is that I have already made a composition for that film, about the five-minute scene of the car queue. Also, the abrupt event of the woman driving herself to death with her lover in *Le Mepris* is thought-provoking, with the unrealistic, oversaturated red blood characteristic of Godard.

"In other words, the essence of the cinematic movement-image lies in extracting from vehicles or moving bodies the movement which is their common substance, or extracting from movements the mobility, which is their essence." (Deleuze, 2017, p. 27)

By the Road also refers to one of the first events in cinema. At the time, the Lumiere brothers filmed short scenes and screened them on large pre-cinema screens, choosing moving objects to film and project. The *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat* (in English, *The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station*) was screened at Grand Café's Indian Salon in Paris in 1895. It is a film depicting a train arriving at a train station, which caused some spectators to flee the screening in fear. My point here is that cinema, from the start, has had an affinity for moving objects and often incorporate machines in the framing of their films, a tradition that continues to this day. Maybe the action films are the genre most true to cinema's origin.

Mimetic: Program music and transcribed music

I will try to elaborate here on other people working with relevant projects – and there are many. I will focus, however, on three aspects: mimetic, machinic, and transcription. *By the Road* refers to the mimetic tradition of music called program music. In short, it's music that sounds like

something out there in the world. Take *Catalogue d'oiseaux (Catalogue of birds)* by Olivier Messiaen (1956-1958), *An der blauen schönen Donau* (1866), by Strauss, and *Peter and the Wolf* (1936), by Prokofiev as classic examples. This music intends to emulate or make the listener hear the origin of the sounds. I would say that there is a difference between transcribing and mimetic music since the transcription as I do it is an interpretation of a recorded sound following parameters like, for example, rhythm, pitch and pitch bend, as I have mentioned earlier.

I want to mention *Emil* (2003) by Carola Bauckholt for solo singer here as a contextual reference. Here Bauckholt has made a composition for soprano where you can hear the singer perform sounds that a baby would have made together with calming sounds from a parent. This emulation or transcription of an intimate moment, together with the scenic presentation of an adult emulating these sounds, gives me an uncanny feeling of something that I'm not supposed to witness. In my view, this feeling connects to the voyeuristic ambivalence of watching car crashes in film.

This difference correlates well with the difference between a painting and a photograph. The painting is mediated through the painter to the canvas, like program music. Likewise, transcribed music is mediated through the camera as it takes an image. Here, Peter Ablinger is maybe the most prominent example, with *Deus Cantando* (2009), a mixed-media installation consisting of a mechanical piano and video. Ablinger manages - with mechanical triggers - to get a grand piano to speak, where the resolution or speed of the mechanics and programming makes it possible to understand and hear what the piano "says," which is The Declaration of the International Environmental Criminal Court.

Context

Music machines

This tradition has started in the renaissance with Leonardo DaVinci when he created a mechanical drum-machine for the military. A more modern starting point would be "futurism," with Luigi Russulo's *Noise machines/Intonarumori* (1913), featuring mechanical noise machines that made new sounds with their foundations or origins in machines that are, to some extent, controlled.

I think *Stifters Dinge* (2007) by Heiner Goebbels is a relevant reference to my work. Goebbels created a hybrid between an installation and a theatre performance. The music in the installation was performed with triggers, motors and machines, without actors. Thus, it looks like an extensive assemblage or a machine that performs his music. I think this lack of persons performing is a relevant and central component of *Stifters Dinge*.

Fellow Koka Nikoladze needs to be mentioned here, being a meticulous constructor and performer of his mechanical machines. He is also the constructor of the technology of the drum kit on "Death Drive," and his kind contribution to a fellow in the field of machine music cannot be

underestimated. Moreover, Koka creates machines that are central in his compositions and performances.

Art and literature

The primary reference is the British author J. G. Ballard and his books on car crashes, *Concrete Island*, *Atrocity Exhibition* and *Crash*. Also, his collage works and his exhibition where he exhibited crashed cars, called *Three Crashed Cars*, exhibited in 1970 at The Arts Lab in London.

A serigraph from 1963 by Andy Warhol called *Silver Car Crash (Double Disaster)*, is one of several works where Andy Warhol appropriated an image of a car crash, repeated 12 times over a large canvas. The image is an uncanny documentation of the aftermath of a what has happened.

The British artist Sarah Lucas, often combines crashed cars and sexuality in some of her installations and sculptures in a ballardian way. Her sculpture *EPITAPH BLAH BLAH* (2018) Lucas has covered the surface of a crashed car with cigarettes enhancing or doubling the reference to mortality. And her *No Limits!* (1999) is a sculpture consisting of a worn BMW with the door taken off with mechanic masturbation hand mounted for the driver seat.

Ruined romanticism

As paintings from the romantic period have made us realise, old castles, cathedrals, and buildings are even more mysterious and beautiful after time has turned them into ruins. This can be seen in several of the paintings of the German painter Caspar David Friedrich. In *Abtei im Eichwald* (1809-1810) and *Junotempel in Agrigent* (1828-1830), he depicts ruins. In romantic aesthetics, aesthetic experience was found in motives, other than objects considered to be beautiful, like ruins, a wild forest, or a wrecked ship. Today the car wreck could also be a romantic motive in art: "*Meanwhile, the Lincoln lay abandoned in the avenue. Without Vaughan's presence, it rapidly disintegrated. As the leaves from the autumn trees staled on the roof and bonnet, sinking through the broken windows into the passenger compartment, the car sank on the flat tyres. Its derelict condition, the loosened body panels and fenders invited the hostility of passers-by.*" (Ballard, 2014, p. 181)

Chapter 13. Conclusion

"Doing art means displacing art's borders, just as doing politics means displacing the borders of what is acknowledged as the political." (Rancière, 2010, p. 149).

In the different works that make up my artistic-research PhD, I have thematised and focused on different ideological elements in the documentation and archived materials.

This was inspired by the Marxist understanding of ideology and by theoreticians inspired by both Marx and psychoanalysis. Some central examples are Slavoj Žižek, Laura Mulvey, Jaques Lacan, Althusser and Michel Foucault. One central topic in Foucault's publications is the relation between power and knowledge, as this relationship produces subjects and structures institutions in society. These structures, in his view, change throughout history. For Lacan, The Imaginary forms what we strive for and want in our lives. Žižek was inspired by Marx and Lacan, often creating interpretations of films that tell us something about its ideology and how we are brought up in society to think and act without being aware of it.

"What is most important is to cease legislating for all lives what is liveable only for some, and similarly, to refrain from proscribing for all lives what is unlivable for some." (Butler, 2004, p. 87)

The artistic works have been produced in a period of around four years. I see artistic production as a plane where ideas lead to research that leads to artistic works where the material, combination of media and placement or presentation is motivated by following the idea to the production.

Common denominators of my artistic research works

Society-discipline-institutions

Through the artistic works in my PhD, I have worked through different aspects of society. For example, I have researched and done artworks on asymmetrical power relations, from surveillance and control institutions, both historical and present, to worries about the consequences of artificial intelligence in our society and which position humans will then have in relation to computers with artificial intelligence.

In pedagogics, psychiatry and psychology, people are concerned about or work on people that fall outside the normality. But I have been interested in how these people are represented and treated.

"The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the social worker-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, his gestures, his behavior, his aptitudes, his achievements." (Foucault, 1995, p. 304)

Then I moved to focus on the power-relation and hierarchy of humans in the military. I have also focused on the colonial representation of other people "coloured" through Western knowledge production. Also, I have focused on protest movements and sub-cultures as internal movements within society.

I think I create works where there is a power struggle or opposition, where some have the power and position, and some do not. However, I strive for a descriptive and distant perspective. Despite this distance, it is important that my sympathy in my works lies with the unprivileged. I also think counter-movements and protest movements are relevant and share this power and control relation. They are in opposition and stand up against ideas from within a society. They are often targets for control and force but are important in working and fighting for change to improve our societies.

I then moved from the control institutions and control mechanism that surveillance of a population is, historically and present. And finally, in the next artistic research works, I moved to the control and power mechanisms within the human sciences, where one can be diagnosed, treated, medicated, and locked in institutions. Discourses on human science that exemplify through my appropriated visual material are both dated and outdated. Again, this can lead the spectators' thoughts towards our society's view on humans, on mental illness, which might be outdated in fifty years.

I also think counter-movements and protest movements are relevant and share this power and control relation. They are in opposition and stand up against ideas from within a society. They are often targets for control and force but are important in working and fighting for change to improve our societies.

The nine works

Surveillance done the old way

The work *Das kapitalistische Ausland* was a natural starting point and a continuation of an interest in working with surveillance, a thematic I have been working with since my bachelor at the Norwegian Art Academy. Earlier I have coupled this thematic together with the experience of *The Gaze*, the self-reflexive experience of someone watching that has an impact, that changes your behaviour. As Snowden says: *Under observation, we act less free, which means we effectively are less free.* (Snowden, 2014) The institution that manages and administers the files from the former Stasi-files of the GDR, The BStU, is one of a few institutions that can give access to surveillance reports and documents. GDR is also an interesting example of a country that had almost a total surveillance of its population. How this power-relation was reflected in the reports was something I was interested in.

The power of storage

I was worried that my research and study would be read too much in a historical context. To balance this out, I did a study on the NSA, one of several intelligence organisations in the USA. I interviewed Thomas A. Drake on his experience of being a whistleblower and being charged with espionage. This interview was originally played over the speaker in the bus that transported the audience to *Das kapitalistische Ausland*. But the motor was too loud, and many were unable to understand what was being said. I then had the idea to present it as a sound sculpture in a gallery space where I modified a speaker into a speaker to play the interview, which I think worked much better. Since the presentation was so different, I gave it a new title, *Storage*.

The future might not be ours

After presenting work on how surveillance is executed today, I had the idea to research how the power-relations in the world in the future can change if or when we invent artificial intelligence. *The Pen is mightier than the Word* is about conscience and artificial intelligence. This would be a new life-form that has self-consciousness that can improve itself at an incredible speed, a worry I could see both in magazines, film and newspapers. I wanted to make a work that fed on this, in many ways, an ideological worry and connected this with older image-material of computers and philosophy on consciousness. The work has an under-communicated thematic of surveillance but presents a clear idea of what can happen if computer technology, a tool used for surveilling and controlling people in modern society, gains its own will and will think and act for its own good is something worth reflecting over. The Pen, or computer technology, is then mightier than the sword.

Communication and Affect

I then thought of humans that fall out of the "normal" spectrum and came across the story of Helen Keller, a deaf, blind person who learned to speak and read. She was famous in her time, and it was quite an accomplishment. But the story also reveals an upbringing where she as a child was looked upon as an "imbecile," a derogatory term no longer used today. Helen Keller was to be placed in an institution if she didn't learn to communicate and behave like a person. So the family film on her upbringing, *The Miracle Worker* (1962) shows quite a lot of use of force in the pedagogical process of teaching Helen Keller to speak.

Psychology and the human

The use of force for the sake of good led me to want to research to make work on psychiatry and psychology and their discourse on normality. In *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!)* I have assembled a collection of old educational therapy sessions and photographs of mentally ill

women. In my view, they seem quite dated, both in the use of technology, but most importantly, in the power-relation between the doctor and the patients, which I read as quite condescending. Curiously I find the therapy session with Wilhelm Reich to be the most humane. I get the impression that he really wants to help his patient.²³

The Military and The Other

The work is a re-narrativisation of an old movie classic entitled *Zulu* into an afro-futurist fiction and time travel technology. But most central and visually present is the military discipline, its hierarchy and sorting of humans that it is a total system of organisation of humans. One can also read a class organisation with privates that do not want to be there, with their protests of not doing more than they have to do until the battle hits their station. The original film, *Zulu*, is, from my perspective, dated and has a clear colonial view of the Zulus as primitive and brutal. My strategy for presenting this was the juxtapositioning of the new narrative, where I believe the imagery was split from the original story and was seen as more problematic than it would have been by watching the original *Zulu*.

Postcolonialism and the entertainment industry

In *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!* I focused on a post-colonial perspective on the visual representation of non-western ethnicities viewed through the Western lens or gaze. I collected scenes from 249 films where The other is watched, focusing on drums, rhythm, rituals, and dancing. I acted as an ethnomusicologist, collected the rhythms, and transcribed them with help from SISU-Ensemble, performing the music with the collected video material. Central to this work is the western countries colonising the world, collecting and generating knowledge about cultures and representations of "The other," representations that are biased and based on a colonial perspective.

The protest and the fight for a better world

Reenactment/Microphone focuses on culture and society and which acts that are accepted or not. Reenacted through appropriated material and composed as parts of a whole. With the microphone, a technology taken for granted in our time. The first part is a monologue of Wilhelm

²³ This music theatre work has never been shown. All the parts are ready, but this was never performed and probably never will due to the corona crisis. Most contemporary music is only played once. And since I missed the opportunity, this work will most probably never be heard.

Reich where he talks about the culture and family as a carrier of violence, examples though circumcision of boys, which is performed because it was performed on the boy's father when he was a baby. Central is where he talks about the value of human children saying No. This is juxtaposed with a scene from a therapy session from the Godard film *Week-End* (1967), where the client tells her sexual histories for the therapist's pleasure. The last part is a recording from *Occupy Wall Street*, a protest movement that had to use the "human-mic" so that all could hear what was being said from the speaker.

The death drive and the car as a modern aesthetic object

By the Road - Death Drive is a more distant work. Here I interpret and collect scenes of car crashes from films. I find this phenomenon peculiar because the car can be seen as a former symbol of freedom, and its destruction becomes an aesthetic experience, an experience of the sublime. This is connected with death metal, a subcultural music genre where death and destruction were central in the album covers and the song lyrics. The subcultural movements were countercultures that protest lifestyle and views against the doxa, the accepted thoughts in society.

The work's relation to the research questions

When starting my research period, and as my works grew in number, I had the idea that they would fall into a harmonic structure where the structure between the artworks would seem harmonic and planned. But art doesn't follow stringent logic, reasoning and make clear answers. Artistic research and art are to experiment, research and create works that are not functional to solve problems.

Art and artistic research, in my view, must follow the logic of art. Linear or structured reasoning, however, often results in illustrative works, depicting reasoning or logic but making dull art – mere illustrations. The process of researching the concept and idea material for the work must be materialised and constructed. The concept must adapt to the plane of reality, realising a work with its inner logic, which often breaks or differs from a mere execution and is not linear. This resonates with the American artist Trevor Paglen's statement: "*I don't think that art does linear arguments very well at all. So I kind of break it up in different forms.*" (Cornell, Wilson & Kholeif, 2018, p. 29)

The works are intended to be political, with content presented as a political act to present for other people, together with the different art discourses. There is a reference or use of media archaeology to all the nine works, where the mediation of the appropriated documentation is a central part of the work. For example, recitations with Dias-screens or a hard drive converted to a speaker playing the interview of an NSA whistleblower.

Also, by using the psychoanalytic concept of the death drive on my fascination with car crash scenes transcribing the car sounds to death metal music in the work *By the Road - Death Drive*. The music was performed by machines: The sampler and the mechanical drum machine. Here the

auditory experience was mixed with the scent of melting plastic, similar to the smell of burned tires.²⁴

Political potential

One of my research questions relates to the potential of music theatre today. In this regard, I relate to Bertolt Brecht's theory of "epic theatre," which is a good example of a theatre to make the audience think and reflect on the content presented. His theory about *The Epic Theatre* and his plays is presented through breaks in the dramatic story. The "Verfremdungseffekt" gives the audience space and the possibility to reflect on the problems or conflicts in his plays and productions. "*Verfremdung estranges an incident or character simply by taking from the incident or character what is self-evident, familiar or obvious in order to produce wonder and curiosity.*" (Brecht, 2016, p. 143)

I would claim that it is more difficult to have political works resonate and create engagement in society today than was the case in a period where Marxism and socialism were central ideologies with a political force. Both Brecht and the audience were sharing the same class or political ideology, and were therefore mutually striving towards the same goal: a better world where money and material goods were evenly shared.

I follow Brecht's thoughts of breaking with the illusory theatre machinery and present the mechanics of theatre and music theatre to make space for presenting what I see as political material. I think breaking the illusion contributes to creating a reflective space. To help with that, I try not to hide the elements of construction. With music theatre as a base, from Brecht's and Erwin Piscator's productions, one has the ability to present a text, video, objects, and images as elements of the work with the potential to present political content for the audience's reflection.

I am still not sure what kind of concrete political function a work of art can have. This is an impossible assignment, as one never has full control over the reception of the works one has created. Nevertheless, as an artist and an artist-researcher, I have to believe and insist that artworks with the power of presentation in the present moment can impact the viewer.

"But contemporary art is not only about beauty. It is also about function." (Steyerl, 2012, p. 93)

²⁴ The solenoids triggering the drums are playing fast on high voltage, melting the plastic parts creating the smell. Also, the drummer on the record, Jonathan Shapiro, was an experiment of performing the concert with a live drummer.

Is every artwork political?

I was confronted by the question “Is every artwork political?” several times while presenting my works at artistic research seminars, where PhD students, colleagues, and teachers met to present and discuss their work. Because art is the expression and presentation of something, it can be viewed as political or as a political act. I disagree with this notion, as I think the situation, timing, and, most importantly, the presented content makes it political. The function of the artwork is also important, that is, the intention one has in creating it. This is what you want the audience or viewer to experience. It is why you're presenting this content or perspective and not presenting something else. Here, I follow Brecht's understanding of art: it should have a function, work, and effect.

However, art does not, in my view, work if it is only meant to agitate, with the only imperative of telling the viewers how they should feel and react to the artwork. Art, in my opinion, is better when presented indirectly, as for example one of the most important political works of the last hundred years, *Guernica* (1937), by Picasso. The painting depicts a bombing by German planes during the Spanish Civil War. From my perspective, at first glance, it looks like an ordinary Picasso work, but when you look at it more thoroughly, you can see the agony, fear, and death on the people's faces. It is an artwork that now is one of the most powerful portrayals of the miseries of war.

CNN & Beslan

I have thought about why I make political artworks and also why I want to make them. I am not very outspoken in my political views. Still, I am a member of a political party here in Norway to use areas of life outside my artistic platform to improve society, preferably for "the subaltern " or the unprivileged. I have thought of why this documentarist strategy came into my work. I recognise the influence of watching cable TV growing up, particularly when the news channel CNN became available in Norway and observing its use of war imagery and live images from the First Gulf War. That was imagery that I – along with most of the world – hadn't seen before—live images of live bombing from the perspectives of a soldier in helicopters and jet fighters. The demonstration of total war power and the “entertainmentization” was both bizarre and fascinating to me. You could watch reports 24 hours a day back then.

Most important, however, was another news report on Norwegian radio. It came from Beslan, when Chechen separatists had taken over 1,100 people hostage in a school, including 777 children, threatening to bomb them. I remember turning on the Norwegian radio, which broadcasted a recording from the town square when the bomb went off, killing over 300 people. You could hear the bang in the distance, but then came the reaction to that sound. The sound meant that the hostage-takers' bomb had gone off. The sound of immediate collective agony and sorrow is something that I will never forget and that I later have thought of as something that has impacted what I do with my art. Of course, one part is the political aspect. But what made the most impact was the people's immediate reaction, making me think of collective empathy. An empathy that comes before reason, a collective emotion that can connect us to feel and react with each other, as I did when I heard the bang, I had an emotional reaction together with the locals. Also, I think the indirect way this event was documented is similar to some of the famous paintings of Caspar David

Friedrich, such as *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer* (1818), where a person watching along with you is in the motive of the painting.

Experience with places for presenting my works - Placement and content

During my PhD period, I struggled to get a place for my works to be performed. I first wanted my artistic research to be presented in a theatre space, a black box. I found this a complicated process where I had cancelled agreements and meetings that did not lead anywhere. This led together with reading Foucault *Of Other Spaces*, led me to work more site-specific. One door shut can lead to another. But broken agreements are stressful in an already packed work process of research, seminars, producing and presenting work. I wanted to use my competence and education from Fine Arts when working on the locations and placements of the artworks. The sites had to contribute, making the presentation clearer and more effective as if the audience or viewer was surrounded or encapsulated by the works. to make an example, in *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!*, I included the building with the mural in the building and books from the library, together with using the old tables from Deichmanske library, furniture many students have a nostalgic relationship with. Also I made a postcolonial stew, both to make it easier to socialize with the audience and to fill the space with a smell of garlic, ginger, cumin that connected with the theme of the work.

And I am glad I made that choice instead of using a white cube or black box, both of which I considered at the beginning of my research period. Also, my experience is that music theatre is a genre primarily presented in a contemporary music context. Some of my artistic research works were programmed in contemporary music festivals. From this experience, I want to continue working with sites and spaces and create works for selected locations. I like connecting the concept for artwork and the space. I find this work exciting and something that often benefits the artwork and the experience for the audience watching it.

Zeitgeist

I think my works are dated, not to say they're outdated, but they're rooted in time and often in which I live and work and are affected by the political changes that have occurred during my PhD. Some of my works relate to historical material, such as *Me Too* and *Black Lives Matter*. For example, *Dialogue - Diagnosis (Olympus Greek Masque!)* is a work that I don't think I would have made without the *Me Too* movement. I don't think this was a conscious decision. Still, the work was motivated by researching the different forms of gazes thematized in theory. In particular, Laura Mulvey's elaboration on the male gaze, which I have also called the "Western gaze," and which has some similarities with Ann E. Kaplan's the imperial gaze. I think my concept, however, is more descriptive and less morally charged than the imperial gaze. In my understanding of the term, A.E. Kaplan's term focuses more on the imperial and colonising act and focuses more on female depiction than I have. In another example, I worked on *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!* for over three years, and it was performed in September of 2019. Then, in May of 2020, the

police killed George Floyd, creating enormous reactions and giving attention to the Black Lives Matter movement that has existed since 2013. In addition, the alt-right movement and the rise of right-wing populism, at its height, got Donald Trump elected as the American president.

I think these are important time-specific events underlying my work as a "Zeitgeistly temperament," which I'll probably notice reading this reflection some years from now. What's important here is that when I use the word *Zeitgeist*, I don't mean that ideas are porous and in flux and eventually just stop having importance. In their periods of momentum, things, events, and thematics are important, and one can see similar work and movements forming a correlation. Thinking of it, it might seem quite outdated ten years from now. Hopefully, it will only look dated, being an example of its time of production.

"Every articulation is a montage of various elements—voices, images, colors, passions, or dogmas—in time and space." (Steyerl, 2012, p. 78)

There and then

When working with video works and video installations, the closed nature of this form of expression has become more apparent to me. The video-format consists of moving images forming the indexicality of something that has happened and things said in the past. The images have been recorded and stored. There is an aspect of a situation of "there and thenness." The point is to make a finished, closed work, to make it ready for screening. Through the research period, the intention to open video material together with other documents has been a drive that connects and combines the works.

Here and now: Working with archive material and video

The basis for the music theatre in my artistic works are documentation, video material, recitation, transcription to music, and superimposition with actors, all of which were ways to reformat the material and to present a work in the present, as a "re-presence-tation." By doing this, I reopen historical material, imagery, documents and facsimiles in the artworks. And the viewer or audience can experience it and reflect upon it in the present while they are spatially together with the material, the actors, or the musicians. For example, with this strategy, I open the Stasi-files in the recitation. I have a similar strategy with *It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!*, where the live drum parts are played together with the film scenes. In *Zulou*, I put a new narrative on top of the original. With the original narrative still present, it is open for evaluation.

This idea came from watching Jeremy Deller's work *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001). This was a happening – and later a documentarist work – where he reenacts a historic battle between miners on strike and the police in 1984, in Orgreave in England. Here, around 800 historical actors and two

hundred former miners reenacted the confrontation. This may function as a reopening of a traumatic historical event which may have a potential for new reflection or even healing.

In addition, I also used a form of recitation that I experienced in the GDR, mentioned in the chapter of *Das kapitalistische Ausland*. The dramaturgy and the scenography were stripped to a bare minimum. On stage, one could only see an actor sitting at a table on stage reading Alfred Janka's auto-biography *Schwierigkeiten mit der Wahrheit (Difficulties with the truth)* at Deutsches Theater in 1989. This stripped the theatrical experience down to its bare minimum, which caught my interest. This functions as a reopening of the material, and, through this person reactivating it, creates a room in the present, an aspect of "Here and now."

Uneasiness and quantity as strategy and function in my work

Common in my work is my drive to break with classic narrative structures and the melodrama created to play with the spectator's emotions, which is something I claim exists in nearly all series and films one can watch today. I try to break with this operatic and entertainment structure by using long sequences of material and documentation not meant for public or cultural purposes and archive documents and interviews. I also use large quantities of materials as an active, creative choice in my works.

Concerning the subject of quantity, I think of my large collections of material as being beyond the audience's ability to focus or be entertained; I want works to push the limit in those areas. For example, in *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, I wanted the audience to feel the never-ending structure to help them relate to the scope of the archive and all the work spent generating the documents recited on stage. With *It takes all kinds to make the World, Sir!* I wanted the archive of the scenes presented in concert to feel never-ending so that the audience could experience the sheer quantity of the collected video material, and the pervasiveness of the western gaze as an othering mechanism.

The appropriated use of material from others as a political act

I mainly make extensive use of appropriated material in my works. I collect, combine, and juxtapose different found materials to create original works. This may be problematic in an artistic research context. In my understanding of appropriated art, one important requirement is not to ask for permission to use the material. It is an act of situationist "détournement" to overturn other material, often taken from magazines or from the imagery of the entertainment industry, such as films created more or less for economic and entertainment purposes. One of the most famous artists working with appropriated material, Martha Rosler, did not ask for permission to use the material and combine it to create new artworks. As I follow this line, I have not asked for permission to use the material from others.

For example, Cristian Marclay is a Canadian artist whose work *The Clock* won the Golden Lion award at the 2011 Venice Biennale. In this work, he used material appropriated from films quite extensively. He has defended his use of the material as "Fair Use" and has also sold this work to art collections in museums, making a profit from it. The work has been purchased jointly by the Tate in London, Centre Pompidou in Paris, and The Israel Museum in Jerusalem. The Boston Museum of Fine Art has also acquired *The Clock* in their collection in a joint purchase with the National Gallery of Canada. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art and MoMA also have the work in their collection. My intention here is not to criticise Marclay's work or his endeavours to make a profit from his work. On the contrary, it is a fantastic artwork, but this can exemplify how appropriated material and "fair use" work in the art world.

YouTube

The way we look at ownership of visual material has changed through the establishment and the expanded use of YouTube, where the material is presented and combined with others' intellectual properties on a vast scale. You can find whole films to watch, remixes of films, collections of scenes from movies concerning particular themes, or redubbed scenes. The list is never-ending. One example is the redubbing of a bunker scene with Hitler from the movie *Downfall* (2004), where Hitler, played by Bruno Ganz, loses his temper. This scene has been re-subtitled into almost every theme imaginable. For example, he loses his temper after struggling to "nail" to achieve Stevie Ray Vaughan's guitar tone.

The remix (meme) culture is endless. YouTube phenomena show us that imagery can exist on different platforms than originally intended for presentation. This creates new forms for remixed material, and in many ways, democratises the imagery that surrounds our daily lives. Humour and remixing can also be a way of being critical of the entertainment material. This enormous scope change of use and internet platforms has also created a wider acceptance of using other people's intellectual properties. Which again has made way for Fair Use and Creative Commons, laws and platforms for using other people's creative and intellectual work.

Juridical defence of the use of appropriated material

There is, of course, a juridical aspect of this practice, where one's intellectual property is secured by law. But there is the American law of Fair Use that allows using other's intellectual and creative material:

"Copyright Disclaimer Under Section 107 of the Copyright Act 1976, allowance is made for 'fair use' for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. Fair use is a use permitted by copyright statute that might otherwise be infringing. Non-profit, educational or personal use tips the balance in favour of fair use." (Center for Media & Social Impact, 2015)

The Centre for Media and Social Impact has produced a manual for the practice of Fair Use for artists. The "Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for the Visual Arts," states that one requirement is central: "*[a]rtists should avoid uses of existing copyrighted material that do not generate new artistic meaning, being aware that a change of medium, without more, may not meet this standard.*" (Center for Media & Social Impact, 2015) This gives room for me to use appropriated material in my work artistically. Another aspect is that it is artistic research, and research also opens for Fair Use because this use is not for profit or economic reasons.

The musicians' and actors' roles in all this

I try to do as much work as possible myself, and I hire people who have the competencies I lack concerning the different artistic works. This collection of works has involved musicians, actors, and sound engineers. I also hoped to hire a real foley artist to work in *Zulou*, but unfortunately, he was unavailable.

I think this is a way of working I have acquired from fine art. I want to do the most and even expand the field where I'm working, only hiring expertise when required. Anyone employed is an expert, and I hope to use their competences oriented to the concept of my art and music theatre works. That means that I give room for them to use their abilities, trying to flatten the hierarchical structure as much as possible. It is, in the end, my artistic work. From my perspective, this creates a suitable workspace where feedback, critique, and rehearsal are productive and stressful, fun, and challenging. On the other hand, the collaboration established a creative space where solutions, ways of presentation of ideas, and critique made my artistic works better, more focused and I hope easier to read by the audience.

Still: Not the End



How my research has opened up to further research and artistic works

My artistic research period has expanded my way of working and reassured me that working conceptually with music theatre and art is still relevant and productive. The period has given me the possibility to do more thorough research and be more experimental and led me to further research.

I will now work on refugees and their experiences connected to satellite and communication technology. Satellites and smartphones are technological agents enabling the refugees fleeing relate to this technology for communication, and countries gather information and intelligence from satellites.²⁵ The audio communication between mobile phones using the Fast Fourier Transform technology to simplify and compress audio transmission in mobile phones will also be studied, together with radio transmission used to send and receive information from the satellites. In 2022 I will work with a school class consisting mainly of fugitives, where we will work and do

²⁵ The FFT technology is what is also used to transcribe audio to notes.

research together on satellite technologies. This will lead to an exhibition, *From Above*, at the gallery space Tenthaus in Oslo.

As a continuation of my work with *Das kapitalistische Ausland*, I will continue to work on the Stasi files of seven Stasi-informants from Norway, some that were positioned in the political system. These are still anonymous, hidden behind Stasi code-names. It has been discussed at the Norwegian Parliament, the Storting, to allocate resources to find out who those informants were, but the proposal did not get a majority vote. This is an area where I want to research more. In this work, *De syv forlagte*, I will study their Stasi-files and follow the traces to see if I can find out more about who the informants were. I see this becoming more of a Performance-oriented lecture.

In 2022, I will continue collaborating with Decoder Ensemble, developing *By the Road* to a more scenic happening-oriented version with new music from car scenes performed by the Ensemble. This version has the title *Along the Road*. Later in 2022, I will present *We bow to Death and Die!*, a site-specific scenic video work about death and pestilence, with references such as Detroit Techno together with the illustrations from *Svartedauen* (1900) by Theodor Kittelsen and the film *Epidemic* (1987) by Lars von Trier. Finally, as a part of the V/H/H, we will continue with a new collaboration where we will replace the narrative and perform foley on an entire film. Here we will build on the reflection and experience we had from *Zulou*.

"In the dark times

will there also be singing?

Yes, there will be singing.

About the dark times." (Brecht, 1976, p. 320)

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Storage

Thomas Drake

The Pen is mightier than the Word

Alexandra Elbakyan

By the Road

Ernst van der Loo

Cato Langnes

Koka Nikoladze

Bjørnar Habbestad

Jonathan Shapiro

Espen Hangård

Reenactment/Microphone**Decoder Ensemble**

Alexander Schubert

Sonja Lena Schmid

Carola Schaal

Andrei Koroliov

Jonathan Shapiro

Hertzkin

Sanae Yoshida

It takes all Kinds to make the World, Sir!**The Eminent SISU-Ensemble**

Tomas Nilsson

Bjørn Skansen

Bjørn-Christian Svarstad

&

Snorre Hvamen

Bjørnar Habbestad

Ann Kristin Traaen

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