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INQUIRY

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EDITORIAL

Jozef Kovalčik and Max Rynänen

Dear reader, this is the introduction page for issue number 5. There is no theme for the issue, but one could say that it mirrors popular culture as its most typical – a smorgasboard of absurdities.

Lenka Lee's article "New Beauty: Between Hipsters and Folklore" focuses on the culture of one of the most interesting middle class 'tribes' of our era, the hipsters. Aleksí Vauhkonen's text "Within Walls - The Fictional Audience of Professional Wrestling" is a discourse on the grotesque art/sport of professional wrestling and the way the audience takes part in the performance. Mari Vergara's "The kaleidoscopic experience within everyday-life: on authorship, intertextual narrative, stream of consciousness and multifractality" offers a philosophical overview of issues related to playfulness in modernist/avant-garde literature, and Juha Torvinen's and Susanna Välimäki's "Stockhausen's Helicopter String Quartet and the challenge of conceptual music" takes up, analogously, some playful popular aspects in Stockhausen's music. Danai Anagnostou's critical analysis, "To address femininity via studying Below-the-Line Film Labour Practices", discusses twisted gendered practices in film production.

We are happy to announce that Miško Šuvaković's and Boško Drobnjak's special issue, which will be based on the poppish margins of the papers presented in the conference of the International Association for Aesthetics in Belgrade (July 2019) will form our spring issue, and that Scott Elliot is working on editing 2020/1, which will be a special issue on cars and popular culture.

WITHIN WALLS – THE FICTIONAL AUDIENCE OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING

Aleksi Vauhkonen

1. Introduction

Let me begin with what could be a controversial statement to some: professional wrestling is the most successful form of live theater performance in the world. Multiple times a week, the world-wide industry leader WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) draws crowds in the thousands, and often the melodrama of wrestling can fill even the largest stadiums. Meanwhile the Japanese promotion NJPW (New Japan Pro Wrestling) has become so popular that it routinely runs shows for English language audiences in America, Great Britain, and in Australia. Whereas WWE and NJPW have weekly television shows and also stream their contents via video-on-demand services to international viewing audiences, the smaller local independent wrestling promotions are also thriving. Also, recently the upstart company All Elite Wrestling has acquired a national cable television deal in the United States, becoming a viable alternative in mainstream professional wrestling to WWE. Indeed, wrestling is at an all-time high¹, and it is no surprise. It offers an immersive live experience and includes its audience like no other form of performance. As a matter of fact, wrestling does not have a choice of including its audience, the audience is included organically, as I shall argue in this paper².

Veijo Hietala calls professional wrestling “the apex of post-modern media sports”³. For him televised sport has evolved into something that encompasses “fake sports” such as wrestling. Hietala states that professional wrestling turns upside down the fraudulent ideology of legitimate sports, the rules, and the sportsmanship that are continuously broken in the name of competition. Indeed, wrestling turns cheating into a spectacle: referees are often violently attacked, hairs are pulled, groins are kicked, and illegal weapons such as metal folding chairs are swung. This is often the case with traditionally American good vs. evil wrestling battles that follow a three act formula: first the hero is proved to be a superior wrestler and athlete, then the villain realizes this and cheats to get the advantage, and finally the hero either prevails and wins or loses after a courageous fight against the odds.

Hietala's analysis of wrestling is an analysis of a sport, but most existing literature regards wrestling as a theatrical performance.⁴ It is hard to draw a line between the two as wrestling is predetermined and scripted but at the same time it clings to the notion that it is a sport by utilizing conventional sports production aspects such as instant replays and sports commentary as narration. That is what makes wrestling hard to pin down as a genre of entertainment. Even though professional wrestling may be marketed as sport in its largest and most important medium, television, it is not regarded as sport by devout sports fans. It does not escape its "fakeness" by being post-modern as much as Veijo Hietala might claim. It is not embraced by people who crave the competitive aspect of sports, those who live vicariously through their hometown teams, or those who just need it to be "real" for it to make sense.

The conventions of spectator sports used in professional wrestling however activate the wrestling audience in a way that no other form of fiction does. Professional wrestling does have its roots in legitimate combat sports, but today the wrestling audience understands what they are in fact witnessing is a "fake sport" that exists solely in the fictional world of wrestling. Indeed, a fictional spectator sport requires a fictional spectator and thus I shall argue that the wrestling audience constitutes a fictional audience.

In this article I will attempt to give an explanation on the fictional world of professional wrestling by referencing Kendall Walton's *Mimesis as Make-Believe*⁵. Further, I will put forth the notion that the professional wrestling audience is an entity inside said fictional world. I believe that this gives the professional wrestling audience power and the ability to become at times even a radical element inside the product they are consuming.

2. What is a fictional world?

In J. M. Barrie's play *Peter Pan* (1904) there is a scene where Peter turns to the audience and asks them to clap their hands if they believe in fairies in order to save the dying Tinkerbell. Presumably every single time the audience would then clap, and this would cue the actor playing Tinkerbell to wake up. This, according to Susanne Langer⁶, is "disregard" of psychological distance and to seek audience participation in this way is to deny that drama is art. Whether this loss of distance is relevant in arguing if a play can be appreciated as an aesthetic object is up for debate, but it does raise an interesting dilemma about what can constitute a fictional world.

Imagining fictional truths is what makes fictional worlds⁷. As children play games of make-believe, they include fictional truths into the real world. This is accomplished through what Kendall Walton calls "props". For example, if a child proposes to another that "the floor is lava" and the two begin to climb on furniture to avoid getting burned, the floor becomes a prop that generates a fictional truth. The floor is a prop merely because the children explicitly make

it so. By stating that the floor is lava and acting accordingly apprehensive to walk on it, they create a fictional world where it is a fictional truth that the floor is lava. Perhaps the children's mother is in the kitchen cooking and standing on the same floor. She is not standing in lava because she is an entity outside said fictional world (until of course the children decide to include the parent in the fictional world they are imagining).

Walton's special definition of the "representational arts" is that they are fiction. According to Walton, performances such as theater are props specifically made for the purposes of being used in imagining fictional truths. These truths are implied through conventions of the given genre. For example, it is automatically implied that during a stage production of *Peter Pan*, what happens on stage is a prop for imagining fictional truths, such as that Wendy Darling is a 12-year-old girl who lives in Bloomsbury, London. If a production of *Peter Pan* would break out on a train platform during rush hour, it would be unclear to anyone unfamiliar with the play or anyone who would not be cued in to the performance by theatrical conventions that what is happening is a prop for imagining the fictional world of *Peter Pan*.

So, what exactly happened with the case of Tinkerbell? The audience was first separate from the fictional world of the play but for a brief moment the audience was merely engaged with it. When most likely in every staging of the play Tinkerbell wakes up, the audience is once again relegated to watching the play from the outside. Peter and Wendy do not fly back to London in front of an audience of people as the fictional world of *Peter Pan* in no way encompasses an audience that could have any power within it. In theater the fourth wall can be broken time to time, but the conventions of theater always rebuild it and the audience is left outside.

3. Professional wrestling as fiction

The genre of entertainment called professional wrestling portrays the fictional sport of professional wrestling. Therefore, the sport of professional wrestling happens exclusively inside a fictional world and a professional wrestling entertainment product is the prop that allows one to imagine said world. This fictional world is in fact quite uniform, as different professional wrestling products reference each other regularly. Especially as the industry leader WWE is referenced by independent promotions constantly as being the "big leagues" in the sport of wrestling. One could even go as far as to say that all professional wrestling shares a fictional world as it is the convention to regard it as such.

Professional wrestlers portray characters, but they are not commensurate to actors on stage. For the most part, wrestlers only play one character for the duration of their careers and often adopt that character in all public relations. For instance, in WWE Joseph Anoa'i portrays the fictional character of Roman Reigns but in all wrestling related discourse the person is

always referred to as Roman Reigns and not Joseph Anoa'i. One could compare this to a musician having a stage name, but a musician is not performing as a part of a fictional world. In essence, Joseph Anoa'i has become Roman Reigns and Roman Reigns is very much like Joseph Anoa'i. At the end of the day, wrestlers are amalgamations of themselves and their characters.

In the fictional sport of professional wrestling the wrestlers fight for money, revenge, glory, respect, and most importantly championships. Championships in professional wrestling are, of course, not won in legitimate sporting contests but are used as fictional story engines. A championship is thus given to the character who is focused on and is currently being portrayed as a winner. The performer who holds a championship title is in a prominent role, often meaning that portraying a fictional champion generally corresponds to more money, prestige, and respect among peers. When, for instance, Roman Reigns' character wins a championship title, the character is a champion inside a fictional world, but the performer also holds the accolade of "being" a champion rather than just "portraying" a champion. As mentioned above, wrestlers are regarded as amalgamations of the performer and the character, so the audience is cued to recognize the championship not only as a fictional accolade but as an actual real-world reward given to the performer. This mentality seeps into the fictional world where the audience members legitimately want their favorite performers to portray winners, effectively making the championship a non-fiction entity inside a fictional world.

All the aforementioned aspects of the fictional world of professional wrestling are conventions of the genre that has its roots in legitimate combat sports. For instance, wrestling television programs do not have opening or closing credits like other fictional programming during which the wrestlers' or writers' names could be revealed. Credits sequences would in a way create a psychical distance between the audience and the fictional world, a distance which according to Susanne Langer is imperative for drama to be art. It is not the convention to create such distance in wrestling. Professional wrestling is also staged and filmed for television very much like a sports program: it features instant replays of the more spectacular moments, sports commentary as story narration, and other aspects of sports production. This cues the audience to regard it as sport even though the audience is well aware of the fact that it is not a legitimate one. The conventions of the genre, or rather the lack of traditional conventions of fiction, create a confusing reality where a new spectator can find it difficult to relate to professional wrestling. It appears too fictional to be a sport and too much like a sport to be fiction.

Be that as it may, wrestling has its audience that seems to embrace these conventions. Whereas theater holds a fourth wall that separates the audience from the fictional world, a fictional sport such as wrestling has a fourth wall that holds the audience in. When this is established, it is of course imperative for the audience to perform inside the fictional world and play its part.

4. The fictional audience of professional wrestling

So, it stands to reason that even a fictional spectator sport needs an audience. Admittedly, it would make very little logical sense for a fictional professional wrestler to compete in front of a crowd that is under the assumption that his or her fights are predetermined, choreographed, and fake. In other words: the professional wrestling audience must be a fictional entity. It follows that a single audience member at a live wrestling show is simultaneously spectating a fictional performance and a part of said performance. The audience, in essence, is performing whether they want to or not. Thus, I argue that professional wrestling is a form of performance which has historically and organically engulfed its audience as a fundamental element of the fictional world it presents to them.

This performative aspect of the audience's experience has grown as a byproduct of the age of television. WWE produces live events that are then filmed and distributed as television content. From the point of view of the television audience, the live crowd is an element of the show. Most, if not all, audience members are aware that they are an element of the show. This creates a unique situation where the professional wrestling audience is participating inside a fictional world and thus, in Waltonian terms, inside a representational work of art.

When a fan buys a ticket to a televised WWE show, they know that in addition to getting a show, they get to be a part of it. As WWE wants its television product to be as exciting as possible, the live crowd is encouraged to perform, to make noise, and to convey a sense of frenzy to the audience at home. Whereas in the past wrestling television programs were aimed to sell the audience on the live experience, today WWE has been able to monetize the television audience directly: the live, physically present audience is an element of production rather than its means. The paying customer has a job as a background actor, and in a way, WWE has a history of exploiting its audience in order to make good television.

Televised professional wrestling indeed demands an active audience. A wrestling story for the most part has a protagonist (in wrestling parlance "the babyface" or more simply "the face") and an antagonist (in wrestling parlance "the heel"). The traditional dynamic of audience participation in professional wrestling is such in which the face is cheered, and the heel is booed. The audience, to this day, more often than not performs in a way that conveys the sense that the face has an implied home field advantage. This is the standard circumstance in the fictional world of professional wrestling, as it fits the central story of the hero overcoming the odds in front of a supportive audience. It is also mostly a cathartic experience to members of the audience when they feel as if they have helped the morally upstanding face in defeating the villainous heel. It should be noted, that a traditional face versus heel dynamic is in no way the only story that can be told in wrestling, on which I shall elaborate at the end of this paper.

The live audience reactions create a vital aural backdrop for the televised matches. As the audience mostly acts in a rather predictable way, in which the wrestlers portraying faces are cheered and the wrestlers portraying heels are booed, it creates an unambiguous television product as well. However, whether an audience follows this exact dynamic or not (and many times it does not) it is always obliged to at least make noise. As any wrestling promoter would say: there is nothing worse than a silent audience. This is true to the point that WWE has even taken up the practice of adding audio of audience reactions to taped shows in order to convey the desired atmosphere in the building.

As mentioned previously, professional wrestlers portray fictional characters, but these characters are amalgamations of themselves and the characters created for them. For instance, the fans for the most part recognize a wrestler's journey from the independent scene (the minor leagues) to the WWE (the big leagues). A wrestler is thus able to garner recognition among the most zealous fans as a kind of starving artist by toiling on the independents and honing one's craft before eventually earning the limelight. The Internet has made it fairly easy to follow the career of an independent wrestler and knowledge of the independent scene has become a new kind of cultural currency. At the same time, for a few decades now WWE has had the practice of also training their own wrestlers from the very start of their career. This allows them to create characters and mold performers to fit their needs. However, these characters do not have the reputation of the independent stars that at least in the eyes of some fans have created their own fame. This forms an interesting dichotomy between WWE created company guys and the "Internet darlings". This dynamic seeps into the fictional world that professional wrestling presents through its audience.

This creates the potential for a performer to debut on WWE television without any credibility in the eyes of the "smart fans"⁸, the most zealous fans that are consumed by wrestling minutia. These fans could be called wrestling geeks but they do have some power as taste makers. One wrestler that had no prior wrestling experience before WWE was Roman Reigns, whose character was introduced as a part of a heel group called The Shield by the side of two former independent stars: Dean Ambrose and Seth Rollins. The Shield was a successful act but after the group disbanded it became abundantly clear that Reigns was the wrestler WWE higher ups saw as the biggest star and the franchise character of the company going forward. Very soon the "smart fans" realized this and the backlash Reigns got was unprecedented. Reigns has primarily portrayed a face for his entire solo career since 2014, but the audiences have not accepted him as such. First started by a few "smart crowds" at bigger shows, the majority of all live crowds started to boo Reigns. Be that as it may, this has not stopped WWE from promoting Reigns as one of their most prominent heroes. WWE production also started to mute booing crowds and to cut negative crowd reactions in post-production as well as confiscating anti-Reigns signs brought into shows by fans.

The reception that Reigns gets from live audiences goes against the fictional truths of WWE where Reigns is a hero that should be looked up to, not booed. In the case of Reigns though, WWE has started to manipulate the part of the fictional world created by the crowd reactions for him. From some crowds Reigns has even garnered the dreaded chant “You can’t wrestle!” which is essentially a loud and clear indictment on Reigns’ ability to entertain his audience and not his characters’ ability to wrestle and win matches in the fictional world of WWE. For all intents and purposes Reigns is a hard worker and a talented wrestler, but the narrative for his character was not created in the fictional world but instead in the fact that the “smart crowds” have not accepted him. To them Reigns represents industry created pop music that lacks true artistic merit earned toiling on the independents. Essentially, it became trendy and cool to hate Roman Reigns.

On the other hand, when a wrestler gains a following among the taste makers, the wrestler can essentially arrive in WWE already a star in the eyes of the fans and the credibility a wrestler gleans on the independent circuit rarely ever dissipates. For instance, when Kevin Owens debuted on WWE after performing on the indies for over a decade, he was already a star in the eyes of the fans, garnering an enormous ovation from the live crowd. Before that night was over though, Owens had turned heel and become a vile, opportunistic character who figuratively stabbed his friend in the back in order to further his own career. To this day, Owens is greeted by live audiences by mostly cheers instead of boos even though the character has very little redeeming qualities. This can be accounted to the audience’s appreciation of Owens’ charisma and ability to the extent that it does not matter whether Owens portrays a heel. In addition to this, Owens’ independent past is a factor, effectively making him a former starving artist and thus a genuine rag to riches story. It is hard to boo an underdog. Thus, Kevin Owens’ character is a pure villain that gets cheered by audiences, and this often creates a rather surreal situation in the fictional world of WWE.

Only recently has Roman Reigns gained some traction as a face in the eyes of the fans. This happened more or less because of a real-life tragedy befalling Joseph Anoa’i as he was diagnosed with leukemia in the fall of 2018. The fans were of course sympathetic of his struggle and as he made his announcement on live television the crowd was respectable and unified in cheers and applause. Remarkably, after only 6 months Reigns made his return to television and the fans had not forgotten. Reigns has since been almost universally cheered. It took a strange and tragic turn of events for Reigns to turn the corner, and it shows that a mere fictional story of struggle and perseverance is not enough for the wrestling audience anymore.

5. Conclusions

It is safe to say that professional wrestling presents a special kind of fictional world where fictional characters cannot be separated from the performers and where championships are not mere story engines but also career achievements. It is also such a world that has historically and organically engulfed its audience as a fundamental element of itself. The clapping of the audience of Peter Pan might have woken up Tinkerbell, but a theater audience does not have power inside the fictional world they are consuming. I argue that the professional wrestling audience has such power as it is in fact a fictional entity. It also exercises its power regularly, whether or not its motives could be criticized as being at times egotistic and vague.

For the French philosopher Jacques Rancière⁹, being a spectator is inherently a bad thing. Firstly, viewing for Rancière is the opposite of knowing as the spectator is held in a place of ignorance from the production of the image. Secondly, viewing is the opposite of acting as the spectator remains passive. The viewer is therefore robbed of both the capacity to know and the power to act. Rancière believes that theater is inherently evil as it prohibits knowledge and action. Theater is the third term standing in between the artist and the viewer blocking the formation of a true community, a community of active power. This community is one that does not tolerate theatrical mediation. However, for Rancière theater is potentially an exemplary community form. It encapsulates the ideal of a living community that occupies the same place and time as opposed to forms that utilize the distance of representation. More so than other forms, theater in a way has the potential to bridge the gap between the artist and the audience.

Obviously, one can easily imagine a play where the fourth wall is continuously broken. Peter Pan does this and improvisational theater takes audience suggestions. However, the fourth wall is broken if and only if the artist allows it. The artist merely gifts the audience a taste of power and only by the artist's terms. True knowledge is not transferred, and participation is only temporary and trivial. Theater indeed does not allow a situation where the relationship between the artist and the audience is flipped upside down. Rancière states that what is needed then is a "new theater": a theater where those in attendance are able glean knowledge as opposed to being merely exposed to images, but also a theater where those in attendance are able to act as opposed to being passive voyeurs. This would essentially be a theater without spectators but with a knowing, acting community audience. The "new theater" would be the ultimate realm of what he calls "the unpredictable subject".

According to Roland Barthes wrestling is a spectacle¹⁰. However, it seems that wrestling does not leave its viewers as passive and disinterested voyeurs. As we have learned, wrestling has organically and historically engulfed its audience as a part of its fictional world. Wrestling is unique theater because it presents a fictional sport. Actual sports do not have fourth walls, but

wrestling can be said to have a fourth wall that traps the audience in. Outside the walls the audience has no agency, but when invited in the audience can act. In theater the audience is robbed of its abilities to act and know, but wrestling is built upon the notion that the artwork – the third term – is diminished to the point where the audience has power to act, and even become a radical element inside the fictional world. In Waltonian terms the wrestling audience is acting inside a representational work of art.

I do not claim that professional wrestling is the exemplary form of culture that already realizes the potentials of the Rancièrian unpredictable subject. This is partly because wrestling is often extremely violent. It is not the goal of this paper to build an apology for aestheticized violence, but I feel that it is imperative to bring this up if the aesthetic values of wrestling are to be defended. Existing literature on wrestling depicts the art as paint by numbers, a violent soap opera that lacks subtlety and that offers very little seedbed for analysis beyond wrestling being a theatrical spectacle of excess.¹¹ Wrestling is often celebrated as a simple morality play but it seldom is investigated as other than curiosity. Perhaps this is because of its violent nature. Violence is deplorable in real life, so what aesthetic value is there in a form that depicts a world this ugly?¹²

It might come as a shock to someone with only cursory knowledge of wrestling, that the genre is not inherently violent. One could even argue that it is less brutal than most legitimate professional combat sports such as mixed martial arts or boxing. Two performers can put on an enthralling match within the traditional rules of wrestling where neither resort to any overtly cruel tactics. A match can tell the story of sibling rivalry, student pitted against the teacher, or veteran versus rookie. A match does not have to have an obvious villain and an obvious hero. A wrestling match is not necessarily a simple morality play but instead it can dwell in the shades of grey. By this I mean that wrestling has potentials of storytelling that are yet to be investigated properly.¹³

Wrestling matches by themselves are also abundant with meaning that is often left unexplored in literature on the subject. Matches consist of wrestling maneuvers that are rich with lore. While some moves have evolved from rarity to common place, some are almost sacred and to be used only in the most extreme of situations. Wrestling characters overcome their weaknesses and build their strengths in the span of their careers. Rivalries can build without even a word spoken between two performers, just with exchanged wins and losses, championship opportunities awarded to one and withheld from the other. These elements of the genre are analyzed profusely by wrestling fans online but overlooked when discussing wrestling as a relevant form of culture. It is of course tempting to explain wrestling in simplified terms and compare it to forms such as theater, but indeed there are components that make wrestling very unique.

That is all to say that there is potential in wrestling: both in terms of a field of research but also as a petri dish of audience agency. Perhaps professional wrestling offers a recipe of

participation through the fictional integration of its audience that eventually will help create a form that realizes some of Rancière's utopian goals of the "new theater". Until then, wrestling fans are quite happy to be the sole partakers in this unique process of participatio

¹ For instance, just recently WWE's stock price reported record highs after the company received a new lucrative television deal. <<http://money.cnn.com/2018/05/17/news/companies/wwe-raw-smackdown-tv/index.html>>

² This paper is based on my master's thesis "You can't wrestle!" – Professional Wrestling as Participatory Fiction (University of Helsinki, 2018).

³ Hietala, Veijo 2003. *Painii myyttien kanssa – urheilu modernissa ja postmodernissa mediakulttuurissa*. Lähikuva I/2003.

⁴ See e.g. Chow B., Laine E., Warden C. (ed.) 2017. *Performance and professional wrestling*. Oxford UK, Routledge.

⁵ Walton, Kendall L. 1990. *Mimesis as Make-believe*. Cambridge MA USA/London UK, Harvard University Press.

⁶ Langer, Susanne 1953. *Feeling and form*. New York City NY USA, Charles Scribner's Sons. Page 319.

⁷ It is not relevant to this article to discuss the possibility of fictional worlds. One should merely take the stance that there are in fact such things as fictional worlds that have the characteristic of not existing. Walton for instance does not give fictional worlds further ontological statuses.

⁸ Originally, "smart fan" meant a fan that was aware of the fact that wrestling matches had fixed outcomes. Now though it refers to more dedicated wrestling fans as opposed to ones that are casual television viewers.

⁹ Rancière, Jacques 2011. *The Emancipated Spectator*. London UK, Verso

¹⁰ Barthes, Roland 2005 [1957]. *The World of Wrestling*. In Sammond, Nicholas (ed.) 2005. *Steel chair to the head* (pp. 23-32). Durham NC USA, Duke University Press.

¹¹ Barthes called wrestling a spectacle of excess. Wrestling was also explained in a simplified manner by Henry Jenkins III in "Never trust a snake": *WWF as a masculine melodrama*. (In Sammond, Nicholas (ed.) 2005. *Steel chair to the head* (pp. 33-66)). Durham NC USA, Duke University Press.)

¹² A very good examination on the subject of aestheticized violence is Henry Bacon's *Väkivallan lumo* (2010. Helsinki, Like Kustannus Oy).

¹³ While finalizing this paper I came across Lisa Jones' article *All caught up in the kayfabe: understanding and appreciating pro-wrestling* (*Journal of the philosophy of sport*. 2019, vol. 46, no. 2, 276–291). Jones makes several same points as my 2018 published thesis and is also to my knowledge the only other professional wrestling related work that cites Walton's theory of fictional worlds.

THE KALEIDOSCOPIC EXPERIENCE WITHIN EVERY- DAY-LIFE: ON AUTHORSHIP, INTERTEXTUAL NARRATIVE, STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND MULTIFRACTALITY

Mari Nieves Vergara

1. Is the author really dead? Our identity as observers in kaleidoscopic experience

Carl Gustav Jung referred to the *mandala* as an image from the Eastern cultural tradition that presents a kaleidoscopic condition, as a representative archetype that comes from the self-unconscious. This archetype could be present in all the human beings and escape from the individual self.¹ In Jung's words, we can consider it as "the reflection of the real image" that has the person who projects the referred image, who would be the "author" somehow. The idea of a collective authorship implies not having a unique author anymore, by suggesting there is a collective connection regarding the creation of kaleidoscopic images. In addition, this connection is related to the moment when we project this image, which seems to work like a connective network or is present in proposals with an intertextual narrative.

In 1968, Roland Barthes discussed the text nature in *The death of the author*, specifically concerning the existence of an author "behind the text". For instance, the significance of his proposal is supposed to be completely focused on the reader, who participates within the reading far from any biographical conception about the author. This way, the reader will have a real immersion within the text. On the other hand, the Barthesian conception has been discussed in relation to the intertextual discourse previously proposed by Julia Kristeva.² In 1966, Kristeva named to this narrative as "intertextual" two years before Barthes introduced the death of the author conception. Kristeva did not refer to the dead author, because what she investigated was the existence of an absent author in the case of intertextuality. Therefore, the presence of many voices along with the author's voice would merge into a collective narrative, similarly to the same idea

expressed by Jung regarding the *mandala* creation process. Certainly, through intertextual writings a non-authorship agency started in 20th century. For example, we find Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Pessoa, Woolf or Joyce among other writers whose texts were characteristic by the absence of the author's voice in the search of giving to their writings the referred collective sense.

Barthes expressed that nobody thought on the reader, since everything was focused on the author as an “egocentric” agent. In fact, he concluded his publication with a statement: “the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author.”³ Far from Barthes' idea, in the intertextual texts the reader is quite important. It is because the reader has a key role as a player concerning the layers that are present within intertextual writings. Reading the text, the reader has to make his own interpretation connecting his thought to different authors and ideas. On intertextuality, Stanford Friedman stated that the texts compose “a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of the analysis instead of static structures.”⁴ Then, when reading an intertextual text, we would have an active attitude within the reader, who has to analyse and get into the relational processes that the text produces. Given this circumstance, shall we continue accepting the death of the author? In intertextual writings we have an active author that somehow works as a reader, having in mind the reader's interpretation. On account of that, if the author creates an intertextual writing made by the conjunction of many voices or elements, we find that authorship works differently comparing it to the traditional notion of “authorship”.

The agreement on Barthes' statements on giving significance to the reader that he presents in *The Death of the Author*, as well as Foucault's conception in *What is an Author*, are certainly necessary. In any case, the death of the author was introduced in the authorship agency when women started to be recognised as authors. Taking this into account, do we have to consider that the author is really dead? Shall we accept the death of the author considering that, as Nancy K. Miller expressed, we finally admit “the death of the author” when women were starting to be recognised as authors⁵?

Actually, we find interesting statements from this period expressed by women writers in this regard. For example, in the poetry of Alejandra Pizarnik:⁶ “I wake up from my dead body, I looked for the one I am,”⁷ or authors like Inger Christensen. In 1969, when the death of the author and intertextuality were respectively proposed by Barthes and Kristeva, Christensen published this poem: “I don't want to vanish / 'I' am the one who has written the above / and the one writing the following / 'I' will not pretend that I am dead.”⁸ The poem was part of a book that she named as *It*. This book works as a critique to systems in society and reflects on the human being relationship within the world and reality – even by experiencing fiction as an accepted system introduced into a deep kaleidoscopic view. It seems like an intertextual writing that attempts to create a total image in which everything remains connected, just the type of

image that Julio Cortázar presents in *Hopscotch*, a kaleidoscopic *imago mundi*. It is closer to a phenomenological approach, since it contains some conceptions created by human beings as fictions in opposition to the nature of cycle processes. From a phenomenological perspective, it is referring to an embodied authorship that participates of reality through the experience of real but also fictional elements, like it happens within the kaleidoscope. *Hopscotch* works as a game, so the reader's attitude could be totally active, as well as the reader's interpretation, that can always be the right one – even when the reader gets to a different approach far from Cortázar suggestions. This way, Cortázar presented this book as an intertextual playground for the reader also referring to the author as the first observer of kaleidoscopic image:

Morelli, the author, would be the first amazed observer of this world into its acquired coherence. [...] A crystallization where nothing would remain subsumed, but where a lucid eye might peep into the kaleidoscope and understand the great polychromatic rose, understand it as a figure, an *imago mundi* that outside the kaleidoscope would be dissolved into a provincial living room, or a concert of aunts having tea and Bagley biscuits.⁹

Certainly, both in the cases of Cortázar and Christensen, they are not working as the traditional authors. Actually, they pay attention to the reader/observer through intertextual and participatory proposals that present a kaleidoscopic method, structure and narrative. Given these examples, we can notice the rebirth of the author as reader/observer when the kaleidoscopic perception is involved: “the author, would be the first amazed observer of this world” regarding the kaleidoscopic image creation as an author and the perception of seeing the kaleidoscopic image as a reader/observer. This fact also takes place specifically without the conception we had on the author as an egocentric agent which constituted the Barthes' critique. The title of Christensen's book, “It”, is actually very close to the notion we have on intertextuality, since “It” is what we would find where the author is not. Christensen claimed the author as an alive subject in her writings: “I will not pretend I am dead”. However, the impersonal “It” is the title of the book, which is closer to the author's absence and also to the statements proposed by Barthes and Kristeva: “For both Barthes and Kristeva, the text – an “it” – draws, makes, enters, and dialogues with its intertexts.”¹⁰ Considering the writing of intertextual texts – not relating to Christensen's book, but to the absent author – “the birth of the text's as ‘it’ – the-text-as-it – also introduces the concept of the text-as-psyche.”¹¹ If the text-as-psyche is what replaces the dead author, there is a different type of authorship that claims the subject, “I”, as an “it”, concerning the intertextual discourse in the kaleidoscopic perception, where the author should be alive from a different perspective. To conclude this part, it should be noted the next citation on intertextuality – the

double, the other's [life] texts – by Kristeva: “Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations, any text is the absorption and transformation of another” in which “*intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and a poetic language is read as at least double.¹²

This different model of authorship is connected to the observer/reader, closer to the psyche than to the ego. If the author is dead, then we lose the property of discussing on the first person experience. For instance, the place that the author should take regarding the kaleidoscopic understanding would be situated in the space in-between the mirrors: “It”, where the author is not but still observing, as Cortázar's view with reference to kaleidoscopic image. Like *Hopscotch* or *It*, everything works into a continuous reflection pattern. Actually, the author is not there when talking about intertextuality, but still there is an active author who decides not to take place within the text. According to Miller, “only those who have it [status as subjects] can play with not having it.”¹³ Many cases in the context of artistic research manifest that the author is present, not absent and, consequently, “dead” from a conceptual viewpoint. Actually many artists and researchers are talking about their own experiences within reality.¹⁴ Therefore, these perspectives contradict the notion of having a dead author: “the idea of situatedness, or emphasis on personal experience” in artistic research.¹⁵ The philosopher Ortega y Gasset said that “I am I and my circumstance,”¹⁶ a statement that is similar to physics understanding, where the object of study is always related to its context according the open system theory – where the system has external interactions.¹⁷ As a result, it is important to consider the death and the re-birth of the author from a different conception: “I” as an “it”. The author's role as an interpreter within the world, like the reader/observer does when perceiving kaleidoscopic experiences or methodologies.

2. The embodiment within kaleidoscopic everyday-life experience, stream of consciousness and multifractality (James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and Julio Cortázar)

The narrative had to work “from the inside out” in Cortázar's perspective, although the most generic process is precisely the opposite one – a narrator who intervenes within the action of the characters. When there is a narrator in Cortázar's writings, we find another person that works as the narrator-witness,¹⁸ aiming to generate the identification of the reader regarding the text. Fundamentally, referring to the feeling that the subject “is reading something that was born by itself”, as Cortázar said¹⁹, thanks to the mediation of the narrator that would not manifest any presence.

In many works of literature, we do not find any narrative directionality from the narrator to the characters. In contrast, within this type of literary works the narration is focused on the characters that tell and/or live the action by themselves. Usually this type of “literary” work present a multifractal structure, such as *Hopscotch* of Cortázar and other examples like *The Waves*

of Virginia Woolf. A recent publication demonstrated that the literary texts that presents this narrative approach are fractal²⁰. The researchers specifically noted that the majority of the titles that present a multifractal structure belong to the *Stream of consciousness* literary style, whose main purpose is to represent the thoughts and feelings that are going through the minds of the characters, usually employing the inner monologue technique.

Finnegans Wake of James Joyce presents the most complicated multifractal, as well as the *Ulysses*, which constitutes an interesting case. If we divide this book into two parts – the second one approximately starting from chapter 11 – the *Ulysses* presents a monofractal structure in the first part while having a multifractal in the second one. Surprisingly, the second part of the *Ulysses* shares significant similarities with *Hopscotch*'s multifractal structure²¹. Kaleidoscopic image presents a fractal structure, since it is made of identical repetitions of the same motif. Taking this into account, it is interesting that authors like Cortázar, Woolf or Joyce that referred to kaleidoscopic image or presented a kaleidoscopic narrative in their work also produced multifractal literary texts.

Virginia Woolf and Roger Fry referred to symbols that represented both life and death. In the case of Woolf, they were identified as the clock, the film stock and the kaleidoscope.²² According to Woolf, the writer has to recognise how “our lives are pieces in a pattern.”²³ In this sense, we have to find these patterns²⁴ and join all the atoms that compose this total image.²⁵ This way, the creative writing is understood as the cohesion of elements into a kaleidoscopic sense. For example, when Woolf related to the creation of a character, she refers to the subject in permanent relationship to experience.²⁶ This type of character could be immersed within a different identity conception and considered as a subject that is in the world with an embodied attitude.

Actually, the subject cannot be separate from the daily-life environment, since the individual human beings simultaneously co-experience their own being and their relationship within the world. Regarding this feeling, we find in Woolf's thought how the kaleidoscope – a kaleidoscopic perception of reality – would start crystallising into harmony over the everyday context, similarly to Cortázar's statement in this regard. At the same time, the new images that appear during this perceptive process are related to the embodiment within a kaleidoscopic vision of reality. Consequently, these new types of image would be generated both in unity sense and with the *liveliness sense* of life.²⁷ As we see, the connection between kaleidoscopic image and life experience is very important in the creative work of Woolf and Fry. We also find this perspective concerning to the author as reader/observer within experience, even regarding the nature of the characters that Woolf presents in an intertextual manner.

The co-experience opens a new way of authorship where the author's experience is contextualised within the media. Regarding this practice, we find an *embodied authorship*. Cortázar

referred to the author as the reader in this regard, along with the author's attitude in relation to the creation of kaleidoscopic image, as it was previously introduced. At this point, Cortázar alludes to the *Ulysses* of Joyce and presents co-experience in this form:

A third possibility: that of making an accomplice of the reader, a traveling companion. Into a simultaneous experience, provided that the reading will abolish reader's time and substitute author's time. Thus the reader would be able to become coparticipant and cosufferer of the experience through which the novelist is passing, *at the same moment and in the same form*.²⁸

In Virginia Woolf's literary work, we find an invisible network of relationships that contributes to produce the aforementioned co-experience. Although at first glance this "invisible network" is not detectable, it exists when is revealed into a "multiplicity" that becomes "unity".²⁹ This state of thinking is also present in the philosophy of María Zambrano, who approaches this issue similarly to Woolf, through the revelation idea. To reveal something in Zambrano's philosophy means to show the connections that an object of study has, instead of being focused individually within the object.³⁰ This type of connective understanding also appears in another literary work connected to the kaleidoscope and written by Vladimir Nabokov: *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*. In this case, the main character tries to discover the real life of his brother, Sebastian Knight, a writer that had already died and wrote a book named as *Kaleidoscope*, among others. The significance of this book was related to the methods of composition, not to the narrative style or the characters. In addition, not only the methods, but also the happenstance and the relation between the characters are what create the kaleidoscopic sense.³¹ This kind of kaleidoscopic sense is also present in the chance encounters throughout *Hopscotch*, regarding the relationship between Horacio and La Maga, which are the main characters of the book, among other examples.

3. The Andalusian girl in the *Ulysses*. An experimental writing that investigates on the connection between kaleidoscopic experience and intertextual narrative through the detection of identical motifs.

In this section I would like to present an interpretation based on the experience I had in a creative writing lecture at Aalto University course on November 11, 2016. It was Friday and just before starting the class I knew about the Leonard Cohen's death. Afterwards, we read the ending of the *Ulysses*. I already knew it, but that time I felt it had a different meaning because of my own experience. In the following paragraph it is the referred passage, which belongs to the Molly's soliloquy in the *Ulysses*:

Ronda with the old windows of the posadas 2 glancing eyes a lattice hid for her lover to kiss the iron and the wineshops half open at night and the castanets and the night we missed the boat at Algeciras the watchman going about serene with his lamp and O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and the pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.³²

This citation belongs to the second part of the *Ulysses*, which is multifractal. In this regard, I intertwined two events that were supposed not to be connected – Cohen’s death and the Molly’s monolog in the *Ulysses* – based on my personal experience on that day and the repetition of the same motifs, as we will see. In that way, it should be noted that repetition is precisely what generates fractal geometry thanks to the iterative structure that this geometry presents. Some days later I knew that Cohen died on November 7, when he was in his bed.³³ On that day my father showed me a song played by Leonard Cohen because my grandmother died on that day in 2014. None of us knew that Cohen already died on November 7, like my grandmother. She was an Andalusian girl like me or the Andalusian girls that are present in the Molly’s monolog in the *Ulysses*. During her soliloquy, all the action is happening in Molly’s mind while she is lying in her bed near her husband. Afterwards, I also discovered that Molly’s bed is a second hand bed. In the text she was thinking that “the old bumpy bed jingly always reminds me of old Cohen.”³⁴ I read that Cohen was the previous owner of Molly’s bed, what kept me thinking in this paradoxical connection.

We should consider that Molly works as the Penelope’s character in the *Ulysses*. Penelope is one of the main characters in the *Odyssey*, by Homero. In the *Ulysses* we find that Molly works as “a new Penelope”, since she is not the wife who waits for her husband to come back as Penelope did, but a free contradictory woman that is involved with other men. The distance between Molly and her husband is not physical but emotional, so she wonders how they got to that situation as a couple. Finally, she finished her monolog remembering her husband’s marriage proposal when she says “Yes”. Many things are related to Greece somehow and I remember that

Cohen had a house in Hydra Island, where he lived for a period of time. Then I thought about a speech by Cohen, when he won a literary prize in Spain. He referred to Federico García Lorca, a poet that was born in Andalusia, and talked about a Spanish guitarist who taught him how to play guitar. The main issue regarding these “moments of being” as well as regarding the *Ulysses* might be the intertextuality, “a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of the analysis instead of static structures,”³⁵ where “there are always other words in a word, other texts in a text.”³⁶

In the text I wrote on November 11, 2016, we find how personal experience and my relationship with the *Ulysses* as a reader was also able to give new layers of meaning to a text that already existed: the *Ulysses*. The text I wrote applying an intertextual approach as well as a stream of consciousness style can be understood as an experimental writing exercise. It investigates on the connection between kaleidoscopic experience and intertextual narrative, on the basis of the detection of identical motifs that surprisingly get correlated in a concrete frame of time (Cohen, Andalusia, November 7, *Ulysses*, etc.). This story is originated in relation to the referred motifs and, at the same time, highly correlated to my own biography and the place where I come from. Therefore, it also corresponds to the application of an embodiment attitude within the world and reality, in which I am situated both as an author and reader/observer. This approximation to the authorship practice, as we saw in the beginning of this paper, is present in the collective voice regarding kaleidoscopic experience and intertextual narrative. To conclude this part, the related text of this section is presented below.

Helsinki (Finland), November 11, 2016

The Andalusian girl in the *Ulysses*

There is a photograph of my grandmother when she was young and somehow everything remains connected like the nature of the images in *Camera Lucida*. Here the notebook seems to be empty since there is a poem behind the blank page near this one. Empty as the blue sky that I can see behind the glass of the window the sky wasn't there for one month but to write in English something like this has become very usual, just like the sun's absence even though it is the first time I live with no sun for a long time I feel there is only one sentence I am able to read within the notebook: “I was a flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls do”. I am the Andalusian girl in this notebook in this empty sky of memories and the kiss near the Moorish wall I'm not an English speaker but sometimes I remember my place of origin when I am far away and I think in the nothingness, the notebooks or the empty sky just like this one today just like the disappearance of my mother tongue in my everyday life and the light of the Andalusian sun the memories when I walk through the forest it's snowing

and I think about my name. Today in the early morning I read in the newspaper that Leonard Cohen died yes I was in the bus on the way to Otaniemi looking at the islands while the sea is getting frozen yes he had an Andalusian insight just like me my grandmother and her green eyes the girls in the *Ulysses* monolog when Molly was young. There was a time in which the sun was always shining and everything seemed to remain forever yes when all of us were young yes all of us we didn't lose together the faculty of remaining present. The Andalusian girl monolog is spoken in Molly's mind at the same time she works both as the simile and antithesis of Penelope from the *Odissey*. Some days after that day I knew that Cohen had died some days before, on November 7, when he was in his bed. November 7 was the day I listened a Cohen's song because my grandmother died on that day in 2014 yes none of us knew that Cohen did already die on that day like my grandma did two years before. She was an Andalusian girl like me or the girls from the Molly's monolog in the *Ulysses*. During her soliloquy all the action is happening in Molly's mind while she is lying in her bed near her husband. But one hour ago I discovered that Molly's bed the place where she is lying while she is spoken to herself is a second hand bed, so she says, "the old bumpy bed jingly always reminds me of old Cohen."³⁷ Then is when I realise that Cohen is the last name of the previous owner of Molly's bed yes it kept me thinking in this paradoxical connection because there is a poem behind every blank page when the snow covers everything but now there is no possibility to come back and change anything. Another identity and the emptiness in my thoughts those are able to keep me thinking in this story, if there was any. I had a flower in my hair like the Andalusian girls use to do near the Moorish wall but I suppose I have to come back to nothing yes one more time. The flower was yellow like the sun in the paintings of the children and empty as my heart when I realise that I don't know if still I am that Andalusian girl yes with a yellow flower in her hair.

4. Conclusion

Having presented the cases of Cortázar, Woolf and Joyce in relation to the stream of consciousness literary style and multifractality, it can be concluded that the kaleidoscopic experience is highly related to intertextual narrative in literary works. Specifically, a different type of authorship is detected regarding to this creative practice. In this way, the "alive author" works as the reader/observer concerning the kaleidoscopic experience, with an embodied attitude within reality and everyday-life in a connective way. At the same time, the production of creative writings based on the personal experience allows an intertextual approach, adding complementary layers of meaning to the already existing ones.

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³⁴ Joyce, *Ulysses* (2008), 1618.

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STOCKHAUSEN'S HELICOPTER STRING QUARTET AND THE CHALLENGE OF CONCEPTUAL MUSIC

Juha Torvinen & Susanna Välimäki

1. Introduction

The *Helicopter String Quartet* (1993) by German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928–2007) is one of the most notorious works of classical music of the past decades. It is exceptionally megalomaniac and laborious to perform, and from an everyday common-sense point of view it makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. Accordingly, it is guaranteed extensive media coverage and popularity wherever it is performed, or even if a performance is merely planned.¹

The work is scored, if one can use that term, for a traditional string quartet, four helicopters each with a pilot and a sound technician, audio and video communications equipment, a sound engineer (or 'sound projectionist') and a moderator (optional). Lasting half an hour, the work features the four musicians playing the music each in their own helicopter. In the air. In each helicopter there are three microphones, a video camera and a sound technician managing the balance between the sound of the instrument, the noise of the helicopter and the speaking voice of the musician. The audio and video from each helicopter are transmitted to a central location ('ground central'), where the audience is gathered among towers of speakers and video screens and where the moderator talks them through the piece as the sound engineer controls the balance. Before the musicians take off, the moderator presents them to the audience and describes the technical execution of the piece. After they land, the moderator presents the pilots and leads a question-and-answer session with the audience not unlike the public debriefings of NASA astronauts.

The work was premiered at the Holland Festival for the performing arts in Amsterdam on 26 June 1995. The performers were the Arditti Quartet and the Grasshoppers aerobatic team of the Royal Dutch Air Force. Stockhausen himself was the sound engineer and the moderator.²

Dutch film director Frank Scheffer made a documentary of the premiere and its preparations, also titled *Helicopter String Quartet* (Netherlands & Germany 1995). It shows the

members of the quartet trooping towards their helicopters, each wearing a different coloured shirt according to the symbolism in the score. In the meantime, the composer explains the content of the piece, including the significance of the colours of the shirts. Then the helicopters take off and fly out over Amsterdam harbour.

Strapped into their seats, the musicians saw away manically at their instruments. The texture, consisting of shifting tremolo lines, blends with the noise of the helicopter rotors, and the basic sound of the music consists of a loud carpet of noise made up of buzzing lines sliding up and down.³ The string players do not hear each other; all they hear is a click track in their headphones. At times, one or another of them screams a number into the microphone attached to his/her head, with elongation and vibration in imitation of the helicopter's sound; these indicate cues in the music (but are only heard by the sound engineer and the audience).⁴

2. Confusion and disbelief

It is a bizarre spectacle. A string quartet playing in flying helicopters? Really? The soundtrack comes across as a boring and monotonously unpleasant noise, which further fuels disbelief: all this effort for a musical texture like that?

At the same time, there is something utterly fascinating about the documentary, probably because the concept of the work is so surreal as to be funny. And ultimately it is the *idea* behind the piece that attracts interest rather than what it sounds like. This reveals that the work has a strong conceptual music dimension.

It is impossible to pigeon-hole the work neatly into existing conceptual classes or affective categories. It does not embody the thing-ness that is conventionally expected of performances of classical music. On the contrary, it seems to require the listener to make a considerable effort to understand it. The importance of sensory perception seems to diminish in reception of the work – or at least to differ considerably from the types of perception generally associated with music – while the demand for cogitation and intellectual analysis grows exponentially.⁵ What is this all about? Is this music? Is this work worth performing in the first place? Does a composition like this make any sense at all, and if so, where might that sense be found? What *is* music, anyway?

We approach these questions as being crucial for the content of Stockhausen's *Helicopter String Quartet*. In other words, we discuss the work from the 'conceptual music' perspective.⁶ Our approach is based above all on a musicological translation of the theory of conceptual art developed in visual arts scholarship, i.e. the application of that theory to art consisting of sound. Our analysis is based on the score of the work including its written instructions, the composer's other commentaries on the work, the recording made by the Arditti Quartet and the documentary

directed by Scheffer.⁷ We also made use of various media materials from performances of the work: descriptions, reviews, still photos and audiovisual recordings of performances.

The following is a discussion of the ways in which the *Helicopter String Quartet* challenges our thinking about music and the world. We first discuss the concept of conceptual music and then a feature characteristic of conceptual music in general and this work of Stockhausen's in particular that we call a *manifestation of a concept*. This means presenting ideas using concrete symbols. In the work at hand, the key concepts being manifested are the concepts of air, sound direction, the world, the cosmos and light. Also, the transgressive approach of the work to the string quartet tradition prompts reflection on the relationship of the work to (chamber) music and to music as a metaphor for the miraculous and the ineffable. Finally, we discuss the *Helicopter String Quartet* as music that presents as a metaphor of itself and explore conceptuality as a feature of this music.

3. Conceptual music, part 1

There is not such a great discourse or tradition in conceptual music as there is in conceptual art in the sphere of visual arts. Conceptual music is not a term generally used in musicological scholarship, and there is no genre or canon of conceptual music works.⁸ Nevertheless, the term has been used in a variety of musical contexts.⁹ As early as in the beginning of the 20th century, the notion of 'thought and concept music' (German: *Gedanken- und Begriffsmusik*) was assigned in the distinction between absolute and programmatic music to compositions such as tone poems that had a predetermined programmatic conceptual content.¹⁰ On the other hand, absolute music has also been deemed conceptual: in any music where a distinction may be made between the music written on the page and the performance, it is always possible to claim that any performance is only a more or less imperfect manifestation of the idea inscribed in the score or existing in the composer's mind.¹¹

Most commonly, however, the term 'conceptual music' has been used to describe compositions that are akin to an installation or performance art and are based on a simple, unusual idea, as with *Poème symphonique* (1962) by György Ligeti (1923–2006), where 100 metronomes set at different speeds are put in motion and gradually come to a stop at their own pace.¹² The key feature here is that the music is experimental and unusual in a way that challenges conventional ideas about music and composition. Many of the works created by John Cage, La Monte Young, Nam June Paik, Yoko Ono and other *happening* artists and experimental musicians in New York in the 1960s – and, in retrospect, the musical ideas of Marcel Duchamp – may be considered early examples of conceptual music in that sense. Indeed, a parallel may be drawn between them and the early type of conceptual art that emerged in the USA in the 1960s, where

the central aim was to liberate art from its materialist chains and to focus instead on ideas, thoughts and concepts and the role of the recipient in comprehending those ideas, thoughts and concepts. At the same time, conceptual art questioned the very concept of art and shook up the relationship of artistic functions to society and culture.

Yet the role of music in the conceptual art movement remained a minor one. Even the experimental and avant-garde forms of music dissociating themselves from conventional score-based music, such as Pierre Schaeffer's acousmatic music or John Cage's emancipation of noise, tended to focus on the separate and independent nature of sound, sidestepping the key question in conceptual art: the question about the relationship between art and reality, the world of sign systems and representation.¹³ It is indicative that when Fluxus artist Henry Flynt first defined conceptual art in *Essay: Concept Art* (1961), he used music as an analogy or a counter-example instead of emphasising its conceptual art potential.¹⁴ Early conceptual art emphasised the importance of language (text) as a key element in conceptual art, and obviously Flynt, by noting for instance that concepts are material for conceptual art just like sound is material for music, felt that the sign system of music was too far removed from language to be capable of conceptual communication.

Musicologically speaking the approach of this article draws from cultural musicological study of recent decades according to which music is never devoid of meaning or content. Accordingly, the idea of music as abstract or absolute art by its essence has become untenable, and the term "extra-musical" (as opposed to inherently "musical") is no longer valid. All music has content, meaning, and cultural significance, and the idea of music as something abstract, absolute or "pure" is merely one possible form of its socio-cultural signification. Music communicates just like all other cultural constructs, and as an art form in its own right it has its own discursive practices and therefore its own conceptual art potential.

It is precisely music's non-linguistic meaningfulness that proves to be crucial for the conceptual musical argument of this article. Besides and in connection to cultural musicological studies, another important starting point for this article is the fact that, in recent years, the term 'conceptual music' has come to be used in a new way, more loosely defined than the above, referring to a shift in the aesthetics of content in classical music and sound art in the 2000s.¹⁵ This 'neo-conceptuality' departs from the constructivist and modernist traditions of composition aesthetics and concert practices that focus on the structures of music and are score-based; instead, it aims to respond to the challenges of post-modern, technology-driven and media-infused society, culture and art. What is essential are the ideas that music or sound art are used to convey and the artistry of performance that freely combines various forms of art and media. As a result, the boundaries between music and sound art, between music and other arts, and between music and other culture have become more porous.

4. Conceptual music, part 2

In the present article, developing further both of the above definitions of the term of 'conceptual music' – music as a part of traditional conceptual art, and the 'neo-conceptual' shift in the aesthetics of content of music – we discuss conceptual music not so much as a genre of music, a form of composition or an aesthetic approach but instead as the emphatically *philosophical* dimension of a work of music or sound. In this sense, conceptual music highlights in a particular way what philosopher Andrew Bowie said about the philosophical potential of music: music is able to present examples of conceptually confusing phenomena and situations that force us to re-examine critically assumptions that we have regarded as established truths.¹⁶

With a piece of music with a strong conceptual dimension, the focus is not on the fine-tuned observation and emotional perception of the composition itself and its features but instead on concepts and intellectual insights. The most important material in a conceptual music piece is not sound but an unusual and surprising idea, thought, concept or question. Indeed, the planning or creation of the work – or even just the idea of the work – is more important than actually executing a performance of the work, which is a secondary consideration and, in some cases, would be impossible. Or insane. The composer's principal intention may be simply to spark debate in the media. We should also note that although a distinction between conceptual art and conceptual music does not always need to be made, conceptual music always somehow involves problematising the concept of music, the concept of art in sound. Therefore, a musical work with a focus on intellectual insights isn't an example of conceptual music per se unless the focus is coexistent in the work with a focus on challenging the commonplace beliefs about the very nature of music. In fact, the belief in the "abstractness" of music as an art form and the belief in something distinctly "extra-musical" (as opposed to "musical") are among the very convictions a conceptual musical composition might aim to challenge.

Conceptual music works are not so much about the finished musical object or a performance thereof as they are about the process of creation. They focus the recipient's attention on the concept of music and the chain of events that leads to the emergence of music. Conceptual music poses the question: what and when is music, and on what terms? In drawing our attention to music as art and the terms and conditions under which it is created and received, conceptual music prompts us to meditate on how we perceive the world and its reality in the first place. In other words, conceptual music, in questioning the essence of music, philosophically explores our notions of music, composing, art and reality.

A conceptual music work can consist of any concrete materials, information related to the work and documentation of the creative process. It is usually experimental by nature and often cast in a mixed-media guise: installations, soundscape composing, instrumental theatre,

performance art, and so on.¹⁷ The work often makes use of ‘ready-made’ materials, such as rubbish. Or helicopters. The work may involve audience participation, or its execution may be outsourced to craftsmen, a commercial enterprise or the military.

A conceptual music work often includes documentation of the underlying idea of the work and its creative process: audio, video, still images and written materials. The *Helicopter String Quartet* is a case in point. The fact that a performance of the work has a voiceover explaining what is going on distances the work from the notion of music as a self-contained entity or object and brings its focus closer to the process of music, where reception plays a major role.¹⁸ Stockhausen prepared a large volume of other information on the work, such as various writings. His own company engaged Scheffer, known for his documentaries, to produce a 77-minute film detailing the preparations and rehearsals for the premiere and also the performance itself.¹⁹ Stockhausen himself talks a lot in the film about the work, its planning and other thoughts. The musicians performing in the premiere also describe their relationship to the work. The printed score of the work contains a wealth of information, including an explanation and performance instructions that run to twenty pages.

5. Manifestations of concepts

In our view, Stockhausen’s *Helicopter String Quartet* represents a kind of conceptual music where ‘manifestations of concepts’ and symbolic presentation (allegory) are significant features.²⁰ What this means is expressing a surprising idea, thought, concept or question in an unusual, concrete and material way. Ideas become literal – and at the same time metaphorical – performances that confuse the mind and force it to think actively. Conceptual music, like philosophy, is a mode of exploring reality. But here concepts are replaced by concrete sounds, images, gestures and functions moving in space.²¹

Above all, the *Helicopter String Quartet* evokes, both literally and metaphorically, the issue of music being a material transmitted through the air and a spatial art form whose principal parameter is the direction of the sound. We could go so far as to say that in all his works Stockhausen explored the essence of music (sound), i.e. the question of what music (sound) is from a physical perspective and what it could mean from a philosophical or spiritual perspective. In all of Stockhausen’s works, acoustics and sound analysis (science, technology) encounter a contemplation of the deeper dimensions of music (art, mysticism).²² Indeed, Stockhausen’s compositions are (whatever else they may be) always a contemplation of music as music. Yet in contrast to mainstream post-Second-World-War modernism – characterised by a formalist approach – Stockhausen’s works are never mere composition-technique comments on earlier composition-technique solutions. Rather, they are conceptual studies and metaphors of music, and in order to

function as such they require the listener to step at least temporarily outside the conventional bounds of music in order to be able to take an abstract or comparative perspective on music.²³

6. Air, direction, the universe and everything

Stockhausen's *Helicopter String Quartet* may be seen as a conceptual manifestation of the transmitting of music by air, i.e. a literal representation of the physical definition of music. The flying musicians concretely demonstrate the material nature of music. Music consists of vibrations in the air: in physical terms, sound is made by vibrations in the instrument, transmitted through the air (the medium).²⁴ The helicopters carrying the musicians – which are themselves sources of sound, i.e. instruments – may be seen as a manifestation of what is perhaps the most influential definition of music given in music aesthetics: 'tonally moving forms' (German: *Tönend bewegte Formen*).²⁵

At the same time, the work expresses – on quite a megalomaniac scale – the spatial notion of music, i.e. that music operates in three dimensions and has direction. Music is sound transmitted through the air; it has a direction and a spatial shape. The musicians being moved around in the air according to the score demonstrate the notion of the *direction of sound* as a fundamental parameter of music.

Stockhausen's way of working with music as space and direction was largely derived from the aesthetics of electroacoustic (taped) music. This may be seen in the fact that the musical texture in the *Helicopter String Quartet* is based on noisy tremolos and glissandos on the string instruments and the similar sounds generated by the rotor blades. The way in which the string instruments mimic the rising and falling pitch of the rotor noise is at its most apparent when the helicopters take off and land. There is no boundary between noise and musical sound: the helicopters and string instruments reflect and reinforce one another. Watching Scheffer's film generates a fascinating synchronisation of image and sound, creating the impression that it is the string instruments that are the actual motors of the helicopters, raising them aloft with their frantic buzzing.

In the *Helicopter String Quartet*, the composer directs the music (the sounds made by the string players and the helicopters) into the directions he wants. The space taken up by the work is considerably larger than in any of the composer's earlier works. Because sound propagates everywhere in a space, the fact that the helicopters in the *Helicopter String Quartet* are flying in the open air means that their sound will in theory propagate to everywhere, all around the world. The space taken up by the work is determined by the distance at which the helicopters are audible; but although sound waves are attenuated, they may be considered notionally to continue their spreading beyond the threshold of audibility, rendering the entire atmosphere of

the Earth, and the universe beyond, a part of Stockhausen's composition – as indeed the composer himself indicates in Scheffer's documentary. The music of the work embraces the world.

Looking at the work in this way reflects a cosmological understanding of music that connects music to the fundamental order of the universe, the harmony of the spheres. The notion of music having an underlying cosmic origin comes to us from the cosmic harmony theory of Antiquity, to which the Judeo-Christian tradition added the concept of a hidden divinity behind the audible number relations of the universe. However, the Pythagoreans insisted that we cannot hear this all-pervasive cosmic music because we are so used to it that we do not notice it at all – just like we never notice the air that we breathe.²⁶

The music of the *Helicopter String Quartet* sounding in the sky and conveyed down to earth may be regarded as a representation of the harmony of the spheres, a sort of cosmic white noise where all frequencies are present simultaneously.²⁷ In this sense, the work is in effect an Aeolian harp resonating to the respiration of the world – of existence itself.²⁸ This prompts an association to acoustic ecology and the principal thesis of experimental music: that music can be anything at all.²⁹

7. Inaudible music

Stockhausen also manifests the imperceptible – inaudible – cosmic music in his score. The printed score carries two parallel systems for describing the music: in both, the musical line played by each instrument can be followed through colour-coded symbolism (red for the 1st violin, blue for the 2nd violin, green for the viola and orange for the cello).³⁰

The lower system of the score comprises an ordinary musical score with a staff for each instrument. Above it is another system that shows how the musical lines intersect in pitch as the work progresses. This system, graphically representing the pitch trajectories of the instrument parts, illustrates how the texture of intersecting lines generates (ghost) melodies, which the composer stressed as an important element. These are melodies that are not played by any individual musician; they are formed by pitches in the intersecting musical lines, as the composer indicated. Sometimes such a 'melody' consists of a single pitch. For instance, after the opening section *Aufstieg* (Takeoff), the section *Flug* (Flight) opens with a ghost melody consisting of 23 repetitions of the pitch A4 where none of the musicians plays any of the two repetitions consecutively, each note being played on one of the four instruments in turn.

The upper system of the score illustrates the ghost melodies that do not exist as independent entities yet are very real and audible.³¹ This upper system may in fact be a better representation of the listener's perception of the work than the conventionally notated lower system.³²

We may thus describe the upper system as manifesting the 'miracle' of music, the end result in sound that would be difficult if not impossible to perceive in a conventionally notated score.

Moreover, the dual-system score also serves the purpose of questioning what actually is a score and what its relationship is to the work. Is the score a performance instruction or a representation of the auditory result of its performance? Which of the systems in the score of the *Helicopter String Quartet* is 'more' music?

8. World and cosmos: environmental music

Stockhausen's work creates a world – a world view – not only aurally but also visually. It is essential for the video projections used in performance that the listeners/viewers perceive how the string players see the world above, below and in front of them through the windows of the helicopter. These images of the world as seen by the performers is both literally and metaphorically a 'world view'. The players render the world in sound, and this serves as a conduit to the totality of existence, in keeping with the theory of the harmony of the spheres. Also, if we apply the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, we may observe that this view demonstrates how in the modern era the world has become an image determined by a technological subject (here, the helicopter and the musician) and instead of its recipients' human beings are now its representants.³³

The *Helicopter String Quartet* expands the notion of the spatial qualities of music to the maximum, as it seeks to fill the entire world. This may be seen as the logical conclusion of the conception manifested by Stockhausen in his output since the 1950s, that music is an all-encompassing global structure that connects everything that exists like a network of rhizomes and is thus a metaphor for life itself.³⁴ Stockhausen used to talk of his music as not only music in space but music *of* space, cosmic music.

According to the instructions in the score, ground central should be located indoors in an auditorium, but in some performances, particularly those given since the composer's death, audiences have been given the option of being either indoors or outdoors. In fact, in Scheffer's documentary the composer himself implies that it would be in keeping with the spirit of the work if the roof of ground central were to be opened and the audience were to see the helicopters in the sky above them, preferably a starry sky. To paraphrase anthropologist Tim Ingold, whose thinking was influenced by Heidegger: if witnessed under the open sky, the work underlines the concept of the world as a concave spherical object in the centre of which the human being is and which is in diametrical contrast to the concept of the world as a convex spherical object that can only be understood from an outside point of view.³⁵

Notwithstanding the above, a cosmic connection can ultimately only be sensed through a specific location and a relationship to that location. Accordingly, the *Helicopter String Quartet*

may be regarded as environmental music and a landscape composition that leverages a specific physical outdoor environment as its own material, at once the performance space, the object of depiction and the source of experientiality.³⁶ Music, being an art based on vibrations of the air and of the human body and comprehensively addressing space, time, body and emotions, has special potential for enhancing environmental awareness among listeners and prompting a sense of ecological affinity with the environment.³⁷

Performing the work in different cities, i.e. different environments (for instance in Paris 2013, Rome 2009 and Venice 2013), emphasises the environmental and landscape elements of the work and how it connects to local culture. In Paris, it was particularly important to have the helicopters fly a long way along the Seine River.³⁸ In Salzburg (2003) and Valais (2015), the Alpine scenery was of course in a prominent role. Locating ground central in an outdoor location, as at the Place du Pont-Neuf in Paris for the performance by the Elysian Quartet in 2013, emphasises the cosmic and environmental aspects of the work but also its communal and cultural-history significance, since this explicitly links the performance to a specific location with its own layers of socio-cultural and historical meaning.

For the audience to be outdoors rather than in an auditorium emphasises the connection between the audience and the environment, because it links the listener to the environment both concretely and metaphorically.³⁹ Instead of an abstract notion of being one with the cosmos, the listener is able to blend into and identify with a location or landscape that is familiar or otherwise has significance and to which the listener has historical, social and personal ties, prompting a contemplation of those ties and his or her relationship to the environment in a new way.⁴⁰

Because the *Helicopter String Quartet* is noisy, loud, repetitive and spatial, it is very much haptic by nature: it is music that is as much felt as heard.⁴¹ This too emphasises the link between listener and environment. The noise and the profuse use of technology point to the constructed nature of our world view and relationship to the environment, and more generally of the ways in which we observe and inhabit the world, as noted above. While these elements may help the listener explore the modern world view, they may also have the effect of alienating the listener from the environment.⁴²

9. Helicopters into the light

Rendering the air-transmitted nature of music tangible by having helicopters make music in the sky may further be identified with the notion of music as a manifestation of the miraculous and the ineffable, or transcendence.⁴³ The music literally flies away, as the composer says in Scheffer's documentary. Art historian Simon Shaw-Miller wrote that in the *Helicopter String Quartet* the music is concretely elevated to transcendence and then brought back down to

earth.⁴⁴ Flying may here be seen as a concrete representation of the transcendence of art – reaching for the sky or for alternate realities – or as a metaphor for spiritual striving.

Art scholar Ryan Bishop notes that the technology employed in the work has the purpose of liberating music from all things terrestrial. One might even suggest that technology used in this way beyond the realm of technology and science facilitates the revealing of the truth in Heideggerian terms: it shows the technological mindset as comprehension of existence.⁴⁵

Although Stockhausen wrote the *Helicopter String Quartet* as an independent work (he was commissioned to write a string quartet for the Salzburg Festival in 1994), he also cast it as a scene in his opera heptalogy *Sieben Tagen aus Licht* (usually referred to as *Licht*). This gigantic 29-hour cycle, intended to be performed over seven evenings, was Stockhausen's principal occupation from the 1970s up to the 2000s. It is no exaggeration to say that from 1977 until the end of his life Stockhausen was working on only two compositions, each of huge proportions: *Licht* and *Klang* (Sound).⁴⁶ The *Helicopter String Quartet* is Act III of the Wednesday instalment of the opera cycle, *Mittwoch aus Licht* (1998).⁴⁷

Licht is about the eternal struggle between different ways of understanding reality in a cyclical structure that ideally has no beginning or end: the days of the week follow each other in unending succession (and, by extension, in an ideal performance the opera cycle should continue ad infinitum). Stockhausen's description of the principal characters is that Eve symbolises the rebirth of humanity in music, while Lucifer and Michael represent opposing conceptions of the world and life.⁴⁸ In all of the world's mythologies, religions, philosophies and art, light is traditionally a metaphor for life and for a human being's spiritual journey, the search for a higher dimension of being.

10. Communication and the un-string-quartet

Stockhausen's *Helicopter String Quartet* can easily be described as an anti-opera(tic part of an opera), since it involves no singers. But more importantly, it is an anti-string-quartet, demolishing conventional notions of what a string quartet is and more generally what chamber music is. The string quartet, a genre scored for a specific group of solo string instruments (two violins, viola and cello), is regarded as the highest form of chamber music in Western music and the very essence of chamber music.⁴⁹ A close-knit string quartet can achieve a uniquely sensitive and concentrated state of interaction and communication. The music is exceptionally carefully and intelligently constructed, using subtle means and effects. The audience, if there is any, is relatively small, and the performers have an intimate connection with them. It is all about the social and aesthetic pleasure of making music together.⁵⁰

All this is negated in the *Helicopter String Quartet*,⁵¹ which blows up the intimate, subtle, small-scale genre to huge proportions in the sky. The performers are isolated from one

another so that they cannot communicate or experience the pleasure of making music together. Enclosed in a helicopter cabin, they would not even hear the sound of their own instrument if they did not have headphones to which the sound picked up by a mike near the instrument's bridge is transmitted. The only other thing piped into the headphones is a click track; none of the performers can hear what the others are playing. Only the sound engineer and audience at ground central can hear everything – the music played by all the musicians and the sound of all the helicopters. The four instrumentalists only become an ensemble through a complex technological mediation process – an ensemble from which they themselves are excluded.

Communication between the musicians and the listeners is also made as difficult as possible. The performers and audience are far apart, and the music is transmitted to the audience not directly but through a technological system. To be sure, the technology serves as a concrete manifestation of the nature of music as an airborne art form and raises questions about communications and transmission. The emphatically technological character of the transmitting of the message in a performance of this work is a metaphor for how music travels between human beings and is able to bring together people who may otherwise culturally be very far apart. And because music is ultimately based on touch – sound waves touch the eardrum, which amplifies them and conveys them to the inner ear – the music literally touches all its listeners.⁵² Thus, the music that is separated from direct contact with the individuals receiving it is a metaphor of something that can connect all the people and living beings of the world.

The musical texture of the *Helicopter String Quartet* is also as un-string-quartet-like as possible, consisting mainly of the noise of the helicopter rotors and the buzzes and hums of the string instruments imitating the sound of an air stream. It does beg the question of whether the actual resultant sound is at all interesting except as far as its anti-string-quartet nature is concerned. Instead of catering to sensory perception, the music seems to prompt metaphorical associations.

The composer mentioned that he wished to emulate the sound of bees – moving, magical sound sources – but the rushing of air may also be understood as representing the cosmic breath of the world that we referred to above.⁵³ We hear the helicopter rotor blades 'slicing' the air, distorting the sound as the very medium that carries the sound is cut to pieces.⁵⁴ On the other hand, the mind-numbing sound texture invites the listener to pay closer attention to the multitude of frequencies and sounds present in the noise. Stockhausen once recalled being entranced as an airline passenger by the noise of an aircraft in flight; he pressed his ear to the fuselage and learned to discern frequencies and sonorities in the noise so that his perception of the spectrum of sounds was constantly shifting.⁵⁵ The *Helicopter String Quartet* asks us: what is listening to music? what is the relationship between music and listening?

11. Music as a metaphor for itself

Stockhausen constantly explored the question of what music is and what its essence is. Aspiring to the 'suprarational', he saw contemplating music as confronting the miraculous, the ineffable and the inexplicable.

Music has served as a metaphor for many things not subject to rational explanation or sensory perception, ever since Ancient Greece. It has even been regarded as a practical philosophy or an extension of philosophy that can help us resolve ultimate questions of existence.⁵⁶ As Bowie has said, music is even today a vehicle for creating an affective relationship to things which we know affect us but which are completely beyond our control,⁵⁷ such as death, loss, longing, transitoriness, love, happiness and joy, but even such fundamental modern phenomena as the environmental problems that threaten our very existence. From this perspective too, the *Helicopter String Quartet* addresses our relationship to the universe, to the cosmos.

Conceptual music works, then, are not so much completed musical objects or performances as they are processes. They direct the recipient's attention to the concept of music and the development through which something becomes music. We also argue that conceptual music in general and the *Helicopter String Quartet* in particular do this by transferring ideas and thoughts into concrete, material manifestations; or, to put it another way, in the *Helicopter String Quartet* the music becomes a metaphor for itself.

In exploring the nature of music through material manifestations, Stockhausen created a metaphor of a metaphor, where a phenomenon typically understood as a symbol for the ineffable (music) itself becomes the referent of a symbol (Stockhausen's conceptual music). In the *Helicopter String Quartet*, as indeed generally in conceptual music – an art form that queries the concept of music – music serves as a metaphor for itself, taking the time-honoured function of music as a metaphor for the ineffable to the next level, so to speak.

In the end, Stockhausen's *Helicopter String Quartet* consists not only of the sounds made by the quartet and the helicopters in mid-air and the sounds transmitted to ground central and mixed by the sound engineer for the audience to perceive in an auditorium or urban landscape. To at least as great an extent the work also consists of the bemused comments it elicits, the process of creating the performance, the running commentary for the audience during the performance, and all the related documentation and discussion. This, of course, also includes the present article and whatever thoughts you, the reader of this article, may have about it. All the talk and confusion and criticism that the work generates is ultimately part of the realisation of the work. When, at the premiere, the composer himself sitting at the sound console explained to the audience what was going on, this did not make the work any easier to understand; if anything, it confused the audience even more. What the *Helicopter String Quartet* questions –

because it is so strange – is the conventional relationship to the miraculous, the ineffable, the inexplicable or (in pre-conceptual terms) the affective that has been established in the history of music.⁵⁸ It is precisely because the work is a metaphorical contemplation of music itself that it manages to boggle the mind of the listener in a ‘WTF moment’.

12. Conceptuality as a dimension of music

Conceptual music focuses our attention on the concept of music. It may be regarded as an experimental form of music philosophy, posing the questions of what music is and when music is. Instead of philosophical argumentation, it operates with sounds, objects, gestures and actions moving in time and space. This often has the effect of provoking confusion, irritation and boredom among listeners. Stockhausen’s *Quartet* is one such work that compels the listener to take a philosophical position.

So why do we need conceptual music? Conceptual music – especially in a neo-conceptual sense discussed above – questions our ideas about music, highlights the boundaries and parameters of music and also expands the very concept of music. Conceptual music sensitises us to the world by upsetting our conventional notions of music, composing, concerts, works and the relationship between art and reality.⁵⁹

The discussion above defines conceptual music as a subgenre under experimental music. However, a more feasible approach might be to consider conceptual music not as a genre or tradition of music but as a potential dimension of a musical work or performance which, if emphasised, may provide a relevant perspective from which to contemplate the work. As art theoretician Roger Seamon proposes, conceptuality may be understood as one of the fundamental dimensions of an artwork along with mimesis, expression and form. Different works – and different critiques – emphasise different dimensions. With the conceptual dimension, we cannot intuitively understand the work; we must engage in deduction and embrace a state of uncertainty in order to explore interpretations of what the concrete and unique symbolic representations in the work might signify and what the meaning of the work might be. The (neo-)conceptual dimension highlights meaning, theory and interpretation instead of value, technique and artefacts, and thus it may be regarded as the philosophical side of art.⁶⁰

It follows from the above that the arts as a whole have undergone a shift towards conceptual art since the 1960s. Today, instead of a specific genre of conceptual art we find the conceptual dimension extending itself to various branches of the arts. The performance art trends of the 2000s and new forms of experimental art such as artistic research have been seminal in this development. In performance art, having art turn to contemplate itself creates a philosophical

structure with which one may present questions about art and reality, challenge conventional ways of representing the world and create new ones.⁶¹

Conceptual music need not be understood as a genre of music. Any work of classical or popular music may incorporate a conceptual music dimension, whether more or less apparent. It is typically found, however, in experimental music and performance art, in which music may serve as a philosophical vehicle for contemplating reality where concepts are replaced by concrete, material sounds, images, gestures and functions moving in space. In this context, the distinction between “musical” and “extra-musical” is no longer relevant. Any culturally meaningful music where the idea of music is the main focus and that is significantly experiential from a conceptual perspective can be defined as conceptual music.

¹ An earlier, a slightly different version of this article is published in Finnish in the journal *Niin & näin* (3/2015).

² The performers at the premiere were: Irvine Arditti, 1st violin; Graeme Jennings, 2nd violin; Garth Knox, viola; Rohan de Saram, cello; Pilot Marco Oliver; Pilot Lieutenant Denis Jans; Pilot Lieutenant Robert de Lange; Pilot Captain Erik Boekelman; and the composer as the sound engineer and moderator. There were also technical assistants both on the ground and in the air.

³ The microphones recording the helicopter sounds must be placed so as to maximise the sound of the rotor blades and to minimise the sound of the engine (Stockhausen 2001).

⁴ This ‘Stockhausenian counting’ occurs throughout the *Licht* opera cycle, imposing a sense of formalist control, constructivism and symmetry, much like the visually appearing numbers in the film *Drowning by Numbers* (1988) directed by Peter Greenaway.

⁵ Cf. Roger Seamon, “The Conceptual Dimension in Art and the Modern Theory of Artistic Value,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 59, no. 2 (2001): 139; Marja Sakari, *Käsitetaiteen etiikkaa. Suomalaisen käsitetaiteen postmodernia ja fenomenologista tulkintaa*. (Helsinki: Valtion taidemuseo, 2000), 42, 68.

⁶ For previous discussions of the *Helicopter String Quartet*, see e.g. Ekaterina Sedova, “Netzstrukturen in Karlheinz Stockhausens *Helikopter-Streichquartett*,” in *Musik Netz Werke: Konturen der neuen Musikkultur. Dokumentation des 16. Internationalen Studentischen Symposiums für Musikwissenschaft in Berlin 2001*, ed. L. Grün and F. Wiegand (Bielefeld: transcript, 2002); Minoru Shumuzu, “Potentiale multimedialer Aufführung und ‘szenische Musik’ – einige Bemerkungen zum *Helikopter-Streichquartett*,” in *Internationales Stockhausen-Symposium 2000: LICHT*, ed. I. Misch and C. von Blumröder (Münster: Signale aus Köln); Robin Maconie, *Other Planets. The Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen* (Lanham: Scarecrow, 2005); Steven Connor, “Strings in the Earth and Air,” A lecture given at the *Music and Postmodern Cultural Theory Conference*, Melbourne, December 5, 2006, <http://stevenconnor.com/strings/strings.pdf>; Ryan Bishop, “The Force of Noise, or Touching Music. The Tele-Haptics of Stockhausen’s ‘Helicopter String Quartet’,” *SubStance. Review of Theory and Literary Criticism* 40, no. 3 (2011); Florian Leiffheidt, “Tradition vs. Moderne? Karlheinz Stockhausens *Helikopter-Streichquartett im Spiegel der Gattungsgeschichte*” (Studienarbeit, Grin, Norderstedt, 2011). As far as we know, the work has not yet been discussed from a conceptual music perspective.

⁷ See Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Helikopter-Streichquartett vom Mittwoch aus Licht* (Kürten: Stockhausen-Verlag & German Music Publishers Society, 2001); Karlheinz Stockhausen, “Introduction – Performance practice – Recordings,” [CD liner notes] translated by Suzee Stephens, *Helikopter-Quartett / Arditti String Quartet*. [CD] Arditti Quartet Edition 35. Westdeutscher Rundfunk WDR Köln & Montaigne Audivis, MO 782097 AD 049, Paris 1996; Karlheinz Stockhausen,

“Helikopter-Streichquartett,” *Grand Street* 14, no. 4 (1996); Karlheinz Stockhausen, “Introduction. Helicopter-String Quartet (1992/1993),” Website of the Stockhausen Music Foundation (*Stockhausen-Stiftung für Musik*) (1999), http://www.stockhausen.org/helikopter_intro.html; Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Helikopter-Quartett / Arditti String Quartet*. [CD] Arditti Quartet Edition 35. Westdeutscher Rundfunk WDR Köln & Mouton Edizioni, MO 782097 AD 049, Paris (1996).

⁸ See e.g. Harry Lehmann, “Konzeptmusik. Katalysator der gehaltsästhetischen Wende in der Neuen Music” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1 (2014): 23.

⁹ See e.g. Voya Toncitch, “Music Conceptuelle,” *Musicalia: Rivista internazionale di musica* 2, no. 4 (1971); Seth Kim-Cohen, *In the Blink of an Ear. Toward a Non-Cochlear Sonic Art*. (New York: Continuum, 2009), Sophie Stévanec, “John Cage Tunes into the Redefinition of the Musical Field by Marcel Duchamp and the Emergence of a Conceptual Music,” *Tacet: Experimental Music Review* 1 (2011); Johannes Kreidler, “Mit Leitbild?! Zur Rezeption konzeptueller Musik,” *Positionen: Texte zur aktuellen Music* 95 (2013); Johannes Kreidler, “Das Neue am Neuen Konzeptualismus,” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1 (2014); Tobias Eduard Schick, “Ästhetischer Gehalt zwischen autonomer Musik und einem neuen Konzeptualismus,” *Musik & Ästhetik* 66 (2013); Lehmann, “Konzeptmusik”.

¹⁰ See Frederick Niecks, *Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries. A Contribution to the History of Musical Expression* (London: Novello, 1906), 448.

¹¹ Lehmann, “Konzeptmusik,” 23.

¹² Lehmann, “Konzeptmusik,” 23.

¹³ Cf. Kim-Cohen, *In the Blink*, xv–xvii.

¹⁴ Henry Flynt, “Essay. Concept Art (1963),” in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art. A Sourcebook of Artists’ Writings*, ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); see also Sakari, *Käsitetaiteen etiikkaa*, 33.

¹⁵ E.g. Kim-Cohen, *In the Blink*; Kreidler, “Mit Leitbild?!”; Kreidler, “Das Neue”; Lehmann, “Konzeptmusik”.

¹⁶ Andrew Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 11.

¹⁷ The term ‘experimental music’ is here used broadly to refer to any music or sound art that consciously pushes against the boundaries and definitions of its genre or of a particular musical tradition. Its principal features are a radical departure from norms and an embracing of that which was previously excluded, thus for instance unusual materials, sound sources, sound production techniques, composition methods or aesthetic goals. Experimental music questions and expands conventional notions of ‘music’ and ‘musical work’ and is characterised by an open and exploratory approach to sound as such. See e.g. Tanja Tiekso, *Todellista musiikkia. Kokeellisuuden idea musiikin avantgardemanifesteissa* (Helsinki: Poesia, 2013).

¹⁸ Simon Shaw-Miller, “Thinking through Construction. Notation–Composition–Event. The Architecture of Music,” *AA Files* (Architectural Association School of Architecture) 53 (2006): 46.

¹⁹ The documentary does not include the actual 30-minute premiere in its entirety, only its beginning and end.

²⁰ Cf. Seamon, “The Conceptual Dimension”; Sakari, *Käsitetaiteen etiikkaa*, 31.

²¹ Cf. Sakari, *Käsitetaiteen etiikkaa*, 14, 17, 34, 38, 42, 75–76; Välimäki 2015, 249.

²² We borrowed the concept of deeper dimensions from the philosopher Eino Kaila [Eino Kaila, *Syvähenkinen elämä. Keskusteluja viimeisistä kysymyksistä* (Helsinki: Otava, 1985)]. Stockhausen, though a Catholic by upbringing, was a religious mystic who was in favour of all the world’s religions.

²³ Cf. Tere Vadén and Juha Torvinen, “Musical Meaning in Between. Ineffability, Atmosphere and Asubjectivity in Musical Experience,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology* 1, no. 2 (2014): 218–219.

²⁴ Cf. Bishop, “The Force,” 30.

²⁵ Eduard Hanslick, *Musik für alle. Vom Musikalisch-Schönen, 1854*, trans. Ilkka Oramo (Tampere: niin & näin, 2014), 43.

²⁶ E.g. Joscelyn Godwin, *Harmonies of Heaven and Earth. The Spiritual Dimensions of Music from Antiquity to the Avant-Garde* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1987); Thomas J. Mathiesen, Greek Music Theory, in *The Cambridge History*

of *Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

²⁷ Cf. Max Peter Baumann, "Listening to Nature, Noise and Music," in *The World of Music* 41, no. 1 (1999): 99. Representing the harmony of the spheres as noise deviates from the convention in Western music of representing it as a field of tones forming octaves, fifths and fourths, as broad in range as possible and rich in overtones (e.g. the opening of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony or Mahler's First Symphony).

²⁸ Cf. Connor, "Strings," 1.

²⁹ E.g. Tiekso, *Todellista musiikkia*.

³⁰ Stockhausen also drafted a graphic score representing the aural impact of the piece, including the sounds of the helicopters.

³¹ The Sixth Symphony (*Pathétique*) of Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) has a similar construct in the opening of its final movement: a ghost melody made up of alternating tones in different instrumental parts.

³² When listening to the work, it is possible and feasible to follow one or the other of the systems in the score, but it is impossible to keep track of both at once.

³³ Martin Heidegger, *Kirje humanismista & Maailmankuvan aika*, trans. Markku Lehtinen. (Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto, 2000), 24–27; see also Tim Ingold, "Sfäärien soitosta pallojen pinnalle. Ympäristöajattelun topologiasta," in *Luonnon politiikka*, ed. Yrjö Haila and Ville Lähde. (Tampere: Vastapaino, 2003), 152–169.

³⁴ E.g. Karlheinz Stockhausen, "Zur Situation des Metiers (Klangkomposition)," in *Stockhausen, Texte zur Musik 1*, ed. Dieter Schnebel (Köln: DuMont Schauberg, 1963), 46.

³⁵ Ingold, "Sfäärien".

³⁶ Cf. Irene Kletschke, "Landschaftskompositionen," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 69, no. 3 (2012): 196–206.

³⁷ E.g. R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape. Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester: Destiny, 1994); Hildegard Westerkamp, "Speaking from Inside the Soundscape," in *The Book of Music and Nature. An Anthology of Sounds, Words, Thoughts*, ed. David Rothenberg and Marta Ulvaeus (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2001), 143–152; David Ingram, *The Jukebox in the Garden. Ecocriticism and American Popular Music Since 1960* (New York: Rodopi, 2010), 11, 59–70; Tiekso, *Todellista musiikkia*, 179–185, 241–261; Susanna Välimäki and Juha Torvinen, "Ympäristö, ihminen ja eko-apokalypsi. Miten nykytaide kuuntelee luontoa?" *Lähikuva* 1 (2014): 8–27; Tere Vadén and Juha Torvinen, "Musical Meaning"; Susanna Välimäki, *Muutoksen musiikki. Pervoja ja ekologisia utopioita audiovisuaalisessa kulttuurissa* (Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2015).

³⁸ In this performance, the helicopters did not take off beside ground central as suggested in the score but at the Auteil Hippodrome 8 km away.

³⁹ Cf. Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 86–89.

⁴⁰ Cf. Ingram, *The Jukebox*, 64.

⁴¹ See Bishop, "The Force".

⁴² Interestingly, the Salzburg Festival that originally commissioned the quartet for the 1994 festival in the end did not premiere it. One reason for this may have been the public protest made by the Austrian Green Party, declaring that it would be "absolutely impossible for Austrian air to be polluted by performing this Stockhausen", but the prohibitive expense was also a factor. (Stockhausen, "Helikopter-Streichquartett".) On the other hand, when the work was finally premiered at the Holland Festival in Amsterdam in the following year (1995), it was praised specifically for its environmental-art aspect. The work was eventually performed at the Salzburg Festival too, almost a decade later (2003).

⁴³ Stockhausen himself said that he was interested in the suprarational: that which cannot be explained but which is not senseless (see Stockhausen: *Helicopter String Quartet*, [a documentary], directed and written by Frank Scheffer. Stockhausen Verlag and Allegri Film. 77 min. DVD release, Medici Arts, 2008.) The work is dedicated to "all astronauts" who concretely work at the extremities of our knowledge, and in extreme circumstances too.

⁴⁴ Shaw-Miller, "Thinking," 46.

⁴⁵ Bishop. "The Force", 32; cf. Martin Heidegger, *Taideoksen alkuperä* (Der Ursprung der Kunstwerkes, 1936), trans. Hannu Sivenius. (Helsinki: Taide, 1995).

⁴⁶ *Klang* is a 24-part series of chamber music works, one for each hour of the day.

⁴⁷ *Mittwoch* has four acts: I *Welt-Parlament*; II *Orchester-Finalisten*; III *Helikopter-Streichquartett*; and IV *Michaelion*. There is also an opening greeting (*Gruss*) and a closing farewell (*Abschied*). It poses formidable technical demands and has only been produced once, in Birmingham in 2012.

⁴⁸ See Ivanka Stoianova, "And Dasein Becomes Music. Some Glimpses of Light," *Perspectives of New Music* 37, no. 1 (1999): 179–212; on *Mittwoch* see e.g. Robin Maconie, "Divine Comedy. Stockhausen's *Mittwoch* in Birmingham," *Tempo* 67, no. 263 (2013): 2–18.

⁴⁹ E.g. Paul Griffiths, *The String Quartet* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1985).

⁵⁰ E.g. John H. Baron, *Intimate Music. A History of the Idea of Chamber Music*. (Hillsdale: Pendragon, 2003).

⁵¹ Cf. Bishop, "The Force", 31.

⁵² Cf. Bishop, "The Force".

⁵³ See Stockhausen: *Helicopter String Quartet*.

⁵⁴ Cf. Connor, "Strings", 8. As Bishop ("The Force," 30) explains, the periodic sound of the rotor blades is created by the blades beating, slicing and compressing the air, much as sound waves beat the ear and vibrate the inner ear. Bishop notes that the Quartet highlights the idea of the production of sound by physical touch.

⁵⁵ See Stockhausen: *Helicopter String Quartet*.

⁵⁶ Juha Torvinen, "Musiikin filosofisuus ympäristöongelmien aikakaudella," *Agon* 4 (2014). <http://agon.fi/article/musiikin-filosofisuus-ymparistoongelmien-aikakaudella>.

⁵⁷ Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, 32–40*.

⁵⁸ About music as a metaphor for the inexplicable, cf. Torvinen, "Musiikin filosofisuus"; Juha Varto, *Kauneuden taito* (Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2001).

⁵⁹ Tanja Tiekso writes in her thesis *Todellista musiikkia* (2013) of the ethos of experimental music in opening up to the world.

⁶⁰ Seamon, "The Conceptual Dimension", 140, 144–147.

⁶¹ Cf. Välimäki, *Muutoksen musiikki*, 249.

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NEW BEAUTY: BETWEEN HIPSTERS AND FOLKLORE

Lenka Lee

In the conclusion of the article *The End of Art*, Arthur C. Danto presents Marx's vision of a posthistorical world, when Art is over, but art production and artworks are not. Everybody – in his postnarrative insignificance – can do what he or she likes.¹ In my study I present and describe a phenomenon which in some way fulfils Marx's and Danto's vision, but although it does not operate with any great narratives or manifestos, it influences with its specific aesthetics everyday life in many places across the entire first world.

A search today on Google returns “hipster” 191 million times (“the aesthetics” 157 million) and this phenomenon attracts now not only journalists, bloggers and laypersons, but also the academic sphere. The entry “folklorism” is quite humble, 42 thousand only, this term seems to attract primarily ethnographers. At first sight, these two categories do not seem to have much in common, belonging to divergent fields of cultural studies (in its broadest sense). This paper aims to show an area of their intersection. In a case study of specific signs of Moravian hipster-ness, it will be shown how the hipsters influence their translocal subculture with the elements of local folklore. As we will see, this connection between hipsters and a folklore also responds to a current political and economic situation in the Czech Republic.

The category of a hipster arose in 1940 and was connected with the black jazz culture. Originally, the term was used in an essay by American literary critic Anatole Broyard² anatomizing a black subcultural figure of the late forties. Later Norman Mailor used the term in his *The White Negro*,³ describing white middle-class males having predilection for the lifestyle of black jazz scene. The term was reborn in the late 1990s in New York. If we go through the current definitions, we usually find these expressions: young, skinny, tall, ironic, snobbish, vintage-style clothing, tattoos, facial hair, thick glasses, using bikes as the preferred way of transport,

biological food, craft beer, authentic wine, collectors and connoisseurs. A typical hipster studied at the humanities, works in the creative industry, in cafés or fashion stores.

The often-mentioned sign of a hipster is the following: the real hipster never identifies himself as a hipster, because he or she used to be a hipster before it was cool and popular. The rejection of this label as a category of self-identification seems to be part of the hipster identity discourse, real hipsters do things “years before they become mainstream.”⁴ There is a certain level of snobbery in this statement and that can be the reason why the hipster culture is often treated in a negative view. According to it hipsters are only wannabe-connoisseurs because in seeking authenticity and individuality they in fact imitate and follow each other.⁵ Many descriptions mention their uniformity of the culture which presents itself as strongly individualised. This is also connected with the fact that they don’t publish any manifestos, something that will be elaborated upon later in this text. Another problem is that the hipster culture is no real subculture because it is “characterised by a lack of generational distinction and by a genuine veneration of certain cultural expressions and objects of the previous generations”.⁶ Their predilection for collecting forgotten objects (the favourite examples are wall antlers, the sailor figure or the roaring deer at the forest lake) is not understandable, especially for previous generations who wanted to change the society and were opposed to their ancestors. Hipsters don't fight against their fathers, which is often interpreted as a form of nostalgia or a lack of a creative force. They are not seen as a radical political revolutionary (which they really are not), but as postmodern dandies; for them “the style is all that matters”.⁷

As Malíčková argues, the hipster, as an uncompromising aesthete, restores to the cultural space of the 21st century, the figure of a dandy who was originally born in the 18th century as a culmination of an individualism. For a dandy, the fan of a transience, the aesthetics stands over everything and gives sense to his existence bringing not superficiality but uncertainty and distance. The high degree of stylization of the dandy’s look emphasizes elegance. But the dandy remains an unattainable model for a hipster and the awareness of an unreachability of an aesthetic idol strengthens the ironical attitude of a hipster who is a pragmatic idealist and cynical visionary.⁸ In Sontag’s *Notes on Camp* we can also find some remarks which today can be connected with the hipsterness: „Time may enhance what seems simply dogged or lacking in fantasy now because we are too close to it, because it resembles too closely our own everyday fantasies, the fantastic nature of which we don’t perceive. We are better able to enjoy a fantasy as fantasy when it is not our own. This is why so many of the objects prized by Camp taste are old-fashioned, out-of-date, démodé. It’s not a love of the old as such. It’s simply that the process of aging or deterioration provides the necessary detachment – or arouses a necessary sympathy“.⁹ Besides the positive effect of time, Sontag also writes about the connection between Camp and

dandyism: „Detachment is the prerogative of an elite; and as the dandy is the 19th century’s surrogate for the aristocrat in matters of culture, so Camp is the modern dandyism. Camp is the answer to the problem: how to be a dandy in the age of mass culture.“¹⁰ Hipster is not completely campy because he is not completely dandy (as Malíčková explained) but there is nevertheless a huge intersection in the triade camp – dandy – hipster.

Hipsters usually operate in big cities; they are associated with urban spaces and gentrification. There are studies speaking about so called gentrification aesthetics - “a form of objectified cultural capital that gentrifiers appropriate through the decoration or renovation of their homes.”¹¹ The hipster focus on good living style transforms the cities visibly, they open new bars, cafés, food trucks and fashion places (e. g. in the area around Krymská street in Prague or around the Gorkého and Grohova streets in Brno). Other texts show how this process changed the life of working class who are not able now to live their former ordinary lives because their living areas were transformed into something cool, fancy, visited by many tourists, Airbnb and expensive localities.¹² Although the hipsters adore the pre-digital, analogue medias (e. g. the conventional film camera and the “old-school” photograph development) which counter the up-to-date aura-less age of digital reproduction, their culture is widespread (and unified) because of the new “2.0” media, especially online social networks. But still there are local differences between them (e. g. predilection for a different type of music - in the US they are associated with the indie scene, in Belgium it is also hip hop and r&b), therefore they can be presented as an example of what is called “micro-populations” which Maly and Varis explain as follows: “The hipster is a perfect instantiation of this: a translocal, polycentric, layered and stratified micro-population that is not only visible in style and (both local and translocal, and online and offline) infrastructures, but also constantly (re)produced through identity-authenticity discourses.”¹³ I would like to present one such local Czech (more precisely Moravian) hipster particularity – their inspiration by local folklore, or rather by elements of folklorism.

Wiktionary defines folklorism as: “Invention or adaptation of folklore; including any use of a tradition outside the cultural context in which it was created”.¹⁴ This definition follows on the best known formulation used by Hans Moser in 1962: “a second-hand mediation and presentation of folk culture”¹⁵ and also that one by Hermann Bausinger 22 years later: “The use of material or stylistic elements of folklore in a context which is foreign to the original tradition.”¹⁶ Moser distinguished between three forms of folklorismus: the performance of folk culture away from its original local context, the playful imitation of popular motifs by another social class, and the invention and creation of folklore for different purposes outside of any known tradition.¹⁷ From the beginning, the term was connected with the problem of authenticity and the discussion was led by two opposite groups of scholars: the first rejected this “spurious tradition”

and labelled it as “faklore”, the other defended it. But as the Czech folklorist Oldřich Sirovátka argues, folklorism as such is a neutral phenomenon and cannot be neglected, avoided or rejected.¹⁸ According to me, today the crucial question is if the real, genuine folklor really does exist today. If so, what would it look like? Country women using local folklore costumes as a daily or festive dress? People singing folklore songs working in the fields? People cooking traditional food on the furnace? Since Moser published his definition there were also another two geopolitical views formulated: “Scholars west of the Iron Curtain usually identified folklorism in a commercial context, while those to the east identified folklorism in government-sponsored cultural programs.”¹⁹ The Western theories labelled it as a form of escapist theory because it offers a vision of simple and genuine life from from the good old days. The civilizations long for it since ancient times, see for example Virgil's *Eclogues* praising the life of shepherds, Alan de Lille who in the 12th century complained about bad moral of his contemporaries and yearned for the old good behaviour and the Arts and Crafts movement which was based on the admiration for the Middle Ages. Yearning for the simple life has always been connected with travelling and tourism. Tourists want to experience real rural life, but what they get is in fact never folklore but folklorism (the different situation is the one of the ethnographers who try for example to record original habits etc. but there is always a doubt whether their presence as so called “unconcerned” observers doesn't interfere with the possibility to experience a real folklore). The tourists want to eat genuine food, see the traditional costumes, listen to folklore songs. And they usually get it. In some form. They can go to the Zittertall in the Austrian Alps to visit a festival Ursprung Buam Fest of some music based on folk roots, they can participate in a Greek evening which is the very same in every summer resort in Greece, they can see the Amerindian rituals and they play in their casinos or in Prague they can taste a “genuine” trdelník – a kind of pastry having in fact the roots in Hungary.

As I mentioned above, folklorism was due to government support in the Socialist countries. Especially the spectacular parades of folklore music and dances were very popular and professional folklore ensembles have shown the picture of a big happy Socialistic family, proud of their political system. But on the other hand, many of these companies are still in existence and 30 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain they are still highly professional performers. I would like to describe the situation in the Moravian region and its capital Brno, the second largest city in the Czech Republic. Moravia is more influenced by and following folklore culture and there are still many places in the countryside which are devoted to folklore/folklorism. There are many customs alive which are not conserved only in museums, but you can meet them in everyday life, especially connected with festive days. The eastern part of the Czech Republic was always quite rich because of the fertile countryside and people here are also more hospitable and

prouder of their traditions (and also of showing it off). There is still an honour for families to organize so called “hody”, traditional feasts connected with the end of harvest or with a certain saint – a patron of the place. Let us mention Vlčnov, a small town with 3000 inhabitants, which is a significant cultural centre supporting folklore art and folklorism. The so called Jízda králů (Vlčnov Ride of the Kings), a celebration which is held on the last Sunday in May, is famous, not only in the Czech Republic, but also worldwide and was in 2011 listed in the UNESCO register.²⁰ The other town, Kyjov, organizes every 4th year a big folklore costume march called Slovácký rok (The Slovakian Year).²¹ There was 3000 participant in traditional folklore costumes and about 25 000 visitors this year. Many families own original costumes and treat them carefully, and there are rigid rules on how such a dress may look, you cannot fix or sew it according to your own fantasy. But back to the hipsters. Influenced by this vivid folklore tradition, the hipster culture adopted and implemented some folklore influences, elements and motives. We can see it especially in tattoos, fashion and food. I think that this connection between hipsters and folklorism mirrors the phenomena mentioned above – the hipsters preserving the experience of the former generations, the romantic (and naive) yearning for the good old days and the vivid folklore tradition in the Moravian region.

There is also a third phenomenon connected with hipsters and folklorism. In the last 20 years we can observe the boom of the contemporary art and crafts tendencies. Hipsters are connected with fashion stores and cafés/hand crafted bakeries/bio food shops and a part of these workshops in a way follow John Ruskin’s theories about beauty and moral and Arts and Crafts movement, which stood for traditional craftsmanship (and adored a time long gone). Let me present some of these places in Brno focusing on the sphere of clothing and hand-crafted bakeries and sweet shops.

Brno, also called the Moravian Manchester, was very famous due to its massive textile industry in the period between 1800 and World War II. Because most of the owners of these factories were Germans, they left or were expelled from the city after the war and their factories were put under the state control and decayed afterwards. After the Velvet Revolution in 1989 and the fall of communism only a few of these former places had been maintained. Therefore, the current fashion designers in Brno cannot follow up on this tradition, but they seem to rather follow the Arts and Crafts movement’s ideas based on connection between beauty, handcraft, aesthetics and social aspects.

First, I would like to mention the workshop called Zašívárna (A Stitch Workshop) whose owners – two women - are devoted to embroidery. They teach the techniques, they also design patterns by modifying old folklore patterns or producing completely new ones (geometric animals).²² They also follow an aforementioned social aspect, as in the Czech crowdfunding online

portal HitHit they run a project to support so called stitching grandmothers - women in retirement or with some health problems who are sewing for them their patterns, because : “These ladies are often alone or feel abandoned and in this workshop - place for them - they could meet each other and also their clients.”²³ This campaign resembles the activities of Tereza Hoppe Teinitzerová, an active Czech follower of Arts and Crafts movement, who in 1920 founded a textile workshop in southern Bohemia which gathered local weavers. Teinitzerová, who studied the art of weaving in Prague, Vienna, Berlin and in the Scandinavian countries, but also frequented lectures concerning Arts and Crafts, also strived to create some place where “the old ladies could work next to the orphans.”²⁴ This magnanimous project was unfortunately not implemented because of the Czech political situation after 1948. Next, I would like to introduce the anonymous guerrilla knitting association called Užaslé (The Astounded) which creates and displays their works of art – the knitted clothes – reacting to the Czech political situation. After the last parliamentary election they placed some decorations on the statue of the first Czechoslovak president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk – the first one with the embroidered statement “Žasnu” (I am amazed) which was followed after some months by another one “Mizím” (I am escaping).²⁵ Their artefacts, placed illegally in public space, are usually displayed only for few hours, but attract the interest of media (and police). Both mentioned fashion groups, in some way, follow the tradition, but primarily they reflection and react to current social needs and political life. They are not cheap imitators of folklore misusing tradition for an effect (and gain). Both are also quite active in social platform; in their case it is Facebook where they regularly present their works.

In the culinary area it is about the return to traditional recipes and ingredients (handmade yeast bread, traditional cakes – for ex. “frgály”) on one side, and using new technologies and media on the other. The handcraft bakery Laskominy od Maryny (The Dainty by Maryna)²⁶ is famous for the handmade yeast bread which is popular in Brno because it tastes deliciously and lasts long. The owner works with two part-time assistants and they make 30 pieces of bread of different kinds (with potatoes, caraway, rye etc.) a day. Especially on Fridays it is difficult to buy it after 11 a.m. Besides this, she also bakes cakes and pies, quiches and baguettes. Every morning around nine, she posts her current daily offer on Facebook and people can call and book what they want. This system is a bit old-fashioned but quite helpful. This direct daily communication with clients is also a part of her success. According to Forbes journal, this bakery belongs to the top ten in the Czech Republic. The owner – Maria Matuszek – also leads courses on how to bake bread and other kinds of bakery and she (because she graduated in ethnology) is also a specialist of traditionally bakery connected with the liturgical calendar – like e. g. boží milosti (God’s mercy) for Eastern and vánočka (Christmas cake) for Christmas. A use of fantasy, but not becoming kitsch – can characterize the design sweetshop Sorry, pečeme jinak (Sorry, we

bake differently). The owner, Šárka Divácká, describes her small business as “a combination between goulash and macrons”, which sounds terrible but tastes great and her cake called “Bud’ mech” (Be a moss) containing a moss, pistachio, spinach and a (dead) cricket is a legend now.²⁷ Her place is also famous for marmor rainbow glaze cakes. This place offers something really extraordinary. Patient and honest hard work, a small company, ingredients of high quality – these are all characteristics of these two mentioned places. They have one more thing in common – they are not raw, vegan nor vegetarian.

My survey aims also to find out whether this connection between tradition and up-to-date form has something to do, not only with aesthetics (beauty, originality etc.) and moral (social aspects, honest work) qualities, but also with political reasons (nationalistic tendencies and movements). After the year 1989 the Czech Republic quickly opened up to foreign influences. In the next ten years fast foods, fashion chains, MTV, kung-fu movies, a lot of glitters, big screens, door-to-doors sellers was introduced and it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the truth from an illusion. But after the year 2000 people started to revise and evaluate more and the year 2000 is a milestone for what I call The Arts and Crafts 2.0. The people started to look back to their traditions, handcrafts, local food, but in that time not because it was necessary because of a lack of goods as they were used to from the communism, but because they wanted back the good things which existed in their history. And in the last twenty year we can observe a development of some kinds of applied arts, design and handcrafts which combine traditional contents and forms with new technologies that serve production and promotion. As John Ruskin and The Arts and Crafts movement, the new authors follow an aesthetical and social vision of the quality of handcraft, but these new tendencies are not organized nor united (at least yet), although they cooperate and support each other to a certain extent (these handicraft makers usually know each other because their environment including their clients – not only hipsters - is a kind of micro-population). They also do not publish any manifestos (unlike Ruskin but like hipsters). John Ruskin and his followers fought against industrialism “without heart” and The Arts and Crafts 2.0 - which is a phenomenon of course not existing only in Moravia but in the whole first world nowadays - according to me has also an enemy – the profanation of the terms “traditional, tradition, home-made etc.”. On one hand these labels are misused in advertisements offering traditional “home, like-by-mother” products which are in fact produced in big factories and sometimes even out of the country,²⁸ or by sellers of the kitsch-folklore-like-souvenirs cheating the tourists in major towns and dishonouring the good Czech (not only folklore) tradition and on the other hand, the term “traditional” can be used and misused by the populist voices invoking a fear of anything unknown, foreign, extraordinary, exceptional which is a topical theme not only in the European Union but worldwide nowadays.

The Arts and Crafts 2.0 people take inspiration from their tradition and restore it, but also follow up on new domestic and foreign trends, work hard, learn from failures and try to succeed because of a good reputation, not through false advertisement. And they would never call themselves to be a member of this movement which does not exist. The hipsters are blamed by some theorists for having resigned from a political dimension of the subcultural identity as they are lacking ideology in their basics. But as Malíčková explains “the subculture doesn’t have to be politically engaged, it should have a readable worldview. This worldview is present in the request of the maximum aestheticization of life here and now with an emphasis on the visibility of the cultural memory tracks revitalizing the tradition. The hipster is an aesthete, trendsetter, creative bricoleur, recyclator, archaeologist of the cultural memory – a creative administrator of a cultural archive. Hipster is socially engaged as he or she is reshaping her/his living space. The aestheticization of the everydayness is his or her life program.”²⁹ This can also be applied to Arts and Crafts 2.0 people because they fulfil the everyday aesthetics by their work and products, without proclaiming any ideology.

In a small case study of the city of Brno, I attempted to show that even if there are no great narratives or manifestos anymore, the relationships and connections between the micro-population of the hipster culture (however snobbish or ironically treated), folklorism (however naive and dreaming about the good old days) and followers of Ruskin’s and Arts and Crafts’ ideas (with whatever lack of organisation but yet groping) mirror and follow the current cultural trends widespread in many towns of the first world and, also provide many illustrative examples for how to aesthetize our everyday lives.

¹ Danto, Arthur Coleman. 1998 (1984). “Konec umění.” *Estetika* 35: 16-18.

² Broyard, Anatole. 1948. “A portrait of the hipster.” *Partisan Review* 15 (6): 721–727.

³ Mailer, Norman. 1957. “The White Negro. Superficial Reflections on the Hipster.” *Dissent* 4: 276-293.

⁴ Maly, Ico, Varis, Piia. 2016. “The 21st-century hipster: On micro-populations in times of superdiversity.” *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 19, no. 6: 637-653. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549415597920>.

⁵ Schiermer, Bjørn. 2014. “Late-modern hipsters: New tendencies in popular culture.” *Acta Sociologica* 57, no. 2: 167-181. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24569530>. Michael, Janna. 2013. “It’s really not hip to be a hipster: Negotiating trends and authenticity in the cultural field.” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 15, no. 2: 163-182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540513493206>.

⁶ Schiermer, Bjørn. 2014. “Late-modern hipsters: New tendencies in popular culture.” *Acta Sociologica* 57, no. 2: 167-181. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24569530>.

⁷ Reeve, M.J. 2013. “The hipster as the postmodern dandy: Towards an extensive study.”

http://www.academia.edu/3589528/The_hipster_as_the_postmodern_dandy_towards_an_extensive_study.

⁸ Malíčková, Michaela. 2019. “Som hipster a neviem o tom. Pátranie po príznakových estetických hodnotách hipsterstva.” *Český lid* 106: 49–67. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21104/CL.2019.1.03>.

⁹ Sontag, Susan. 1964. "Notes on 'Camp.'" *Partisan Review*. 31 (4): 515–530. https://monoskop.org/images/5/59/Sontag_Susan_1964_Notes_on_Camp.pdf.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ le Grand, Elias. 2018. "Representing the middle-class 'hipster': Emerging modes of distinction, generational oppositions and gentrification." *European Journal of Cultural Studies*: 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549418772168>.

¹² For more about this topic aptly explained on the example of the city of Berlin see Slobodian, Quinn, Sterling, Michelle. 2013. "Sacking Berlin: How hipsters, expats, yummys, and smartphones ruined a city." *The Baffler* 23: 138-146. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43307878>.

¹³ Maly, Ico, Varis, Piia. 2016. "The 21st-century hipster: On micro-populations in times of superdiversity." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 19, no. 6: 637-653. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549415597920>.

¹⁴ <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/folklorism> Accessed: 15-8-2019.

¹⁵ Moser, Hans. 1962. "Vom Folklorismus in unserer Zeit." *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 58: 177-209.

¹⁶ Šmidchens, Guntis. 1999. "Folklorism Revisited." *Journal of Folklore Research* 36, no. 1 (Jan. - Apr.): 51-70. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3814813>.

¹⁷ Moser, Hans. 1962. "Vom Folklorismus in unserer Zeit." *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 58: 177-209. Newall, Venetia J. 1987. "The Adaptation of Folklore and Tradition (Folklorismus)." *Folklore* 98, no. 2: 131-151. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1259975>. For examples in the Czech cultural environment see Pavlicová, Martina. 2011. "Lidová kultura volně k použití – zamyšlení nad její ochranou a využíváním." *Folkové prázdniny*, November 5, 2019. http://www.folkoveprazdniny.cz/kolokvium2011/sbornik2011_04_Pavlicova.pdf.

¹⁸ Sirovátka, Oldřich. 1992. "Folklorismus v kulturním životě společnosti." *Národopisná revue* 2, 1: 13-19.

¹⁹ Šmidchens, Guntis. 1999. "Folklorism Revisited." *Journal of Folklore Research* 36, no. 1 (Jan. - Apr.): 51-70. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3814813>.

²⁰ <https://www.rideofthekings.com/> Accessed: 25-8-2019.

²¹ <http://www.slovackyrok.cz/> Accessed: 27-8-2019.

²² <http://zasivarna.eu/> Accessed: 1-8-2019.

²³ <https://www.hithit.com/cs/project/5345/sdilena-vysivaci-dilna-zasivarna> Accessed: 1-8-2019.

²⁴ Hubatová-Vacková, Lada. 2011. *Tiché revoluce uvnitř ornamentu: Studie z dějin uměleckého průmyslu a dekorativního umění v letech 1880–1930*. Praha: VŠUP.

²⁵ <https://www.em.muni.cz/udalosti/10204-uzasle-potreti-oznacily-sochu-masaryka-mizim-rika-tentokrat> Accessed: 5-8-2019.

²⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/laskominyodmaryny/> Accessed: 22-8-2019.

²⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/divackasarka/photos/bu%C4%8F-mech-nejobl%C3%ADben%C4%9Bj%C5%A1%C3%AD-dort%C3%ADk-z-na%C5%A1%C3%AD-vitr%C3%ADny-z-lesa-rovnou-k-v%C3%A1m-sam%C3%A1-jahoda-%C5%A1p/891258571041138/> Accessed: 22-8-2019.

²⁸ <https://www.bika.cz/obcerstveni/caje/bylinne/bylinny-caj-babicka-ruzenka-sedmero-bylin-20-sacku-4355.html> Accessed: 28-8-2019.

The tea called The Grandma Rose produced in Poland was withdrawn from the Czech market because of a presence of tropan alkaloids. See: <https://www.vitalia.cz/clanky/tisice-kusu-caje-babiccina-ruzenka-jsou-dle-inspekce-nevhodne-ke-konzumaci/> Accessed: 28-8-2019.

²⁹ Malíčková, Michaela. 2019. "Som hipster a neviem o tom. Pátranie po príznakových estetických hodnotách hipsterstva." *Český lid* 106: 49–67. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21104/CL.2019.1.03>.

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TO ADDRESS FEMINITY VIA STUDYING BELOW-THE-LINE¹ FILM LABOUR PRACTICES

Danai Anagnostou

The ‘Me Too’ Movement spread virally as a hashtag in October 2017, followed by #timesup in January 2018. Both movements were introduced by women who work in television, cinema, and theatre confronting sexual harassment and assault at work. Feminist Film Theory influenced by second-wave feminism was introduced as an academic discipline already in the early 70s. Drawing from critical theory, gender studies, semiotics, Marxism and psychoanalysis, Feminist Film Theory meticulously analyses depictions of women in moving images – by delving into their influences and pointing at their socio-political references. The viral movements of 2017 and 2018 have put forward experiences of established above the line practitioners, while Feminist Film Theory has been mostly dealing with representation. Yet, a niche research field named *Production Studies*² or *Feminist Production Studies* is currently developing, focusing on how female professionals, other than directresses and actresses, articulate their working experiences within media industries.

Production functions as a term for all the procedures often referred to as *behind the scenes*. Production is mainly an ‘invisible territory’ where working codes and relations might be even more perplexing or foggy. Unsurprisingly, the film industry has proven to function just like any other corporate environment, obeying a very strict code of social conduct and a severely solid hierarchy. Within this space, not only sexual misconduct, but also systemic violence, verbal derogation, and an expectancy for keeping up a constantly pleasant and nurturing presence are realities that female workers encounter on daily basis. Due to the frequency of low or no budget productions over the last decade, the film industry is often euphemistically referred to as a family (or fraternity). An extended, sometimes toxic family – that has adopted and maintains its use of military terminology³ – in which female workers’ bodies are strictly regulated and scrutinized continuously.

The film industry has historically been a boys’ club for almost a century; reaching its peak of machismo during the golden era of Hollywood mainly through the expansion of studio films, led by alpha-male directors. Mid-20 century Hollywood classics are now held responsible for

creating the myth of the *eccentric, domineering auteur*⁴. However, we could pause for a moment and mention the avid female presence behind cameras, active in all facets of movie production, just before the establishment of the numerous Directors' Guilds, Actors' Guilds and the strong influence of several unions post-WWII⁵. Nevertheless, the departments which are inherently considered to be female-dominated and statistically still employ a vast majority of women, are the casting, make up and costume department. These sectors are also evidently less visible and surely underrepresented in international film summits, talent campuses or seminars⁶. Their contributions are highly likely to remain unmentioned in publications, press kits, or posters. In addition, the workers in the aforementioned departments have to deal with or plainly accept an immense wage gap between their salaries and those of their colleagues. Furthermore, workers in the they are broadly considered as available for multiple tasks of on-set nurturing, care-taking and providing unpaid emotional labour⁷ – demands which are never disclosed in their contracts.

I could offer an illustration of what I consider gendered labour in such context, referring back to my experience working in the costume department. To begin with, a popular assumption shared between other colleagues, would be that a wardrobe worker's labour cannot be considered by any means different than what everyone else might already had been doing at home. Wistfully, working in the costume department is often rendered synonymous with shopping, washing, folding, scenting, ironing, pampering, holding, foreseeing, back-upping, nurturing, providing, surprising and pleasing. Costume designers and assistants struggle to absolve the domesticity and the overall stereotypical femininity they are assigned with; regardless of their gender, their reasons to be in the industry, their education, political position or interests.

When a day on-set translates to 12 working hours on average, either the costume designer or their assistant is regularly expected to take laundry as additional work at home. Every costume needs to be clean, free of stains, exempted from the actor's body odour and ironed for the next day, which would frequently be less than 10 hours away after wrapping up. The responsibility for these materials' maintenance is rarely shared with another person hired in the costume department, but even when it is, the person is not regularly present on set. On fewer occasions each actor is assigned with washing and bringing back their costume on every working day. Lastly and most rarely, there would be a sufficient allocation of budget to cover dry cleaning expenses, yet it is a matter of fact that if there was a budget surplus it would most probably not be announced and certainly would not be spent on dry cleaning. Anecdotally, a producer once called 45 minutes before show time to request that the costume assistant would rush to the theatre and iron the protagonist's dress, even though there were 5 people – plus a flatiron – in the building already.

Bizarrely, the costume department is commonly assumed to be equipped with an endless supply of hats, rubber boots, or windproof jackets; not for dressing the characters but to

distribute between the members of the filming crew when necessary. These items usually belong to the costume designers. While their work is being undermined as something that anyone could do and even do better, confirming the myth of *female incapacity within the capitalist mode of production*⁸, their colleagues with presumably superior, hard-earned skills cannot bear the responsibility of keeping a hat in their car. Concurrently, a costume designer would be seen as frivolous, irresponsible and unprofessional, if only she refused to carry another 10 kilos of gear or if she called attention to the hat or jacket that she offered and got lost or returned to her dirty. It is essential to understand social and professional caretaking as productivity contributing to the creation of surplus value. Meanwhile, the costume designer is reduced to a provider of services filled with domestic qualities and attributed with several so-called feminine characteristics compatible with the acceptable female image enforced by patriarchy.

A young professional is instructed early on to know her place – far behind the camera – and to *stay there*. Meanwhile, it is taken as a given that she will not only offer her time and expertise but also her space, contacts, even personal clothes or jewellery for any no-budget short film, as the costume department is always expected to supply unlimited items and options no matter the resources available. When *dressing the part* all set boundaries tend to disappear. The director might start suddenly inquiring for a stylistic *surprise*, after seeing several styled outfits previously agreed upon. The director might as well invite everyone who happens to be present in the building to attend the costume fitting and *offer their opinion*. In most cases when such opinions are offered, they are done so in a completely inappropriate manner and at moments that could not be more unwelcome. Yet costumes are considered to be just clothes after all, and apparently everyone is entitled to an opinion on clothes and may share it at any time.

While several women who work as costume designers find challenges in owning the authorship of their creative labour, women who are production designers (art directors) find it difficult to advance in that profession. Similar or worse are the obstacles for women in other more masculine departments, such as camera, sound or animation. So, what happens when one expresses rational demands? In 2016, I was accused of being *rude* for inquiring an estimation regarding the payment day, *irrational* for requesting per diems, *unprofessional* for replying the following morning to a text message that had been sent at post-midnight.

In addition, wardrobe workers are expected to maintain physical contact with actresses and actors by actually dressing them. Most acting professionals can certainly tie their shoes, zip their dresses, button up their shirts or hold their purses perfectly by themselves. Other practices that include physical contact and moving beyond personal space are to cover actresses and actors with a blanket in between shots, put a hat on their head for the 30-second pause when shooting outdoors, or brush them for lint when none of the aforementioned actions are

applicable. Genuinely, it is unlikely that the actresses and actors enjoy this procedure either, which is indeed a form of violation of personal space and an interruption in their concentration. Yet, it is something both sides still perform plainly for the gaze of their colleagues whom they need to reassure how present and caring they are.

Simultaneously, women who work behind the scenes are judged harshly for either not looking overtly polished and *well-taken care of* themselves. A male colleague once approached me and casually made a derogatory comment about a person who was working with me on that day as a wardrobe assistant. What he commented on was the length of her trousers, that barely touched the floor but looked *filthy* according to him. Another female colleague took pride in being preferred over her co-wardrobe assistant who was dismissed and mocked as *fat*.

Coming back to public discussions on sexual harassment and other sexist behaviours at work that are currently taking place globally, Flix.gr⁹ recently produced and published video interview under the fairly pompous title “*Women of Greek Cinema*”. Flix invited 36 female practitioners currently active in the field who were offered a set of particular questions¹⁰. The platform set a frame for a discussion without first acknowledging the apparent ascendancy of sexist behaviours on-set. This decision of course triggers concerns from the very beginning. The publication was formatted in a manner in which the interview questions were listed as text via a small introduction to the video interview, yet they never appeared in any format throughout the video. The lack of context specificity here is crucial; as it always remains unclear what are the interviewees responding to each time.

Furthermore, the video was edited (either deliberately or not) in a manner which constantly interrupts the interviewees sentences. Presumably, each participant must have been interviewed separately, yet in its final cut the interview presents working women interrupting or talking over other working women. Although some responses appear to be fairly problematic, they cannot be commented on since it is apparent that they are cut and pasted in a sequence that doesn't make clear sense. For instance, when an interviewee says that “*sexism goes both ways*,” it is utterly unclear whether she is referring to internalized misogyny or the so-called reverse sexism that men claim to experience. Female practitioners were again denied the space for articulating their own views and experiences.

The first part of the video interview is comprised from a mixture of catch-words conventionally connected to femininity, presumably meant to describe the contribution of women in Greek cinema. To cite a few: *persistence, patience, creation, struggle, ecstasy, frustration, love, passion, power, tenacity, inspiration, contribution, sexy, emotion, talent, beauty, selective oblivion or even mother goose*. Several interviewees did acknowledge and address sexism in their passages, yet the majority refers to *facing challenges beyond gender, the presence of stupid people*

regardless of gender or equated sexism with the idealization and pursuit of power, which again according to the video has nothing to do with masculinity or gender. Several statements even went as far as to imply that to acknowledge or address sexism is a luxury, while key terms such as feminism, or gender equality, are avoided (or possibly edited out) altogether.

The aforementioned video publication fails completely to establish any ground for a solidarity network among practitioners within the field. Even worse it proposes that exposure to sexist behaviour or willingness to discuss such misconducts publicly shows weak character. Consequently, those who share such opinions, consider themselves to be higher in any professional or moral scale, since in their understanding encountering sexism is something that can only happen to people who have no concerns *about the real problems of the film industry* (sic) and never occur to passionate, dedicated women of career who refuse to be like *all the other girls*.

Overall the film industry might indeed be open for women – “Women of career” who seek to join the boys’ club; cis-gender, white, upper-middle class women, who can afford to be mostly (un)paid as “trainees” for the first five years of their working life; women who are later expected to join and unconditionally cater for a no-budget, no-payment, time-consuming, high-demanding project only to pay their dues to the industry; women who are recruited to help an emerging, ambitious young director – most times male and almost all times upper-middle class – who refuse to undergo the formal procedures and logistics of film making, as they consider their work superior to that; or women who will accept being infantilized for the rest of their working lives; women who are so passionate about their career that they can overcome any obstacle like being constantly subjected to sexism, underpaid and expected to nurture the whole set, always smiling and prepared for countless backup solutions; women who cannot see that their “only makes me stronger” attitude contributes to the exclusion of less or differently privileged females from entering the space.

The film industry is deeply sexist, racist and classist worldwide and has overly failed to secure acceptable working conditions for *below the line* practitioners¹¹. Concurrently, there is a strong, strange omertà on referring to the class or gender disparity of the industry. During the last decade in Athens, such discussions with colleagues were bluntly dismissed at their very beginning as referring to *individual incidents*, being irrelevant or as being *small talk*. Workers in the film industry – in front or behind the camera, critics, those in funding committees, festival curators, distributors, and viewers – are all responsible in deciding whose stories are told and promoted. This is a fact to be acknowledged and a certain ‘fiction calling’ to be exercised during all the stages of production and mediation.

Resolving a condition so deeply embedded within the culture of the field will be slow, yet not impossible. Firstly, mutually acknowledge and address all the forms discrimination might take.

Secondly, instead of speaking “from a personal perspective” and stating “our own opinions”, understand that the very fact that we keep debating whether discrimination and inequality actually exist is not only being oblivious to the issue, but outrageous. Thirdly, make a collective strong statement asserting that such behaviours are simply unacceptable, and ensure that all colleagues are safe, heard and properly compensated.

¹ In film production terminology the “line” functions as a separative for production costs and budget allocations. The producers, directors, actors and scriptwriters are classified as being “above the line” while the rest of the production team is grouped under the term “below the line”. Most salaries, production expenses, publicity, insurance, and travelling costs fall “below the line”. Essentially any cost that is not linked with the main actors, directors, producers or screenwriters will be categorized as a below-the-line expense.

² *Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries* by Vicki Mayer, Miranda J. Banks and John T. Cadwell was published by Taylor & Francis in 2009 and Vicki Mayer’s *Below the Line: Producers and Production Studies* by Duke University Press followed in 2011. The aforementioned work shifts the discussion about entertainment and media production targeting the professionals within the industry whose work is mostly uncredited or invisible and does not focus on the elite “above the line”, whose influence and power over the production as well as their visibility is already immense.

³ The filming process is called shooting, the production’s groupings are named units, while the Director or Director of Photography are semi-jokingly introduced as the chiefs or the generals among the film crew. To add on the paramilitary clichés many productions still use walkie talkies to communicate on set. It is still taken for granted that the job would often require a certain ferocity and that men would be better at acting that part. Borrowing a passage from an interview of film director Karyn Kusama: assumption is that a man is a much better monster.

⁴ Auteur theory, theory of filmmaking in which the director is viewed as the major creative force in a motion picture. Arising in France in the late 1940s, the auteur theory—as it was dubbed by the American film critic Andrew Sarris — was an outgrowth of the cinematic theories of André Bazin and Alexandre Astruc.

The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. “Auteur Theory.” Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., December 27, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/art/auteur-theory>.

⁵ Dorothy Arzner (1897–1979) was pioneering in fiction films in the US, while Ruby Grierson (1904–1940), Margaret Thomson (1910–2005), Jill Craigie (1911–1999), Budge Cooper (1913–1983), Kay Mander (1915–2013) were mainly active in documentary filmmaking.

⁶ For instance, Berlinale is a reputable annual film summit, with “franchise” localised festivals in Beirut, Buenos Aires, Burdan, Guadalajara, Sarajevo, Tokyo and Rio, which also hosts a talent campus for young professionals. In their application section they explicitly disclose their policy on gender parity and proudly state that 50% of their attendees identify as female. Yet Berlinale Talents still does not host summits for the predominantly female departments’ representatives.

⁷ In a professional context, emotional labour refers to the expectation that a worker should either contain her feelings or manipulate their expression in order to satisfy both her colleagues, customers as well as the perceived requirements of her job, while avidly responding to other’s emotional needs. Emotional labour can also include being constantly quietly present and available for any conversational inquiries or menial tasks, charmingly resolving any conflict that might occur in her working environment etc.

⁸ Dalla Costa, Mariarosa, and Selma James. *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*. Bristol: Falling Wall Press, 1975.

⁹ Flix.gr is an online publication posting news related to the Film Industry.

¹⁰ As listed in the website: Being a woman professional in Greek cinema. What does it mean nowadays? Does sexism exist? Is the field, also in Greece, male dominated? What kinds of problems are women faced with? Are female characters real enough, complicated enough, smart enough? What kind of stories do women want to share with the world? How do they hope to see heroines on the big screen? 36 women answer these questions. The video is available with English subtitles. Flix. "Menu." Flix, March 9, 2018. <http://flix.gr/en/women-of-greek-cinema.html>.

¹¹ Shooting days regularly extend their agreed duration. With production companies having normalised that it is not uncommon to schedule even a 30-hour working day or group numerous all-nighters back to back. The minimum compensation is constantly under negotiation especially for workers employed in certain departments and the payment day is most times unspecified, with the salaries being finally deposited even a year later. Social security or health insurance are rarely included. Even if these working conditions apparently deprive the employees the ability to plan their lives, surprisingly many still do take pride in coping under these conditions.