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Techniques of Ecstasy: *Rumori—Tracing Sound*



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

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Abstract

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This doctoral thesis proposes the philosophical concept of onto-poetics in relation to an artistic practice of sound (music) and listening. The concept of onto-poetics is used as the backdrop of the developed notion of *techniques of ecstasy* essentially as an intermediary between listening and language. Onto-poetics becomes the bridge between the archaic and contemporary man.

My research is practice-based but nevertheless finds a form of dissemination where the word, the sound and the image work together *like a body*.

Through placing the shaman and the mystic (the ones who originally wield *the techniques of ecstasy*) as the figure of our present-day artist the thesis offers a more immersive understanding of the artist, and the possibility of imagining how sound, listening and a form-of-life (understood as a *way-of-being-in-sound*) still can be considered as a way and method of shaping our world.

The shaman and the mystic are also a gateway to exploring *onto-poetics* as a way of understanding sound, listening and communication as something *preceding* interpreted meaning, yet still producing knowledge.

On an equal level of importance, the thesis consists of several musical compositions which extend and materialize what in the thesis is proposed as *potentiality* and the *condition* for making music.

This interdependence of sound, word, and image (the tracing of sound) is given its own importance in the realization of a *strategy of sound*. A method, but at the same time not; the strategy gives way to this thesis's tentative conclusion. Listening is a way of knowledge, through listening the world emerges. And this knowledge is accessible through music's *immediacy of expression*.

Throughout the thesis the work on sound is given predominance. However, a rich material of dialogue partners of both musical, artistic, and philosophical characters is included, most prominently exemplified by the writing of Lotta Lotass where the thesis's *strategy of sound* finds a dialogue partner—a dialogue also with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, Martin Heidegger, Simone Weil, the ravings of Antonin Artaud and Giorgio Agamben as well as the music of Diamanda Galás, Giacinto Scelsi and Luigi Nono. The author of this work places them in a strange and shared space where the artist and the shaman are brought to a common, wordless end in a music which is as much *sound as silence*.

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I was born in 2637 BC in Mesopotamia. I was married to a pretty woman, and we were both killed. It happened on the banks of the Euphrates. There is a statue of me, a six-foot statue, there, under the sand. One day, someone will discover it. Then there will finally be a portrait of me. I think there is still on photo left, but I'll destroy that too, before I die. So, nothing is left!

GIACINTO SCELZI (AD 1905–1988)

Preface

Introductory Summary

Techniques of Ecstasy is a thesis which essentially is about the possibility and impossibility of using words to describe the act of making music. And how this rift in itself demands other kinds of questions, other kinds of strategies.

As starting point *techniques of ecstasy* sets out in opposition to the Kantian notion of a disinterested perception of art. Instead, what at first glance seem to be lacking in the three critiques of philosopher Immanuel Kant: passion, body and sound, are in this thesis put in question.

The thesis looks upon the poet as a shaman. Through artistic examples as the raving of the dramatist Antonin Artaud, sound artist Diamánda Galás, composer Giacinto Scelsi et al., the thesis searches for another way of approaching the creative act than that of analyzing musical, or practice-based works.

With an emphasis on the artistic act, of its tracing, its *inoperative* qualities, its potentiality rather than its actuality, and use of (academic) language, it tries to give way for a different understanding of how sound can produce knowledge.

The thesis searches for clues in order to imagine what precedes thought, what precedes sound (and thereby precedes musical notation), and how this pre-in fact constitutes the real source of potential knowledge in the domain of art.

Alluding to ontology (the question of being) the thesis introduces the concept of *ontopoetics* in the context of musical composition.

One of the main objectives in this thesis's approach to the idea of research is to find a congenial form to articulate the artistic, foremost musical, experience, without regressing to a musicological or too narrow academic perspective.

A Brief Note on This Artistic Research

I doubt the reader of these pages will find an articulate definite conclusion to anything. It isn't without cause. The field of artistic research is a young one, at least when considered as an academic discipline. What kind of knowledge artistic research can produce seems to have as many replies, as there are researchers. It isn't a note of discredit, rather the opposite. The search for knowledge needs a safe haven, one where not only singular answers are given, but one where common questions are allowed to be formulated, by singular souls. Even if we, in life, oftentimes desire an almost axiomatic

stability, we need to acknowledge that how we perceive and understand the world is a continuous compromise. Even the most respected scientist knows this perfectly. We are still far from understanding, or even proposing the existence of a law of fundamental physics. Absurd, then, to even consider a law of art.

The sources of this thesis balance between primarily two poles. One where the artist is in focus, the other where a particular philosophical tradition speaks to the former. Both of which encapsulate more than two millennia of human effort.

Very few sources in the field of *artistic research* have proved useful for this project. Not because of its lack of value. There are projects with not unsimilar aims, but oftentimes ones where either the method in the actual music was key, or ones where the philosophical discussion on sound was never given examples inside of a personal, and particular practice. In the secondary list of sources quite a few of these are listed, only the ones who have had an explicit mark on the project are explicitly cited or referred to in the thesis. However, already at the onset of this research project, two key questions were present. One, ruminating throughout the history of philosophy, that presupposes that the questions most essential to mankind are eternal, and don't shift by the whims of history. The other one suggests that the key to artistic knowledge resides in the intersection of the artist and an art conception in which he or she is placed. What I mean with the latter is that to understand a work of art, or *why* and *how* an artist has conceived of something we need to enter into the *world* of the artist, not to transfer our own paradigm and thinking (both our subjective and those that are the result of the times we live in) to theirs.

For instance, in the late music of Italian composer Luigi Nono, which is essential for this thesis, it would be possible to analyze it so that we deduce the *systems* used, the (a)tonality which is explored, the preferred instrumentation etc. However, this would lead us to a point where we could mimic the sound of Nono's music, yes, but we are still very far from understanding *why*, and we are eons away from understanding the questions that burnt in his mind, that propelled his obsession. We are not close to appreciate his sensibility. And, as will be reiterated many times throughout these pages, Nono's late music has nothing to do with a system in its conception, it has only to do with a system when it finds a form.

When I hear about forms and structures that are given, or are determined, I am instinctively against it. I am much more in this discovery, by chance, which happened to me in Toledo: *no hay camino, hay que caminar*

[...] And this *no hay camino, hay que caminar*, even in music, was unleashed more and more inside me. Even in Prometeo, which changes in each concert hall, from place to place, it is not a form that is presented, for me they are materials that are composed in space, and space transforms them. [...] in S. Lorenzo the structure of Renzo Piano, has combined the sounds, the spaces, the dynamics, the relationships, in a completely different way from Chaillot.¹

To be able to conceive of the thesis you now have in front of you, I needed to exclude some academic material, even if labelled as artistic research, in order to propose into the field of artistic knowledge a different way of judging the *act of composing sound*. I am aware that there is a sense to *exploring the field*, but if the field is a new one, and if the field seems to be tilting toward a direction opposed to a (my) project's implied orientation then one is left with two choices. Either write about this *problem* or invite a new set of references, a new perspective. The former has to be for the academic, the latter must be the choice of the artist.

In this thesis the research is done through exploring a particular sound practice, my own, with clear indications of the development of what the author will call an ontopoetics. However, a general approach is done in which a heavier emphasis is placed on philosophical topics, as well as positing the inclinations of the author's aesthetic and *technical* decision in the frame of a wider, more common point of view. The aim—of the thesis—is not to explain philosophy (and how it can or does relate to music), but to explore how sound is also a particular kind of thinking which requires an awareness that goes beyond musical techniques, language and theoretical models. To avoid getting lost in philosophical considerations, a kaleidoscopic intellectual and speculative outlook is explored in which the artistic process that takes place in the musical practice finds a mirror image in the intellectual practice. Or rather, that the distance between them is minimized as far as possible.

An important note to consider throughout these pages, is to pay attention to the insistence to create questions rather than direct answers. The questions do not only delineate the field of interest, they also slowly mark the boundary of the topic(s). They focus one's attention on what is made to act as the centre of the revelation. In this sense questions are far more important for the idea of *knowledge* than answers (which tend to rather reflect their time, than become more than tentatively *axiomatic*).

1 *Archipel Luigi Nono* (Saint-Cloud (France): Echo, 1996).

The constant, over-arching question in this book is framed by the notion of *techniques of ecstasy*. In itself not a question, but instead a stepping-stone from which all herein stems. As a very general term, ecstasy implies a vision. Sometimes a personal one (personified simplest perhaps, by the mystic), sometimes a shared one (for instance, in more ritualistic or communal settings). Nevertheless, a vision is not in itself a scientific reply to anything, rather it gives rise to further questions. In itself, it questions what we hold for the truth, and discloses what previously remained veiled or unknown. It is the enunciation (regardless of form) of a sudden realization of *knowledge*.

A question is in this sense—in the framework of artistic research—a dry, academic form of ecstasy in that it gives place for visionary kind of knowledge. One which not necessarily needs words but requires space and attention. We need to—when art is an established part of academia—to acknowledge and celebrate this. To not let this vision lose its transcendental powers. Otherwise, we are left only with the academia.

Demarcation

This book has an ambition to speak to a general reader as far as possible. However, much of what will be dealt with in detail presupposes both particular and general academic, and intellectual knowledge. Not least, naturally, in the domain of music. That is, much of what is discussed and presented, most prominently in the specific musical works, presuppose s—if one wants to understand on a professional, technical, level—a general knowledge and orientation in the various musical genres and expressions of the 20th century. However, there is a limit to what can be explained without losing sight of what is in fact more important as far as I am concerned. If the tradition form which I work from would be explained in detail, the reader would be required to be a rather highly informed and specialized one. A minute explanation of for instance the tradition of descriptive and prescriptive notation, or the use of so-called extended techniques during the last 100 years might be illuminating to a certain degree, but for a non-musician it would still require a further elaboration of the musical system it pays homage to. An elaboration which inevitably would digress the project to one bordering on musicology. Although this artistic research is in musical performance, my aspiration has continuously been to try as far as possible to speak to a general, artistically and philosophically interested audience. The reason has not only been on the part of the reader, but also since, as far as I am concerned,

the most important part of my artistic practice happens in the intersection of music, literature, art and philosophy. For me, this constellation of affinity has been important to make alive for the reader, since it is essential also for several of the more important sections of the thesis.

Let a simple example illustrate what I mean. The actual technical solutions for my, later discussed, cello solo *à Sibyl—mōnē*, has its closest affinity and connection to the scores and music of Helmut Lachenmann, Giacinto Scelsi, Luigi Nono, Iannis Xenakis, Pierluigi Billone, Sofia Gubaidulina and Hildegard of Bingen. Some of these considerations are hinted at in the thesis, but not particularly discussed in technical terms. However, I hope the reader will realize that the essential reasons for how the music turned out the way it turned out depends on completely different sources, where the technical part of its realization is more related as *what I needed technically to do, in order to reach the end result*. Or, as I rather view it: *what I needed in order to show what was already there and give it form*.

It might sound too banal, but technique, in the sense of the word in use today², is simply this: what we need to do to realize what we imagine³. It doesn't happen by chance, though, but requires years of dedicated work, and *techniques of ecstasy* is a project which begins and ends during a period of a composer's work where the starting point is not one of a *tabula rasa*, but of an already elaborate, and established professional level. As a researcher I have been a student for these past 5 years, but as a composer I consider my work from a completely different horizon.

I would like to stress that this omission of a chapter (or similar) on notational topics, or an outline of the history of the development of, for instance, the notation of our tradition, is not due to negligence. Rather, I

2 Although the specific technics of western music, and its evolution of sound conception, is discussed in this thesis with the conscious decision to exclude a musicologist perspective, a further—from my point of view—even more acute discussion is not explicitly elaborated herein. That of the *essence* of technique. Implicitly and oftentimes explicitly the writings of Heidegger, Agamben, Weil and Scelsi (Artaud etc.) in themselves delineates the approach to term technique one which is very FAR from a general mechanistic standpoint. The cause and effect-analogy only shows the most basic and banal feature of technique. Essentially, this is why the title of the thesis is, and remain, central; *Techniques of Ecstasy: Tracing Sound*. To unveil the artist, to unveil art, is a continuous disclosure of being or becoming. Techniques, appear as a necessity of the open question, of the potentiality of the *thing itself*.

3 When we create something, we are bringing an idea into presence. We are presencing a presence. We are making real what was present in our mind, paraphrasing Heidegger's thoughts on 'the question concerning technology', Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings: From Being and Time* (1929) to *The Task of Thinking* (1964) (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 221.

have taken this opportunity to instead imbue and replace the notion of the evolution of the *syntax* of musical notation to instead put emphasis on more common considerations of sound. Ones which do not necessarily necessitate a notation, but which are at the same time embedded in an almost indistinguishable mixture of sign and signification. In other words, language. Communication. However, through this *way of asking* that this thesis proposes, a different possible perspective is introduced: ideas of immediacy, of becoming, of disclosure, but moreover: *of unharnessed imagination*. Later on, I will quote Pasolini, but let me here paraphrase what in the next chapter will be articulated: I try to remain inside an imaginary space as long as possible. To suspend becomes a way of *being-in-sound*. The demarcation does not precede sound but becomes what this thesis thinks *through*.

To the Matter at Hand

Techniques of ecstasy is probably seldom used literally in connection with music of a more academic character. However, taken as separate terms they permeate musical as well as artistic discourses. During the last 30–40 years certain aspects of music has become increasingly understood as a co-mingling of cultures, genres, and intellectual and emotional frameworks, where notions, which prior at least in our western tradition were considered for a long time vague, esoteric, and speculative. These aspects are now considered as different facets of a deeper or more nuanced understanding of what music is or could be. Essentially, I view this eclectic approach as a weakening of the actual importance of sound, despite its simultaneously emancipating and positive non-Eurocentric aspects. It is a relativistic stance that, in my mind, to a greater extent than it has revealed caused the sense of sound to be viewed more and more as a particular form of sound-fetishism. As such, it escapes in essential ways the deeper consequences of the emancipation of sound in the last century. Sound, or music, in this thesis will be presented as impossible to separate from life, impossible to separate from the body, that is, the matter in which all that define us resides. Music, it will be argued, isn't reducible to only its acoustical qualities. Instead, the conception of sound (which can be experienced, in the end, as music) reveals what we can consider and understand as *Sound*. That is, it reveals us as human beings—our feelings, our sensibility, our intellect. This means, that the material properties, or the resulting emotional reactions is in fact only the external stimulus to something deeper.

A sound-fetishism veils the existential dimension of sound. A sound-fetishism reduces the work on sound to only far too obvious sonorous

qualities. It treats sound as a thing, an object. A sound-fetishism tends to forget, or make scarce, the greater question of art, which is an ontological one; the nature of our being.

During the 20th century the notion of the third dimension of sound, namely space, is a re-occurring concept. However, one of the more occurring figures in this thesis, composer Giacinto Scelsi, did not only allude to space when he, in many of his writings, was emphasizing the spherical qualities of sound. In fact, the depth of sound he was ruminating, had probably more to do with existential and philosophical considerations than merely acoustical ones.

This thesis is artistic research taken at its core: the research of an artist's work. As such, it proposes no quantifiable results of quality, or any distinct measurements of achievements. Instead, it proposes to present and critically examine the keys to a singular vessel of an artistic creation. One which as its ambition will move beyond the acoustics of music, beyond the rigor of philosophy, and place itself on the limit of a constellation of aspects, which for lack of a better word hopes to be understood (at the end) as *techniques of ecstasy*.

To Hear What Was Never Heard⁴

When fully concrete, discoursing (letting something be seen) has the character of speaking [Sprechens]—vocal proclamation in words. The λόγος (logos) is φωνή (phóné), and indeed, φωνή περὶ φαντασίας—an utterance in which something is sighted in each case.⁵

Let us return to what has already been said in this preface: to learn something, profoundly, we need to ask questions. Questions are what brings the common to light, it binds us—as human beings—together, on a common quest.

The question doesn't necessarily present itself as an articulate, clear and didactic one. Often it presents itself as a hunch, and even begins with a question which in the end has very little to do with the final one.

However, the beginning of a thesis in general implicitly presupposes that the question will produce an answer, a conclusion, and thus establish a prominent truth of its writer and a possible trace to develop for further research.

4 Paraphrasing Walter Benjamin's notes and sketches for his "Theses on the Philosophy of History": "To read what was never written," Giorgio Agamben, *Potentialities: Collected Essays*, Meridian (Stanford, CA, Cambridge: Stanford University Press; Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1.

5 Martin Heidegger et al., *Being and Time*, Harper Perennial Modern Thought ed (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Thought, 2008), 33.

Let me begin with a simple, yet radical and seemingly fictitious proposition: what if all you were told on sound was false? What if the very foundation on what sound is, was based on erroneous and misguided presuppositions?

It is less controversial than what one would initially think. Our life is based on an idea in which the phenomenal world exists, and even if we can't explain all phenomena, we have agreed, more or less in good faith, on a scientific explanation which includes more than it seemingly excludes.

Yet, at the heart of it there exists a prerequisite, which in itself contains no direct truth; *language*.

Language.

Language is communication.

As soon something is given a name, an almost automatic sequence of deductions is begun.

A name is a symbol, or a sign, and through language what we normally consider as definable knowledge is formalized (or agreed upon). Language gives us the limits of *what* we can *say* or *understand* of something (anything). It is essential that the *name* is accessible through language. If not, the process of interpretation becomes veiled, sometimes lost in etymology. As Aristotle says: [language] says something of something. In itself it falls short of the *thing itself*.

I will quote Peter Brooks later on: "a way of life is a way to life." It is what these years of PhD has become, and ironically it might also be the point to which it falls short of.

What if the artist as a shaman, which I will contend in different forms throughout these pages, were a subconscious plea for self-preservation?

What can be made legible of sound through words? For me, with each passing year, the question seems less and less central. Experience, and the imaginative, come before me, instead. In this thesis an experience of sound is made known for the reader. An experience which gives keys to the way of making decisions, the way of making sense of what becomes not only a piece of music, but a way-of-sound.

For the ancient Greeks, aesthetics was the experience of the senses. I believe it holds true still today, although the domain of aesthetics has morphed into an array of further convictions and stanzas. The senses are however still, more or less, in focus. Sometimes as in the ephemeral qualities of artworks, yet with an increasing emphasis on an intellectual, ideological dissemination. Experience remains the part of the puzzle which still must be thoroughly elaborated. Can artistic research be a part of the solution? At least, my PhD-studies has had this in mind.

Experience of the senses... Why, today, this insistence on giving it a language?

For the Greeks the distinction of the experience at stake before the artwork was discussed for centuries. Throughout this book, more than 2000 years later, I continue this search. Not so much for the senses, but for the experience.

My reply is given in full force in the body of artistic work, as a continuous awakening of a way-of-sound. However, I use the language of our day to give as many keys as possible for how its awakening has taken form. The words will never be enough to give definite answers, they will even lack this ambition. What the words will trace is how the praxis of my music is embedded in the research into which my obsession is directed.

Essential in this ambition is the inclusion of an ontological discussion. Today, almost 100 years ago, Heidegger published his *sein und zeit*. This thesis is built upon what was given a form there.

That is, the question which this thesis asks, is done through its own way of asking. For Heidegger the question was the being of being. How does it show itself? A key in my reading of this writing is Heidegger's interpretation of the term *logos*, which has many translations, but oftentimes, and so with Heidegger, prominently is understood as the written or spoken word. How the word, through its enunciation shows itself. *Logos* shows itself through its articulation, but Heidegger shows little interest in its sounding properties. As do the history of philosophy.

I turn the clock back. A year before my doctoral studies began the composer (and my future co-supervisor) Pierluigi Billone wrote me a few lines in an on-going conversation between him and me. These lines have stayed with me more through these years than I at that moment realized:

Let's imagine that the Notation doesn't exist (...almost impossible... for us).
Nevertheless, let's try.

We (me and Pierluigi) are speaking of an ancient Gregorian chant. *Viderunt omnes* from the IX century (as a written source, its origin remains eclipsed by history). Pierluigi continues to write:

Listening [to] this Gregorian chant I follow... a wave—not a line. The wave depends on the natural site of this chant: the space. This wave has dimension. After a while each new step of the chant leads the whole wave (not the melody) upper or down or extends it. Here the minimal unit is not the pitch and the interval, but the movement, and this movement is

always a part of a big wave. There is an incredible Aware strategy by leading the wave, it always lands on different poles, there are some “Archs” of movement which are completely plastic and Abstract, based on a sense of proportion, tension, and extension, empty-full spaces we can only... dream. It is not a line.

Even the old score Shows and testifies that the origin of this chant has basically nothing to do with the linear Dimension of a text (and the Limits of a word). The signs represent each different movement, for itself, it is more a Quality of movement than a succession of steps. The origin is “oral”, completely possessed by heart, the Notation tries (especially in the 1x Cent. example) to capture and define the simply contour of the movement, whose construction has nothing to do with the combination of signs.⁶

We are speaking of a tradition where the sign (of a musical action) has yet to be understood in the context of our tradition. It is only a manifestation of an oral practice, a manifestation which in the coming millennium would become the root of what our tradition has been built upon.

The logos (word) comes about through *sound*, not understood as *spoken word*, but sound as a force, an energy which doesn't depend on or even logically follow the word (as semantic content). Something more fundamental is at stake.

The ontology of sound, in this case, shows itself through the proportion, tension and extension in a particular sacred space. The phenomenology makes its presence known through its movement in *time and space*. The two so called (by Heidegger) ontological constructs which had eluded the history of philosophy, and even more, the two deciding factors of the knowledge of the *phenomena* that even had eluded Immanuel Kant (at least, how to assess them) in his three critiques is *time and space*. In Heidegger's *being and time* the final solution of the phenomena in relation to time and space was never included in the published thesis. One could argue, he did offer a possible reply in his later work. A fact that I will return to remotely, or through detours, in the thesis.

6 Excerpt from private email conversation.

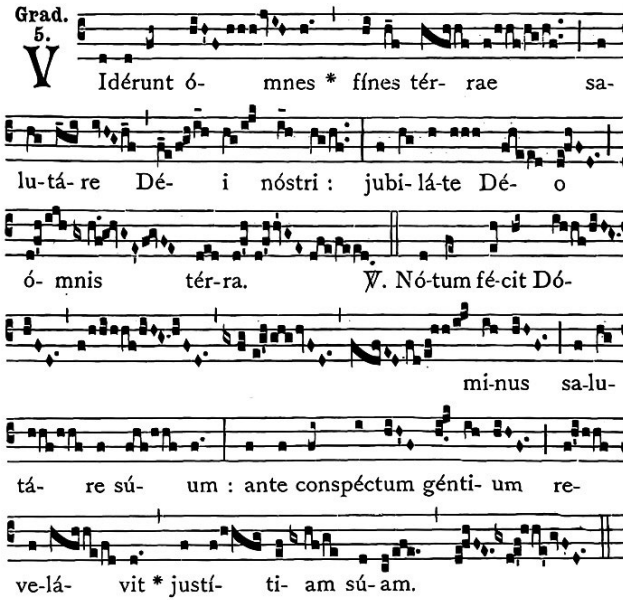


IMAGE 1.⁷

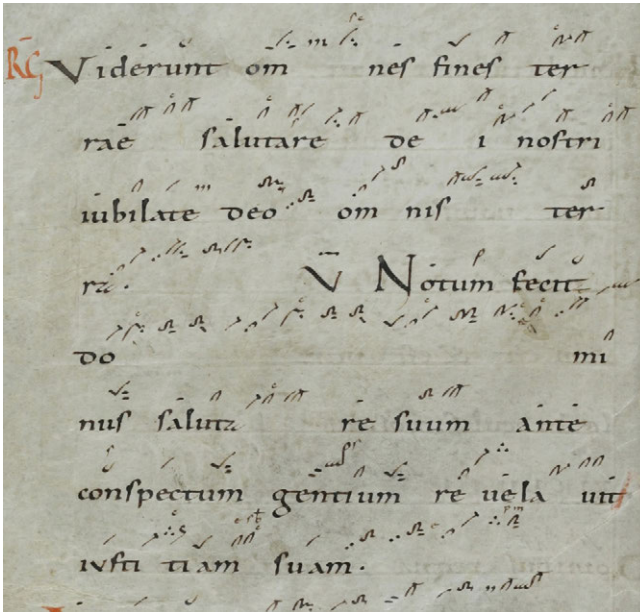


IMAGE 2.⁸

7 Ildefons von Arx, “St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 359: Cantatorium”, Parchment, 178 pp., 28 × 12.5 cm, (:unav), <https://doi.org/10.5076/E-CODICES-CSG-0359>.

8 *Graduale Triplex* (Solesmis [Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 1979]), 48–49.

However, why philosophy never has been able to bridge time, space, and the phenomena, or perhaps better put: never been able to bridge the question of body and soul (*anima*), I think it comes down to its inability to fathom sound due to the simple fact that it is *invisible*. In this it shares the traits of the transcendental. That of it being *invisible* doesn't necessarily mean that it doesn't exist, but as with the *noumenal world* we can know nothing of it, to echo—again—Kant, unless we find a way of making it *visible*. As an embodied knowledge sound is disseminated further in the modern era. It is thereby in a sense made visible, but not as the common understanding of *vision*, as something seen with our eyes. Vision's Greek root, ὄραω, as well as the Latin one, *visio*, both include several layers of meaning. Not only what we *see* in front of our eyes, but also a sensory experience, something we perceive in dreams, in imagination. It is a realization that is as much *silent* as *visible*, but it can also be known through touch, through dreams, through the ear.

Logos meaning order/ground/word/speech/system, seems in a similar way as *vision*, to only be made sensible—in a common understanding—through a visual aid, a visual metaphor, or as in our western tradition of sound; through the notation.

This means that sound in an ontological sense doesn't need the *word* to encapsulate the experience of sound, there isn't even any time. The sound enters into our ears, our body as a force of *immediacy*; experience as ἐνέργεια in the Aristotelian sense, as *act(ion)*.

For Heidegger the vision (what-we-see) needs to be acknowledged by *logos*, the word (written or spoken), in order to become knowledge. We can call it *noein*, or *ousia*, or *logos*, to converse with Heidegger, but knowledge needs to be *perceived* through *vision*. And *vision* needs to be considered not only as *to see*, but as *vision* felt by the body. Made known by its placement in space. The clearing, or the mood (*stimmung*) of Heidegger is one of these models of explanations, but for me—as a musician—*listening and sound* is the concrete way of this experience. Through listening the world emerges. I hear the past, I hear the future. I hear the background, the foreground, and all its liminal transitions.

The philosophical concept which I trace throughout this thesis I call *ontopoetics*. It isn't meant to overthrow the history of philosophy, or to challenge our empirical senses, but it is meant as a mean to infer and make *visible* the agency of sound. It will do so through a *praxis*. A particular body of artistic work on sound (mine) paired with an exploration of an aesthetics impossible to discern from life will disclose what I consider a first articulated step toward a thinking of sound which since the invention of the score (notation) increasingly has been forgotten.

Again, “let’s imagine a time when notation does not exist.” This is the heart of it, but also the simple reply to why the evolution of notation is not detailed throughout these pages. It is in a sense the reason why the tradition of descriptive and prescriptive notation (notation that signifies a relative sound, and a notation that signifies *how* to execute the sound) is less detailed than needed in order to understand my particular way of notation.

Only selected traces of the western tradition that I belong to that is present in the text. The development of musical thought and notation especially during the 20th century is essential for the particular way of how I notate (sound), and how I construct sounds, however, the key for this thesis belongs to a *vision* of what has potentially been lost, and to what can potentially re-appear in the future.

The act of becoming belongs to the act of disclosure, therefore the question or the imagination of a time where notation does not exist also presupposes the notion of a sound conception that has gotten lost but could be unveiled and made to once again be able to be *thought of* in the future. And this is one thing this thesis hopes to bring to light: what has gotten lost has continuously remained alive, and there is amidst our own tradition visible traces of its survival, and its shortest (and in my opinion, simplest) description are: *techniques of ecstasy*.

Lastly, the paraphrase of “to hear what was not heard”, does in the context of Walter Benjamin allude to a distinction between a historian and a chronicler. The latter has for centuries has been the one to document history. A voice that articulates what happens, while it happens, but leaving its reverberation to its reader. In a sense the gospels are in this way are more works of art than the story of Jesus. Although, the latter understanding is a more common one today. This thesis puts emphasis on its (the thesis) role as a chronicle that tells the story as it unfolds, that explores its implications as they are discovered. As Heidegger writes in his “the question concerning technology”: the question shows the way. Or as the composer Luigi Nono wrote (or rather the poet Antonio Machado): there are no roads to walk, only wandering.

The questions are not meant rhetoric, they are not empty, they aspire to a *we*. There is something to share. This thesis might depart from the ambition, and dedication of an ‘I’, but its topics, its line of flight and desire to artistic knowledge aspire to a form of a shared question. Of sound, of listening, of becoming. However, the communal aspect of its ambition speaks also of the thesis’s width of subjects. The reader doesn’t need to be a musicologist, nor a philosopher etc. The reader (and listener) will hopefully notice the dedication of the questions, the altruism of their answers, and thereby—I hope—not only take a passive part, but in time develop the questions further.

Chapter 1

In which the project is outlined



Introduction

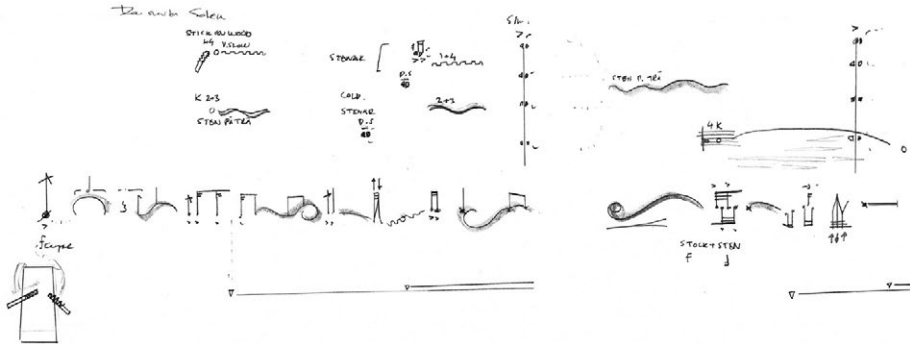


IMAGE 3. Sketch from the as of yet unfinished piece *Oneiros* for percussion, organ and choirs.

Techniques of Ecstasy I

What do we mean by techniques of ecstasy? They shouldn't be understood as a religious practice; they are, I argue, an artistic practice. They don't necessarily convey measurable ecstasy, they don't necessarily provoke ecstasy, but they give the condition for it.

A condition: how things are at a given time. A condition is also a possibility. A condition is the pre-requisite for something to appear, it is the promise of potentiality or the stage where it, its condition, is made "visible". Potentiality is the promise of a becoming. Becoming is a question of how being takes form (ontology). The techniques of ecstasy are with this in mind simply a model to explain *an artistic practice*. For a composer (such as the author, i.e., me) it is, I propose, a terminology used to explain the act of composing which coincides with the tacit and non-verbal.

However, the condition the techniques of ecstasy aspire to is possible to define, to give shape, and to do so through the use of words, of images—and with the addition of the sounding I propose it will be given a particular answer to the question of what techniques of ecstasy are in the domain of music. Something which through its expanded context (of which this thesis will extensively dwell and think with and through) nevertheless offers a further, more common base of artistic and even philosophical knowledge. That is, this research will in its entirety offer one of many possible forms of a specific *technique of ecstasy*. One which is not in itself an answer, but still an exemplary model of its potentiality.

If *techniques of ecstasy* = artistic practice, the argument could be made, naturally, why ecstasy, why techniques?

Firstly, there is a foundation of ideology. If I don't consider the artistic practice, similarly to the ecstatic or mystic experience, possible to quantify or to analytically structure in a way which produces measured and reproducible results, that does not mean that it lacks a technique; something which is possible to define, describe, and thereby trace and make visible in various modes of dissemination. However, the result of these ecstatic techniques aims (already on an etymological level) to reach beyond, to transgress borders, limits, thresholds. Thereby, ecstatic states and trance states coincide with what this thesis will argue is the essence of art: to explain and give meaning to the world, to life, and especially to existence. And existence, which will be a key in this thesis to merge ontology and art, will always remain one of the biggest mysteries of mankind. If we glance at some non-western cultures, or ancient (archaic) ones even on our continent, the different fields of art, or religious experience, or even anything which could be considered *plastic* in any capacity seem to be impossible to discern from life (at least I will throughout the thesis give such examples). In many ways life, considered with a sense of holiness, is a certain kind of (holistic) aesthetic. Existence and art are interdependent.

Perhaps my use of *techniques of ecstasy* is—on a larger time scale—a desire to re-take what essentially has become a religious, even new-age, term to the domain of art. I don't wish to give art a vaguer, more esoteric model of explanation, rather I seek to reclaim the ambition of ecstatic states to the very heart of the artistic practice. If God is dead, then in art, in life, we are still in touch with what we commonly refer to as worlds beyond. Outside of the paradigm of language, beyond the physics of our eyes, our ears, our touch, we at least sense and imagine the transcendent. And this, to speak with philosopher Immanuel Kant, *noumenal* world still exists for us to give meaning and shape. Not as priests, but as artists. The ground is made open, and its knowledge is one of becoming, of emergence, and in this thesis it will take form with and through listening, with and through sound, but made *real* through the slow and gradual co-mingling of text, images, and recordings.

The key concept to give a meaningful and extended understanding of *techniques of ecstasy* in an artistic, philosophical, and historical context will be the elaboration of *ontopoetics*. Its use will be manifold. Perhaps the most essential feature is the fact that it doesn't place this artistic project in the context of a concert or a specific, final, score, but within a *thinking* of sound. Sound as a free, uncircumcised domain. Something which resists anything else but a temporary definition. That is, *ontopoetics* will channel the exploration of sound to a philosophical ground, from where it will serve as a mediator of

possibilities, of conditions, of open-ended worlds. The methodology that will be outlined through projects (and pieces), will all convey a sense of prethesis. The research will give way for a *strategy of sound*, that requires no finality; no paradigm other than an invitation; an invitation to sound, and a reassessment of an ancient, obvious truth: to take care of the sound:

Il musicista è *Colui che si prende cura del *Suono* se e quando lo considera un *Richiamo, un *Invito e un *Dono. Così è stato e così continua ad essere.⁹
 [The musician is *One who takes care of the *Sound* if and when he considers it a *Call, an *Invitation and a *Gift. This is how it was and continues to be.
 (My translation)]

Lastly, only to emphasize, techniques are not to be construed in a technological sense. The thesis lacks any ambition of designing tricks or imbue the idea of specific methods to attain ecstasy.

It is important to point out that all the ideas that from this point and onwards are argued is of a metaphysical and existential order at most. Already here a simple image will be made to make this point clear: the force of gravity. Gravity is a theory. Yet it lacks evidence (in a scientific sense). However, ask anyone; gravity exists. Our whole existence depends on it. Gravity in this sense belongs in two worlds. One *scientific*, but at the same time it is also a *metaphysical* notion, something on which our existence depends, regardless of whether we can prove it or even decide if it is a force or a consequence of the curvature of the space and time.

In the thesis, gravity and perception should not only be considered metaphorically, but existentially. And the sensation of ecstasy is in a sense a further sensibility of this gravity; what we start to sense, perhaps even in the moment when gravity is perceived. When the world, when our being, as in the philosopher Martin Heidegger's infamous *clearing* (Lichtung), comes before us.

This thesis hopes to merge these, to some degree implicit, notions, but to expand upon them, and thereby through a praxis and a philosophical argumentation make certain consequences unavoidable. And if not else, describe a poetics of an artistic condition that somehow brings the ancient continuum of Aristotle, the shamans of Siberia, the ravings of a 20th century avantgarde and a contemporary conception of sound to a congruent form.

9 "Note (2018)—Pierluigi Billone", para. 26, accessed May 4, 2021, https://www.pierluigibillone.com/it/testi/note_2018.html

Throughout these pages, and throughout these explorations in both sound and space, a re-occurrent possible limitation will be the suspicion of a dependency on a model of explanation that at its core could be diminished to the wisps of *intuition*. The author feels, thereby the author makes his own, singular sensibility an axiomatic condition. It could be argued that intuition comes across as a *weak paradigm*. Here, intuition needs to be considered as simply a distilled form of knowledge. One which shows itself as the result of both tacit and more scientific or empirical realizations. This condensation should be visible through the assemblage of texts, sounds, and the whole form of the thesis. That is, intuition, the actual realization of the intuition is spelled out in the present poetics of this work of artistic research.

However, the notion of *weak* could already here be a point to reflect upon. The possible weakness of *silent* forms of knowledge made to be visible through words is not used here without meaning. The concept of ‘weak thought’, or rather ‘weak ontology’ has already gained importance through the work of philosopher Gianni Vattimo¹⁰. Its most basic addition to philosophy is essentially to press upon the separation of language and reality. Vattimo uses it to ask for another mode, or process, of interpretation of the world. Could perhaps sound be one of those modes? Sound has for far too long been the subject of an increasingly linguistically determined form. A paradigm which only remotely add or aid the sensibility of the ear, and only remotely explains the poetic quality of the touch (and its tacit, yet musical, qualities). A weak ontology which puts sound in the centre does not replace it with arbitrary, whimsical forms of intuition. Instead, it requires and asks for a more rigorous process. One which at first glance may seem vague and esoteric, but in the end the ambition must be (and is) to be something far more important. The ambition is to show how the conception of sound, the experience of sound, the autonomy of sound, all through a different, and strange mode of exposition asks other questions and calls in question the hegemony of the written word. Instead, different levels of intuition, abstractions, symbolism and (even) secrecy merge the written, the signified (and signifier), the *graphé*, the body and the space to an insight which might be of another kind. Possibly immediate, possibly ecstatic, at least always one which continuously challenges the idea of a directional logic of (a univocal anthropogenic) existence.

10 Pier Aldo Rovatti, Gianni Vattimo, and Peter Carravetta, *Weak Thought*, SUNY Series in Contemporary Italian Philosophy (Albany: State university of New York press, 2012), 39–50.

Towards an Ontopoetics

You do not go to a hospital to inspire the recreation of your own Death on stage. You know it by heart...¹¹

The quote above goes back the *auteur*¹² Diamánda Galás. Her words point to an aspiration which essentially is all-consuming. In the creative act, for Galás, the need for reflection, philosophical moderation, or any kind of compromise is completely immersed in a self-effacing tour de force. This unrelentless attitude, which exemplify the music of Diamánda Galás, has for the past years been at the centre of my musical efforts. At first as a search for a music of, what I would call, catatonic properties, then slowly, gradually becoming a music of more elaborate qualities. At the heart of it I find a longing for a music which abolishes many of the objects or strategies of the tradition into which I belong, a western, traditional, score-based music. This longing has led me along a path of artists, philosophers, and archaic cultures in which the verbal (or language—defined) dimension seems to slowly become only a mask (if even acknowledged) of something more essential pertaining to sound. Glossolalia (sense-less, or non-language, vocalizations), obsessiveness and relentless expression (be it loud or quiet) fills this path. My work on sound has taken on a distinctly different method than the one previously found in my music. The necessity, therefore, to reflect, to research and grasp the kind of sound conception I am developing has become increasingly important.

One realization during the pre-phase of this research was the identification of modes of experience in which my sensibility of sound and form seemed to be activated again and again, even heightened, and in the end always seemed to propel me into a new, deepened relationship to sound. Both in a clearly physical sense (I could feel it), but also intellectually. However, the intellect always seemed to be less and less eager to translate the sensations into words. What I experienced remained in the traces of graphics on papers, and recorded studies on various instruments. It was contained in movements,

11 Diamánda Galás, *The Shit of God*, First Edition edition (New York; London: Serpent's Tail, 1996), 1.

12 "I would never use that word [performance artist] for myself. I use the word *auteur*, as Hitchcock would. Yes, I compose the music and I perform the music and I compose the libretto and I design the lights until I turn it over to a professional lighting designer. But Wagner did that, too! People who call this performance art do it out of sexism—any woman who organizes a *Gesamtkunstwerk* is condemned to this territory." Steven Wilson, "The Radical Music of John Zorn, Diamánda Galas, and Merzbow: A Hermeneutic Approach to Expressive Noise", (PhD diss. Univ. of Illinois, 2014), 251.

often clearly slowed down, almost frozen. It showed itself in brief excerpts of sharp or suspended sounds. It was possible to dwell *on* and *in* sound, and this state continuously had both the feeling of suspended time and the energy of a defined, poetic image. Somehow the experience of time *resounded* a past event, not as an echo of something lost, but with a force anew. That is, unveiling a dynamic quality of becoming, and as such a direct ontology. It became.

Slowly, a method, or what I more and more came to call a *strategy*¹³, began to evolve. One directed by the direct contact with the instrument(s), an exploration of the hand–instrument relationship, a transcription of sounding events, and by the infusion of poetic, more or less non-verbal interpretations of my collection of quotes and excerpts. More importantly, what was being built up was a kind of imaginary space of composing. One which shared traits of *reality* (experienced spaces, events, contexts, texts etc.), and one which was imbued with the fantasy of hallucinated ones (visions, fantasies, speculations, constructions etc.).

The mode of experience (the moments) was extended by the hand through graphical and active (on sounding sources/instruments) tracings. The strategy was to a certain degree without direction, instead it was tentatively exploring with a sense of a hidden centre of gravity, essentially emanating from the actual compositional setting (the instrumentation).

However, it pushed me toward a compositional trajectory of a perceivable methodology. Its common denominators then being, as already stated, a predilection for texts, recordings and practices which hint at states or aspirations that somehow try to elude a verbal dimension, or that at least presuppose that the key to artistic endeavours is pre-verbal and relies heavier on something which more entails the body, the psyche, an extended understanding of consciousness, or simply; a transcendental attitude. One which exposes a desire to disagree with what could be considered a linear aesthetic western idea of art. Instead, I have primarily searched for clues elsewhere and for *things* which bear traces (or is), to borrow the words of Antonin Artaud: “unlike our idea of art, which is inert and disinterested.”¹⁴ The illuminating reference to mention at this point is the feeling of disbelief in front of

13 Influenced by the composer Morton Feldman I have since many years been suspicious of the idea of a method, or a system for composing. I need a more flexible approach. Feldman phrases it eloquently: “Rather than system I would use the word ‘strategy’ [...] But strategy, and a strategy usually comes about in terms, of the same kind as any other composer would have. [...] Like anybody else the opening measure and its potential and its flexibility. But what I don’t do is to try to make a system out of it.” “Feldman on Feldman”, accessed December 12, 2022, <https://www.cnvill.net/mfjobur2.htm>

14 Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and Its Double: Essays*, Signature; 4 (London: Calder, 1970), 6.

Kant's aesthetic judgement¹⁵ which centers on an idea of a disinterested satisfaction¹⁶, which Kant characterizes as the foundation for the experience of beauty¹⁷. A concept of beauty which is associated with a sense of lack of purpose (or an explicit representation of said purpose) and essentially is given a *universal* value. Kant's notion—which weighs heavily on the later transcendental concept of absolute music—clashes with the notion of manifested obsessiveness, or of art as an expression of explicit ecstasies in communal settings. In *The Man Without Content* philosopher Giorgio Agamben argues that *the artist* has become “the man without content” and that “the divine madness” (of the archaic man) “has been moved from audience to artist”.¹⁸ Agamben means that the object of beauty for Kant, instead of revealing the art, rather shows us non-art (ἄρτ, as Agamben calls it), or an object which “represents art's reality to us as pure and simple nothingness”¹⁹.

However, the notion of Kant and its influence on thought is far wider and more complex than perhaps what Agamben's overview gives credit to. In this thesis, the focal point of the artistic work will be centred on a work which puts Kant's *Critique of Judgement* in the centre: Lotta Lotass' *Den svarta solen*²⁰ (The black Sun). The discussion of Lotass' work, Kant's critique and the *ontological* implications of my methodology will further elaborate a possible harmonization of these seemingly dichotomous perspectives, that nevertheless point towards a different kind of realization of both perspectives. However, the perspective that eludes the Kantian rationality will be the starting point. To lay bare another set of references, Lotass (in chapter 6 and 7) will be the turning point at which Kant returns, but now in a different light, and perhaps now accessible with a different kind of understanding.

Ravings of, among others, Nietzsche, Artaud and Galás, with the assistance of archaic cultures and a particular interest in monastic (or mystic)

15 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement.*, Oxford World's Classics Ser (Oxford: Oxford University Press USA—OSO, 2009).

16 I consider Kant's aesthetic judgement to permeate the western notion of art since the romantic era, not always consciously, but associated with our idea of the genius and the sacredness of the “work”. Oftent it is argued for in different ways, but more than anything it seems to relate back to Kant.

17 “Taste is the ability to judge an object, or a way of presenting it, by means of liking or disliking *devoid of all interest*. The object of such a liking is called beautiful.” Kant, *The critique of the judgement*, 302.

18 Leland De la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 31.

19 Giorgio Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, Meridian (Stanford) (Stanford, CA: Stanford UnivPress, 1999), 43.

20 Lotta Lotass, *Den svarta solen: [roman]* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 2009).

traditions and framed by an, often implicit, presence of the *moodedness*²¹ (Stimmung) of Heidegger, will in this thesis be transformed in a poetic dissemination, using the term *ontopoetics*. In what at first will seem as a contrast to Kant's disinterestedness, this project aims to include (again) passions and feelings as part of the artistic experience. Not only through explicit ones, but even more through looking for the *other* side of things, so in a sense reversing Agamben's dystopic claim of how we perceive art through ~~art~~²². Instead, perhaps doing the opposite, beginning in ~~sound~~²³ could reveal something more essential of our conception of *sound*, and how to extend or explore it further.

Furthermore, the insistence on *techniques of ecstasy* and (the soon more elaborated explanation of) *ontopoetics* also shifts the perspective of listening and conception of sound to a place where the context of a *concert* or a *performance* is suspended. My project denotes the domain of sound, from the perspective of how it *becomes*, how it *emerges* and how it *appears*. The exploration in this sense takes place essentially inside of an extended understanding of what we are placed *in* (for sure, we are listening *to* something, but this *to*, is already something which we listen *through*, and as such, it in a way *discloses* itself to us in different degrees of revelation, depending on how we (possibly) can relate to what we hear, or more properly: perceive).

The afore mentioned collection of quotes function on one hand, naturally, as a reinforcement of my own artistic aspiration, but hopefully they constitute something more profound; a slow opening toward *another* conception of sound, which I sense, but cannot (yet) grasp. These things remain difficult to define with words. It goes without saying, a non-verbal attitude finds its wording with difficulty, not with ease. If it did, why bother searching for its *reasons* far away from logical and theoretical models?

Hovering around this question is—regardless of how hubris-ridden it may seem—a question of ontology. An ontology of sound. Is our definition of sound (at this point this conception needs to be very generally understood within the confinement of western art music) useful to understand what sound really is? The reply does not appear now, instead we need to re-formulate and trace our steps, try to look as much backwards as forward. In the thesis I use the term *ontopoetics* to describe or capture a sense of conception of sound which is grounded on an idea of becoming. Instead of

21 For Heidegger, "moodedness": what the emotions reveal of the nature of our *Being*. Essentially Heidegger views our existence as an on-going attunement and re-attunement of our being. Basically, for us, our emotions are the mode in which *Being* is made noticeable.

22 Non-art.

23 Similarly understood as non-music.

an ontology, rather an “*ontogenesis*”²⁴ (something which is constant movement, and not possible to reduce to an axiomatic beginning). *Ontopoetics* is a term which increasingly has appeared in academia during the last 20 or so years²⁵, but then primarily located in the realm of ecosophy²⁶. In contexts where nature, and our attunement and possibility to learn from our embodiment within it, is explored. It is not a theory, rather an attitude and way of approaching ontology that refrains from the notion of paradigms. Tentatively, I use *ontopoetics* for the context of sound. On an intuitive level it seems increasingly appropriate. After all, poetics belong—nowadays—indeed to the realm of art. And lastly, *ontopoetics*, or an *ontogenesis* of sound, already in its wording eludes a paradigm, but instead invites an open mind, and the promise of a more holistic approach.

Galás and the Abyss of Musical Heritage

However, there are a few circumstances and contexts which already at this point in the thesis need to be addressed and placed in the open: I belong, culturally, to a tradition of language, and it should be pointed out: to one of the *written* word. The distinction of the written and the spoken is important. Man is often, by philosophers, referred to as the animal with language, and its particularity has to be essentially understood in terms of the written, or the construction of *a* language. Influenced by linguists Saussure and Benveniste, the distance between the written and the spoken marks an abyss almost impossible to bridge without a philosophical consideration. And one which simultaneously unveils the influence of the construction of language on the limits of our thinking. We need to keep in mind that the split between speech and language (essentially manifested as the written word) is one of modern man. We can still imagine a historical, primordial, situation in which there is no split between them. We will return to it in different wordings and figures, but the separation of speech and language marks perhaps the clearest image of the ancient separation of *dynamis* (potentiality) and *energeia* (act(uality)) of Aristotle. However, for me, another transition of a related, but more primordial order is in focus in the context of this thesis,

24 E. A. Grosz, *The Incorporeal: Ontology, Ethics, and the Limits of Materialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 1.

25 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1997).

26 Freya Mathews, “Introduction: Invitation to Ontopoetics”, *PAN: Philosophy Activism Nature*, January 2009.

by replacing speech with voice. Thereby, if still alluding to Aristotle the distinction can be made between φωνή (*phóné*) and λόγος (*logos*)²⁷. Phóné which is not the same as speech, in fact it precedes it, and as much as it means voice it also means sound or noise. And as we perfectly know phóné is not restricted to the human being. The voice is something we share, at least in an extended sense, with all organic beings; and the voice, as denoted in Aristotle's *politics*, express pain or pleasure regardless of creature. And still, what resides in the voice that makes the transition from phóné to logos possible? In some ways the articulation of the musical score (as a sign mirroring both a movement and a sound) is a typical practical reply, where the ear and body are being put, ideally on the same level, in motion. A reply which underlines the problem of the transition from semiotics to semantics.

The "secret" of western music, and its complexity is unthinkable without the elaboration of notation, but at the heart of this written invention we find the allegiance to the word, most prominently articulated in the evolution of sacred music. The priest who sings the word, where every kind of ornamentation and rhythmical inflection follows the word (of God), in the original (ancient) mass, without accompaniment. Simply: the word supersedes the sound. With centuries the sound (or more simply, the religious, Christian, mass) includes slowly instrument by instrument, voice by voice. However, on a very basic level the sound's *likeness* or perceived similarity to that of the voice leads the slow, growing inclusion of instruments for a simple reason: the voice enunciates the word (logos, with all its connected meanings), establishing the presence of God (and accordingly, order).

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

This means that the musical notation with the continuous addition of signs and musical practices extend what is considered a musical sound. It is not only in the last centuries that notation have begun to incorporate distinctly other qualities of the instruments (and voices), but just as Wagner

27 Logos, the Greek word with a manifold of meanings: *word/speech/order/proportion/ground etc.* For Aristotle and the ancient Greeks there is already in the voice a presence which presupposes language. For Aristotle, *gramma*, most simply translated to the letter. In any sense there is in the human voice an articulation, which the animal lacks, this articulation is essentially the *voice that can be written*. So, for as long as we can remember there is a presupposition that language is already pre-existing in a sense in written form.

marks the limit of tonality²⁸, modernism opens the door to a completely different conception of properties of sound. However, this does not mean that the score bridges the distance between the sign and what it signifies, rather the score remains in itself a manifestation at the same time of what it cannot *think*. For me, as a composer, it means that the score is always a battleground for my art. When reaching the final bar, the music seems confined. Graphical scores, open score, improvisation are not tools or models which offer a strict solution (even though, they for sure add to the growing understanding of what a sound, and what a music, can be), instead the reply seems to remain elsewhere. At the same time, this confinement, this prison, is the form in which a certain illuminating act takes place. The hand—through *tracing* the sound—makes the sound *real*. What was previously only dreamed of, is now in the open. And placed in its graphical reality it remains, at least philosophically, free. The notational reduction is only one of many possible consequences for its possible execution. The result could as easily be considered the other way around. A singular line can expose the world as easily as it can reduce the multifaceted sensations of the ear to a condensed and particular aspect of sound. In neither form does it even remotely objectively result in a qualitative reduction. The only artistic reduction will be found in the subjective perspective of (a) listener. The sign teaches the ear, but concurrently the ear is taught of the sound through the movement of the human body.

If we again reinvoke the quote of Diamánda Galás, that begins the previous section, we could make an example:

You do not go to a hospital to inspire the recreation of your own Death on stage. You know it by heart.²⁹

Galás, who is foremost a vocal artist, uses her voice as a weapon. Her voice is the extension of her body which uncompromisingly hurls its venom and anguish to the world, embodying and personifying death on stage. It is a voice that at first glance strikes the listener as situated in a particular tradition of extended voice techniques. She screams, distorts, and electronically manipulates the timbre of her voice. Galás uses a range of vocal register that is daunting, her

28 Incidentally by reinstating the hegemony of the word over sound: “Where music can go no further, there comes the word... the word stands higher than the tone.” Lydia Goehr, *The Quest for Voice: On Music, Politics, and the Limits of Philosophy: The 1997 Ernest Bloch Lectures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

29 Galás, *The Shit of God*, 1996, 1.

training in both classical and jazz music permeates her expression. If one goes further and brings her works en-masse, for instance, *Wild Women With Steak-Knives*, the *Litanies de Satan*, *Tragouthia Apo To Aima Exoun Fonos* and *Panopticon* en-masse, then it is possible to recognize even more characters; the music of her ancestral Greece; the tradition of Maniat-laments³⁰, the ritualistic sounds of an *imagined* “Eleusinian mystery”³¹; the agonizing laments of mourning the dead; the art of classical Greek theatre declamation. A point of interesting reference could be the legendary actor Katina Paxinou (1900–1973) when she dramatically recites the ancient text of Euripides’ Hecuba, a rendition which as of 2023 is still possible to experience via youtube.³²

To hear the emotive state of Diamánda Galás in the cry, moans and singing of Katina’s personification of Hecuba’s grief-stricken loss of her murdered son Polydorus, is not far-fetched. We can compare it with, for instance, Galás’ *Tragouthia Apo To Aima Exoun Fonos*³³.

Galás’ voice contains other features than the monologue of Paxinou. There is a completely different context and ambition, but it is relatively easy to identify the moans, the lament and the melodic phrasing which bring the two women together.

Furthermore, the use of imagery in Galás’ poetics (of essentially cruelty, of torture, death and suffering) and an imploding language create links to a long tradition of glossopoetic or charismatic/ecstatic renderings of transcendent states. Among other things, and I will return to it later, the *lingua ignota*³⁴ of Hildegard of Bingen comes to mind.

As for the torments, the echoes of Marquis De Sade, Antonin Artaud and Jerzy Grotowski can be sensed... Among all these names we can also extrapolate methods, how to train both mentally as well as physically in order to transcend, and in the coming chapters we will return to these methods.

30 “the antiphonal vocalization [of Maniat laments, my note] and physical display of ‘pains’ construct an affective enclave where alternative codifications of women’s relation to the social order achieve a formal status as biographical testimony and oral history.” Wilson, “The Radical Music of John Zorn, Diamánda Galas, and Merzbow: A Hermeneutic Approach to Expressive Noise”, 279.

31 The *Eleusinian mystery* was a today mostly forgotten (in part secret) ritual of importance during the *Hellenistic* era of ancient Greece. Centred around the cult of Demeter and Persephone it included two degrees of initiation rituals; the lesser and greater mysteries. Only traces and parts of the actual rituals and its performance remain today. See for instance Dudley Wright’s *Eleusinian Mysteries and Rites*.

32 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJYSONV7Uo9> 9 December 2019.

33 *Diamanda Galas—Diamanda Galas*, 1984.

34 *A secret language* constructed by Hildegard of Bingen, consisting of roughly 1000 words—as far as we know—and with a graphical alphabet of its own.

The more one delves deeper in the matter at hand, avoiding a typical classical, western approach (but all the same using its analyzing gaze, unavoidably; I cannot ignore my ‘place’ culturally) the character of Galás’ expression cannot merely be reduced to a post avant-garde sound art, that in acts of pure inspiration deconstructs the sound idiom of the 19th century music. She is not simply a radical noise artist or a post-modern stereotype. In fact, she is in touch with a deep-rooted sensibility that stretches, engulfs, and goes beyond our whole tradition. As such, Galás is also emblematic of a more profound realization of what an instrument *is*. A modern flute is not only a flute inside of our western tradition, but at the same time a Japanese *shakuhachi*, an *Aeolus* flute of ancient Greece, a *traverse flute* of the baroque, a *recorder* of the medieval time, a *Sad* of Egypt, a *pan flute* of south America... Acting on any instrument is to put in motion a sensibility which is universal and suspends time. There is a moment of immediate contact in which the relationship of human being and instrument remains outside of all traditions while at the same time belonging to all of them. The modern flute *is* the pan flute, the Sad, the Aeolus, even the primitively carved piece of wood or bones that can be found in long, lost terrains all over the world. For a moment we share something, we are not yet *ego*. Then come all the modes of thinking, culture, and habit...

This trace, that at first glance seems difficult to identify, is what we hear placed in front of a musical (or artistic) experience which we fail to comprehend (verbally). This is precisely what this project wishes to be able to further detail, perhaps replying also reflectively to the question the Italian composer Luigi Nono sought for an answer to in his music in the last 15 years of his life:

[...] perhaps it is possible to try and reawaken the ear. *Reawaken the ear*, the eyes, the human mind, the intelligence, the utmost of externalized internalization. This is what is essential today.³⁵

Nono’s words succeed a passage in which he underlines our difficulty of listening to others, to listen to sounds which for us are unknown and evoke something new in us. Instead, we prefer to listen for ourselves in others, in other music. And build our conception of music on one of similarity and congruity. This is on a philosophical level what Nono tries to work with in his final opera *Prometeo—a tragedy of listening*, and as such it is but an artistic

35 Luigi Nono, Veniero Rizzardi, and Angela Ida De Benedictis, *Nostalgia for the Future: Luigi Nono’s Selected Writings and Interviews*, California Studies in 20th-Century Music 21 (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2018), 369.

contribution. However, its ambition is clear. My thesis, we could say, adhere to Nono's plea without the ambition of a solution, but with the aim to illuminate some of its consequences and, for lack of a better word, roots. That is, a sound conception which tries to reach beyond the realm of being a mere *activity*, to aspire to a state-of-being; *a way of life*. The shift from activity (or profession) to *life* signals also an ethical dimension. It is a vocation whose replies reside (potentially) outside of the limitations of my ear, my hands and my culture. However, my ears, my hands and my culture remain its most basic conditions, consequently constituting its ground zero. Its growth is but a manifestation of the potentiality of the human.

Music on a Single Note and Preliminary Remarks on Sound, Balance and Becoming

Before going further a few more considerations are needed. The first one from Rudolf Steiner. Steiner, the late anthroposophist, who, curiously, alongside the composer Dane Rudhyar—as far as scholar Gregory Reish knows³⁶—are the first ones in our western tradition that meditate positively on the notion of a music consisting of only *one* sound³⁷. Furthermore, Steiner, in his lectures on *The Inner Nature of Music and the Experience of Tone*, acknowledges the decline of the human perception of sound in relation to our loss of perception of space, but in his formulation, he also hints at something within our grasp to *think* (and thereby re-awaken):

The ear is also related to our sense that is still older, the sense of spatial orientation that enables one to experience the three dimensions of space. Man is no longer aware of this sense. Deep in the ear's interior we find three remarkable loops [...] When they are injured [...] man's sense of balance is upset. They are the remnants of the sense of space, which is much older than the sense of hearing. Formerly, man perceived space in the same way he perceives tone today. [...] The sense of space perceives space; the ear perceives tone, which means that which passes from space into time.³⁸

36 Gregory N. Reish, "Una Nota Sola: Giacinto Scelsi and the Genesis of Music on a Single Note", *Journal of Musicological Research* 25, no. 2 (August 2006): 1.

37 Rudolf Steiner, *The Inner Nature of Music and the Experience of Tone: Selected Lectures from the Work of Rudolf Steiner*. (Anthroposophic press., 1983), 71.

38 Steiner, 28–29.

It relates to what the composer Pierluigi Billone writes, when asking himself what constitutes our conception of sound:

By posing the question—what is a sound?—something appears in the dimension of sound. It begins to be recognized as *sound*. Not every vibration becomes sound, sound is not only an acoustic definition. Sound stands always for a revealing relationship. It reveals what a human being is in contact with, on what he depends for his balance, a rhythmical revelation in an extreme wide sense.³⁹

That sound is not (only) an acoustical dimension is important. Any vibration (or any act toward a vibration) we come in touch with has the possibility to *become* sound. There is a *potentiality* of becoming, echoing Aristoteles—if it then becomes *actuality* needs a practice; not only a desire, but a slow metamorphosis in which the ear slowly becomes aware of its sounding existence in time and space. There is an important part to point out here: what becomes sound happens not by chance, linked to its emergence is a sense of ethics. What we (as composers) evoke needs to have a necessity, a quality which in the end becomes a resonance of a (human) balance. It is not immediately a perceived *value* of the sound: the roar of the lion contains as much beauty as the most delicate soaring flute tone, but it is through the practice it becomes meaningful. The anticipation (properly, ‘silence’) of sound as well as its execution (the *attack* which sets the sound in motion) is equally important, or rather—the transition between these states marks the limit between potentiality and actuality, and thereby paints a picture with a poetic strength. Additionally, if sound is only considered a scientific category—that is, only a mechanical reality. Then for instance cultural, historical and geographical differences becomes only a curiosity. A definition of sound as (only) energetical quantity, periodicity and so on is effectively a completely neutral and indifferent reality, one which cannot explain or make real a deeper artistic necessity that can be experienced and perceived by the history of art.

The importance of space and our cultural *situatedness* has been an explicit important topic since the end of the 19th century. Phenomenology, via the post-structuralist to our present-day theories of agency, has paved the way for a realization of our existence as not necessarily simply logical, but as a much more rhizomatic and interdependent reality. Posthumanism, to converse

39 Billone, Harvard lecture 2010, https://www.pierluigibillone.com/en/texts/harvard_cambridge_lecture_2010.html

with Karen Barad⁴⁰, has established an understanding of objects (subjects) as essentially devoid of meaning. Only through *intra-actions* will meaning, governed by the paradigms of our present-day, appear. That is, as with sound, its meaning is continuously constructed.

Although my project, probably at some point, will have to deal with these theories, in the frame of this thesis I have chosen another perspective for the simple reason that many of the late 20th century theories tend to focus or distinguish an underlining mechanical and structural reality, as it seems. I argue, instead, that academization leads—regardless of the ambition of the arts—involuntarily to a quantifiable or systematic (axiomatic) thinking. Even in rhetoric, a clear logic tends to overcome an argument based on tacit qualities. The inherent, tangible (but wordless) qualities of obsession, of transcendence through violence or introspection, through trance, through celebrating an acknowledgement of magic in the arts seem to me to need other questions, to diverge to other modes of explorations, if they are to find a form that can take place in writing, and not only be reduced to whimsical, esoteric and banal considerations. By tracing the notion of *techniques of ecstasy* through the abyss of myth and archaic cultures, via monasticism and western mysticism, to the ecstatic expressions of art during the last century the research hopes to give way to a different conception of sound, where the practice, not theories, regardless of how many words I use, acts as the foremost vessel. A practice where sound is not an activity, but—repeating myself—a state-of-being, thereby paraphrasing the 16th century mystic Teresa of Ávila, by replacing prayer with sound:

Sound [prayer, in the original] is not an activity; it is a state-of-being.⁴¹

And furthermore, it is my utopian aspiration that sound, elaborated in an obsessive poetic, will reveal a space where *reality* and *imagination* is inseparable, a space where the overcoming of metaphysics is possible without the necessity of the mediation of a mental or verbal image, paraphrasing the words of Nietzsche, that perhaps Schopenhauer was correct: music (art) is the direct expression of the will itself.

Once again, Diamánda Galás, continuing the method of manifesting death on stage:

40 Karen Michelle Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 136.

41 Ruth Burrows, *Fire Upon the Earth: Interior Castle Explored—St. Teresa's Teaching on the Life of Deep Union with God* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1981), 21.

[H]e [the performer, my note] may use the raw materials of his own soul in a process which is the immediate, the DIRECT experience of the emotion itself. The second concern is felt by performers who, not just professional, are *Obsessional* performers.⁴²

Form of the Thesis

[M]y point of departure will be [...] this moment so decisive for the reader—that of moving from unlimited and multiform potentiality towards something that does not yet exist and can only exist by encountering limits and rules.⁴³

The title of *Techniques of Ecstasy* was chosen at an early stage as a tentative one, for the simple reason that it appeared pertinent to the task at hand. There was, on my part, a certain reluctance to this title. As the reader will notice throughout the thesis, and not the least in the strategy of sound in chapter 5, the opening idea is oftentimes defining, and manifests itself as the moment, which Italo Calvino hints at in the quote above, of the movement from the *potential* to the *actual*. Therefore, passage after passage in this thesis revolves around suspension. Of allowing the imagination and philosophical considerations to be free in a sense, as long as possible, from any kind of paradigm. Accordingly, the early suggestion of the title *Techniques of Ecstasy* after a while began to reflect what was to come also in itself. *Techniques of ecstasy* is the opening idea of this research. As the reader will notice this research began several years before the PhD-studies, so in this sense the opening “idea” of *techniques of ecstasy* does precede the title, but the title in many ways came to influence its actual development. *Techniques of Ecstasy* is but a title, but the subjects which it needed to explore, for my project of sound, also became the poetic *stanza* through which the whole scope of this thesis needs to be considered. Again, it may be only words, but it created the limits of this research even with the seemingly open overarching question of *what are techniques of ecstasy?*

One of the main objectives in this thesis’ approach to the idea of artistic research is to find a form to articulate the artistic experience, rather than

42 Diamánda Galás, *The Shit of God* (New York; London: High Risk, 1996), 1.

43 De la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben*, 21. (This passage is in fact a quotation from Italo Calvino’s preparatory notes for his Harvard Lectures which were to have been delivered 1985–86, but due to his death only have survived through his left-behind manuscripts)

to reduce or over-analyze it to a theoretical, logical, and strong model. To suspend paragraphs of uncertainty, to excel in *failures* or dead ends, in order to capture the moment of creation. Important is also the act of transference; trying to reflect and understand the practice and reciprocally to challenge my way of composing with the realization of the objects, and to what they pertain, of study.

The desire is to formulate a text which harmonizes in its form to the specific musical works which will constitute its artistic output, thereby allowing a kaleidoscopic outlook in its inception, while allowing text and music to grow out of all its eventual blind alleys and illuminating breakthroughs. Therefore, the reflective text will mirror the attempt to describe the actual artistic practice; producing a dialogue between a more philosophical, accountable exploration of a diverse universe of art, anthropology, musicology, philosophy as well as, of course, the work on sound.

All theoretical and philosophical considerations aside, the important part of this thesis takes place in the actual exploration of sound, inside the practice. The thesis delineates not only a few years of ambition and work, it entails almost a decade of a continuous (or at least finally possible for me to identify) line of thought, which throughout these pages find a broader context and a clear focus of intention (and attention). In particular, the *strategy* elaborated in chapter 5 can be traced already, in hindsight, through a selection of pieces composed prior to the PhD-period (that will be discussed in chapter 3 and 4), as well during its initial phase.

This means that this thesis needs to take into consideration the emergence of a practice, which perhaps didn't consider the notion of *techniques of ecstasy*, but nevertheless experienced both in mind and body the events which in this thesis comes full circle. Accordingly, to fully understand (and follow) how the philosophical content of chapter 2–4, and the practice of chapter 5 are related and by chapter 6 is made into an artist's (mine) poetics, the necessity to trace its emergence in individual pieces is important to stress, both in musical (practical) respects as well as the inclusion of the different aesthetic and philosophical ideas. Some of these pieces are discussed throughout the chapters, but they are also added to the thesis as scores and recordings. And the dialogue between their written and graphical dissemination and their sound cannot be underestimated. For clarification, each new composition discussed is framed by the heading, intermission.

The pieces discussed in chapters 2–4 are only examples of a growing strategy that involve a bigger body of works. However, the ones included in chapters 2–4 are pieces which have had their first performance or final revision during my PhD-studies. As such, they serve as different exemplary

case-studies, which together point toward the strategy of chapter 5. Important to point out is that the chronology of the pieces is not reflecting their conception, but rather the chronology of the different philosophical paragraphs of the chapters. Each *case-study* will also use a subtext which refers to what will be discussed and phrased as a general strategy in chapter 5. Furthermore, what will transpire in chapters 6 and 7 will hopefully make clear the consequence of merging the content of chapter 1–4 as a condition under which a particular kind of sound conception can emerge. One which in the final chapter is shown in a poetic and actual use.

In order to make visible already in chapters 2–4 make visible as much as possible of the strategies that are developed in chapter 5, and to sustain the musical and aesthetic considerations in chapters 1–4, the exposition of the music discussed will be varied. Sometimes relying on sketches, and a glance inside of the basic work on sound, and sometimes the focus will turn to more general considerations. The intention is to lead the reader toward chapter 5, to give way for an understanding of the final body of artistic work that this thesis results in: *Songs for Simone*, *Fragments of a Broken Order*, *Rumori ii* and *Archè*. An understanding which doesn't depend on a technical knowledge of music (of the craft...), but on a more general one, one which aspire to unveil an artistic-philosophical approach that for lack of a better word is hinted at in the re-occurring sections under the heading *Ontopoetics* (all in all, there are 5 onto poetic sections placed in the thesis). However, with chapter 5 this thesis gives place to the practice, that is the moment of concretisation, what otherwise only to its full capacity can be perceived in the study of the actual musical scores on one hand, but most importantly during the moment of experience; in the concert hall, or (to a somewhat lesser degree) through playback of its audio documentation.

It should be emphasized, even if the thesis contains thousands of words, that there is foremost an ambition to be concrete at all moments, through the extensive body of musical works, to have a focus on acts rather than words. However, as with the discussion concerning speech and language, or voice and language, words are also simultaneously *an act*. And although this work as its point of departure imply doubt in this regard, its at least historical truth cannot be denied, even if I hope to offer at least the glimpse of a possibly different orientation when considering sound in a capacity where the word only constitutes a mean of its (partial) realization.

To summarize: the thesis will, after this chapter's introductory texts, be an exposé of reflective, not necessarily music-related sections, and actual case-studies that puts the different strands of my *thinking* in relation to different notions of ecstasy or related concepts. It will be sections that aim to

merge into a coherent and complementary structure. Although the first chapters in a sense mostly follow different separate sections, the inclusion of the specific musical works infer a play with different voices, with different sense of closeness or privateness (in the writing).

Different explorations and understandings of *Techniques of Ecstasy* will also be paired with gradually widening discussion of *ontopoetics*. The passages on *ontopoetics* create a framework, and even if I don't view it as a theory, it nevertheless is a philosophical addendum that allows for a more general theory and discussion of both sound and listening. In much, the *ontopoetics* also alludes to the late texts of Heidegger, where he calls for a new thinking⁴⁴. Similarly, I call upon a new conception of sound, not through erasing the past, but through re-interpretation.

The fifth chapter, it must be underlined, is of a more esoteric form. The chapter will at moments (taken in itself) come across, in parts, as enigmatic. However, being a composer I consider it the most important section, since it details to what I aspire and it places my artistic work (the music) in perspective. The strategy is presented as a process, one which establishes how the rules and limits of a musical work are encountered. Although there is a linearity to the mode of exposition, the different paragraphs are in themselves a spiral of points of references which can be read kaleidoscopically.

In the sixth chapter the artistic practice is explored through a combination of text, graphical annotations, and a growing realization of the *strategy of sound*. Its form, though, is enigmatic. In the scope of the whole thesis, I hope it will be at least partially clear that its mode and presentation come closer to a tracing of the conception of the final pieces of the PhD-studies (*Songs for Simone*, *Fragments of a Broken Order*, *Rumori ii*, and *Archè*) than a more traditional musical analysis would. If not else, chapter 6 is intended as the most legible form of the *poetics* that chapters 1–5 have aspired to. What remains unsolved or veiled in chapter 6 is either my own shortcomings, or it is representative of what (so I wish to believe) the artistic process fails to be able to communicate when taking form inside the paradigm of our language (and academic institutions).

The most apparent aspect of chapter 6 is the novel *Den svarta solen* by Swedish writer Lotta Lotass, the key dialogue partner from which my music during these years gathers its inspiration, or perhaps foundational qualities. The obvious literary and poetic qualities of the sixth chapter serve a double function. First and foremost, they trace the development of my strategy in a

44 See for instance, 'The Way to Language' and 'what Calls for Thinking?'

sense through nameless (but slowly they are being indicated) pieces, thereby showing both how the strategy grows through practice, but also as a more real *image* of how the practice actually evolves; through a kaleidoscope of reflections and attempts. Secondly, they will in themselves be decisive cornerstones and act like the *strategy of sound's* autonomous, yet inter-dependent sound-philosophical evolution. I would like to make clear that the sixth chapter is not a comment or analysis of one or several musical works, but indeed the actual musical practice in action. To trace the dialogue with the text of Lotta Lotass is as much to perceive the growth of my music, as well as realizing the reflection and implementation of the previous chapters intellectual and poetic concepts.

The thesis concludes with a seventh chapter where the onto-poetics sections of the earlier chapters, the strategy of the fifth and the music and praxis will be brought to a reflective end note. An end note, whose ambition will serve to point to further strands of research, as well as offer a concluding segment of what the research has made apparent.

In this thesis, all parts will (this is the utopian ambition) act like constellation of reflections which slowly begin to speak with one another, to create gravitational centres which slowly set all in motion and finally takes on a definite form in the *imaginative* space-time continuum of my musical work. As such, a clear cut, pragmatic division of material is not my ambition, but rather that in the end the thesis merges, mixes and perhaps even combines both audio, visuals, and text in a more elaborate way. However, as a singular book, the ambition is also that the text itself communicates the most important claims of a possible artistic knowledge.

The project delineated in this thesis does not reach a conclusive statement, its dependence on *potentiality, emergence/becoming* embedded in the concept of *ontopoetics*, is too strong. In the end, the obsession of being a composer is to continuously dream of unknown sounds. As Pasolini utters in *Decameron*:

Why create a work of art when it is so beautiful simply to dream of one?⁴⁵

My thesis is through its creation a part of that dream.

45 Pier Paolo Pasolini in a cameo role in the film *Decamerone* (1971) quoted in: De la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben*, 21.

Chapter 2

*In which some concepts are
elaborated and explored*



A Theory of Practice

Ontopoetics I: Listening as a Way of Knowledge

How one becomes a composer, I don't know. If you ask me how I write music, I don't know. Even now, I keep wondering how this happens. Is it an urgent need? An ultimate necessity? An enlightenment? Or are there moments... attempts or knowledge that develops, therefore a knowledge that transforms, even in myself, which expands, which leads me towards other possibilities, in contact with other knowledge, other needs or other feelings?⁴⁶

While listening, the world emerges. It is perceived rather than known. It is perceived through time. The relationship between sounds, or objects, are brought together and they come before us as the sound and music itself. The distance between sound sources, the suspension between attacks, are nevertheless perceived in an extended, suspended temporal relationship. We are dealing with a poetic order, which resides and acts—it seems, more often than not—independently from a causal one. As musicians we are inviting dreams, juxtapositions of different speeds, as an act and practice of a developed balance of what can be imagined and included in our definition of music. Composer Luigi Nono, in the beautiful film *Archipel Luigi Nono*, speaks again and again of exactly this:

How to perceive the different qualities of sound? For me, it is the quality of the sound that is fundamental, much more than its substance. The various types of sounds, arrivals, departures like the obstinate sound of a siren which extends far away... When there is fog the bells which signal the [location of the] islands go DONG... DONG... DONG... continuously, which creates sound fields of infinite magic.⁴⁷

While standing on the docks of Venice, Nono speaks of the sounds he is immersed in, he is pinpointing a particular path inside of these rumblings of the city, of the sea, of his surroundings. The path *becomes*, rather than being described, and with each new inclusion of noise it grows and becomes a discrete way of *knowing*.

46 *Archipel Luigi Nono*. [Translation from Italian by Pierluigi Billone].

47 *Archipel Luigi Nono*. [My translation from French subtitles].

My project in this sense shares many features of Salomé Voeglin's poetic outline in her *Listening to Noise and Silence*. In the opening chapter she writes, paraphrasing Adorno:

Every sensory interaction relates back to us not the object/phenomenon perceived, but that object/phenomenon filtered, shaped and produced by the sense employed in its perception [...] It is a matter then of accepting the *a priori* influence while working towards a listening in spite rather than because of it. The task is to suspend, as much as possible, ideas of genre, category, purpose and art historical context, to achieve a hearing that is the material heard, now, contingently and individually.⁴⁸

An *ontopoetics* asks not how the world is, but—etymologically *on-tos* and *poiesis*—how it becomes. Its focus resides in allowing a set of conditions and insistence on listening as a form of tacit knowledge, that brings about an order which is essentially informal. A sometime surreal active growth, and sometimes a passive, contained, hunch.

For instance, while beating my Japanese singing bowl in quick succession on the *kkwaenggwari* (a small, Korean, hand-held gong), immediately the space begins to resound. The stage becomes immediately responsive. I can hallucinate a vast number of possible interactions, I choose one, follow it, beat again, caress the *kkwaenggwari* and then stop, allowing for the sound to be contained in the body-instrument relationship of 'silence'. And then I start again. Each iteration creates anew the space, the resonance and the cues and signals of both auditory and imaginary results in a new *knowing*. It remains tacit, but with each new exploration it distinguishes a growing order and a point of potential gravity.

48 Salome Voegelin, *Listening to Noise and Silence towards a Philosophy of Sound Art* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 3.



IMAGE 4. The small handheld Kkwaenggwari (Korean gong) and dobaci, a Japanese singing bowl.

The question of ontology, in western philosophy, has increasingly shifted toward something which perhaps rather could be described as an *ontogenesis*⁴⁹. That is, ontology increasingly describes how being is a continuous becoming. With Deleuze it is transformed into the *plane of immanence*. As such, it re-evokes the *panpsychism* of ancient Greece, but also the singular substance of Spinoza.

The term *ontopoetics* belongs to a new field of environmental and ecological philosophy. In doing so it refrains from positing itself as a theory, rather it functions as a description of a mode of being, or a mode of experience and acknowledgment of the world⁵⁰.



IMAGE 5. Dobaci

49 Grosz, *The Incorporeal*, I.

50 Mathews, "Introduction", I.

The project put forth in this thesis lacks the ambition of a theoretical framework, rather it aims to trace and make visible a number of features which belong to the act of composing, to the preoccupation of using listening as an informal vessel of construction, to the creation of a condition of sound, which at its aesthetic core is not a theory, but:

- A way of being in sound

As such, *ontopoetics*, should in the context of this thesis be seen as an attempt to bridge its already elaborated concerns into the realm of music. Its underlying *panpsychism* can be noted in the insistence on the term ecstatic techniques, and the inclusive use of both poetic techniques of the Far-East as well as complementary ones in our western tradition. The *ecstasy* is not viewed as an exotic and esoteric framework, but simply as an attitude, a way-of-being, which not only points to certain—what seems ancient—concerns and characteristic of a global (and yes, universal) order. *Techniques of ecstasy*, and in its extension; rituals, symbolism, and religious beliefs, all rely on methods in which an altered state of consciousness is evoked. A descent into the supranormal. By tracing and replacing this archaic notion of communication with the “gods”, *ontopoetics* is a way of slowly shifting its implicit aesthetic techniques into the realm of sound, and of art. Through this act of displacement the question of a colonial gaze is somewhat suspended. The distinction between *orient et occident* is made scarce. Instead, it introduces a sense of non-western universalism projected unto an artistic exposé which refrains from all kinds of universal claims, but only offers a possible extension and elaboration on the *ontogeneses* of sound. For sure from the point of view of a certain tradition, of a certain position in time, but as such it thereby anchors its knowledge, as one articulated through sound and therefore without the value of a centric paradigm of epistemology.

(Sound) is neither mental nor material, but a phenomenon of experience—that is, of our immersion in, and commingling with, the world in which we find ourselves (...) (Sound) is not the object but the medium of our perception. It is what we hear in.⁵¹

51 Timothy Ingold, “Against Soundscape”, *Autumn Leaves: Sound and the Environment in Artistic Practice*, 2007, 10–13.

In this sense, the onto-poetic sections invites the reader to a trail of events, of fragments and passages with different degrees of gravitational force. Together they will merge in a construct of a drive for knowledge through sound, while insisting that the work of the poet deduces very little in an empirical sense, but through its act it creates meaning. We are speaking of *experience*, not measurable quantities, as a source of knowledge. And as the film maker Andrej Tarkovsky says, “When the last poet dies, the world loses its meaning”.⁵² It is in this existential understanding of *meaning* that this work of artistic research should be approached from a perspective of knowledge.



IMAGE 6. Dobaci and Kkwaenggwari

Techniques of Ecstasy II

I do not hear them with my outer ears or perceive them by the thoughts of my heart or by any combination of my five senses, but only in my soul, with my eyes open. So, I never suffer that defect of ecstasy, but I see them day and night, wide awake.⁵³

Ecstasy is understood—at this point—in a very wide and flexible sense. In the field of music ecstasy is possible to define in various ways. Often, musicology or anthropology creates a distinction between trance and ecstasy. Where the former relies on extrovert, musically or performance-oriented displays, the latter is associated rather with meditation or introvert practices. In the former we find for instance the Shamans of Siberia or the dervishes of the Middle East, in the latter our own monastic tradition or for instance, Tibetan-Buddhism. Throughout this text I will not make a

52 *Andrey Tarkovsky. A Cinema Prayer*, Documentary (Film Capital Stockholm, Film i Väst, Film på Gotland, 2019).

53 Sarah L. Higley, *Hildegard of Bingen's Unknown Language: An Edition, Translation, and Discussion*, 1. ed., The New Middle Ages (New York, NY [u.a.]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 36.

clear-cut between ecstasy and trance, instead alternate between the two terms, although conscious of the theoretical significance imposed by various scholars. Instead of focusing on their (possibly) different implications (especially in relation to sound), I will view and handle them as part of a similar expression, which is essentially a use of a heightened perception or—as history teaches us—a method of shaping and interpreting the world in the societies in question using a ritual framework. The expression relies on a ritual, communal dimension, but treats its medium as an—and this is the key—*immediate expression*.

Religio-historian Mircea Eliade describes the techniques of the Shaman as “archaic techniques of ecstasy”⁵⁴. They involve movement, sound, words, and space. They are essentially a communal act, they narrate, they improvise, but they cannot be reduced to the western concert practice. There is a stage, but the *real* one does not exist in our physical world, and although it is represented—and can be described and interpreted by the gaze of a western tradition—a conventional description of it can only briefly touch upon its magic.

The *ecstatic techniques* are used as an intermediary—liminal—condition: to die, to go beyond, to pass from one condition to another. It is a liminal practice which is achieved within the framework of a specific ritual. And by ritual I mean as anthropologist Victor Turner:

[...] prescribed formal behaviour for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or powers.⁵⁵

The rite explains or interprets, in a communal setting, the world. It functions or resembles what philosopher Giorgio Agamben describes—paraphrasing Heidegger—as the original structure of art⁵⁶. That is, the qualities of art’s origin which with the rise of the aesthetic and its separation of form and content, made the function or necessity of art concealed and forgotten.

In Shamanistic traditions (with the risk of being too general) what we westerners would isolate as art is not possible to discern from life. In this sense, few archaic cultures (if any) can be said to use a kind of ‘music theory’, rather it could be termed as philosophy or aesthetics. As Tim Hodgkinson remark regarding the music of the Tuvan people of the Siberian tundra:

54 Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (London: Arkana, 1989), 4.

55 Victor Witter Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, Cornell Paperbacks; 101 (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1970), 19.

56 Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, 101.

Tuvan's do not generally articulate a 'music theory' in the sense of musicology. Tuvan music theory begins, rather, at the point where music is not seen as separate from life. The focus is not 'music' in the sense that isolates a sonic structure of pitch and time relationships, but music as a field of sounding connectivities between inner and outer states, music as a means of metaphysical metabolism, of modulating the (multiple) being of the human within the (multiple) world(s) he/she inhabits.⁵⁷

In Finnish scholar Anna-Lena Siikala's thesis *The Rite Technique of the Siberian Shaman* she analyses a set of field studies of Siberian rituals. What she manages to make lucid is the similarities in form, that the rituals have in common over a wide-stretched area, thereby, but also in other regards confirming Mircea Eliade's seminal *Shamanism—Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. In Eliade's book as well as in Siikala's thesis the shaman is a person, who to be perceived as a "true" shaman, in early years must display certain pathological traits or tendencies. Hysteric fits, epilepsy or schizophrenia are all signs of potential shamans. The hyper-sensitivities of these persons are associated with the ability to communicate, or at least sense the supernatural. Eliade insists that the shaman through his or her training is given the tools to control this disposition. That is to say: the shaman is not possessed, but in control of the psychological instability and takes advantage of this state to induce a heightened sensibility. Anna Lena Siikala, in her thesis, summarizes the techniques of the Shaman to 11 common principles. They paint a complex portrait of the shaman: a person who is as much priest, healer, actor, poet, dancer and musician. The shaman is the human being, the tribe, the spirits, the demons etc. and he or she is continuously shifting in between them. I quote three principles, just to give an idea:

- 1 The framework of the shaman's technique of ecstasy is similar to the basic psychic mechanism on which hypnosis is founded [...].
- 2 The shamanic trance or the shaman's altered state of consciousness then comes into being, as generalized reality orientation disappears, along with an increase in the intensity of the rhythmical, gradually accelerating sensory stimulus and role-taking directed at the supranormal.
- 9 Not even in the deepest trance does the shaman's reality orientation completely vanish; supported by the scheme of the séance, he retains his contact with the audience.⁵⁸

57 Tim Hodgkinson, "Musicians, Carvers, Shamans", *Cambridge Anthropology* 25, no. 3 (2005): 5.
 58 Siikala, Anna-Lena, *The Rite Technique of the Siberian Shaman* (Helsingfors: Academia Scientiaru), 340–341.



IMAGE 7.⁵⁹

Essentially the shaman is an artist who is in touch with, to include Giorgio Agamben once again, the *original function of art*, that is a person who shapes, explores, explains the reality through an artistic practice. The pathology of the artist is clearly reminiscent of a poetic vein, a quality which through the training of the Shaman becomes a balanced and refined sensibility. To quote a tribe member of a Buryat tribe of Siberia:

That was how he became a shaman, after the sickness, after the torture. He had been ill for seven years. While he was ailing, he had dreams; he was beaten up several times, sometimes he was taken to strange places.⁶⁰

59 Patricia Rieff Anawalt, *Shamanic Regalia in the Far North* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2014), 62.

60 Anna-Leena Siikala & Mihály Hoppál, *Studies on Shamanism* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó 1992), 31.

The Shaman could (and should) be considered as one of many forms of how ecstatic techniques is used and perceived in various cultures. However, on a more general level—focusing on the relation between music and ecstatic states—we need to acknowledge a distinction between *emotional* and *communal* trance behaviours⁶¹ to widen the field of knowledge. Possession cults (for instance different forms of voodoo worship) are also a topic of converging expression. Furthermore, the monastic or mystic traditions of our western tradition as well traditions as in the Far-East is a point of interest.

For now, although it will be relevant to return to the topic of differentiation within the trance/ecstasy-concept, I will include some brief words: *emotional trance* could be considered the foremost simple form. We find it in numerous cultures, and I would also suggest it is the most common one present in our secular/new age-world by practitioners seeking a *spiritual non-confessional life*. It could be characterized as expressions where poetry and music merge, or furthermore: where the word act as a gateway to trance states. Typical examples are found in Arabic culture. The words used in the ecstatic practices of Samā, Wajd (دوجو) and Dhikr (رکذ). Practices in which the recitation and extended repeating of divine utterings slowly induce trance states. In Islam, then, *Sufism* is a typical example. This type of trance is closely linked to *communal trance*. The difference here being that *communal trance* is “performed” with others and is dependent on this larger community. The trance can either be induced (the person who reaches the trance state is “only” a by-stander) or conducted (the trance state is reached by the person(s) controlling the ritual). In the communal trance, once again, *Sufism* is a typical example (another one would be the Candomblé of Brazil, the Kuarup of Amazonas, various charismatic movements within Protestantism such as shakers etc...): in the Muslim Dhikr, a special way of singing is used accompanied with a dramatic form of breathing, reciting the name of God (the word). Dance is also essential to the *Sufi*, as anyone who has witnessed the dancing dervishes of Sufism are aware of, meaning that the induced, but also conducted form of communal trance is in all aspects a corporeal activity.

Finally, some words on *mystic trance*. The ecstatic states of the mystic, in especially monastic culture, will be continuously referred to implicitly and explicitly throughout the coming chapters. Primarily, since I regard them as a key to imagine a bridge between theory and practice in my artistic work. Nevertheless, in Gillet Rouget’s words the mystics (thereby also including

61 Gilbert Rouget, *Music and Trance: A Theory of the Relations between Music and Possession* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1985), 315.

tibbetan-buddhism and similar meditative expressions) are emblematic of states of ecstasy rather than trance. In his book, *Music and Trance*, he includes a pedagogic dichotomic table in order to distinguish between the two forms. For now, I include this table as point of reference. Although, my own exploration of the ecstatic techniques will look for another reply, one which does not necessarily concern itself with the division of trance and ecstasy, the table nevertheless seems to me to be important at this stage.

ECSTASY	TRANCE
Immobility	movement
Silence	noise
Solitude	in company
No crisis	crisis
Sensory deprivation	sensory overstimulation
Recollection	amnesia
Hallucination	no hallucination ⁶²

The difficulty with the division of trance and ecstasy makes itself apparent if we turn only to, for instance, ecstasy, and try to discern a particular similarity and congruity within the limited set of characteristics when comparing for instance two separated cultures. Swedish religio-historian Ernst Arberman spent the latter part of his life only trying to distinguish and define (with a scientific aspiration) ecstatic states or religious trance. In three fascinating volumes, one mystic after the other, and one ecstatic practice after the other, is scrutinized. Instead of a separation of ecstasy and trance, Arberman narrows the picture but includes the notion of ‘vision’:

Whereas the vision [...] opens the inner, spiritual eyes and ears of the believer in a way that permits him to look into another world, enter into a direct personal contact with its various divine representatives, listen to the messages they have to convey to him, etc., he has with the ecstasy, when it has attained sufficient depth, been put into a state in which he has literally left his earthly existence and completely, or with the whole of his interior conscious self, taken the step into or been removed to this other invisible or supernatural spiritual world.⁶³

62 Rouget, II.

63 Ernst Arberman, *Ecstasy or Religious Trance: In the Experience of the Ecstatics and From the Psychological Point of View. Vol. I, Vision and Ecstasy* (Stockholm: Svenska bokförl, 1963), I.

Arbman, whose specialty was ancient Indian religious beliefs, gives most attention to ecstasy and vision inside of a Christian framework, but his remarkable achievements and insights are oftentimes made lucid with his deep knowledge of the ancient practices of the east.

In lieu of this, the table set up by *Gilles Rouget* gives in any case a perhaps more tangible sensation of the more sounding qualities of altered states of perception. However, the tabulation of anything (not the least categorizations and dichotomies) are not self-evident in an *ontopoetics*, but here I create a rift between the ecstasy and trance, even if—as the thesis continues—my project slowly will merge them together.

Theory and Practice

Theoria

If mysticism involves some form of ‘knowledge’ isolated from or unconcerned with responsible human action, it appears to the contemporary mind as at best a curious aberration and at worst a dangerous illusion.⁶⁴

Ecstatic techniques are explained and described through *experience*. It is a practice defined by a specific culture. Possibly, some techniques, such as breathing, plants/drugs in combination with pathological states (conditions) could be assembled and a general theory proposed, in our scientific understanding of the word “theory”. However, it should become increasingly clear that what I am looking for something that resides elsewhere.

To explain one thing one needs sometimes to begin by characterizing the subject for what *it is not*, or just pose questions which, although related, at first glance would lead the topic astray. It is a way of negation, which comes not by chance. The notion of ecstatic techniques—especially concerning its manifestation in mysticism—has within Christian theology perhaps received its most diligent theoretical framework through apophatic theology; a way of understanding God by asserting *what he is not*. Most clearly formulated by Thomas of Aquino: “[B]ecause we cannot know what God is, but rather what He is not, we have no means for considering how God

64 Mary Frohlich, *The Intersubjectivity of the Mystic: A Study of Teresa of Ávila's Interior Castle* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Pr, 1994), 13.

is, but rather how He is not.”⁶⁵ This mirrors, interestingly, what Agamben characterizes as the result of Kant’s *disinterested satisfaction* in which the way of perceiving art has become through arts negation that we are able to perceive art, Agamben phrases it in the following way:

In the act of judgment that separates art from non-art, we turn non-art into the content of art, and it is only in this negative mold that we are able to rediscover its reality. When we deny that a work is artistic, we mean that it has all the material elements of a work of art with the exception of something essential on which its life depends, just in the same way that we say that a corpse has all the elements of the living body, except that ungraspable *something* that makes of it a living being. Yet when we actually find ourselves before a work of art [...] (we) must mentally refer back to [...] dead mechanical model(s) [...] to orient (ourselves).⁶⁶

So, what is (conventionally speaking) *not* theory? In my project there is already an ambition implied in which the praxis is at the centre, but nevertheless a practice which searches for a methodological clue. The immediacy of sound, the distrust of language, a kind of ontological question—all need some way of dissemination and intellectual consideration which not only remains in the artistic work (even if the actual artistic practice aspires to make implicitly and explicitly visible and audible its said ambition).

Praxis is, to speak with Aristotle, to do. Strictly speaking separated from theory (thinking) and poiesis (making). The artwork is then not isolated only in one of these categories but appears seemingly in the transition in-between them. To go further, πράξις can, as Giorgio Agamben has shown in *The Man Without Content*, etymologically be linked to πείρω, which means to cross and is etymologically linked to πέπα, πόρος and πέπας, meaning beyond, passage and limit respectively⁶⁷. We are here reminded of the *liminal practice* of ecstatic techniques, as stated earlier: to die, to go beyond, to pass from one condition to another. Praxis is essentially the transitional tool in which the artwork meets the limit, or rather transcends it. To go further in an etymological query, *praxis* nowadays (through various shifts and turns, also in meaning) can be traced in *experience*. That is, tracing/understanding the action. To be clear, in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* both *praxis* and *experience*

65 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica, Part I (Prima Pars) From the Complete American Edition* (Project Gutenberg), 85, accessed May 5, 2021, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/17611>.

66 Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, 42–43.

67 Agamben, 73.

co-exist: πράξις and ἐμπειρία, share the same etymological roots. The basis for possible knowledge in this thesis, then, will be tentatively located to an experience, something done. As something contained in the act of doing, as something which seems to be reflective though being at the same time foundational (for experience) and a tool to go beyond the limit. There can be no distance between the researcher and the artist to communicate artistic knowledge:

Mysticism radicalizes this problem in that it radicalizes the very notion of both “knower” and “known”. The known is viewed as the fullness of ultimate reality, while the knower is viewed as one capable of knowing this fullness. The researcher, who approaches the mystic [...], is by definition (point of view of the mystic) a knower of less than this fullness. The researcher has no place from which to “stand above” the mystic’s transcendent knowledge, unless by joining the mystic as a mystic.⁶⁸

Frohlich’s words (in the quotation above), which are interpreting the theories of theologian Bernard Lonergan, argue that mysticism needs something called a foundational methodology in order to be explained and this explanation needs to have a focus *not limited to, or dependent on* the modern understanding of theory. Instead Lonergan calls for three canons as the basis for investigating mysticism:

(the)

- aspiration to be concrete.
- continuous effort of being explanatory.
- focus on *acts*, rather than words.

As such the regular use of theory is only transitory, it makes sense only as an intermediate step toward the fruit of the process, the act—the praxis.⁶⁹

68 Frohlich, *The Intersubjectivity of the Mystic*, 20.

69 In a passage almost wholly devoted to *praxis* with an etymological chain of thought, perhaps *theoria* had deserved at least a bit more than a slight mention and strike-through? To condense: *theoria* is an equally complex etymological/historical/philosophical construction, where perhaps the most interesting—in the context of this thesis and with the figure of Antonin Artaud, in particular—feature is that *theoria* in Greek shares the same etymological root as ‘theatre’: a word which means ‘to view’ or ‘to make a spectacle’. And as David Bohm points out in his *Wholeness and the implicate order*: “Thus it might be said that a theory is primarily a form of insight, i.e. a way of looking at the world, and not a form of knowledge of how the world is.” David Bohm, *Wholeness and the implicate Order* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 4.

Form-of-Life, Way-of-Life

The object of this study is the attempt—by means of an investigation of the exemplary case of monasticism—to construct a form-of-life, that is to say, a life that is linked so closely to its form that it proves to be inseparable from it.⁷⁰

The shock of seeing that somewhere in the world acting is an art of absolute dedication, monastic and total. That Artaud's now-hackneyed phrase 'cruel to myself' is genuinely a complete way of life—somewhere—for less than a dozen of people.⁷¹

If practice, experience and knowledge are inseparable, if the researcher must *become* the object or, rather, subject of his research, then the borders of life and activity are made scarce. Sound, in this research, then becomes a state-of-being, as implied earlier, and as such sound cannot be considered indifferent; if it becomes our essential mode of being it would seem its importance lies closer to what the rites of ancient time evoke: the inability to separate life from norm. Or as Peter Brooks comments on Grotowski's *poor theatre*, "[A] way of life is a way to life."⁷²

In Giorgio Agamben's political project of *Homo Sacer* a considerable portion of its analysis takes place within the monastic life. In his books *The Highest Poverty*, *Opus Dei* and prepared in the *Sacrament of Language* the liturgical life and use of language (foremost within the Franciscan order) is used as a sign of a life which he considers as more or less unthinkable in today's society:

Monasticism is not a confusion between life and norm or a new declension of its relationship [...]. The '*vita vel regula, regula et vita, forma vivendi, forma vitae*' they are naming something which in fact is something resulting—a third thing—from them both. [...] Our task is precisely to bring this third thing to light.⁷³

70 Giorgio Agamben, *The Highest Poverty: Monastic Rules and Form-of-Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), xi.

71 Jerzy Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, A Theatre Arts Book (New York: Routledge, 2002), 11.

72 Grotowski, 12.

73 Agamben, *The Highest Poverty: Monastic Rules and Form-of-Life*, xii.

The rules of the monastery are designed to fill every waking hour of the existence of the monk/nun, they intertwine completely. For Agamben it becomes essential to understand this form-of-life as one in which the body of the human being is not appropriated and not used as a commodity and thereby a trace for Agamben's project of a notion of the human value, which our modern culture, by use of politics and capitalism, has neglected or even destroyed⁷⁴.

To view monasticism as exemplary of a *way-of-life* is one thing, to give it importance in connection with a *sounding* project we need to widen the understanding there-of. Thomas Merton, the trappist-monk, makes an important remark in his lectures on mysticism in the early 60s, where he acknowledges the relationship between asceticism and mysticism⁷⁵. The asceticism of the monasteries (and it is also here possible to—as Merton often does—to include a wider variety of ascetic practices, for instance from the Far-east) does on a simplified level create the condition of the monastic life. “Obedience”, “Patience”, “manual labour” etc. A *bios praktikos* separated from *bios theoretikos*, the latter then representing a life in contemplation, whereas the former only serves as a praxis to achieve the latter. However, what is *asceticism*, if not in itself a continuation or example of the merging of theory and practice, that is—if we again remember the Greek etymology—something which in itself is inseparable from its parts? The Greek root of asceticism, *askein*—literally means to adorn, or to prepare by labour/exercise. Merton mentions that Homer uses it for referring to “making a work of art”⁷⁶. *Asceticism* we then can identify as a specific way of life, with a clear purpose of spiritual development, where however the possible “sacred” manifestations are unthinkable without its *bios praktikos*.

The French psychoanalyst Fernand Deligny describes another way-of-life. In his studies of autistic behaviour, he uses the metaphor of the texture of the spider-web, *the Arachnean*, as a mode-of-being. This network of thin, sensitive strings mirrors how human beings, or rather anything at all, create meaning without necessarily language. In his examination and research of autism he enters in to their (the autists) mode of being and *traces it*. Tracing becomes a method on all levels, tracing with the hand on paper the autists paths or movements, tracing—that is exploring the space with the body. Instead of creating a verbal or obvious visual communication, the therapy, or attempt to understand the patients, came about as *harmonizing of movements*.

74 Agamben, xiii.

75 Thomas Merton, *A Course in Christian Mysticism: Thirteen Sessions with the Famous Trappist Monk* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017), 4–6.

76 Merton, 4.

The grown-ups place themselves in the same space as the *patients*, but while letting the autistic children wander freely in what Deligny called *lignes d'erre* (translated in English to *wander lines*) the *observers* slowly adjust their own movements toward harmonizing with the seemingly inexplicable pattern of the *autists*. The neologism of *Arachnean* serves to hint at the dream of another political *ethos*, one in which language resigns from its prestige and *weaving* or the *wandering* movement becomes key, but also as placed in a network of interconnected threads. Deligny remarks:

What can *brut* mean? That which is in a natural state, having *yet* to be elaborated or shaped by man.⁷⁷

The French word *brut* is mostly translated by *raw* (here, *brut* must be understood as in old medieval French. Today *brut* is perhaps rather associated with champagne and the process of fermentation from *raw* fruit) and its usage in old French is connected to what is brutal, more belonging to nature than cultivated life. It is interesting to take note of the connection between *noise* and *a natural state*. For the future elaboration of an *ontopoetics* this will again come into focus, but it is here possible to add that Deligny's mention of *noise* is indicative of something which lies dormant, something yet to transfer itself from potentiality to actuality. That is, to appear and *then* acquire *meaning*.

Although Deligny greatly inspired Deleuze's and Guattari's conception of *flight-lines* or the rhizomatic network and was himself in turn of course inspired by, for instance, phenomenology and the anthropology movement of the 20th century, his work shows a very distinct difference in the way he puts such a resolute focus on the *act*; and more importantly, an acting *devoid of purpose*. An acting which is free—exemplified by the autistic children who iterate and perform seemingly disinterested, purposeless and meaningless motions and movements. Thereby Deligny evokes how the tacit speaks but has a speech in which its muteness is not a mode of secrecy, but another kind of force of transferring, for lack of a better word, information. Speech (understood as communicating meaning) is instead done by acting.

Tracing is acting.

That the gestures that have succeeded in taking place in time—and time is space, after all, the vast circle of the cooking pot with its blackened

77 Fernand Deligny, *The Arachnean and Other Texts*, First edition. (Minneapolis, MN: Univocal Publishing, 2015), 81.

sides is a space—persist in the form of an iridescent thread presupposes the existence of a certain memory; still one has to wonder what a word can mean?⁷⁸

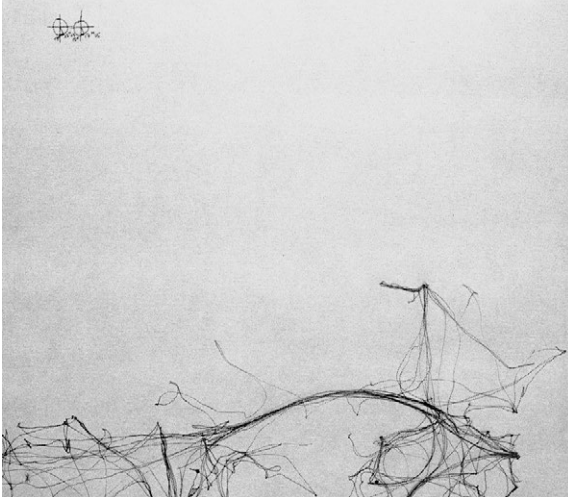


IMAGE 8.⁷⁹

The acting is not done in the likeness of a language. For Deligny, his autists—referred to as *Arachmeans*—create their own spider-like network completely independent of *ours*. It takes place in a poetic space of silence. Not as the absence of noise. Once again, Deligny is not speaking of an *acoustical silence*, but of a silence which has its own richness, in which language as we understand it cannot exist. Cannot asserts its paradigm. The listening for this *silence* is not one in which the ear trains to perceive what can be reduced to a common ground, but a listening which instead adapts to “[...] the perplexity, the disarray, of a being so informed and literally submerged by the nuances that we eliminate, so we can grasp only what the language (of the other) is saying.”⁸⁰

One is reminded of the late works of composer Luigi Nono, in which the ear is as much a wanderer as a listener; as if listening is evoked by the double *turn* of the ear. A tragedy as much as a dream of imagined lost spaces⁸¹. Tracing the ontology of sound is done by tracing its ruin, figuratively as well as aurally.

78 Deligny, 93.

79 Deligny, 245. (although this appendix passage contains no page numbers in the edition)

80 Deligny, 106.

81 Luigi Nono, *Ecrits*, trans. Laurent Feneyrou (Geneva: Contrechamps Editions, 2008), 256–57.

There remains real silence—which moreover does not exist—which would be what is perceived by some being that does not hear, who grasps nothing of what can be said, of what can be exchanged.

Silence is rich, but this ore, these waves, these noises and murmurs cannot yield or produce a language. Silence itself—which is something completely different from the nascence of noise—is the element of Arachnean.⁸²

And poetically enough, Deligny adds:

The *symbolic nuance* of words, gestures, attitudes, mimicries, is not retained, is not heard.⁸³

82 Deligny, *The Arachnean and Other Texts*, 102.

83 Deligny, 106.

Intermission 1

*'Kuarup A & B' for solo
percussion (2013/2018).
Tracing the first contact*



The minimization of distance between meaning and enunciation, which lies at the heart of this project's aspiration is, as much as it is difficult, also the simplest thing; to be transfixed by making sound, the first time performing as in trance. It is easy to remember, on a personal level, discovering with the fingers the modulation between major and minor, the saturation of chords through dissonances, the use of pause, of rhythm, the flesh of the fingers against the string. The grand feeling of discovering something, the sensation of being the first one ever to perform exactly this sound, or these sequences of events. It belongs to a specific period of life, one in which the world transforms. Becoming man, becoming independent, discovering life and death (and love).

The becoming, and the discovery, turns into profession. And with the craft, the sense of innocence. Poetic discovery moves slowly from content to form, and abstraction. However, at some point the tide shifts and what was lost comes again. Not necessarily as intuitive as before, but instead with a developed sensibility.

Memories

Remembering a session with the Italian composer Pierluigi Billone in Vienna more than a decade ago. We had been speaking of notation for hours. How its evolution, but moreover its roots is part of a reciprocity. They speak to each other. Again, the act is not only a sign, but a movement—an allusion to the writings of Simone Weil, who assesses that we cannot have the idea of shape without the idea of movement.⁸⁴ Billone suddenly takes to his feet and strikes his automobile spring coil, which are a central part of his percussion solo *Mani. De Leonardis*. He strikes, then damps, strikes again and lets it decay naturally. He adds nothing, I remain silent, and time passes in silence. Then we continue, but something fundamental has changed. We agree upon it silently.

Around the same time I am working with percussionist Pontus Langendorf. He is doing a new interpretation of my quasi-open score of *Nattarbete*⁸⁵. Pontus uses a frame drum, as well as extending the drum to his body. His

84 Simone Weil, *Lectures on Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1978), 41.

85 *Nattarbete* (*Night work*) was a piece with a relatively open notation, where the score was developed during 2009–2011, but continued to be “transposed” to new versions as late as 2020. Pontus’ rendition with the frame drum, however, was performed in Gothenburg back in 2011.

voice, even the floor, becomes a percussive and musical instrument. Possibly he has heard me speak of the frame drum (which for various reasons always was a central instrument at my home growing up), but somehow I doubt it. In any case, the way Pontus interprets *Nattarbete*, evokes (in me) a feeling of home-coming, a deep sense of ritual—and essentially, while experiencing the performance I clearly feel a short, ecstatic impulse.

How, then, to find a form of dissemination for this development and realization of a poetic strategy? A description of a musicological character would put it at odds with the *ontopoetics*. Furthermore, as will be made clearer in chapters 3 & 4, the discovery and extension of this artistic research has to do with a merging of both a project of sound conception and methodology. However, already present in the following pages and developed through the other *intermissions*, a slow development of musical construction is outlined that in chapter 5 is given a *form*. A form that at this stage poses two guiding principles or considerations:

- A particular piece of music expresses only a fraction of the work behind it; however, it does present its own universe, wherein the *invisible* part of its construction remains implicit, but never expressed, but can be *traced*.
- The form of dissemination must consider language, but really, music-language, as something decisively different than the rules of our written or oral communication: is it possible to write was not written, and thereby place the *tracing* in the open?

The Frame Drum and the Spring Drum

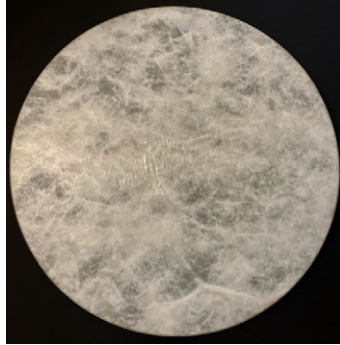


IMAGE 9. The frame drum used for composing Kuarup A.

The frame drum and the particular spring drum used for Kuarup A and B share a number of features, most visibly the skin-covered frame and wooden construction. However, what they relate to in construction are differently posed in relation to what they imply. The frame drum has its vast, geographically and culturally deep connotation to ancient music, to the *horse* of the shaman, to the secret door to the heavens of a tribal community. The spring drum in a sense only seems to be indicative of a special effect, the illustrative thunder or the rumbling of soundscapes at a theatre performance.



IMAGE 10. The spring drum used to compose Kuarup B.



IMAGE 11. Ibid.

Composing these two solos in one way posed very different difficulties. In the actual process, though, they rather informed each other through their respective similarity in sound, but difference in origin. The cultural emptiness of the spring drum inspired and gave space for the exploration of the frame drum, where the profound matter of the frame drum gave the simple spring drum somehow some sense of dialogue partner of importance. These two instruments may be far apart in terms of history, they nevertheless are based on a common sound culture even if their application in that sound culture is only remotely related, and this distance exposes their implicit relative importance in the said sound culture. We could say: where one points in fact to its heart of it (the frame drum), the other points to its superficiality (the spring drum).

As for composing, the Kuarup A precedes naturally the B, in terms of genesis, but they were contemplated simultaneously. And much of their particular gestural and musical development follow and inform one another.

The Hand and the Voice

To touch the frame drum, without losing myself in a maze of connotations was not only the greatest difficulty of *Kuarup A*, but in many ways the key to my desire to compose it. I am aware of the use of the frame drum in countless cultures, and by its use for centuries. From a historical viewpoint, however, I associate it primarily with its shamanic origin, and in particular its connection to *sapmi* culture. It is also in the context of the Innuits that we can localize its archeological origin, with the oldest remnants of a frame drum dated back more than 4000 years, buried in the ice and snow in Greenland⁸⁶. Contrary to what is usually considered the normal way of performing sound on the frame drum (to beat on the skin with a beater), the drum was made to vibrate through beating the frame. The frame, traditionally made of driftwood or pieces of bone in Greenland, was beaten by a bone or wood stick causing the head, covered with seal or caribou skin, to resonate with a treble sound⁸⁷. Furthermore, the shaman of Greenland, the Angakkuq, uses the voice to whisper and sing into the head of the drum,

86 Bjarne Gronnow, "The Backbone of the Saqqaq Culture: A Study of the Nonmaterial Dimensions of the Early Arctic Small Tool Tradition", *Arctic Anthropology* 49, no. 2 (2012): 65, <https://doi.org/10.1353/arc.2012.0024>.

87 Michael Hauser, *Traditional Greenlandic Music*, Acta Ethnomusicologica Danica, 7 (København: Kragen/Ulo, 1992), 361.

capturing, sustaining or evoking the resonance of the instrument, producing an amplification of the sound, ambiguous, secret, thereby ultimately underlining the inherent magic qualities of the act of sound.

The more commonly associated *drumming* of the frame drum seems to be not only a later extension of the sound, but also a more accessible and common form of taking part in the ritual dimension of its music, that is, more for the *common* people, whereas the former way of producing sound was of a more secret and *powerful* order.

In my own work on both Kuarup A & B the intersection of the frame, the skin and the voice became key. I started to explore possible sound-evoking gestures where the hand, the instrument and the voice all took part in a common strategy. In hindsight, the most important point, in many ways banal, became the movement of an articulated knock on the frame, while extending the resonance of the sound with the voice. Similarly important was a knock on the spring drum while using its resonance hole (in different degrees of open and closed) to imitate a strange, artificial, extension of the voice.

Although not made with the intention of creating a method in which the focus becomes an *exploration of the first contact* (as described in chapter 5), The strategy more and more grew into that direction. Slowly, I began to put focus on short, evocative gestures that grew in terms of combinations. They developed, combined, and thereby made longer and longer phrases.

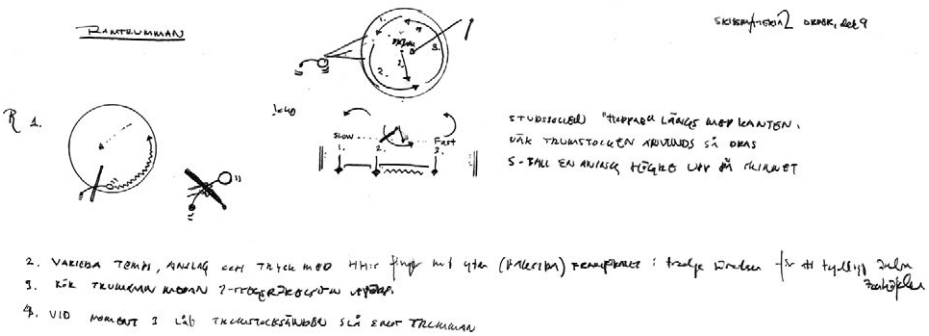


IMAGE 12.

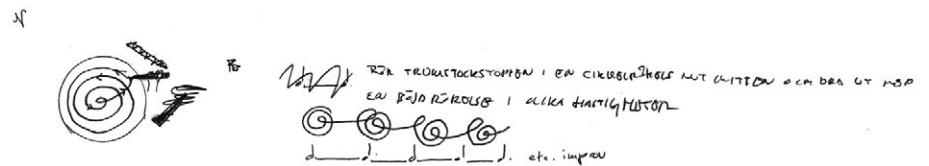


IMAGE 13.

- The alternation of the beating of the “cushion” of the hand and my knuckles on the frame, extended by the voice, repeated again and again.
- The manic repetition of long elaborated rhythms on the frame while including and developing sounds on the skin and through the voice (or with the spring in relation to Kuarup B).
- The extension and transformation of all these actions with different kind of mallets, where the state of being in sound was felt—if not in the actual score of the piece, at least in its *improvisation*.

Most important, by the end of the composition I could close my eyes, grab the instrument, and place myself in its sound world in a meditative state, where I felt I was in touch with an infinite number of possible realizations and that Kuarup A & B was only the manifestation of one specific topography of sound. Naturally the one in which I felt I reached the limits of my possibilities (at the time).

Of course, when you study and [make] experiments, you prepare many materials, many possibilities, then, what I continue to call, the mystery of composition occurs. Here [Luigi Nono is speaking of the composition process of his piece *Prometeo*] it happens that there is an instinct, memories that despite everything settle in us, collide with other possibilities, therefore the moment of choice. I really don't know why you choose one sound over another. And then... there was no system [...] Why I became a musician? I don't know either. Personally, I don't think everything is decided at birth. A person is born and *becomes*. I believe there is... for me everyone has their own story.⁸⁸

Chapter 3

Introducing a few examples



Artaud—Grotowski—Galas

Ontopoetics II

Ontology

We need to elaborate the *ontopoetics* gradually in pace with how the *praxis*, which is slowly, emergingly traced through these different texts. Preceding the etymological construction of *ontopoetics*, we find, naturally, *ontology*; the ancient branch of metaphysics. The ὄν-τος of classic Greek, be-there, or more commonly: that which is. The λογία, then denoting a *logical* progression. How something is there (here) with a logos. Logos which for anyone of etymological interest also means, simply, word, but furthermore, *logos*' definition consists of a wide array of meanings that contain related (yet different) translations such as 'ground' 'proportion' 'order' 'speech' etc. That is, how something is *here (there) as a word/speech/order/proportion/ground and so on*. In western tradition it is however easiest associated through *order* and *knowledge*. However, the subject at hand is sound. Not only in the form of music.; sound as balance, listening, sound as a form-of-being, sound as the most immediate expression of thought and meaning. However, this means that even if the subject is as illusive and sometimes banal as a drum, it is still a question of knowledge. One that is tacit—and yet embedded in sound, but furthermore: in our hands. We look to our hands, we caress, grab firmly our instrument, and make it come to life. Each time we knock, play or in any way make the instrument vibrate (or just touch) we learn our ears something. It teaches our ears how and for what to listen. The *logos* of sound comes indeed from our body and properly from our hands, our voice—these two precious poles of setting ourselves and our extension(s) in movement.

However, this is only to locate how a sound becomes, in itself it has nothing to do with art (in our understanding of the word), in itself it is only a manifestation of a relationship that needs no cultural distinction, again the musician is one who takes care of sound.

Heidegger—Nietzsche, Meditation and Carnival

In Heidegger's readings of Nietzsche, one could (at least I do) argue that he finds himself a dialogue partner from which the infamous *Die Kehre*⁸⁹ of his thinking becomes the most comprehensible. Early in the lectures he writes: "All great thinkers think the same. Yet this 'same' is so essential and so rich that no single thinker can exhaust it."⁹⁰ Sameness would occupy Heidegger for the rest of his life. In the heart of it we find the mode of *Being* (*Da-sein*, as Heidegger puts it, literally: there-being). The ontological question (as developed in western philosophy) had been minimized to a myth by Nietzsche as "the most general, emptiest concept, the last wisp of reality."⁹¹ For Heidegger being nevertheless remains his life-mission but it is explored in an increasingly artistic direction (of thought). In fact, the "nothing" of Nietzsche becomes central for Heidegger in interpreting being. In Heidegger's *What is metaphysics?* he views *nothing* as literally "no thing" and includes it in his prolongation of the project of viewing being as remote from the *phenomena* of Kant. Instead Heidegger writes: "Pure Being and pure Nothing are [...] the same."⁹²

Metaphysics (*meta ta physica*—over the physical) for Heidegger is indeed an inquiry *beyond* beings. As such the question of why something *is* instead of *not* becomes more or less possible to formulate as: "Why are there entities at all, and not nothing?"⁹³

Where shall we seek the nothing? Where will we find the nothing? In order to find something must we not already know in general that it is there? [...] Is there ultimately such a thing as a search without that anticipation, a search to which pure discovery belongs? [...] We can of course think the whole of beings in an 'idea', the negate what we have imagined [...] In this way we do attain the formal concept of the imagined nothing but never the nothing itself.⁹⁴

- 89 Some years after Heidegger's *Being and Time*, sometime during the 1930s a *turn* in his thinking emerges. One which doesn't change his philosophical direction, but changes his approach and the way he addresses the question of being and especially the sources for his conclusion. The sources increasingly become tied to artistic (foremost poetic) endeavors.
- 90 Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Vol. 1, The Will to Power as Art* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 36.
- 91 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols.*, Oxford World's Classics Ser (Oxford: Oxford University Press USA—OSO, 2009), 38.
- 92 Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, 56.
- 93 Heidegger, xii.
- 94 Heidegger, 49.

The location of Being, for Heidegger, finds itself most tellingly in the experience of *nothing*. Famously characterized by Heidegger as boredom, fear or anxiety⁹⁵. Furthermore, Heidegger uses mood, *Stimmung*, as a way of experiencing Being, meaning that the metaphysical question is not strictly speaking a question with an answer. Instead it is an experience which in its event comes to us as a mood and a wordless understanding, as an *apprehension*⁹⁶.

We ‘hover’ in anxiety. More precisely, anxiety leaves us hanging because it induces the slipping away of beings as a whole. This implies that we ourselves—we humans who are in being—in the midst of beings slip away from ourselves [...] In the altogether unsettling experience for this hovering where there is nothing to hold onto, pure *Da-sein* is all that is still there.⁹⁷

In his study of the relation between anxiety and being, Heidegger writes something that is essential for me: “Anxiety robs us of speech.”⁹⁸ Something falls *silent*. The *Stimmung*, or attunement of the situation brings about an apprehension in which language fail to help us. Here, we are not only in the clearing which Heidegger brings about in sensing *Da-sein*, but we also approach the artworld; the domain where something is *perceived* rather than being known. A context in which knowledge is formed through a becoming, where the *clearing* (*Lichtung*), or *event* (*Ereignis*) of Heidegger, makes space for a mood in which Being is apprehended. In his “Origin of the work of art” Heidegger retracts from the reception of works of art as based on pleasure. What the work of art does is to disclose the world, it *unearths* something previously hidden: “The work [of art, my note] holds open the open region of the world.”⁹⁹

In so doing the world comes before us not as Being, but as *in being*, a relationship, or connectedness which brings about a sense of balance. That is, we are—regardless of science, language etc.—suddenly *in tune* with the world. We are grounded. And yet this grounding, as much as his metaphor of the clearing, is also encircled with a sense of *nothing*. In front of the work of art: we pause in “the simple factum est [...] that such a work is at all rather

95 Heidegger, 50.

96 Heidegger, xi.

97 Heidegger, 51.

98 Heidegger, 51.

99 Heidegger, 109.

than is not [...] this 'that it is' of createdness."¹⁰⁰ We see here a transition of emphasis in western epistemology of transcendence. Where Kant's "Critique of Judgement" gives focus to an experience of the work of art in a sense of disinterestedness paired with a fulfilment (of pleasure), Heidegger instead, through phenomenology, tries to infer an understanding of transcendence in which knowledge is made known through perception rather than an almost strictly causal effect of the objective conditions set up by, essentially, Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason'.

Knowledge instead comes to us in a word-less form. As the work of art suddenly emanates so does our *attunement* with the world and thereby our tacit understanding of it.

Anxiety, boredom, fear, awe, any kind of mood does not only disclose being, it also gives us an apprehension of *nothing*. The realization that what was once seemingly non-existent, is now *unearthed*. It was in a sense already present as potentiality, but unknown. It had to become, but this becoming came about as an act of artistic/human illumination which made something to be perceivable.

This brings us back to Heidegger's lectures on Nietzsche. Whereas Nietzsche evaporates the question of being as previously understood, he does not abandon it. Instead, through Nietzsche, the turn from *being* to *becoming* is made manifest by the use of the '*will to power*', and his idea of the '*eternal return*'. And by becoming, by viewing being not in the dichotomy of essence or existence (and how these should be chronologically thought of) Heidegger indeed finds the key for his own historic and slowly unveiling view on being. The unearthing of the world does not disclose an axiomatic origin, but instead posits an *ontogenesis*, echoing the previous discussion in chapters 1 and 2.

In fact, Nietzsche's often antinomistic strategy of possibly obliterating philosophy as we know it, is in itself what Heidegger associates with the function of the work of art; of opening the world anew. And with Nietzsche this happens on the level of condition, the conditions for knowledge grounded by Kant are made scarce by Nietzsche and we can thereby trace Heidegger's own development:

But what is essential in the revolutionary is not that he [Nietzsche, my note] overturns as such; it is rather that in overturning he brings to light what is decisive and essential [...] Eternity, not as static 'now', nor as a sequence of 'nows' rolling off into the infinite, but as the 'now' that bends

back into itself: what is that if not the concealed essence of time? Thinking being, will to power, as eternal return, thinking the most difficult thought of philosophy, means thinking being as time.¹⁰¹

With Nietzsche we are asked to follow this *will to power* as an embodiment, “It is necessary for many reasons that we be recluses and that we don masks—consequently, we shall do poorly in searching out our comrades.”¹⁰² The strategy is one of complete immersion—on many levels a philosophical strategy of the carnival (where up is down, where high is low, where slave is King and etc.) on all levels. The *Stimmung* of Heidegger is in Nietzsche rather evoked and conjured up. Its essence is no longer possible to communicate in words:

I [Nietzsche, my note] have dictated for two or three hours practically every day, but my ‘philosophy’—if I have the right to call it by the name of something that has maltreated me down to the very roots of my being—is no longer communicable, at least not in print.¹⁰³

Again, we are faced with two expressions of ecstasy. The carnival-like extrovert form of Nietzsche and the more introvert mystic version of Heidegger. Western philosophical techniques of ecstasy, which in the heart of their ambition always speak of the unmentionable, of a certain predicament of sensations, of either a complete withdrawal or a method of destruction to arrive, more or less, at the same¹⁰⁴ point; one of becoming.

Again, we arrive at an *ontopoetics*. How becoming is essentially of a poetic order. What once was, comes again, but more importantly: what once was *nothing*, is now in the open.

Antonin Artaud

Life consists of burning up questions.

I cannot conceive of work that is detached from life.

101 Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Vol. 1, The Will to Power as Art*, 13.

102 Heidegger, 29.

103 Heidegger, 13.

104 “All great thinkers think the same.” we remember Heidegger’s words, which allude not only to the history of philosophy, but also as a response to the raging of Nietzsche: “My philosophy—to draw men away from semblance, no matter what the danger! And no fear that life will perish!”. Despite an apparent difference of method, in the end he seems to place himself close to the late years of Heidegger’s introspections.

I do not like detached creation. Neither can I conceive of the mind as detached from itself. Each of my works, each diagram of myself, each glacial flowering of my inmost soul dribbles over me.¹⁰⁵

French writer, poet and dramatist Antonin Artaud's artistic background is spelled Surrealism. It is important; a movement shaped by the desire to invoke the unconscious—to create a kind of hyper-reality in the clash between what we normally consider “reality” and what takes place in our dreams, or better yet—in our imagination. Although Artaud's defining mark on the theories of theatre come at a time when he has denounced Surrealism (or been rejected by the movement's prominent figures in Paris).

Artaud's life was plagued by a nervous disposition. A weak psychological state which deteriorated both by self-medication (different morphine-based drugs, most notably his strong heroin addiction) and long spells of hospitalization. The revolutionary manifesto *Theatre of Cruelty* was mostly realized during a time when Artaud spent his life falling in and out of different asylums. In summary, he was deemed mad and his final contribution to the theatre is brought to life during his descent into clinical insanity (although, some would later argue, his insanity could as easily be understood as eccentricity, but an eccentricity without financial or social support. An argument that in the end gave Artaud a few final months in relative freedom before he passed away¹⁰⁶).

As a writer he was poorly published during his lifetime. He did some stage acting, had some involvement in the film industry (preserved, memorably, in the strange silent movie *The Passion of Joan of Arc* from 1928¹⁰⁷). He co-created the theatre of Alfred Jarry in Paris in the 20s, he wrote a few plays, and by the end of his life he managed to write and record a radiophonic work (*Pour finir avec la jugement de dieu*) for the French radio (which was retracted before being broadcasted and remained ‘lost’ for about 20 years). Above all, what remains is, without doubt, the publication in 1938 of *The Theatre and Its Double* with its (previously published) manifestos for the *Theatre of Cruelty* and its text on Balinese, oriental and alchemical theatre.

105 Antonin Artaud, Susan Sontag, and Helen Weaver, *Antonin Artaud, Selected Writings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 59.

106 Gérard Mordillat and Jérôme Prieur. *La véritable histoire d'Artaud le Môme*, Documentary (Arcanal, Centre Georges Pompidou, La Sept-Arte, 1994).

107 Carl Theodor Dreyer. *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*, Biography, Drama, History (Société générale des films, 1932).

Antonin Artaud attacks in his *Theatre of Cruelty* the state of the theatre in the 30s, proposing instead a performance technique and approach to the stage which in most regards negate the normal way of presenting and performing theatre in the West.

It is a vision in which he wishes to create a communion between actor and audience in a magic exorcism; one in which gestures, sounds, unusual scenery, and lighting create a form of language superior to words. A form which strives to subvert the intellect and logic and instead shock the spectator to face his or her unconscious. It is a theatre in which passion rules reason. The *double* in the title of the book refers a hyper-reality, that will induce in both performer and audience an ambiguous feeling: are we experiencing a *dream* or *reality*?

The key to this theatre is improvisation, in a vast sense. An improvisation involving the body in an immersive sense. Intonation, cries, moans, singing, the sound of the body or the absence of sound comes into the foreground. It is at the same time, it is an improvisation governed by a rigid structure—the ‘spectacle’ (as Artaud usually refers to the performance) is given a pre-determined *rhythm* through a detailed plan of events.

Artaud’s decisive point for developing the *Theatre of Cruelty* seems to be his attendance of a performance of “authentic” Balinese theatre in Paris. Now, it is important to note here that many of his ideas are drawn or modelled on what he alleges to find in the Balinese, Chinese, South-American and different East-Asian tradition. However, his readings of these tradition are really his own. What he does is similar to what many others—since colonization became a topic of intellectual work—have done: to appropriate and only use what confirms their own view or, rather, aspiration. It doesn’t mean that Artaud’s intentions are of less value, his sincerity is obvious. His wide travels, not least to South America (and everything he experienced there) testify to the extent of his desire to transgress and emulate a different way of approaching the stage, poetry and the theatre. However, at the time of his writing and conception of the *Theatre of Cruelty* his analysis of Balinese theatre should be seen in the light of his manifesto. Artaud writes on the Balinese theatre:

The drama does not develop as a conflict of feelings but as a state of mind, which are themselves ossified and reduced to gestures—to structures.¹⁰⁸

It harmonizes with the ambition of his manifesto, but poorly with the Balinese theatre¹⁰⁹, although the use of symbolism is for sure very prominent in Balinese and—in general—Asian traditional theatre.

Artaud—the Technique

There is no stage—instead there is a space to be used in all possible aspects for the performances. The audience is placed in the centre encircled by the performance, or ‘spectacle’. The distance or proximity of actors, the height, or the gradation of the room, all is there to be used to infer a more intense and unescapable experience for the audience. The audience is even suggested to be involved in the drama.

Furthermore, *the mise-en-scène* is replacing the idea of the text. The objects on “stage”—regardless of what they may be—constitute the departure point of the creation on stage (in space). The reason for this is that it erases the distance between author and director.

There is no formal text, but there is nevertheless the use of language, but an avoidance of a usage we usually associate with it. Language is dis-trusted, since:

- a it defines a particular place and culture and is thus limiting and therefore
- b it is inadequate to express the extremes of human passion. Better would be sounds—howls, sighs, moans, groans etc.¹¹⁰

There is also an idea of an extended usage of hieroglyphs or symbols that in many ways replaces the need for words. Facial expressions, bodily positions are all to be treated as symbols. Artaud speaks of verbal images. That is, Artaud imagines a ‘concrete language’ of visual symbols that are to be understood on an intuitive level of the audience:

Rather than explaining in words “I feel great sympathy for you. I am sorry for your pain” one actor might curl his body in a warm protective shape over the hunched sobbing body of another. The idea is that this is something an audience would be able to understand immediately without having to use language to explain or reflect upon.¹¹¹

109 Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, 89.

110 “Dramaworks-Artaud-through-Practice.pdf”, 2001, 5.

111 “Dramaworks-Artaud-through-Practice.pdf”, 5.

In the section on the language of the stage, we read:

There is, besides, a concrete idea of music in which sounds make entrances like characters, in which harmonies are cut in two and are lost in the precise entrances of words¹¹²

Musical instruments, if used, are, as the *mise-en-scène* depicts, part of the stage set. They are used by the actors—once again—as points of departure for the spectacles. More importantly the instruments used should be objects of unknown sounds. Research should be made into creating new resonances, new ideas of the octave. Later in the manifesto it is also mentioned that the instruments should be of enormous size. One senses an idea of instruments which more resembles a stage set which are used as resonant dead bodies. Not without cause, one is reminded of the sounding houses in Francis Bacon's *The New Atlantis*.¹¹³

In similar fashion as with sound Artaud imagines a completely new way of using lightning on stage and a more flexible panorama of frequencies. Light should essentially be no less important to the performance than the actors in the space. All should work together: to quote: "From one means of expression to another, correspondences and levels are created; and even the lighting can have a specific intellectual meaning."¹¹⁴ In other words, total theatre.

Masks and props should frequently be used, but similarly to the instruments their shapes and appearance should have an un-earthly character (although at other places in *The Theatre and Its Double* they are mostly thought of as masks from ancient or distant cultures). Artaud continues with abolishing the use of traditional sets, but as we already have understood the sets are already present in forms of verbal images, instruments, masks and so on.

Increasingly, a stage or a 'spectacle' is disclosed which clearly speaks to the human being as an ancient, mythologically receptive being, one in which archetypes and some kind of notion of *magic* means something. It speaks to us in a pre-verbal state, where sound occupies an unprecedented importance as one of the foremost means of immediacy. Artaud's idea of sound is not limited to the bodies, but furthermore to an idea of space. Sounds *speak* to us, also through spatial displacement:

¹¹² Artaud, Sontag, and Weaver, *Antonin Artaud, Selected Writings*, 247.

¹¹³ Sir Thomas More et al., *Utopia*, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: University Press, 1999), x.

¹¹⁴ Artaud, Sontag, and Weaver, *Antonin Artaud, Selected Writings*, 247.

[Theatre] requires *expression in space* [...] we must first of all put an end to the subjugation of the theatre to the text, and rediscover the notion of a [...] language halfway between gesture and thought. [...] This is the function of intonations, the particular way a word is uttered. And beyond the auditory language of sounds [...] their combinations, are extended until they become signs and these signs become a kind of alphabet. Once the theatre has become aware of this language in space, which is a language of sounds, cries, lights, onomatopoeia,¹¹⁵

Finally, I quote Artaud extensively on four of his concluding remarks:

WORKS. We shall not perform any written plays, but shall attempt to create productions directly on stage around subjects, events, or known works. [...]

THE ACTOR. The actor is at once an element of prime importance, and a kind of passive and neutral element, since all personal initiative is denied him. Between the actor from whom one requires the mere quality of a sob and the actor who must deliver a speech with his own personal qualities of persuasion, there is the whole margin that separates a man from an instrument.

INTERPRETATION. The spectacle will be calculated from beginning to end, like a language. In this way there will be no wasted moment and all the movements will follow a rhythm. [...]

CRUELTY. Without an element of cruelty at the foundation of every spectacle, the theatre is not possible. In the state of degeneration, in which we live, it is through the skin that metaphysics will be made to re-enter our minds.¹¹⁶

Jerzy Grotowski

It is anyhow impossible to treat it in merely artistic terms. It resulted in my fundamental transformation, not only as an actor, but also as a human being.¹¹⁷

115 Artaud, Sontag, and Weaver, 242.

116 Artaud, Sontag, and Weaver, 250–51.

117 <https://culture.pl/en/article/the-grotowski-glossary>

Polish theatre director Jerzy Grotowski is one of the followers of Artaud. In his work there is not an ambition of realizing the *Theatre of Cruelty*, instead he develops a practice which in many ways takes each of Artaud's points into consideration. In Grotowski's "hands" the reply to Artaud's vision is given a very different realization. One which, contrary to Artaud, is presented on an actual stage. To quote Grotowski himself:

Artaud was an extraordinary visionary, but his writings have little methodological meaning because they are not the product of long-term practical investigations. They are an astounding prophecy, not a program.¹¹⁸

Grotowski's practice is called "the poor theatre". Just as Artaud he sees no obvious reason for the use of a text. Furthermore, he places the audience in new ways in space. Often in a circle around the actors (in opposition to Artaud), or even at random places on 'stage'. He always uses sound as an acoustic phenomenon. There are no spectacular sets. As with Artaud, the props placed on stage remain the only ones which should be used throughout the performance. No make-up. In centre we always find the performer, the body and its development in an essentially *physical theatre*. Grotowski founded a "laboratory" in Poland where his group prepared performances with a rehearsal period extending over years. Another theatre director who repeatedly pays homage to Artaud, Peter Brook, writes on his experience of Grotowski working with his theatre group:

What did the work do?

It gave each actor a series of shocks.

The shock of confronting himself in the face of simple irrefutable challenges.

The shock of catching sight of his own evasions, tricks and clichés.

The shock of sensing something of his own vast and untapped resources.

The shock of being forced to question why he is an actor at all.

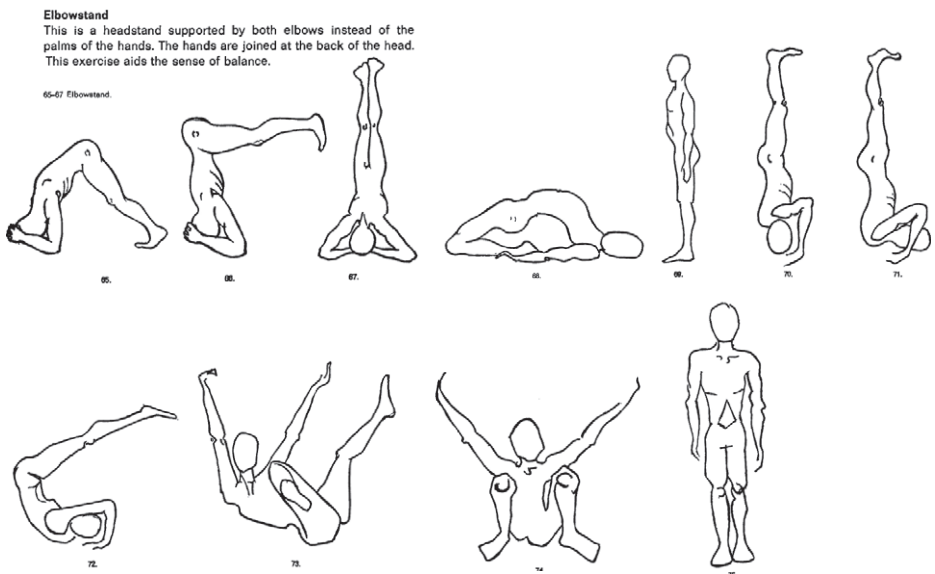
[...] The shock of seeing that somewhere in the world acting is an art of absolute dedication, monastic and total. That Artaud's now-hackneyed phrase 'cruel to myself' is genuinely a complete way of life—somewhere—for less than a dozen of people.

[...] For Grotowski acting is a vehicle ... The theatre is not an escape, a refuge. A way of life is a way to life.¹¹⁹

118 Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, 23–24.

119 Grotowski, 11–12.

On video, but also with detailed images in *Towards a Poor Theatre*, you can find some examples of how Grotowski's technique is taught. Exercise after exercise perfects the movement, the understanding there-of is that the actor is more than just a 'mover'. Instead, the movement becomes the vehicle to create meaning in a unique—and I should add spiritual—sense. According to Grotowski, the actor reaches a heightened state of perception, or spirituality, through the work. However, the actors are not working on their spirituality, but on the composition of their role. To quote Grotowski again: "We find that artificial composition (the method) not only does not limit the spiritual but actually leads to it."¹²⁰



Exercise consisting of the co-ordination of various parts of an arbitrary cycle

The process is as follows:

- To embrace
- To take
- To take for oneself
- To possess
- To protect

All these elements must be linked together in a co-ordinated movement. It is of the greatest importance that the vertebral column be continuously activated throughout this exercise. The vertebral column is the centre of expression. The driving impulse, however, stems from the loins. Every live impulse begins in this region, even if invisible from the outside.

Following Cieslak's example, the pupils are made to repeat this process, first individually and then in pairs. In the latter case a certain association already exists:

- To embrace
- To take
- To push away

IMAGE 16.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Grotowski, 17.

¹²¹ Grotowski, 155–59.

There is an abundance of exercises (the ensemble worked in the laboratory for years in preparation to go on stage), for the voice, body, for the space. In themselves the exercises do not constitute a performance; they are merely a guide to a “right” kind of concentration—in which what is learned is embodied and awakens something within the subject:

The process itself, though to some extent dependent upon concentration, confidence, exposure, and almost disappearance into the acting craft, is not voluntary. The requisite state of the mind is a passive readiness to realize an active role, a state in which one does not “want to do that” but rather “resigns from not doing it”.¹²²

The theatre of cruelty becomes in Grotowski’s ‘hands’ *total theatre* (or total act, a term Grotowski often referred to¹²³). Grotowski transforms the prophecy and challenge of Artaud into a technique which as much as it is a guide to performance also is a kind of spiritual and therapeutic *way-of-life*. In the text *He wasn’t entirely himself* Grotowski makes a very telling remark of the *Shaman* Artaud:

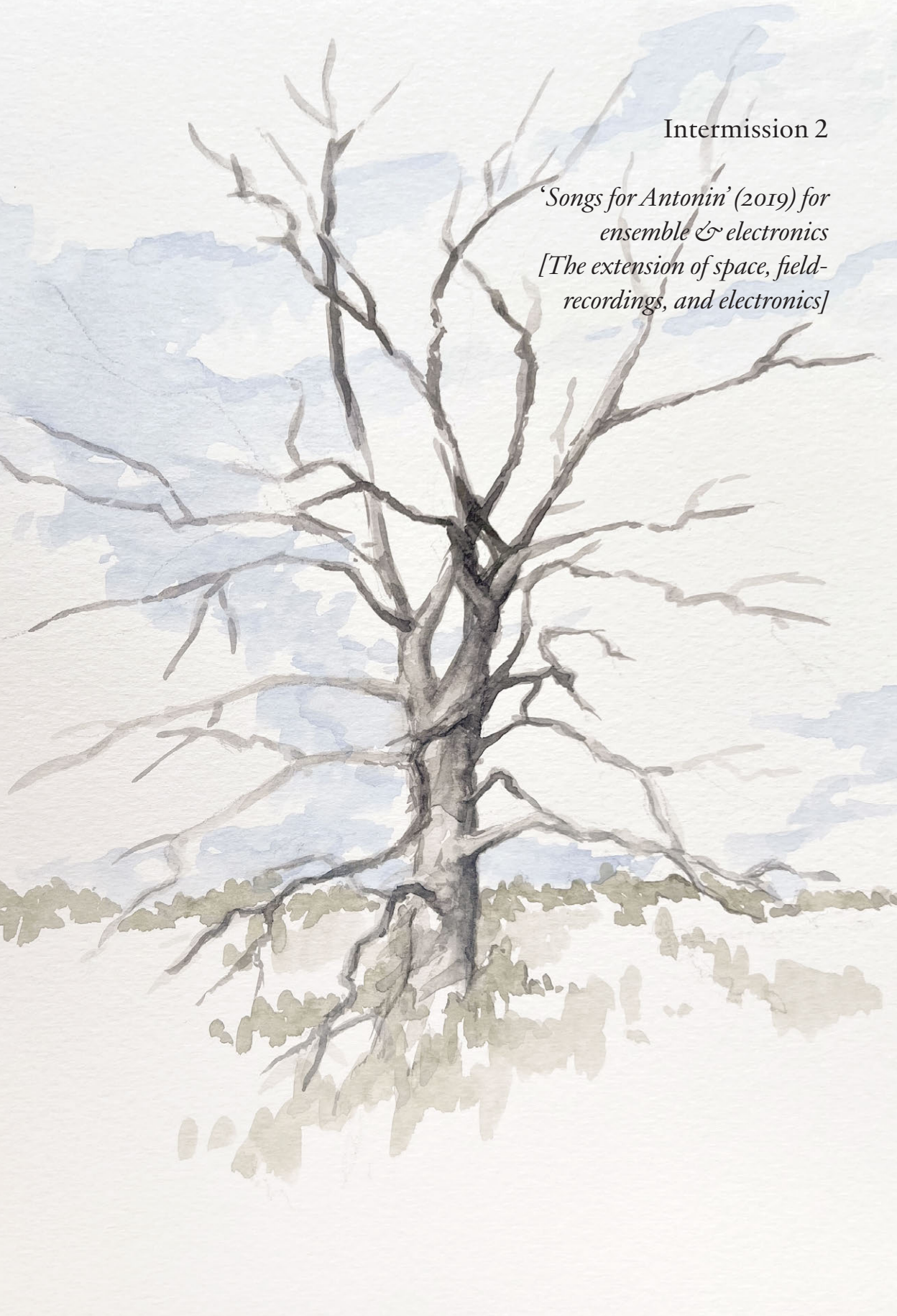
Artaud teaches us a great lesson [...] This lesson is his sickness. [...] his sickness, paranoia, differed from the sickness of the times. Civilization is sick with schizophrenia, which is the rupture between intelligence and feeling, body and soul. [...] Artaud defined his illness [...]: ‘I am not entirely myself’. He was not merely himself; he was someone else. He grasped half of his own dilemma, how to be oneself. He left his other half untouched: how to be whole, how to be complete.¹²⁴

Grotowski and Artaud share a lineage. One raised his voice and hurled his venom, the other turned the frenzy into a heartfelt gift. Where Artaud’s fury was ripe with paradox, it was nevertheless fused with an unmistakable desire. Grotowski embraced and allowed the passion of the *theatre of cruelty* to transform into an intimate, relational, and spiritual practice, one in which the act(ing) aims for a *totality*. Still today, their called-for practice remains a both technical, physical, but perhaps even more—social— challenge. They are not necessarily looking for something new, rather they are excavating something long lost; something almost shattered by our western culture, but whose power remains, dormant, but not through magic and tricks, but through passion, dedication and by—perhaps—being a *shaman*.

122 Grotowski, 17.

123 Grotowski, 91.

124 Grotowski, 91.



Intermission 2

*'Songs for Antonin' (2019) for
ensemble & electronics
[The extension of space, field-
recordings, and electronics]*

Distrust of Language—Distrust of Passion

IMAGE 17.¹²⁵

Antonin Artaud could be considered to represent the extrovert of the ecstatic poles sketched in the section *Techniques of Ecstasy II* (page 42–48), at the other pole it would be possible to place French mystic and philosopher Simone Weil. A thinker who only in passing have been mentioned so far, but one which by the end of this thesis will occupy an implicit and central, part. Where Artaud symbolizes the distrust of language, the desire for the evocative, and the provocative, Weil’s mystic contemplations, although riddled with paradoxes, its vision of movement preceding thought, the counter movement of gravity and grace¹²⁶, and her famous depiction of *metaxu as every separation is a link*¹²⁷ could be considered to have the ambition to transcend the human psyche using techniques relating to the ecstatic. On one hand Artaud with passion and with excess, on the other hand Weil through the ascetic and through a sense of muteness.

¹²⁵ First sketch of *Songs for Antonin*, probably sometime during the early summer of 2017.

¹²⁶ “All the natural movements of the soul are controlled by laws analogous to those of physical gravity. Grace is the only exception. Grace fills empty spaces, but it can only enter where there is a void to receive it, and it is grace itself which makes this void. The imagination is continually at work filling up all the fissures through which grace might pass.” Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, First complete English language edition, Routledge Classics (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 1.

¹²⁷ Weil, 145.

Songs for Antonin form together with the later composed *Songs for Simone* [2021/22] a kind of twin piece. They are not opposites, instead they share a common core of material and strategies, I even started writing them, one could say, in an inverted order. In the first sketches of what would become *Songs for Antonin*, the piece was called *Songs for Simone*. Although the material in itself didn't dramatically change in the shift from *Simone* to *Antonin*, it began to be increasingly clear that what the piece needed (or what I desired, rather) was not the asceticism of Weil, but the passion of Artaud. To be blunt: I felt my project of sound needed something hard, rather than cold. With Artaud's distrust of language, with his carnivalesque vision, with his implicit rethinking of the space, with the reimagining of sound—musician—actor—stage, Artaud offered a frame in which I possibly could find a dialogue partner to go further. It was clear for me, early on, that this could not be realized in a 1-to-1 strategy. That is, it was not to transfer the few methods Artaud imply onto an instrumental ensemble. It would be naïve. Grotowski's laboratory, for example, is a community of dedicated actors living close-by for years and thereby slowly making a physical theatre possible. Perhaps, vaguely, the "whatever singularity"¹²⁸ of Agamben, which I at the time read thoroughly, influenced me too much. The idea of a communal composing act does not even mirror the passion of Artaud. The singularity is too strong. The immediate sensation of sound, sound as an existential act, the distrust of language—and in extension: the techniques of ecstasy are forms in which both the idea of universality and individuality is suspended. An *ontopoetics* has to be less of a theory, but more of a practice, a discovery—of the condition in which the composer—again—takes as much *care of the sound* itself as possible.

128 "The Whatever in question here relates to singularity not in its indifference with respect to a common property [...], but only in its being *such as it is*. Singularity is thus freed from the false dilemma that obliges knowledge to choose between the ineffability of the individual and intelligibility of the universal." Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, Theory out of Bounds, [1] (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1993), 2.

[Transcription and Observation]

Songs for Antonin is scored for an ensemble of flute, clarinet(s), saxophone(s), piano, percussion, violin and cello. Additionally, it uses five loudspeakers, through which several soundfiles are distributed by a max/msp-patch¹²⁹. The ensemble set-up is not without importance. The piece came about as a commission from the American Switch~ensemble, with the deliberate request for pieces requiring multi-media set ups. In early sketches, where the piece was still called *Songs for Simone*, ideas of video are also present. In the context of the past 5–6 years the thought of writing music with further sources than sounds was utterly unfamiliar to me, and yet somehow a logical step. The work on *Kuarup A & B* (page 57–61), *Noein. Noaidi, Insula. Pharos* (page 97–110) and *Isola* (page 125–135) had all respectively involved extensive recordings and transcriptions, even my own demo-versions of the pieces. These recordings would eventually have a major influence of what would become *Songs for Antonin* and in the end they lay the foundation of the different strategies developed in chapter 5 and the pieces composed in relation to the novel *Den svarta solen*. Except for a very, brief premature phase, *Songs for Antonin* was never intended to realize a *music of cruelty*, but something in Artaud's vision began to have a particular sound quality in my imagination, something connected with his thoughts on theater, on art, on space, began to have a particular sound quality in my imagination. As if by simply reflecting on the *theatre of cruelty* there appeared the imagination of a music which explored qualities I hadn't previously managed to include in my music. Qualities which for lack of a better word seemed to speak to me of sounds that preceded articulation or magnified what was already mumbling or rumbling in the background.

Through Artaud's only surviving sounding example, the radio-play *Pour finir avec le jugement de dieu* I found the definite turning point from *Songs for Simone* to *Songs for Antonin*. The radio-play is of a rare insanity. Not only the surreal text, but also its strange musical framing; the actors shift from moaning to outright screams accompanied by a few relentless percussion instruments.

129 A software which enables one to, most importantly, work with sound files in a live-environment. Typically used by recording sound in real-time and either manipulating in real-time or using the live-recorded files at a later time during the same piece (either clear or digitally transformed). In *Songs for Antonin* the software was used to distribute the soundfiles to specific speakers. It was controlled by the piano performer through the use of a midi-keyboard.

The radio-production begins as a political attack on the US, but its epicentre is centred around the rite of the black sun, *Tutuguri*, of the Tarahumara natives of Mexico. Its rite is memorably described in the radio-play by the French actress Maria Caserès. *Pour finir avec le jugement de dieu* was retracted from the French radio before broadcasting due to its extreme nature. Now, 75+ years later it still comes across remarkable. Its sound, both with instruments and voices, and its strange recitations are at best utterly poetic and harsh, but oftentimes mostly bizarre. For posterity, the play is perhaps mostly memorized through Deleuze & Guattari and their use of Artaud's "body without organs", uttered in the final paragraphs of the play:

god, and. with god his organs.

For you can tie me up if you wish, but there is nothing more useless than an organ.

When you will have made him a body without organs, then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions and restored him to his true freedom.

They you will teach him again to dance wrong side out as in the frenzy of dance halls and this wrong side out will be his real place.¹³⁰

The challenge to dare involve myself with Antonin Artaud was not an easy decision. His manifesto is one thing. His legacy on theatre another. His implication on sound... Artaud's vision is strong, but as mentioned by Grotowski, there is little evidence of a practice. It has been left to others to explore. In my work the central question becomes how I can develop my project on sound further. As already stated, there was never any ambition of constructing a musical alter ego of Artaud. On a very basic level it was rather this: the memory of witnessing a live staging of the Norwegian theatre group

*Grymhetens teater*¹³¹ at the Cinnober theatre stage in Gothenburg (sometime during 2013). How their proposed hardcore interpretation of Artaud instead of capturing my fascination with the theatre caught my ear off-guard. How their movements; both audible and non-audible gestures created a *rumour* of varied, grainy sounds. It was as if experiencing an evocation of sound in which I didn't perceive the sounding revelation as at any point in focus. Time was suspended, I was listening to the background noise but the idea of background noise had been completely redefined.

To be blunt, the act of composing is very difficult to differentiate from the act of listening. The ear distinguishes, embraces, and brings to the surface (in some way or another) what reaches into audibility, or—in fact—*perceived* audibility. Our listening, however, is typically focused on (when it comes to what we appreciate as *music*) the practice on sound. That is, the focus remains on sources in which we infer agency. As a composer my focus should be directed in both ways. Background noise is not only that which lurks in the beyond, but also the base of sound. It is the ambience (and space) of what is heard. It speaks of a particular kind of distance, not only the concrete sense of the vast expansion of noise from afar, but it creates a sense of sonic time and space which supersedes the ear's ability to separate and distinguish sounds. It places the experience of sound on the threshold of audibility and nevertheless we can *hear* all.

Attention is also an intention. The attention to this background noise that rouses to sound became more and more a question turned inward. To evoke this ground to the surface and still celebrate its sense of suspense in a limitless spatial setting—invoking background noise as the sonic base of sound—became the obsession of its construction, or poetic aspirations.

131 “We create theater with the body's own musicality, its breath and poetry, as the beginning for all actions. Artaud wanted to awaken the inherent life force that exists in nature and that the Western man seems to have forgotten. Theatre thus becomes a tool for real life. We do not seek to reproduce realistic reality so it can be recognized, but to tell of the core of life inherent in every genuine experience. Although based on a dramatic work or a literary text, the written word does not have a pivotal role and is often lost in the overall stage picture.” “Grusomhetens Teater | About Us”, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.grusomhetensteater.no/about-us/>.

Construction

The starting point was not unsimilar (but the geography of it changed) to that of the later discussed cello solo à *Sibyl—mōnē*: I live quite close to a railway-yard. In the night when going out on the balcony, I hear—the ear perceives—the distant thumps of the freight-trains coming in, the soaring squeaks of its corroded rails, its fascinating displacement in space. The experience is one of how some sounds are perceived as distant while others (pending the weather conditions) in the dead of night rush to my ears. I have no logical explanation or memory of why, but early on the idea of the railyard as a space in which the voice of Artaud was echoing became more and more central to me. The desolate sounds of freight trains in the night carry with them a notion of the passing of a lost era. A distinct ruinous sound of things constantly in search for their *home*, as a wide-stretched emptiness in front of a never-ending passage of goods going around and around the world.

Without a particular strategy or a clear method, I partially spent the early autumn of 2017 recording the sounds of the freight-trains and the space at said railyard from time to time. The *rumour*¹³² of the space had an explicit movement. The trains along the tracks, the surrounding high-ways and its roaring trucks, the occasional shouting voices of late-night workers. Additionally, the culverts leading in and out of the railyard were recorded with their uneven echoes and the occasional sounds of its temporary night guests, sleeping, home-less people, rats and debris. In the end it became the preliminary first, external, impetus of the creation of what will later be called *the imagined space*.

Returning home, these different recordings were over-layered, juxtaposed and edited in my computer. While listening to their different “tonalities” I began to include in the soundscape pure sine waves which extended or—as I heard it—underlined or extended their timbral characters. First it was more of a kind of transcription strategy; to pen down which pitches

132 This term, *rumour*, or sometimes *rumori*, or *rumor*, etymologically deserves its own story, but as the thesis continues its use will increase and as its meaning will be more and more clear for the reader. somewhere around 2017 I begin to use this term—for sure it is relatable of Luigi Russola’s *intonarumori*, the noise machines of the futuristic era. However, its inclusion in my own thinking about sound was inspired and developed departing from writings of the improviser Jean Luc Guionnet, that was originally published in the 1990s “Background_pour_mattin.pdf”, 1, accessed September 25, 2023, http://www.jeanlucguionnet.eu/IMG/pdf/background_pour_mattin.pdf. At this time, 2017, and continuously since then this vague, and slightly changing word is part of the slow growth and development of the term *ontopoetics* herein explored.

to develop in the instrumental part, but as the sine waves were being more and more prominent, they became more and more autonomous. Furthermore, an imitation process began in which the field-recordings were being transposed unto my different acoustical instruments: on flute, clarinet, with voice, violin, cello and different percussion instruments, most notably on the frame-drum. These *imitations* and extensions of both recordings and instrumental experimentation slowly included a kind of separate layer of continuous vocal additions as well. Sometimes more of an organ-point (similarly to how the voice was used in Kuarup A), but oftentimes using the voice as a shadow and residue of the text of Artaud as well as its rendition in the theatre play; in a sense to melodically trace the recitations of the radio-performance. However, doing it ambiguously, as for instance filtering the vocals through the keys of the wind instrument, or through chanting into the resonance of the skin of the frame drum (oftentimes with a megaphone at a close distance) following the contour of Maria Caserès incantation-like monologue, which repeatedly also can be heard sampled in the final composition.



IMAGE 18. Singing into the frame drum with a megaphone

So, already at this early stage of the composition process (which in the final piece then is made explicit) a clear presence of the text by Antonin Artaud is audible (although with few, if any, syllabic resemblances) as a wordless rendition following the rhythm of the use of the vowels in the end part of the opening declamation of Artaud's radio-play, as well as in the *Tutuguri-ritual-recitation* of Maria Caserès, in the latter stages of the play.

However, this deals more with details and with a slow excavation and extension of the musical gestures. What was not *solved* (or addressed) at this stage was how then to retain the sense of open space present in the field-recording and my preliminary ideas of what eventually would become the

imagined space? Knowing that the piece was going (in all likelihood) to be performed in a normal concert venue (my influence in this respect was limited), there was nevertheless a conscious desire to sustain this poetic universe, found when I was walking around documenting the railyard. In my possession there were a few small so-called omni-directional speakers, that had been unsuccessfully tried out the previous year in another composition. Essentially it is a speaker consisting of a membrane (with a built-in amplifier) that you can place on any object and thereby make it a speaker. So, if placed on a table, the table in its totality will begin to resonate and carry the sound. Depending on what kind of object you place it on, the sounds played through the omni-directional speaker will change its timbre and sense of projection.

Through placing different sounds in different omni-directional speakers on various surfaces and objects; on a violin, on a frame drum, on the floor, on my work-desk, on a cymbal and so on, a myriad of possible sounding constellations emerged from the material. Although the sounds were thereby reduced (only a portion of their frequencies and qualities were retained or amplified by the procedure), they became somehow more focused, yet at the same time they continuously extended the sounding space (of both my imagination and my actual workspace). It was possible to in real time place around me the different recordings and by switching place in the room play with them acoustically.

With these additions to the composition a more complex situation arose, one which also made it possible for me to start to work with more separate parts. In the early electronic sketches the music essentially is on a monophonic level, at best a stereo version with some sense of depth (depending on the sound recorded). The voice (filtered through the frame drum) leads everything, all else is a mere shadow or resonance. As such it remains basically a soundscape that lacks friction, resistance, and clear rhythm (although it has a beginning and a deep pulse). It is not so by surprise. The metaphor of evoking the ground, or the rumour of noise in the railyard and slowly transforming it to a sounding texture became an attention to sound, with an explicit ambient beauty of its own. A beauty for the listener, but essentially one which transferred to instruments (or electronics) lacks the inner movement perceived in the moment of experience.

In order to infer conflict, to infer the venom and harsh accents (and rage) of Antonin Artaud, I began at this point to place the material in different “autonomous” constellations. Autonomous in the sense that they were placed with no real linear idea, but with the intention or hope that they could be combined without restraints; over time, backwards, vertically, transposed, omitted, fragmented... essentially like building blocks of

unlimited potentiality. To compress and articulate the somewhat too atmospheric and ambient constellations, I began to use more clear attacks and less subtle and homogenic sounds. For instance, the use of a quasi-Korean-gong (reminiscent of the Kkwaenggwari, which occupies a more central role in relation to all the pieces that place itself in dialogue with *Den svarta solen* in chapter 4), the dobaci (a Japanese singing bowl) and harsher, more extreme sounds in the strings and winds.



IMAGE 19.



IMAGE 20.

IMAGE 21. ¹³³

By allowing multiphonic and articulated sharp sounds to take prominence instead of balancing, ambient sounds, the distant (*background*) sounds of the field recording (which in real life had been perceived much closer) were magnified and gave the work a clearer rhythmical identity. An identity, which immediately began to speak to the different *sound constellations*. That is, how and what and where to place, which frequencies and harmonies to give focus to. The rhythm taught the ear to listen or hear the music which by now was emerging in an increasingly faster pace.

This was a phase during which the ensemble part essentially became established. And with it, as it progressed, the necessity to enhance the tape-part became more and more important, to avoid a sense of accompaniment function. Increasingly, the radio-play of Antonin Artaud came more and more in focus and as such it became for me the solution for establishing a kind of equality between the electronic sounds and the ensemble writing. I began to return to the sound files, still having them placed in the room attached to different objects (at that time still the violin and cymbals, but now also inside the piano, which generates a much more resonant response, when the sustain pedal is depressed). Additionally, I now add the voices from Artaud's original radio-play and even more sinewaves. The sinewaves became like a virtual space construction. A certain ratio of frequencies (114,

133 Excerpt from the work with singing bowl and gong during the composing of *Songs for Antonin*.

214, 220, 228, 232, 440, 880, essentially a wide-octave detuned A) established a kind of imaginative acoustical space inside the piece, which (was the idea) would begin to interact (create pulses, interference, but also blanch out certain sounds in the ensemble part). Text was also added to the ensemble part but at a quite late stage (which I discuss below) and only when discovering a strange language-play in the original manuscript *Pour finir avec le jugement de Dieu*, a passage which was never included in the radio broadcast (if ever recorded). The text, using only syllables, was immediately much more in line with Artaud's view on language, and my difficulty with using text saw a simple solution.¹³⁴: *kré—kré—pek—kre—e—pte*¹³⁵

Hard, consonant sound without a semantic meaning. Glossolalic, secret, yet strong in articulation and sense of direction. These sounds became a natural extension and additions to the sounds of the ensemble. In a sense they were the hard accents of the gong or the echoes of the handclaps of the pianist. Even more they were the sharp crescendos of the wind and string instruments.

However, the constructions of the piece took place *prior* to the explicit inclusion of this text part. Essentially, prior to that, it was a quite rational construction. In all I constructed 37 different sound constellations (containing field recordings as well as the recorded *imitations* and *extensions* of the instruments). Most of them were mapped to different objects of resonance (violin, piano and cymbal) but there were also 13 linear progressive soundfiles thought of as a master-tape, that is, there would additionally be a pair of stereo speakers creating a kind of sonic glue between the ensemble, the omni-directional speakers and the space. Similarly, I had a great number of ensemble parts, about 20 of them. Only two or three were *tutti*, the others were in smaller settings. Some were suspended sounds, other ornamented figures and some (which are easy to hear in the recording) were imitations of the soundfiles. What already had been included in the sound file constructions were also mirrored and echoed in the instrumental parts.

Apart from the *skeleton* of the 13 chronological sound files thought of as the *stereo pair* the other material lacked a clear-cut chronology. The different electronic sound sources that should blend and over-lap created a difficult topology to overview. However, the presence of the Artaud-play (through

134 The fact is that the final piece contain passages in the percussion part which recite the original radio-play script. however, for future performances of the piece these passages might be re-written. Due to the difficulty of knowing if a performer truly can speak French. As sound they have merit, but as a clearly mispronounced sentence they draw unnecessary attention to themselves.

135 Artaud, Sontag, and Weaver, *Antonin Artaud, Selected Writings*, 555.

its *melodic* presence in the different sounds) did make the use of the text to something with a trajectory. It should be noted, though, that at this point the Artaud declamation in the beginning of the piece was not conceived. The piece was constructed as two relatively independent blocks. One electronic, the other acoustic.

The 37 sound-files were put together, over-lapped and slowly fitted into place in a five-channel mix. As a parallel, the ensemble part was tied together. Each part was naturally *aware* of the other. However, it wasn't until they were both (respectively) in place that the final relationship between the electronic and acoustic part was set.

What began as a conjuring up of the *rumour* of a railyard had grown into a radio-phonic staging of Artaud's radio-play. A realization which had slowly emerged from the fusion and tracing of the different materials. And yet, listening to the electronic *skeleton* of the piece while reading and imagining the resonance of the written score of the *acoustic* part this radio-phonic character was rather *acousmatic* than articulated. The voice of Antonin Artaud was missing, only its *rumour* was present. And then only as residue in the instrumental part and as declamations of different proximity in the electronics.

If by luck, or by providence, around this time I discovered a different edition of the text of Artaud. One which included the already mentioned omitted part of the radio-play. And while seeing the ambiguous glossalic syllables, or rather articulating them aloud, suddenly I was as if staring into the missing link of the piece. The articulation to bring the different parts together. The missing link to give voice to Artaud, to give the piece the voice of Artaud. And in a sense, that is how I view it today, to bring what was in the initial sketches *Songs for Simone* back to the source. To Weil:

Two prisoners whose cells adjoin communicate with each other by knocking on the wall. The wall is the thing which separates them but it is also their means of communication. Every separation is a link.¹³⁶

And by this *metaxu* of Weil I prepare the ground for what in a few years would turn out to be *Songs for Simone*.

Turning the page of Artaud from the sharp consonants to his opening assault on the us was the two decisive last changes to the musical text. Finally in the piece, I invited these two Artaud-moments to the music but in reverse order. When the piece begins there is the amplification of rasping

gramophone player and then the rage of the voice of Artaud himself, and then as the *ambience* of the tape part and the ensemble part enters, slowly the articulation of the omitted syllables are introduced, first as mere shadows and contours and then during the latter part of the piece they are clearly heard ricocheting around the space. Again:

kré—kré—pek—kre—e—pte

The musical score consists of several staves:

- Fl. (Flute):** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88. Includes dynamic markings *pppp* and *f*.
- B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet):** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88. Includes dynamic markings *pppp* and *f*.
- Sax. (Saxophone):** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88. Includes dynamic markings *fp*, *f*, *fp*, and *f* *>* *pp*.
- Voice:** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88. Includes lyrics: *kré—kré—pek—kre—e—pte*, *eti. sim.*, *pu-k-te-puk*. Performance instructions: *strong, verge of insanity in the voice*, *Sing into frame drum in 'aria', follow the resonance*, *imitate sax.* Dynamics: *pp*, *mf*.
- Pno. (Piano):** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88. Includes lyrics: *krékré*, *pek*, *e pte*, *pu-k-te-puk*. Performance instructions: *Hand-claps!*, *Strong, supportive, high-strung voice!*.
- Vln. (Violin):** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88. Includes dynamic marking *pp*.
- Vcl. (Viola):** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88. Includes dynamic marking *f*.
- T-P (Timpani):** Measures 85, 86, 87, 88.

Time signatures: 3/4 and 4/4.

IMAGE 22. 137

No perceivable meaning, no clear sense of form, just the feeling of an intuitive, perhaps inspired reflection of what the text later would play out.

137 Excerpt from the final score (bar 137–140) where the glossolalia of Artaud is placed explicitly in the ensemble parts.

With these sharp consonants, there was immediately an example of the glossolalia that Artaud so vividly had called for in his manifesto. But more importantly (for me), it was syllables that had remained unperformed in the production for *Radio France*.

Revision

Before seeing the piece off there remained one vital part to try out, namely the use of the omni-directional speakers. First in the final months of the composing process these speakers were tried out in a larger space. There were clear indications of doubt already in my diary whether they would be able to render enough sound detail. In a workshop for a previous piece the inability for these speakers to blend with the acoustic instruments had been troublesome. A more rigorous way of producing the electronic part was required, but even so, in a larger space, the problem with the soundfiles for *Songs for Antonin* remained. The bandwidth of the frequencies possible to reproduce were too narrow.

In the end none of my omni-directional speakers managed to reproduce the sounds to my liking. What remained, then, was either re-mix the soundfiles or think of a different solution. Discussions with my friend and colleague Johan Svensson, who assisted me in creating the Max-patch for triggering the soundfiles using a midi-keyboard controlled by the pianist of the ensemble, led me to instead use small mono-speakers placed in different locations in the room. In the end, this enhanced the feeling of radio-phonics and, more importantly, this enabled an increase of the sound volume in both amplitude and register, which also made it possible to slightly amplify the ensemble, to blend and even more dilute the threshold between acoustic and pre-recorded sound.

Reflecting on Method

There is in the composition process of *Songs for Antonin* a further use of what in chapter 5 will be described as *constellations of sounds* and *the projection into space*, as well as *the imagined space*. There is no real *exploring the first contact*, or a *spiral of contacts*, instead the field-recordings of the railyard and their subsequent transcriptions or imitations trace and evolve the gestures. The use of sound-editing and construction of sound in the computer (the field-recordings as well as the added pure sinewaves) and the use of omni-directional (spatialized) speakers also includes the step of *the relationships of sounds*.

However, the importance of the *first contact* is somehow implicit. The ‘motives’ of the piece are developed relatively autonomously on the different instruments, as well as in the pre-recorded sounds. And the *spiral of contacts* is in much established through the shared space of *the imagined space*. The extensive use of the melodic contour of Artaud’s (and Caserès’) voice. In this sense the piece on a basic level consists of points (or islands) of material which are slowly made to occupy a kind of extended line, most prominently established in the electronic *skeleton*¹³⁸ of the electronic part. Finally, the line, through the combination of the spatialization of the tape-part (in five loudspeakers) and the addition of the ensemble writing is made into a *plane*. There are no sounds not possible to trace from the single point, but there is similarly no single attack, no single sound, which is not suspended as line, plane or gesture. If not in individual instruments, at least in the music’s spatialization in five loudspeakers and seven instruments.

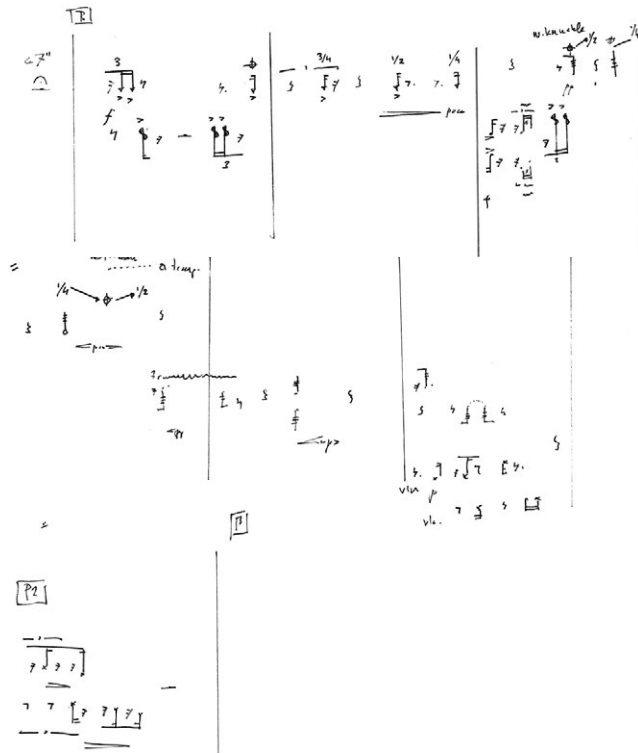


IMAGE 23. Sketch of the percussion and piano material used in the previous excerpt (page 91).

138 In the sketch material the first full combination of the electronic and pre-recorded sounds is called *Songs for Antonin Skeleton*.

Diamánda Galás

Sound artist Diamánda Galás is an example of immediate expression and ecstatic techniques, but also of sound as a state-of-being. Her biography (although quite veiled due to conflicting versions) is of some importance. Galás was born in New Orleans to a Greek-Cypriot (musical) family. She practically grew up with a father active on the jazz/blues scene and began learning the piano (among other instruments) early on. However, she was forbidden to sing—something her father associated with prostitution¹³⁹. It is not an anecdote without importance, already from her musical upbringing the use of her vocal became “an act of rebellion against a dominant male discourse.”¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, she became a child-prodigy on the piano, performing classical piano concertos from an early age¹⁴¹. Later, during medical studies in San Diego, California, Galás began to take lessons in classical singing and simultaneously began to experiment with her voice: famously involving LSD and an anechoic (silent) chamber.¹⁴² As a vocalist she quickly developed a both versatile and colourful tessitura, which—as she herself notes—was already early on received with mixed feelings: “an instrument of inspiration for my friends, and a tool of torture and destruction to my enemies.”¹⁴³ Quickly she developed skills which attracted attention on the contemporary (score-based) music scene and among other things she did the first performance of *N'Shima* by Iannis Xenakis as well as an opera,

139 Wilson, “The Radical Music of John Zorn, Diamánda Galas, and Merzbow: A Hermeneutic Approach to Expressive Noise”, 243.

140 Wilson, 243.

141 Wilson, 243.

142 “At some point in the very beginning I knew that I was going to work with a voice. I guess I knew it at the same time that I started to work in anechoic chambers. I worked in anechoic chambers because I didn’t want anyone to hear me outside the door because I didn’t know what the hell I was doing and I didn’t want anyone to know that. And I wanted to be uncensored. I didn’t want to be performing. I didn’t want to have to worry. I wanted to be free to say anything in a completely, some would say, musical situation [...] I was also experimenting with LSD and all sorts of stuff. I’d go in there in a situation, like an anechoic chamber on LSD, and do these vocal things. Now, you know, I don’t know anything about what LSD did to my mind—I don’t know anything about that. The speed they mixed in it probably screwed me up more than anything else [laughs]”. <https://nmbx.newmusicusa.org/the-politics-of-disquiet-Diamánda-galas-in-conversation-with-edward-batchelder/retrieved-10th-of-May-2021>.

143 Wilson, “The Radical Music of John Zorn, Diamánda Galas, and Merzbow: A Hermeneutic Approach to Expressive Noise”, 244.

un jour comme une autre, by Vinko Globokar in Aix-en-Provence.¹⁴⁴ However, as much as she revered and still today holds the music of Xenakis in the highest regard, the idea of the prison of the score, or of taming her voice to suit another (man’s) aesthetic was never to latch on to her. She doesn’t consider it possible for her voice to exist as an expression apart from its creator.

Examples of how she trained to extend her vocal range, techniques and manipulation of timbre is perceivable prominently in the late 70s. I haven’t managed to find the recording of the Globokar Opera (with Galás voice), but the few renditions that one finds on-line of the piece are not difficult to put in context with the later solo work of Galás¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, her collaboration with saxophonist Jim French and guitarist Henry Kaiser on the album *If Looks Could Kill* (1979)¹⁴⁶ shows a similar direction within a different idiom of music. Galás herself has explained how they were working with techniques of imitation, how the sounds of drum, electric guitar, saxophone and voice continuously amorph to become one another. This spurred Galás on toward expanding and re-locating her aesthetic ambition of both performing and how to articulate sound. Essentially, her conception of sound was during this period (late 70s, early 80s) in a dramatic metamorphosis. For the Donaueschingen Musiktage in 1982 the new-music audience more or less witnessed her adieu to the contemporary, institutionalized music scene with the performances of her *Wild Women With Steak-Knives*¹⁴⁷. Galás has since continued with her vocal and electronic eccentricities, but mainly as a highly independent avant-garde rock star. In the recent decades her music has once again began to be included in the context of *new music* and her vocal achievements are today more or less unthinkable *not to relate to* for a vocalist active on a contemporary, noise/jazz-scene. What Galás composed during the early 80s up until the more commercial breakthrough of the mid 80s deserves a prominent place in the legacy of new music from the latter part of the 20th century.

Diamánda Galás writes in the early 80s in relation to her vocal piece *Wild Women With Steak-Knives*:

144 Steven Wilson, “The Radical Music of John Zorn, Diamánda Galas, and Merzbow: A Hermeneutic Approach to Expressive Noise”, (PhD diss. Univ. of Illinois, 2014), 242–47.

145 This short-version of the opera by Globokar clearly includes the *timbre* of Galás (although the recording features Linda Vickerman, incidentally probably Diamánda’s vocal coach during her time in San Diego and the reason for Galás trip across the Atlantic. However, this is only speculation based on Vickerman’s affiliation with UCSB (in the 70s) and her own involvement with Globokar’s and Xenakis music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sP5PM4ZvUTA> retrieved 10th of May 2021.

146 *Jim French With Diamánda Galás And Henry Kaiser—If Looks Could Kill*, 1979.

147 “Programmheft_Donaueschinger_Musiktage_1982.pdf”, n.d., 28.

“This music is concerned with [...] excessive behavior. An obsession, [...] within microseconds, coalescing one moment and dissolving the next, towards an ultimate dissolution, which is the soul’s own Implosion. You do not go to a hospital to inspire the recreation of your own Death onstage. You know it by heart. [...] An actor may simulate the desired emotive state through a skilled manipulation of external object materials, or he may use the raw materials of his own soul in a process which is the immediate, the DIRECT experience of the emotion itself. The second concern is felt by performers who, not just professional, are *Obsessional* performers.”¹⁴⁸

Galás continues to exemplify how her strategy is one of a reliance of ecstasies or as she puts it “States of severe concentration or trance states”¹⁴⁹. The threshold between the states is the virtuosity of her voice, directed and assisted with a rudimentary pre-choreographed, almost cinematic, situation. Essentially, she describes the form of the ritual in which sound, vocal sound, is the “immediate representation of thought”¹⁵⁰.

Her method is reminiscent and probably inspired by—transferred to sound—of theatre’s *enfant terrible*, Antonin Artaud:

Abandoning Occidental usage of speech, [the theatre] turns words into incantations. It extends the voice. It utilizes the vibrations and qualities of the voice. It wildly tramples rhythms underfoot. It pile-drives sounds. It seeks to exalt, to benumb, to charm, to arrest the sensibility.¹⁵¹

The presence of Artaud in the poetics of Galás is important. Artaud deems language as inadequate to express the human passions, preferring instead sounds: howls, sighs, groans, and screams. In Galás the aspirations of Artaud take an actual form. The abyss of her vocals comes to the foreground as a possible liminal tool of reaching and expressing the innermost core of the human soul.

Galás and Artaud both work with passion over reason, reaching for an “immediate” expression. They do it, essentially, as the Shaman—contained inside of a framework (choreographed or formalized) which can be considered ritualized. Their expressions rely explicitly on intuition and improvisation.

148 Galás, *The Shit of God*, 1.

149 Galás, 2.

150 Galás, 2.

151 Artaud, Sontag, and Weaver, 243.

Intermission 3

'Noein. Noaidi' (2016/2018) for viola
[Developing the first contact,
transposition, transformation, transcription
and acknowledging ecstasy]



The Pre-Work; Diamánda Galás and Her Quadro-Phonic Vocal Solo *Wild Women With Steak-Knives*¹⁵²

The viola solo *Noein. Noaidi* began without the viola being even considered. At the time, around 2015, apart from composing I had begun on a regular basis to explore different pieces, genres or ideas without a particular compositional goal. If there was a goal, the ambition was to go deeper and widen my understanding, especially in subjects which sooner or later might (or might not) influence my writing. What would later become *Noein. Noaidi* began in a mixture of two things. Primarily as a result of studying the American-Greek vocalist Diamánda Galás, but essential was also the interest in shamanic cultures, where Mircea Eliade and his book on Shamanism have a prominent place and also the journal *ISARS*¹⁵³ should not be forgotten, a journal which since the early 90s has published a variety of cultural studies from all over the world. Their musical and cultural implications often play an important part and the texts range from academic anthropological approaches to more essayistic ones. The parallel track of Diamánda Galás came about as a result of my discovery of an inroad to her early work through her book *The Shit of God*, which suddenly placed her poetics in a new light.

A regular exercise of mine is to transcribe or graphically represent music which interests me. To try with the hand and the ear approach and follow something else. Something perhaps perceived as an inner desire, but that has (at that point) found no real articulation, only a hunch *of something of interest*. The music of Diamánda Galás was the object of such a hunch. First tracing her music her movements, her musical form, and by doing so finding a way of embodying her music, with a very limited focus on traditional analysis. By tracing her work (in various ways) the body is placed in the centre, the mind merely follows.

It is a strategy which is typical and not particularly unique. It is a reminiscence of a past life of practicing music. As with Bach, going through part by part. It is an ancient—and still very relevant way of learning by doing.

With Galás' music, however, there is not a typical score. The piece of interest, *Wild Women With Steak-Knives* (from now on called, *Wild Woman*) is for solo voice and a quadrophonic sound system. Its execution is far from any classical vocal practice. I cannot sing what she sings, I cannot, really,

152 Galás, Diamánda *Litanie de Satan* (1983) CD mute records etc.

153 <https://www.isars.org/>

re-create her manipulations of the microphones (each of her microphones that she alternately sings into are connected to different effects. During the piece they continuously change). As for score, in *The Shit of God* a few pages are included, which at least have some kind of instructional qualities. The score mostly indicates durations and the manipulation of the electronic effects:

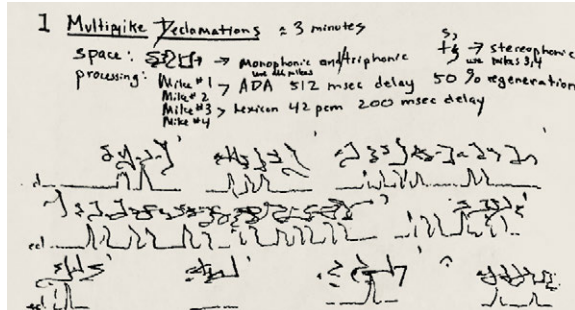


IMAGE 24.¹⁵⁴

Each system consists of two layers. The upper one, which remotely resembles compressed Greek letters, indicates which microphone(s) to sing into (and the intensity) and gives reference to the electronic manipulation. The lower system probably indicates the text and the vocals. A certain phrasing and a certain hint of the vocal register can be traced. For a performance one could possibly view this graphical score as a topology that Diamánda perhaps adheres to, but which she has not committed herself to.

I did something similar, that is, a graphical representation of the music, but with my intent more focused detailing the register, the shape and dynamic quality of the piece. It is not a transcription to a classic notation, instead it retains a sense of topology or plasticity of the actual performance of Galás. I do it in order to get closer to the sound. Even if I can't perform it, I am still trying to find a method to internalize it. It is a strategy which slows down the sounds. Slowly, through the meticulous listening, re-listening, re-transcribing, over and over again, I end up (or feel that I end up) in a place where for a moment I get the impression of being this music's creator. Below two excerpts of my transcription:

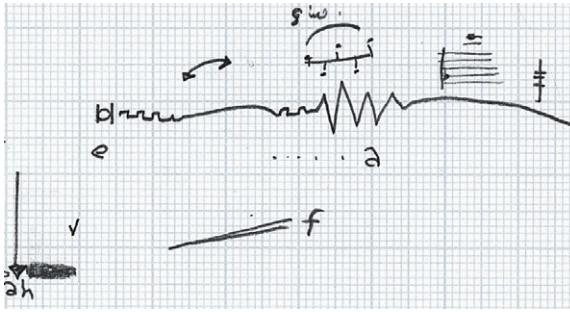


IMAGE 25. Excerpt Galás transcription.

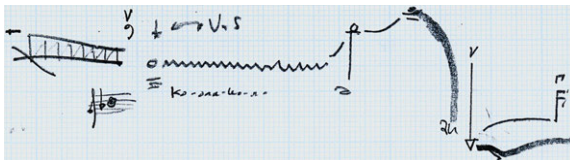


IMAGE 26. Excerpt Galás transcription.

Galás writes in *The Shit of God* about the kind of vocal expression that she explores in *Wild Woman*:

In 1975 I decided upon the creation of a new vocal music which employs a unmatrixed production of vocal sound as the most immediate representation of thought, the primary concern is with the execution—sequentially, chordally, or contrapuntally—of different processes of severe concentration, ‘mental’ or ‘sentient’ states, for which the vocal sound is used as the most fundamental physical coordinate.¹⁵⁵

The voice is one with the expression. There is no distance in between. In the piece she uses the text as an intersection. The words communicate her state of mind which she, while performing, transfers as “the direct experience of the emotion itself”¹⁵⁶ The text takes on a cinematographic air, where the emotional text’s linguistic character becomes the foundation for sound—sonorous and associative starting points grow to a complex web of harmonies and alternating cacophonies. The word-images become the point where voice, narrative and choreography meet and this meeting shapes the space and becomes both micro and macro-structure. Vibrato, distortion, speech, glissando, multiphonics are put in relation to the choreography

155 Galás, 2.

156 Galás, 1.

of the movement of microphone, mouth and so on. Most explicitly Galás expresses her “immediate representation of thought” through the fact that each specific technique in the piece seems to be able to transform itself at any given moment to any other technique. The exposition of the piece, the first 45 seconds, gives an example of most of the gestures that the piece explore throughout its entire duration:

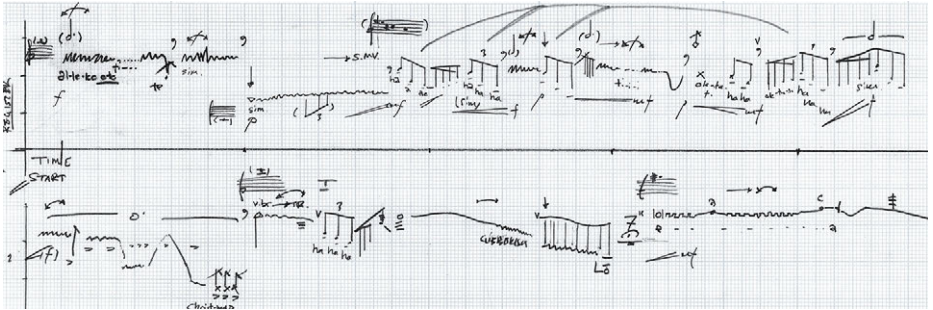


IMAGE 27. Excerpt Galás transcription.

After this brief passage, the voice is transformed into a suspended, vocal line,

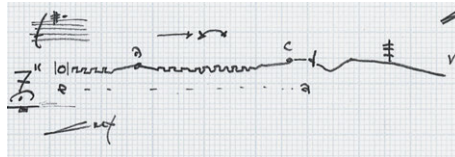


IMAGE 28. Excerpt Galás transcription.

And then onwards to a cut-up, reciting passage:

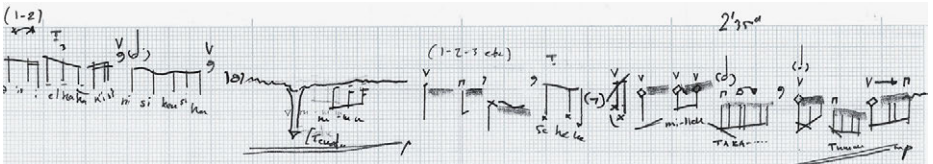


IMAGE 29. Excerpt Galás transcription.

Wild Women is like a filtered, continuous glossolalia scream, interrupted by short, aggressive breaths that mutters aggressively and only bides its time before again turning into a primal, intense scream, whose duration seems dependent on the stamina of the performer rather than a ratio/idea of phrase and rhetoric.

8

[In the practice of the Siberian shaman a re-occurring musical form is found in drumming: simplest described as culminative, a culmination which then slowly fades out. Often descriptions of the use of music in these rituals are limited to this simplification. The ritual, which is of a complex dramatic form, uses a rich variety of sounds on its way to trance. However, the sounds are more often than not associated or identified as *musical*. The shaman (e.g.) neighs like a horse, howls like a wolf, recites long passages on the secret language of its *familiaris* (its magical animal helper). It is a role-playing, but as much as it is *acting*, the use of sound is essential, not direct language, but direct sound: the distance between the shaman and its spirits is minimized. The shaman becomes the spirit and vice versa, a union communicated by sound.]

Diamánda Galás personifies and unleashes passion. From the onset of the piece she seems like in trance. In her virtuosic display, encapsulating heaven and hell, there seems to be no limit. For me she becomes a shaman of our time. She masters her techniques, she does not succumb to the trance, but remains aware of the periphery—her control nevertheless gives the air of unlimited expression. She radiates an unboundedness that leads the music, the sound, the text, the movement—the whole performative act—towards “an ultimate dissolution, which is the soul’s own implosion.”¹⁵⁷

Transcribing Madness

The work on *Wild Women*, though not in itself a composition of my own, becomes somehow something which I—through the method of graphically transcribing it—embody. With the piece, and with Galás—as should be clear by now—I recognize something which resonates with my own work, although don’t understand how to make this come across in my own practice.

If I propose that Galás makes evident the renouncement of language, that language—semantics, fades to the background. Instead, the ecstatic state of Galás' performance—the immediate force of the sounds flows over you. If I try to somehow mimic something of what I traced by transcribing her, can it add something to my own work?

What I did was to take the graphical representation of Galás' piece and slowly turn and twist it toward my own gestural, poetical and instrumental limits. I meditated in silence on the sounds, imagined how I screamed, sang and expressed all of these sounds with my own voice, my own timbre. I went further, I exchanged her voice and my voice with another source; imagining her sounds by following the graphical transcription with another instrument—imaginatively—in hand. Finally I also took other instruments in my hand, started to work on them, tried to see how they could imitate or at least give a shadow of the sound of Galás. By using other instrumental resources I also felt that something began to change radically with the material and the sense of imitation.

An example makes it easier to understand. At one point I decide to make the exercise almost impossible. I try to mimic the voice of Galás with a frame drum. It is an exercise, but not without purpose. It creates a distance between the source (Galás), its representation (my transcription) and me (embodied in the frame drum). This transformation slowly erases the actual voice of Galás. What remains is instead is her timbre, her *topography*, her dynamics, energy, phrasing etc.

It is a strategy...

drum:

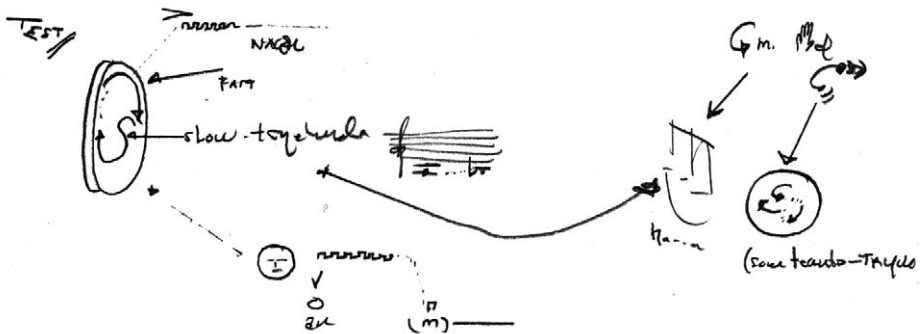


IMAGE 30.

...that I repeat in different instruments. After first having used a frame drum I change to a flute:

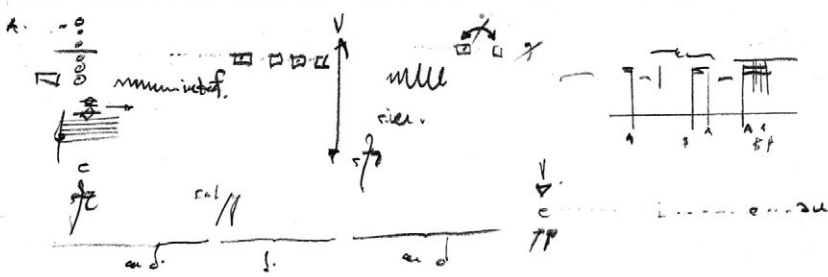


IMAGE 31.

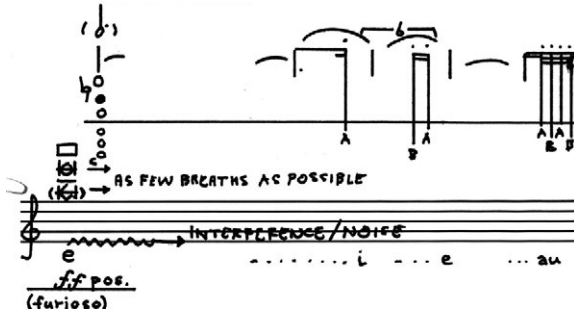


IMAGE 32.

In order to move the sound closer to Galás I use a violin (but by this time only the graphic of Galás remains):

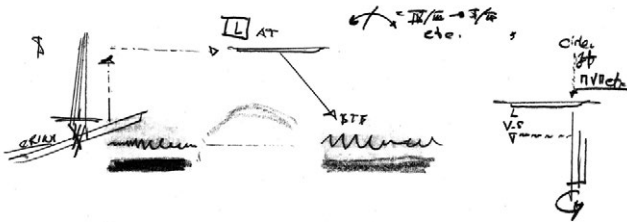


IMAGE 33.

Something happens when I use the violin. The material has by this time been so pushed, transposed, transcribed, and transformed that I no longer think of the material as the sounds as Galás'. I have reached a space where I feel completely free in relation to the material. If I want to sustain a sound, make a rhythm, an attack, whatever, I just follow the impulse.

At this stage, there is still no piece, there is still no idea of what a piece could be or what I plan to do with these exercises, more than the fact that I am sure it will at some point be useful in one way or another. It is not the first time I have explored this strategy, even if it is the first time I use Diamánda Galás' music (and the particular challenges her sound-world has placed me in front of) as actual source material.

During all of this I am in touch with the violist Emma Richards, who asks for a solo piece. In her early emails she mentions that she is practicing the viola solo *Embellie* by the Greek composer Iannis. She also makes clear that at the forthcoming concert my piece will be performed together with among others Pierluigi Billone's string trio *Mani. Giacometti*. I have no notes on why I decided to (which was what I did) make the Diamánda Galás-exercise into the piece for Emma Richards but it is likely that the mentions of both Xenakis and Billone did play an integral part in the decision. Iannis Xenakis was (as previously mentioned) one of Galás' "personal heroes"¹⁵⁸, and Billone's string trio *Mani. Giacometti* has had a great impact on my musical thinking (as is the case with most of Billone's music).

The knowledge of a concert where also *Mani. Giacometti* was performed gave me additionally a few technical clues. The viola part in *Mani. Giacometti* is heavily detuned, but furthermore its sound world contains several of the timbral qualities of Galás. Not least its use of the human voice blending with the strings, the use of harsh noises paired with soaring, singing and utterly virtuosic qualities, and the strong presence of multiphonic sounds.

I intuitively began to retune my violin to a strange violesque timbre. Similarly, I detuned a cello to somehow imitate (without having a viola in my home) or imagine how the tension of the strings of the viola would react to being loosened. At some point I reached a sound where the open strings in themselves had a feeling of friction, yet a beautiful dark sound, a sound that needed a more intense and active bow (than a normally strung viola) movement to be perceived.

Having thus established a basic starting point I then returned, through scordatura and some very general considerations of its implicit technical and sounding qualities, to the Galás material. The exercises on the violin were transferred to this transformed viola, and thereby in many ways displaced and emancipated from the source (material).

158 Steven Wilson, "The Radical Music of John Zorn, Diamánda Galás, and Merzbow: A Hermeneutic Approach to Expressive Noise", (PhD diss. Univ. of Illinois, 2014), 247.

As to the source material it consists of the graphical representation of *Wild Women*, but also the context of the concert, the performer, Emma Richards, as well as my parallel studies of shamanic or ecstatic practices should indeed be considered. Not only archaic techniques are important to have in mind, but also the sound conception of for instance Giacinto Scelsi, the approach to language such as in Antonin Artaud or its philosophical implications in the writings of Agamben—to draw a line to the texts in this thesis.

Nevertheless, in the piece *Noein. Noaidi* I primarily use the graphics of *Wild Women* as the focus point for my exploration of the viola. I retain the voice of Galás in the transcription and imagine transferring this graphical imprint to the work on the viola. Each section of *Wild Women* is tried on the viola, it is extended and transformed. Even if not all sections find their way into the viola solo they nevertheless remain important as a starting and returning point. Below I give a glimpse of my work with Galás' 45-second-long exposition in *Wild Women* and the four themes that I identify. These themes perforate the work of *Wild Women* and ultimately become the foundation of the sound world of *Noein. Noaidi*:

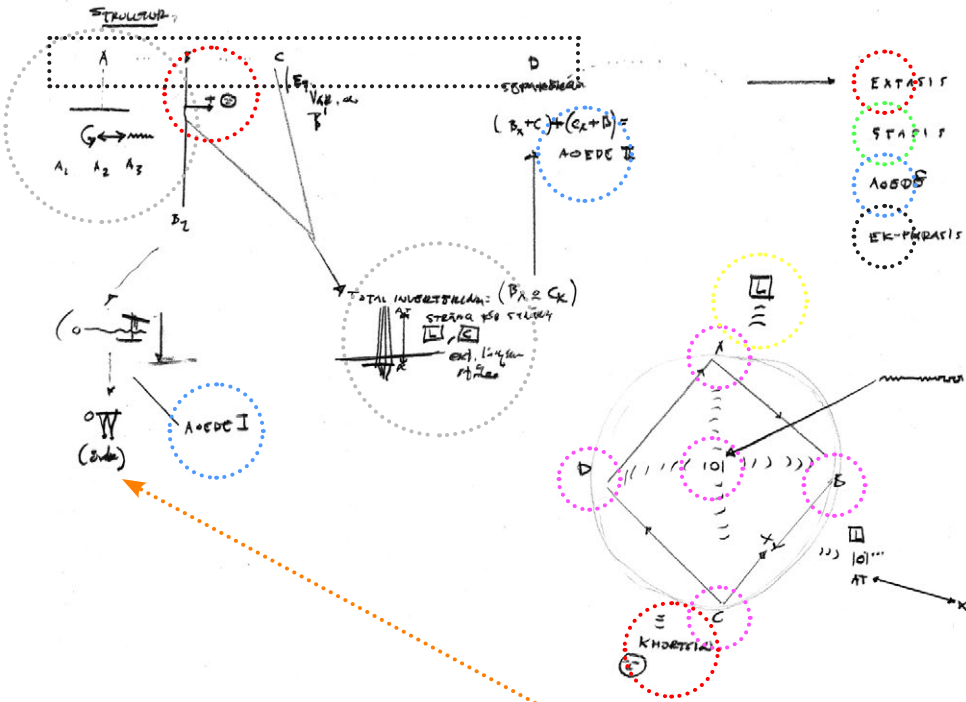


IMAGE 34. Granular, noise-based sections (primarily through extended bow techniques), 'vocal'—Siren-like sections (aoede → Extasis), wood (legno), beatings and the relationships of strings, transitions, the shaman, Stasis, Ek-phrasis, Sumerian markings, numbers.

My inner image of the music grows and is slowly focused, and with it the tuning of the viola continues to lower itself. In the end (in the soft, mumbling passages) it sounds almost like a distorted viola da gamba. In the frenetic, distorted or manic vocalizing sections it begins to scream with full force:

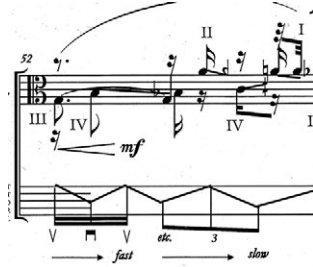


IMAGE 35.

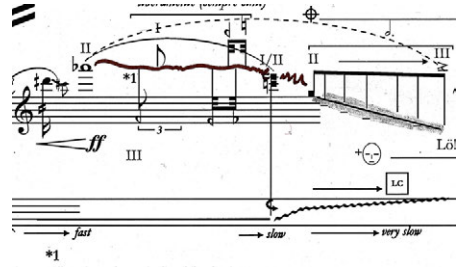


IMAGE 36.

IMAGE 37. The violin sound soaring in an extreme register from pitch to noise, and the voice imitating.

The piece *Noein. Noadi* becomes a typically clear example of what in chapter 5 of this thesis could be traced in the proposed *exploration of the first contact* and its *spiral of contacts* (although in this piece, fairly arbitrary and without methodological intention). Simplified it could be described as two poles constituting the dynamic which my composing revolves around. In the context of this thesis it points with emphasis to the strategy of chapter 5:

- A free graphical relationship: a hand, a pen, tracing something which doesn't define a body, only sound (the transcription of Galás).
- A real sound source, something which exists and that I can relate to and explore (the viola, but at an earlier stage: the frame drum, the flute, the violin—that is, in any case, an extension of my body)

The most important thing is not how to capture the scream of Galás in a viola or her hysteric presence through viola-techniques. The important thing is how the process of this strategy ends up at a sounding point, which

I earlier could not imagine happening in my work. Its result must be considered unknown from my point of departure, although somehow it existed as potentiality. The result is an appearance of something in my music, which is possibly implicit in the work of Galás, but which did not exist previously (on a conscious level) in neither my relation to the viola (or string instruments in general), nor explicitly in my previous pieces. In *Noein. Noaidi* I notice it most clearly in the moment when the music seems to come to a halt and becomes an extremely slow bow movement on the open strings. From the finger board toward the bridge something is slowly made to appear, that develops from a barely audible *pppp* to a creaking *legno crini*. The mouth (of the performer) is slowly opened, tongue, lips and fricatives are speaking with the viola. Body, space and instrument are one unit, joined in a conjuration:

The image shows a musical score for a viola part, starting at measure 66. The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef. Above the staff, dynamics are indicated as *pppp* < *mp* > *pppp*. Below the staff, there are performance instructions: *very slow*, *etc. sim.*, *ext. slow*, and *fash* (m). A pitch contour line is drawn below the staff, showing a gradual rise and then a fall. A box labeled "stable" pitch" is placed above the contour line. A circled area at the bottom of the page contains the text: "Qayalē jūg-dū qai qai qai * Qandūju beye mini-e qai qai qai * Qara jūg-ūn ejen qai qai qai".

IMAGE 38.

One can perceive an incantation that perhaps draws the full circle of a particular time in my life, with the inclusion of a Khortsin shaman's ritual reciting¹⁵⁹. There is a tendency in the piece that sound becomes, and this *becoming* emerges as a more important musical features than the more obvious points of articulation (accents, high points etc.).

Another sounding quality of *Noein. Noaidi* is the continuous use of multiple strings, sometimes even excessively (three strings are only under certain conditions possible to make sounding simultaneously). I use them to underline that the performer should consider all sounds as a complex unit, but also should be aware of that there persistently is a strange kind of two (or three) voiced counterparts, where often noise and pitch (pitch in a very diluted sense) move in different speeds and alternate between foreground and background. They are often extended by the reoccurring use of the voice of the performer.

159 Alban von Stockhausen, "SHAMAN Volume II Numbers I & 2 (2002, 2013)", *ISARS—International Society for Academic Research on Shamanism*, 6.

It is essential to recognize this use of the four strings of the viola, as well as the addition of the performers' voice as one unit. For me, the final score and its evolution on the paper (colours, pressure of the pen, words) enhanced the piece's both imaginative and graphical (through de-coupling the different actions of the performer: strings, bow, and voice) qualities and thereby made possible a more active work on more complex sounds. The work with the hand had previously been in focus when I was composing Kuarup A & B. Now a more detailed harmonization of the score and the exploration of the instrument further reflected the work with the hand, how the fingers of the left hand, the bow of the right hand uses the entirety of the instrument, sometimes with a clear intention and sometimes with almost choreographic qualities, reflecting thereby two ways of interpreting the graphics of Galás. Even more, it plays again with a condition of sound, which sometimes only remains (in the score) as a potentiality and never properly, on an *acoustic* level, reaches actuality. In my following (yet unperformed) violin solo *Insula. Pharos*, this strategy is made even more explicit through the score:

IMAGE 39. Bar 60 *Insula. Pharos*. The four strings on four clefs. The bow movement. The voice.

The score also highlights my affinity of sound aesthetics to Giacinto Scelsi, who during the 50s began (with his assistants) to experiment with a string writing by separating the individual strings to individual staves. For Scelsi it was in a sense a breakthrough to be able to work with what he considered the spherical qualities of sound¹⁶⁰. In the example above one can distinguish that the work on sound takes place not only on three strings, but there

160 Gregory Nathan Reish, "The Transformation of Giacinto Scelsi's Musical Style and Aesthetic, 1929–1959", 103.

is also a separation of the voice and the bow movement. However, they all act together, my intention (desire) being to create one sound, which can be perceived with layers, alluding to depth, alluding to a listening where the causality of time not necessarily is perceived linear (the ear will move rapidly in between the levels of sound activity) and perhaps creating a sense of a further dimension, which could be called *spherical*.

Chapter 4

A few contextualizing themes



Language—Body

Paradigm of Language

It is perhaps time to call into question the prestige that language has enjoyed [...] considered in itself, it is no more beautiful than birdsong, no more efficacious than the signals insects exchange, no more powerful than the roar with which the lion asserts his dominion.¹⁶¹

Our consciousness, our ability to conceive ourselves as subjects is what defines human beings from animals. Its foundation is most easily expressed as *language*. We are the animal *with* language. Although often self-evident, we need to address it further.

Language (i.e., also, notation) shows a certain mode of thinking. What we cannot express in language seemingly does *not* to exist. Language therefore in itself creates a paradigm, which basically is self-referential. “To adopt an image of Wittgenstein: man exists in language like a fly trapped in a bottle: that which it cannot see is precisely that through which it sees the world.”¹⁶² As a *response* philosopher Agamben (in *History and Infancy*¹⁶³) coins the term *originary infancy* where he imagines a state where language does not yet exist. He transgresses an idea from Nietzsche, where Nietzsche finds the possible solution to overcome metaphysics in the scream of the newborn child. Agamben acknowledges that with the infant there is no distance between the level of the sign (semiotics) or the meaning of the sign (semantics). In this sense the newborn communicates like the animal—it is immediate. For a moment it is in touch with a world where it doesn’t make sense to separate the scent of sound and meaning (or form and content). It can only be understood as part of a bigger unity. Later, Agamben develops the *originary infancy* to his more philosophically stringent subject of *potentiality*. However, while touching upon the immediacy of expression, the moment preceding language (speech—*logos*), something *ontopoetic* does indeed emerge. Not that animals are considered to lack a language, instead:

(t)hey are always and absolutely language. In them *la voix sacrée de la terre ingenué* [the sacred voice of the unknowing earth]—which Mallarmé,

161 Giorgio Agamben, *Sacrament of Language* (Polity Press, 2010), 71.

162 De la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben*, 93.

163 Giorgio Agamben, *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience*, 1st Ed. edition (London; New York: Verso, 1993).

hearing the chirp of a cricket, sets against the human voice as *une* and *non-composé* [one and indivisible]—knows no break or interruptions.¹⁶⁴

If language is a paradigm of thought, its narrative is defining thinking. To glance beyond its confinement is, as far as this thesis is concerned, the task of music and of art. For Giorgio Agamben the solution exists somewhere beyond symbols, away from a semiotic or semantic realization of *existence*. It is an immediate experience of reality. As in Nietzsche's "the cry of the newborn child", as with Agamben's depiction of the roar of the lion or the signals of insects, there is no interpretation, there is an immediate understanding based on sound. Simultaneously, we are then acknowledging—through sound—a world where sound and meaning cannot be separated, but are part, yet independent, of a whole.

Additionally, the ambition to work on a sound that is thought of as immediate is to embrace its autonomy, yet at the same time to adhere to a *heterophony*, acknowledging the interdependence and relational forms of creating meaning. Inherent is something which Agamben (then in relation to language) tries to show is part of our *tradition*, but in a sense has been lost, and appears almost antithetical to our conception. An analogous reasoning, but including the concept of sound, can be found in the past, in remote places and *other* cultures. For instance, the music of Tibetan-Buddhism position itself in many ways as diametrical to a western sound conception. The instruments are often completely independent, yet often paired (at least in connection with wind instruments). Two trumpets, 2 "oboes" etc. The duo performs the same music, but they perform more or less independently from each other. At first, with our western ears we write it off as an inability to perform the *same* music, but if we begin to *really* listen and understand what is at stake, we realize that trying to hear the *same* music is to imagine a similar (as in the west) thinking of sound. As earlier in the thesis, when speaking of shamanic music, we must stress that ritual music isn't a concert. There is no stage in our western meaning. As for Tibetan-Buddhist music the instrument and its sound are a manifestation of a particular divinity or aspect of the deities, it is not a question of *Klangfarben*—the instruments are utterly symbolical, they don't perform for a human audience. They take part in the *sound* as an independent part. The idea of counterpoint, melodic imitation or harmony does not exist, it is not even possible to infer as a concept on the religious music of Tibet. For instance, the massive Dung-Shen trumpet can

perform more or less only 4 sounds. Sounds which, in any case, take a lifetime to master. However, the *dung-shen* as well as other ritual instruments obey the same law: they have a particular function in the ritual, they are all defined by the prayer (recitation) or the actual *ritual*. Similar to western music, there is a score tradition, which is particular and specific to every, individual monastery¹⁶⁵. However, the score is not used to perform from, it is more of a documentation (and a way to remember) and serves as a reference in the initiation of the monk (more like the *neumen* notation that precedes the Gregorian notational system). The correspondence between notation and performance (in our western sense) is very different. The idea of high-low, pitch, *timbre* etc. is almost non-existent. Sometimes, a comment in the margin to remember how many times to repeat a section (or some kind of ornament) can be seen, otherwise the elaborated, graphical signs are understood through an almost 1000 years long elaborated performance tradition, which only can be associated with our music in an extremely vague way:

165 Ivan Vandor, "Tibetan Musical Notation", *The World of Music* 17, no. 2 (1975): 5.

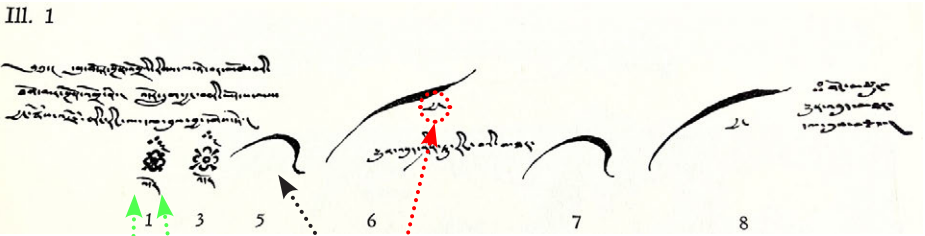


IMAGE 40. Excerpt of Tibetan notation of the bKa-brGyud-Pa monastery in Bodhnath.¹⁶⁶

Here, a transcription of ethnomusicologist Ivan Vando. He has juxtaposed or notated the irregularities of the Tibetan performance. The performers of the long trumpets perform the notation above. They do it as *one*, however, when listening with the western ear, Vando distinguishes a counterpoint which effectively is “not there”.

IMAGE 41. Transcription (by Ivan Vando) of a part of the original notation.¹⁶⁷

Vando is aware of this fact and makes several important distinctions during his ethnological research:

the instrumental notation [of the Tibetan monasteries, my note] is different for each instrument, and this is why, for instance, in the same monastery the notation for the conches does not employ the same graphic procedures as that for the long trumpets, although a more detailed study does reveal the existence of common features.¹⁶⁸

166 Ivan Vando, *La notazione musicale strumentale del Buddismo tibetano*, Nuova rivista musicale Italiana VII, 3-4 1973.

167 Ibid.

168 Ivan Vando, “Tibetan Musical Notation”, *The World of Music* 17, no. 2 (1975): 3.

And he further notes:

The notations do not have a prescriptive character, in other words, they do not precisely indicate all the details of the musical performance and therefore do not form a 'text' to be realized, as is the case with the European musical notation.¹⁶⁹

And again, the point of this notation or music is not one of a concert. The sound is of an order, far removed from us humans:

The *raison d'être* of this music is therefore far removed from any preoccupation with aesthetics, even though it is not played for human beings but, on the contrary, for the deities. The laity, who very rarely attend the ceremonies, have virtually nothing to do with this music: it is an integral and inseparable part of the rituals, and the observance of the rituals is regarded as a specialized professional activity of the monks. For the lamas, however, this music is charged with meaning to the highest degree because of its three interdependent aspects, namely its origin, its function and its symbolism; this is why any judgement of it would be unthinkable.¹⁷⁰

For instance, below I include a transcription of a simple prayer accompanied by a Tibetan singing bowl, a bell (*trillbu*), and voice.

169 Ivan Vandor, "Tibetan Musical Notation", *The World of Music* 17, no. 2 (1975): 3.

170 Ivan Vandor, "Aesthetics and Ritual Music. Some Remarks with Reference to Tibetan Music", *The World of Music* 18, no. 2 (1976), 32.

IMAGE 42. Transcription of a Gyüto Monk chant. Monk's voice: Pitch, duration/rhythm. Tibetan singing bowl. Trillbu.¹⁷¹

The tonality of it is very interesting: despite the clear harmony of the singing bowl, the voice places itself only in the vicinity of its fundamental and overtones. The distance between the sounds of bowl and bell is defined by the syllables of the recited prayer. The rhythms of each individual source are gradually brought together, but never in terms of sound (the sources remain independent and separated. There is no attempt to bring the sounds timbrally, or in any other way than rhythmically, together). Only through analytical attempts of non-Tibetan categories is it possible to explain with a western gaze (and thought) what happens. I would say that a musicologist's approach would only be a curiosity for the monks of this monastery. As with the Tuvan of Siberia, the sense of music theory is here not "possible to discern from life."

Again, language defines what we can think. And language constitute the paradigm through which we perceive the world. To re-make it, we need to look elsewhere:

171 My transcription of Gyüto monk, singing bowl and trillbu (hand-held Tibetan bell)

is it possible to approach music in silent comprehension, in other words: to escape our psychological, irrational, intuitive etc. modes of understanding, which essentially is created by language?¹⁷²

Immediate Expression; The Intersubjectivity of the Artist [Trying to summarize slightly and open the field further]

Once again: *theoria* and *praxis*, now, after chapter 1, considered as an extended realization of the unity of *body-mind-sound*. That is, the body thinks, through *praxis*, through movement. For Aristotle, *theoria* is a thinking which reflects upon the eternal. It is probably more like the idea of a state-of-being, than an activity (in which we find *praxis*). In the concept of the ancient Greeks, the space for a theory and a practice remains located in the realm of a transcendent and virtuous (the *praxis* is intent on action toward the human good, nothing else) experience, which subsequent western cultures have slowly turned to a more distinct and mechanically perceivable understanding: the abstract systematization of the renaissance, and the ascent of *praxis* as technological solutions. Not to mention the impact Marx had on interpretation of *praxis*, in which all activities should be focused on the act of revolution, a focus on the action to change social structures toward greater justice. This impact is impossible not to acknowledge also within the art scene, where today—perhaps more than ever—the discourse of artistic research increasingly deals with a social and political dimension. If not explicitly, at least by disclosing a narrative of the artwork which is interpreted by the gaze of the marginalized human being, or society.

In such a context it seems to me to be impossible to imagine contemplation, mysticism, and trance-states as belonging to an intrinsic understanding of theory and practice. Instead, ecstatic practices then become something which are at odds with the common understanding of the function and meaning of art. I need to go further, to reinvoké what I contend in fact *is* the function of art.

The experience of immediacy, as stated before, is to be found in a pre-verbal dimension: the cry of the new-born child or the communication of animals. Culturally we can trace its presence in a context of community. How the ritual—in a more archaic realization of an artistic condition—creates the

172 “PIERLUIGI BILLONE: 1+1=1”, KAIROS, July 2, 2015, loc. Linear notes to the CD, <https://www.kairos-music.com/cds/0012602kai>.

condition of a shared immediacy. Agamben's depiction of how the *madness* of art has shifted from audience to artist hints at the idealization of this experience. The *immediacy* contains a distinct air of a lack of subject, it is something which is detached from the subject and speaks *immediately* to the space. With this in mind, 20th century theories of deconstruction and apophatic theology share a common trait, pointing to something beyond language. It points to an intersubjective reality, one in which understanding of the world originates in a dimension which is a shared condition. We experience ourselves and the world through intersubjectivity, in the relationship and developed *meaning* of different subjects, objects—agencies.

On a basic level there is the grounding; that is, the primordial—essentially prelinguistic—realization of existence. A bodily presence (of oneself or another) is revealed by even the slightest shift of eyes, of colour—of voice. As such it is not immediately apprehended, instead it touches *immediately* upon my subjectivity. However, this moment is one of transition. The subject is made aware of its own subjectivity in the context of a community. The world is already being mediated. This moment could be called a *bare consciousness*, thereby alluding to Agamben's notion of *bare life*. A life preceding the judgement and paradigm of power. The bare consciousness is a moment of *opening*. A clearing in which the world is mediated.

To summarize: the primordial experience opens to the *world of immediacy* but also immediately becomes a position of interpreting its meaning (the immediacy sparks the realization of oneself), then proceeds to the shared space of existence, mediated by communication among an unlimited gathering of autonomous subjects (and objects). The artistic project I am searching for, belongs to a further step in which this shared space of immediacy and mediated meaning once again—through a method of *praxis*—returns to the realm of immediacy. Thereby, it is renouncing a sense of objective knowledge and instead mediates its pre-linguistic *knowledge* as experience. And this it does, not as mediating itself, but mediating the scent and strength of this long-lost world of immediacy. Bernard Lonergan does something similar when trying to establish a theological understanding of the mystic by treating this particular experience by referring to three forms of intersubjectivity:

The first is the vital or primordial intersubjectivity, which is a fusion in the 'world of immediacy' that 'precedes the distinction of subjects and survives its oblivion.' The second is intersubjectivity as shared meaning, which involves myriad forms of mediated communication among autonomous, self-mediating subjects. Third is mystical intersubjectivity, which

is a ‘mediated return to immediacy’—that is, a conscious appropriation of the ground of consciousness.¹⁷³

Glossolalia

Mysticism stands in a paradoxical relation to language, writes Exert H. Cousins, noting that the origin of the word ‘mystic’ derives from the Indo-European root **mu*, which in turn gives us our Greek *muien*, ‘close the eyes or lips,’ and also our word ‘mute.’ A mystic is an “initiated one”: those initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries were sworn to an oath that keeps the lips closed.¹⁷⁴

The word Pilgrim, etymologically *stranger*, is nowadays more known as *traveler*. Composer Luigi Nono alludes in many of his late works to a pilgrim quote found on a cloister wall in Toledo, Spain on the route to Santiago de Compostela: “Traveller, there are no paths, only walking.”¹⁷⁵ A quote attributed to his own travels, but probably accentuated by its paraphrase of the poet Antonio Machado’s *Caminante, no hay camino (Wanderer, there are no path)*, whom Nono since many years had been both reading and setting to music. As the stranger wanders, the method is also this; it is hidden inside the practice. In all aspects. It is a call for adopting how one perceives, to evoke something *unknown*. One cannot simply stumble upon it, it needs space and time to develop. A slow tracing, modulating and harmonizing with what recently remained closed.

So [this] is for me the great lesson of Giordano Bruno, there are infinite worlds, there are times that overlap, there is the [indistinguishable words] ... that we have on the language [that we articulate by speaking]. At the same time as we speak, I hear other things and think of other things, I’d like to be able to say them at the same time... it’s our limit that we cannot express [not being able to express ourselves like this]... maybe he [referring to Giordano Bruno, my note] is like an Italian, a Neapolitan, who decides to express himself using his hands, not to underline [what he is saying] but to express other things.¹⁷⁶

173 Frohlich, *The Intersubjectivity of the Mystic*, 82.

174 L. Higley, *Hildegard of Bingen’s Unknown Language*, 55.

175 “Caminantes, no hay caminos, hay que caminar”

176 *Archipel Luigi Nono*. Translated from Italian by Pierluigi Billone. Here, Luigi Nono is speaking of the influence of Giordano Bruno on his work.

Can language exist without the grammar that we know of? Is it even possible to consider language without grammar?

There are some curious examples of invented languages in our history. One peculiar form related to ecstatic practices is the already mentioned glossolalia—*free vocalization, to speak in tongues*. This is a technique which should be considered an art of its own. It severs the relationship between vocal utterance and meaning. It contains a sense of loss of the *ego*. In this sense it is an act of regression. Language is made crude and primitive. To speak in tongues is not only a shadow of a language, but an act of violence against its civilized form; to make something *speak* without direct semantic content. One who speaks in tongues is no longer an *I* (*ego*) but only a messenger.

Glossolalia distinguishes two major features: echoism and primitivism. That is, the tendency to repeat syllables and the simplification of the variety of phonemes (which one finds in one's own language)¹⁷⁷. The preference of vowel sounds rather than consonants sums it up. Swedish linguistic Bertil Malmberg points out that the open syllable:

[R]epresents the most primitive, and without doubt historically the oldest, of all syllabic types, the only one which is general in all languages.¹⁷⁸

The vowel as indicating a divine, angelic source has a long history and it does in fact relate to an idea of a divine language that does not need the articulation of the voice but is transferred with sounds rather than semantics. In the writings of the 16th century occultist Cornelius Agrippa, one reads:

We might doubt whether Angels, or Demons, since they be pure spirits, use any vocal speech, or tongue amongst themselves [...] what their speech or tongue is, is much doubted by many. [...] and what man doth with a sensible voice, they [the Angels and Demons, my note] do by impressing the conception of speech in those to whom they speak, after a better manner than if they should express it by an audible voice.¹⁷⁹

The Swedish scientist and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg claimed to have even heard the language of angels in his visions:

177 L. Higley, *Hildegard of Bingen's Unknown Language*, 39.

178 L. Higley, 40.

179 L. Higley, 44–45.

[T]he speech of the celestial angels is like that of a gentle stream, soft, and continuous, but the speech of the spiritual angels is rather vibrating and discrete. The speech of celestial angels greatly resounds with the vowels *u* and *o*; while the speech of spiritual angels with that of *e* and *i*; for vowels are sounds, and in sounds there is emotion... The speech of celestial angels also lacks harsh consonants, and it rarely passes from consonant to consonant without the interposition of a word beginning with a vowel.¹⁸⁰

Glossolalia, seen as a language without limits, or a language only used as sound, impossible to deduce semantic meaning from, but that nevertheless expresses immediate realizations seems to go hand in hand with ecstatic discourse. Glossolalia can be viewed as the term when language runs riot, when it in an air of poetry or music transcends logic and thereby evokes ecstasy.

Body

Man is oriented toward the world. Even in his most crouched condition he remains exposed to the world. Through movement we perceive reality. Through the touch—a slight movement of the elbow, the flickering gaze of the eye. However, movement is always accompanied by an inner reflection, preceding, or proceeding perception; as philosopher and mystic Simone Weil writes: “It is impossible to have the idea of shape without the idea of movement.”¹⁸¹ The eye, a hand—the pen or the imagination of the mind are all part of a movement in which the relationship between things gives them identity. Without movement, the world is silent. Music illustrates this point better than anything else. Once again Simone Weil: “Music doesn’t reside in any single note, but in a relationship: and yet it makes us weep. Man is made like that. Relationships touch his body.”¹⁸² In music, in art we are placed in front of a mystery in which words are not enough. The body is not only a medium, but furthermore indistinguishable from the creative act. To quote again theatre director Peter Brooks, writing after Jerzy Grotowski had held a workshop for Peter Brooks own theatre company:

I won’t describe the work. Why not? First of all, such work is only free if it is in confidence, and confidence depends on its confidences not being

180 L. Higley, 45.

181 Weil, *Lectures on Philosophy*, 41.

182 Simone Weil, *The Notebooks of Simone Weil* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 486.

disclosed. Secondly, the work is essentially non-verbal—To verbalize is to complicate and even destroy exercises that are clear and simple when indicated by a gesture and when executed by the mind and the body as one.¹⁸³

As a composer I work with sound. I come in touch with sound through the body, my body, the instrument, and the space. *E.g.*, I grab the instrument, beat it, caress, make it resonate. While returning, with pen in hand to the paper, sound becomes an imaginative sign, a sign desperate to become a “reality”. We are reminded of the previously mentioned quote of Pierluigi Billone regarding the relational qualities of sound:

By posing the question—what is a sound?—something appears in the dimension of sound. It begins to be recognized as *sound*. Not every vibration becomes sound, sound is not only an acoustic definition. Sound stands always for a revealing relationship. It reveals what a human being is in contact with, on what he depends for his balance, a rhythmical revelation in an extreme wide sense.¹⁸⁴

The sign desperately tries to become a medium, bringing together the body and the imagination. The sound (through body) and its graphical reality only seemingly meet. The ancient fragment of Heraclitus reminds me:

Man kindles a light for himself in the night-time, when he has died but is alive. The sleeper, whose vision has been put out, lights up from the dead; he that is awake lights up from the sleeping.¹⁸⁵

In fragment 77 (sometimes referred to as fragment 26, depending on translator) Heraclitus writes—enigmatic as ever—about a state of transition, between life and death, between the sleeper and the one awake, about the light and the darkness. Each state excludes the other one, yet—in the fragment—they both meet. Swedish philosopher Hans Ruin notes: “the meeting in itself is intangible; it occurs only a seizing.”¹⁸⁶ [My translation]. Again, we are back to the act of the artwork, the etymology of *πράξις*, and thereby in the liminal practice of the *techniques of ecstasy*.

183 Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, II.

184 https://www.pierluigibillone.com/en/texts/harvard_cambridge_lecture_2010.html

185 John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 4. ed. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1945), 138.

186 5/400-talet f.Kr. Herakleitos, *Fragment*, Kykeon, 8 (Lund: Propexus, 1997), 65.

Intermission 4

*'Isola' (2017) for flute,
clarinet, violin, viola and cello
[Constellation of sound sources,
beginning to imagine the space]*



Island of Materials

In my work on the solo pieces, *Kuarup A & B*, *Noein. Noaidi*, but also the less mentioned *Insula. Pharos* (also part of the thesis-included musical works) similar strategies are used. As much as they increasingly acknowledge the hand, the phenomenological exploration of the instruments, they also begin to involve different ideas of ecstatic practices, philosophical idea (Agamben, Heidegger, Scelsi, Weil and others) as well as practical ones. There are considerations of the different concept of sound, concert and stage in archaic, shamanic cultures, but also in western monasticism and avantgarde theatre. They reveal, in hindsight, a general orientation, one which this thesis strives to make to a further strategy with clear methodological implications.

A clear consequence of the solo pieces was how in each piece, in different ways, the voice, the instrument and the movement of the hand began to work like *one* body. What they failed to explore was the extended space. They also, in their own way, followed something which could be considered a linear orientation. A few gestural *formulas*¹⁸⁷, which essentially explored the opening and closing of a sound. A sound which throughout the duration of the works developed, or were dissembled, in a logic which placed itself closer to a western conception of sound, regardless of my philosophical aspiration. There was an insistence of micro to macro and vice versa in the relation between the details of the gestures and overarching form. That is, the method of composing placed itself in a tradition of variation technique. Not by chance, as such it marks a tangible point between vastly separated musical cultures. The continuous separating of musical parts (hands, voice, strings, objects etc.), and its simultaneous merging of sound sources (again: having two or more strings sound as different parts of one sound, having the hand extend or being part of the voice, the drum etc.) resulted in a music which presented itself as increasingly heterophonic in

187 It should be acknowledged that this way of working, where a *formula* of musical elements are extended, expanded and put in variation is evident in the music of, most prominently, Karlheinz Stockhausen. In pieces such as *Mantra* (1970) or *Inori* (1971) could be mentioned. In Stockhausen's so-called British lectures given at the Imperial college in 1973 (especially in the seventh lecture on *Mantra* (Karlheinz Stockhausen and Robert Slotover, *Mantra; Questions and Answers on Mantra* (Kürten, Germany: Stockhausen-Verlag, 2007).) this method is explored in detail. Stockhausen there also shows how this way of working is related and inspired by his genuine interest in other non-western musical traditions. Even if Stockhausen is an illuminating example, the essential method could be considered an expanded form of *variation* technique, and as such it is possibly the oldest method of manipulating musical material, regardless of tradition.

its horizontal development. The *autonomous* (soloistic) sounds that were presented became, through the de-coupling of the different gestures (the left and right hand, the voice, and the instrument etc.) a sense of a counterpoint, in which at times different parts of a sound unfold on different time scales. In *Kuarup A* the dry knocking on the frame in combination with the *carpus* (the “cushion” of the hand) on the intersection of frame and skin combine complex yet multi-layered sound, set off also by acting on the head of the drum and the glissando-knuckle along the skin as well as the chanting voice in continuous glissando:

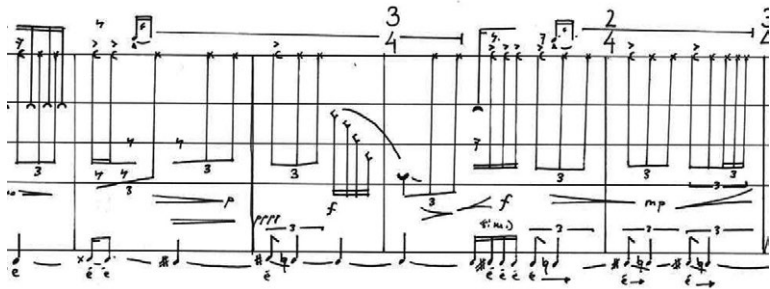


IMAGE 43. Bar 100–104 of *Kuarup A* for frame drum¹⁸⁸

In the ensemble piece *Isola*, the ambition was to start to work with these strategies but placed in combination with one another. That is, from solo to ensemble. Thereby explore how they could interact and challenge their sense of directionality. On a general level I called the materials different islands (*isole*). They all belonged to previous explorations of sounds. For instance, the attempts to trace Diamánda Galás with the flute is here re-introduced. Different similar approaches to the clarinet (although the clarinet transcription belonged rather to transcriptions of other source material), and lastly the string trio which primarily consists of deconstructed phrases from *Noein. Noaidi* as well as *Insula. Pharos*. The over-arching depiction of the material as islands do relate on a very small level to some of the late works of Luigi Nono. In particular, how he worked with *isole*, in the opera *Prometheo*.

To summarize: *Isola* derives from a rich material for each individual instrument. I had been gathering it for a period of about three years, but it was now put in motion in a formal way which oriented itself to what could be considered a hermeneutical interpretation of material, one in which each singular part (ideally) reflects the whole, and in which each singular part has

188 *Kuarup A*, bar 100–104.

the ability (or this was rather the aim) to transform or *become* any other part of the piece. The relationship between temporalities (the *moment/newness* and the constructed form) is pushed towards a non-linear consideration. The final proposition of its evolution in time, I propose, is the one which the *forces* of sound established by their “own” accord. In reality, the parts could easily have been placed in a completely different order.

Transitions I

Man kindles a light for himself in the night-time, when he has died but is alive. The sleeper, whose vision has been put out, lights up from the dead; he that is awake lights up from the sleeping.

Heraclitus, fragment 77.¹⁸⁹

Again, the fragment of Heraclitus, depicting the transition between the sleeper and the awakened. In the piece *Isola* for ensemble this fragment positions itself as a metaphor for the composition, a metaphor which in the end is realized by yet another metaphor which is implied in the title of the piece, *Isola* (island). The material is based on a vast musical material. Each instrument is considered its own *island* of autonomous material:

189 John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 138.

Rall. ----- $\text{♩} = \text{ca } 48-52$
 21 $\text{ca } 5''$
pppp
molto rub. (lento)
quasi solo
 25 $\text{ca } 68-74$
pp
pp
pp
 27 *VS.*
accel.
pppp *pp* *pp* *pppp*

IMAGE 44. Example bar 21–28 in the cello part of *Isola*.

In this sense, every phrase of each instrument could be considered (and from a compositional point of view it is) as one long line consisting of a number of unnumbered phrases interrupted by pauses of varying lengths. The phrases are not chronological, but instead each phrase is considered to be an island of its own, possible to be preceded or succeeded by any other:

accel. ----- $\text{♩} = \text{ca } 66$
 39 *duo w. cello*
pppp *mf* *mp* *mf*
 $\text{♩} = \text{ca } 52$
ppp
 42 *accel.* $\text{♩} = \text{ca } 66$
legatissimo, but articulate
mp *pp* *mp* *ff*

Image 45. Example bass clarinet as in the final score of *Isola* (bar 39–43).

Could as easily be articulated as:



IMAGE 46. Bar 41.



IMAGE 47. Bar 42-43.

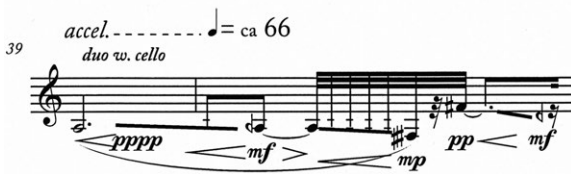


IMAGE 48. Bar 39-40.

Or:



IMAGE 49. Bar 42-43.



IMAGE 50. Bar 41.

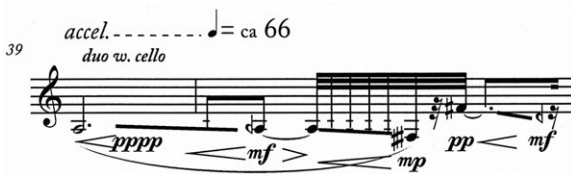


IMAGE 41. Bar 39-40.

The musical fragments are placed (imagined) in a vast space. Arbitrary at first and then focused from a force of gravity induced by the formation of the different fragments. In the finished piece the forces of each phrase are slowly re-imagined and immersed in one another:

IMAGE 52. Example, bar 92–96

The immersion of the material changes the stability in each part, meaning that a stable pitch might begin to fluctuate, to change its dynamic or extend or become shortened. As if each autonomous part begins to listen and react to its surrounding.

The method is as long as possible one of imagination: one phrase hovers solitary (I imagine it as a continuous reoccurrence, or play it over and over again), then by imagining another phrase (in another instrument), the two sources are slowly forced closer and closer (or further and further away) from one another. The compositional process is then one of imagining the tangible point between the different energy levels of the phrases. By retaining the autonomy of each instrument (and by the independence of notating each instrument one by one) the construction of the notation (in the fixed score) is delayed as long as possible. The fixing of synchronicity (in time) in each moment means on the one hand a harmonizing of two (or more) parts, but also imposing a limitation on the material (each individual instrument shouldn't be considered—ideally—as existing in the same temporality).

A particular method of harmonizing materials is also used. The voice, or the acknowledgement of the body-instrument connection. The voice functions as reappearing point of reference and as a point of stability in each instrument:

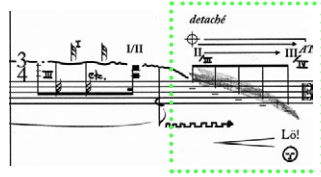


IMAGE 53. Example viola bar 49 (the drawn head indicates the use of the voice, here as an exclamation of “Lô!” balancing with the timbre of the crushed viola sound).

- The voice is used as an inflection or timbre quality of a sustained, unstable sound:

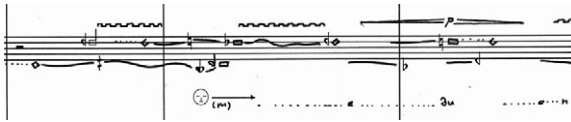


IMAGE 54. Example viola bar 164–166 in which the viola imitates the grainy sound of slow bow movement.

- The voice is used to disturb and immerse the sound quality with an ambiguous quality, a quality which shows the connection of body—instrument, but also allows for the general presence of voice, not as a mere effect, but as a unifying quality of sound, a glue:

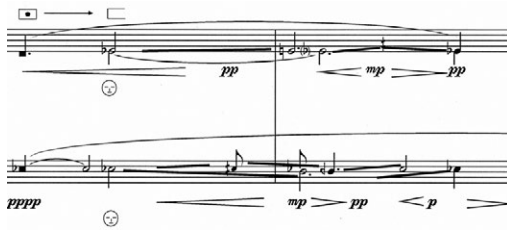


IMAGE 55. Example, bass flute and bass clarinet bar 170–171 of *Isola*, in which the flautist and clarinet performer add an almost unison singing to the normal sound of their instrument.

- The voice is used as an additional extension of the instrument, essentially in *Isola* in the parts of the flute and the violin in which the voice not only emphasizes the relationship between the performer and his/her instrument, but instead integrates and uses the voice as an extension; transforming the instrument:

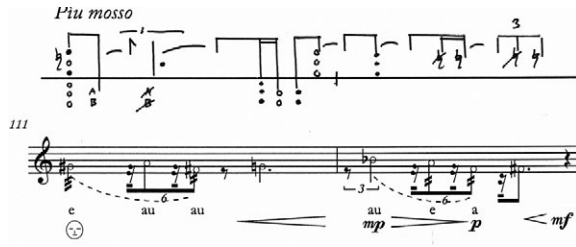
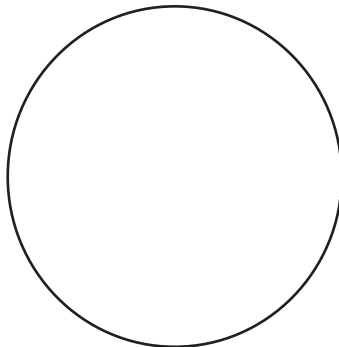


IMAGE 56. Example from the bass flute part of *Isola*, bar III–III2 in which only the voice is used with covered mouthpiece. The sound (and essentially the perceived pitch of the voice) is manipulated by the legato movement of the fingerings.

This is what I consider the first articulate attempt of my work to deal explicitly with a compositional process in which:

- a Each individual material essentially is completely autonomous and doesn't rely on the context for its (possible) existence.
- b Each individual part is constructed, improvised and notated in a form in which the usage of chronology is avoided. Each phrase is a new beginning, but possible to view as intermediary, final or, simply, a part of a holistic whole.
- c Each individual part is in almost all instances able to contain all other parts, each part is also able to immerse or detach from the existing other forces (parts). Each cell is a mirror of the whole and that inclusion is the dominating constructive force. The compositional process seeks to avoid exclusion of possible existences to the very last occasion (the fixation of the score).

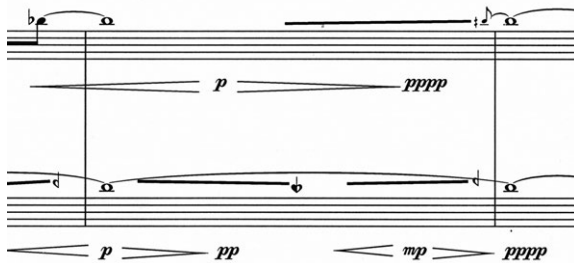
This approach to the traditional categories of *harmony*, *melody*, *temporality and time* poses instead the idea of circular, re-negotiating, compositional process:



Transition II

The liminal point between life and death, the sleeper and the awake, which Heraclitus poetically describes is in *Isola* the manifestation of the imagined constellation of musical (sounding) materials. They immerse, repel, but never fully integrate. They remain autonomous and elusive. It is a continuous sound, articulated and made dynamically present in a specific space, in a specific temporality. The meeting is also here intangible, but nevertheless possible to *hear*. They (the sounds) exist or we imagine them to exist in different dimensions, possible to locate in their intersection, their tangent points, their liminality.

The idea of immersion in the piece, or the *becoming* through the combination of materials is essentially underdeveloped in the piece. It is true that the different materials effect each other: they extend or transform (or as is often the case in the string parts—one part is often slowly distributed in three), but they remain too much limited by their pre-requisite notational identity. For future pieces the idea of becoming, immersion and transformation has to be imagined and re-imagined vis-a-vis the pre-existing phrases (the material). For instance, if a sound is extended through suspense—as in the example below,—a bigger degree of sensibility should be practiced.

IMAGE 57.¹⁹⁰

The *interference* of the sound of bar 95 (which in itself is a consequence of several phrases, as seen on page 131) clearly infers in the acoustic space a moment which invites for the development of a new kind of sound which I consider the piece unable to develop. Instead, it always returns to the skeleton of the piece (the possible phrases existing within the material, the islands), or through the simple use of a suspended sound that essentially is the end of a phrase.

In *Isola*, the placing of the musicians in space is only a realization of an abstract but practical geometry, the best acoustical distribution of the used musical material. However, with a pre-imagined space (regardless of if it will ever be performed in such), some of these issues could have been developed further. It does not mean that a fixation of space would make the material poorer, rather that the material could have transformed further through a more established inner (imagined) and outer (practical) reality.

Lastly, I end with a quote by scholar Dorothea Baumann:

the spatial aspect of music has, in fact, two sides: music creates its own inner world with its own time, which is passing even if only in our imagination. A simple stream of sounds creates a sensation of space. But ‘musical’ space is strangely ambiguous. Still, by means of thinking and sensation we can move within this virtual space, which has fullness and depth.¹⁹¹

Space—Rhythm—The Hand

Space

In Elisabeth Grosz *The Incorporeal* she writes: “The Stoics mention four incorporeals [...] They are the *void*, *space*, *time* and *lekton*. These concepts are all ontological.”¹⁹² Apart from *lekton*, the concepts are immaterial conditions *for* material. *Lekta* is the capacity of bodies or material somethings to become more than what they are. *Lekta* is “impassive entities.” Music is immaterial, but requires void, space, time and *lekton* to become.

The Stoics say that every cause is a body which becomes the cause to a body of something incorporeal. [...] The body uncut is material; a cut body is equally material. But there is something immaterial about the cutting, the being-cut, the is-cutting.¹⁹³

Comprehensibility, or the ability to grasp something, is what composer Anton Webern spoke of in his lectures on the *path to new music* in 1933. The comprehensibility of the space being its first and foremost example:

191 Dorothea Baumann, *Music and Space: A Systematic and Historical Investigation Into the Impact of Architectural Acoustics on Performance Practice Followed by a Study of Handel's Messiah* (Peter Lang, 2011).

192 Grosz, *The Incorporeal*, 31.

193 Grosz, 30.

You want to ‘get hold’ of something, if you take an object in your hand, then you have grasped it, you ‘comprehend’ it. [...] So we extend the meaning; something comprehensible is something of which I can get a complete view [...] So a smooth, flat surface also makes comprehension impossible. [...] Here we come to differentiation.¹⁹⁴

The ‘graspability’ of space comes about as the inclusion of objects, but it leads inevitably to further divisions and metaphors. The “hanging-together”¹⁹⁵ of a musical piece is brought about as a mode to make the music comprehensible. In this sense the basic outline of space brings about the condition of a unity.

In a sense it is also a reply to the remark in passing of Deleuze and Guattari –“what do you not have to do in order to produce a new sound?”¹⁹⁶ in ‘A thousand plateaus’.

We need, as Webern points out, a point of reference; be it imaginative, real or even secret. The musicians, the instruments, the presence of a pillar, all immediately—without a deliberate thought—give the space a sense of comprehensibility. As such, it opens the space for sound. Past sounds, new sounds, current sounds. There is no need for a physical act to produce sound, we imagine it with ease. Again, the idea of movement and shape is inseparable from the mind. The immaterial in this sense is not only the condition for the stage, but also its ‘first mover’¹⁹⁷.

Although space would seem the *silent* promise of sound, it is in fact at the same time the most defining aspect of what can become. With each new inclusion in the space, possibility after possibility is suspended. The position of a piccolo flute in the foreground, with a bass clarinet placed more than 10 meters in the back, immediately excludes a vast number of conventional strategies of music. However, it invites at the same time an almost endless stream of new relations that will force the ear of both composer and listener to find new ways of experience sound. It invites the ear to experience distance, to perceive a very differentiated effect of dynamics. Foremost, it will inevitably make audible the autonomy of the sound sources.

194 Willi Reich, *The Webern Path to a New Music* (Universal Edition, 1963), 17.

195 Reich, 18.

196 Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, New Ed edition (London: Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd., 2004), 38.

197 I allude here to the enigmatic memoir, *Il sogno 101*, of Giacinto Scelsi, and his, Hindu-inspired, mention (there-in) of the ‘first movement of the immovable’, a quote which of course also as easily could be viewed as a derivation of Aristotle’s *unmoved mover* in his *Metaphysics*. Giacinto Scelsi, *Il Sogno 101—Reve 101*, trans. Christine Piot and Anne Giannini (Macerata: ACTES SUD, 2009), 22–23.

An *ontopoetics* of space begins in the immaterial conditions but can only be developed in the presence of an imaginative (and sometimes ‘secret’) mode of exploration, where the tracing *act* emerges and guides.

Rhythm

When rhythm has become the sole and unique mode of thought’s expression, it is then only that there is poetry. In order for mind to become poetry, it must bear in itself the mystery of an innate rhythm. It is in this rhythm alone that it can live and become visible. And every work of art is but one and the same rhythm. Everything is simply rhythm. The destiny of man is a single celestial rhythm, as every work of art is a unique rhythm.¹⁹⁸

A sound is not a mere impulse, a certain duration of vibrations. There is a whole range of immanent qualities that all belong together. The musician in touch with an instrument is more than one movement, it is a complex act of becoming.

Sound contains already within itself the presence of rhythm. Contained in relations between the act on sound, contained in implicit differences. It is worth remembering the famous example of Stockhausen: how a percussive rhythm through a change of speed becomes a sustained pitch. On a more basic level rhythmical articulation is present already in the anticipation of sound; the hand preparing to touch a source of resonance. The hand preparing to just touch a surface. By approaching a sound source as an archaeologist, imagining that each object, each contact, remains a mystery a different sense of rhythm emerges. One in which one *type* of contact is repeated, then varied by simple manipulations: a change of tool, a change of dynamic, a change of duration. It is a focus of attention which reveals a slow unveiling, to quote Martin Heidegger:

The moment of vision is nothing other than the *look of resolute disclosedness* in which the full situation of an action opens itself¹⁹⁹.

198 *Agamben*, *The Man Without Content*, 94. . Agamben is here quoting the German poet Friedrich Hölderlin, in his turn quoted by his friend Sinclair around the time of 1804. At the time when Hölderlin supposedly was slipping further and further away into madness.

199 Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, Reprint edition (Indiana University Press, 2001), 149.

Rhythm thereby becomes something else than a short or long impulse, or a combination of impulses, but has to be understood as a dynamically forming element. In the art theories of Kandinsky, the point occupies the figure of something on the threshold. Of silence, of movement, of temperature, of... etc. The point is the proto-element, but in reality (in the art) it is always of a double nature. As much as its “resonant properties” changes with the location and density of it, so does the slow metamorphosis to plane, to line; from “the creation of a double sound by a single form.”²⁰⁰

Rhythm, as form or structure, points us once again toward a Greek understanding there-of. Aristotle speaks of rhythm as structure (σχῆμα *schema*), where rhythm functions as a *merging* (not as a *combination*) of elements. Rhythm as structure shifts the focus from the particular to the whole, once again Agamben:

in a musical piece, although it is somehow in time, we perceive rhythm as something that escapes the incessant flight of instants and appears almost as the presence of an atemporal dimension in time.²⁰¹

Rhythm becomes form (*schema*), it also becomes space (reverberance) and thereby (through merging) it tells time through suspending it, making time a dynamical cradle which through being compressed and expanded develops and unveils an evolution of sound which emanates from within, through the expansion, re-interpretation and displacement of a single impulse. A waterfall is only causally considered static, in reality it is a rapid current of continuous change. Rhythm is not (only) a figure (*gestalt*) or a metrical structure (*schema*), it is of a more existential order, it is in-the-world, a ground to stand on. Again, I repeat the word of the German poet Hölderlin that introduced this section, but add his beautiful ending:

Everything is rhythm, the entire destiny of man is one heavenly rhythm, just as every work of art is one rhythm, and everything swings from the poetizing lips of the god.²⁰² (*Giorgio Agamben is here quoting Friedrich Hölderlin*)

Hölderlin continues to ponder on rhythm in relation to poetry and meaning, famously characterized as parataxis by philosopher Theodor Adorno’s reading on the late Hölderlin poetry²⁰³. Parataxis, as a literary concept, deals

200 Wassily Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane* (New York: Dover, 1979), 27.

201 Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, 99.

202 Agamben, 94.

203 Theodor W. Adorno, *Notes to Literature. Vol. 1* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1991).

with the juxtaposition of different sentences, meanings, meter and even pauses, where the reader has to infer or understand the meaning of the text although there is no clear logic between sentences which follow upon another. For a musician, this mode of working with material is easy to relate to. That is, to work with different simultaneous layers is part of any musical culture. To beat the rhythm of the music on the body and to sing the melody with the voice is the beginning of almost anyone's first encounter with musical training, and with Hölderlin this basic exercise has grown to a complex counterpoint, which comes across as *heterophonic*.

However, there is something with Hölderlin's thoughts on the *cesura*, the sudden pause in a text. Often unmeasured it resonates even deeper with the notion of rhythm, and the wordless: with the immediate experience of sound where once again the *apophatic* or the *antinomistic* reveals itself. Sound as sound.

In Hölderlin's notes (Anmerkungen zum Ödipus) to his translations of *Sophokles* he writes:

there becomes necessary *what in poetic meter is called cæsura*, the pure word, the counter-rhythmic rupture; namely, in order to meet the onrushing change of representation but the representation itself.²⁰⁴

In Giorgio Agamben's *Hölderlin's madness* this turn in Hölderlin's language is also seen in the light of his alleged madness. After half a life in sanity, Hölderlin dwells in a tower in the university town of Tübingen for the last 36 years of his life²⁰⁵. By his peers he is viewed as a madman, but in the transition to insanity we find intriguing notes on language, and during the three decades before his death a not insignificant amount of beautiful poetry, considered unintelligible by his contemporaries.

As Agamben notes regarding Hölderlin's words on the *cesura*:

Thus the paratactic intention culminates in the *cæsura*, and what surfaces in this anti-rhythmic interruption is not the semantic flow of representative discourse, but language itself. This is why Hölderlin makes the stretch of defining *cesura*, the interruption of discourse, as 'word' (*das reine Wort*)—the eccentric place where what appears isn't intralinguistic discourse but language itself as such.²⁰⁶

204 Giorgio Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness: Chronicle of a Dwelling Life, 1806–1843*, trans. Alta L. Price, The Italian List (Seagull Books, 2023), 310.

205 Agamben, 74.

206 Agamben, 311.

The cesura—the pause—allows language to emerge. Where rhythm is broken, where the silence comes into focus, that is where the poetry appears. Where language thus ceases to function—for Hölderlin—language transforms into its true form. As a musician, it's hard not to think that when the word ends, the tone takes over. Hölderlin falls asleep for good in 1843. Around the same time the previously quoted words of Wagner were written: "Where music can go no further, there comes the word... the word stands higher than the note."

We are here also reminded of Luigi Nono's string quartet *Fragmente—Stille, An Diotima*, in which the writings of Hölderlin have such a prominent, yet hidden, place (through a silent continuous recitation of selected sentences from Hölderlin's letters to Susette Gontard, the muse for the character of *Diotima* in the novel *Hyperion*). However, in Nono's construction of the piece the later writings of Hölderlin, his thoughts on language become visible, not only in its most obvious form—the extensive use of fermatas (the *still* moments of the string quartet) and cesuras.

In Hölderlin's presumably last *hymn*, probably written a few months before his death in 1843 (although dated before he was born as well as signed by his late alter ego *Scardanelli*) some of his most beautiful verses are preserved. It is an example of Hölderlin's paratactic writing, and another example of a *shaman*:

The View

When one's life of dwelling off into
the distance.

Where, faraway, the vineyard's season glistens,
There, too, summer's empty fields draw near,
The woods and their dark countenances appear.
That Nature completes the image of the ages,
That it lingers as they glide by, swiftly turning
pages

Is sheer perfection, and the high heavens shine
For people, too, like trees crowned in flowers
so fine.

24 May 1748

Your humble and obedient servant,

Scardanelli²⁰⁷

Intermission 5

'À sibyl—mônē' for solo cello

[The imagined space.

Developing the first contact.

Developing the strategy]



By Chance

An important part of the *techniques of ecstasy* is the continuous inclusion of the tension between the extrovert forms and the more introvert ones, as well as my insistence that they share more than what separates them. At the heart of it is the pre-occupation of the composer. The one who, seemingly, is the starting point of evoking sounds, but also the subject in which the sounds become signs and symbols in what will become the score. It means that the extrovert passion of the practice, as well as the more reflective contemplation takes place within the same material, within the same subject and with a common aspiration. From my perspective, the cello solo *à Sibyl—mōnē* in much encompasses the evolution of this thesis. Not only in a poetic sense, in its final (sounding) form, but it is valid also for the narrative which accompanies it. In its conception, the figure of Artaud dwindles to the background and instead the other part, the Weil-part, the mystic part, grows forth. Much of it is implicit. The piece is a response to a commission from German cellist Christina Meißner, a commission for a CD-production of several new compositions alternating with transcriptions for cello of Hildegard of Bingen's medieval antiphons. With the music of Bingen one is immediately in touch with a wide range of possible connotations; the early forms of our western notation, the monastic life—and the era of the Christian mystics, the transition from monophonic to polyphonic music. The list can be made much longer...

À Sibyl—mōnē was composed primarily during late 2018 and the better part of 2019, wherefore it in many ways mark the period during which my *strategy of sound* of chapter 5 was sketched out. As such, it is a piece which in many aspects was conceived with the *strategy of sound* as a point of reference. Although some attempt will be made to align its different phases with the chronology of the *strategy* it will also be important to point out some of its more apparent compositional concerns. Even if the *strategy of sound* was in a phase of becoming, this becoming is intrinsic to the practice explored in each, individual composition.

The Score as Prison, Apophatic Strategies and the Mystics

Location

On a weekly basis I spend a few hours in the small town of Lerum (more precisely the area of *Stenkullen*) just outside of Gothenburg. When the weather allows, I walk along the local brook, *Säveån*, which runs through Lerum

toward Gothenburg. The promenade is part of a beautiful nature reserve and the sound of the brook accompanies every step, sometimes with deafening force, sometimes with an almost inaudible low-voiced poetic noise.

Regardless of its Thoreauesque undertones, for me it has been an important meditative spot contemplating sound for the past few years. When listening to sound or imagining sound, there is not a strict direction of its evolution in space. There is not even an *objective* experience of time. The sound flows, as the rushing water, in the direction which gravity directs it. The suspense of sound and the interaction of shorter events do not work in themselves as rhythmically identical cells. They express likeness, they act in our mind as part of our conception of their acoustical properties, but in reality they exist independently from us.

This walk and especially this position (see image) has properly been a place of *composing*. It is a bench to which I brought the imagined cello of *à Sibyl—mōnē*.



IMAGE 58.²⁰⁸

Moreover, it somehow marks the starting point of the *strategy of sound* of chapter 5, the imagined cello is fused with an imagined space. Imagined in a multi-layered sense; the merging of the non-linear nature sound of the brook, the fantasy of the cello sounding there, the slow imagined construction of a ruin in its midst, one where the cello begins to resound within limits, within walls. In *à Sibyl—mōnē* I worked with what could be considered two different spaces. One which more reassembles the imagined space in the *strategy*—a space that has limits; walls, ceilings and that is essentially empty and silent until I place

myself and sounds in its midst. It had vague similarities of the Løgum church in which the piece later was recorded (September 27th, 2019), but only imaginary ones; from images and descriptions of Christina Meißner (the cellist). The other one is the actual space along the trail in *Stenkullen*. Similarly, as in *Songs for Antonin*, the open, unlimited space has an importance (for me). And I would say it belongs to the *imagined space*. If not else, it underlines the sense of breathing that I perceive in space. Of how the remotest sound is accessible in the open space by the *turning* of the ear and despite its remoteness (or as with the opposite; a sounding, or just a “dead” object directly in front of me) can harmonize or completely negate all other sounds. Listening to the gushing of water, hearing tree branches creaking and perceiving far-away cries of civilization together with the hallucinatory sensation of the rays of the sun²⁰⁹—the movement of clouds as sounding properties is a *reality*. It speaks to me. Imagining the cello as the source of all this richness and depth—and perhaps especially, this suspension of time, lends itself not as a challenge, but as a further degree of this kaleidoscopic experience. I don’t conceive of it as a technical act, it is not an exercise in which the cello is asked to perform the sound of water, the feeling of horizon or light—it would imply a far too mechanical, or detached, approach. Instead it is an exercise in perceiving the emergence of a (possible) piece of music with the widest sense of attention.

In the midst of beings as a whole an open place occurs. There is a clearing, a lighting [...] Only this clearing grants and guarantees to us humans a passage to those beings that we ourselves are not, and access to the being that we ourselves are.²¹⁰

It is not a passive activity, as with the surrounding sounds. The attention is displaced with intention. And yet, it is an exercise of restrained sensibility. To let my imagination embrace the sound of the environment into my imaginary bow movement. As if every inch of the bow carries with it the tension of different strands of noises.

209 Later on, it was curious to learn of composer Luigi Nono’s fascination with the reflection of the sun in the water in Venice. “This coast south of Venice is extraordinary, because there is this enormous space, this silence, this infinity, this change of colors, of times. Many times, I stand motionless to watch and listen, to watch and listen at the same time because there is a constant change, a change of colors, bird calls, sounds. So, if we look there, there is something that in Venice we call the “Gibbigiana”, the reflection of the water that comes to give dynamism to the trees, the walls, there is nothing static.” *Archipel Luigi Nono*, translation from Italian by Pierluigi Billone.

210 Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, CN 430 (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 53.

Hildegard of Bingen

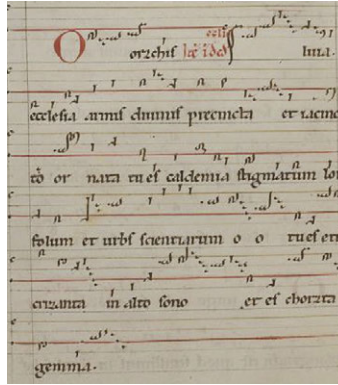
Another companion at this initial stage was the musical legacy of Hildegard of Bingen. Her music displays a richness which deserve (and have received) dissertations and has been the subject of many dedicated analyses. One of its most prominent features is that of its relation to the word, and in a wider sense, language.

In a word there is sound, meaning (uirtus), and breath. It has sound for it to be heard, meaning for it to be understood, and breath for it to be uttered. In the sound, then, recognize the Father.²¹¹

Uncharacteristic for the time, her music displays an unprecedented narrative or almost rhetorical musical content. The gestures and the melodies are used to elevate or single out a force that sees sound and word work together. From a monastic point of view it aligns with the tradition which already had been liturgically refined, for instance the *lectio Divina*, which in the context of a musical culture without a traditional score—more in touch with the reciting traditions of the Tora'h—comes across as more or less natural. However, a quick glance on the prevailing types of Gregorian chants at the time makes it clear that the musical gestures and *dynamical* writing of Hildegard of Bingen occupies a particular place in the history of western music. We can compare, for instance, the 12th century chants of Jerusalem monasteries and the Mozarabic music from Spain with the contemporary *Symphonia* of Hildegard of Bingen.

All the pieces compared are written in neume notation, whereas the Jerusalem school display a more clearly polyphonic orientation and while the Mozarabic seems to imply a more intricate, ornamental character, the music of Hildegard lends focus to words, to their shape and meaning. Below an excerpt of Bingen's original score of *O orchiz Ecclesia* (an antiphon from said *Symphonia*) and the same passage transferred to modern notation.

211 L. Higley, *Hildegard of Bingen's Unknown Language*, 32.

IMAGE 59.²¹²

O orzchis ecclesia

Antiphon, R 472v

Hildegard of Bingen

Transcribed by Beverly R. Lomer

O orz - chis ec - cle - si - a
 ar - mis di - vi - nis pre - cin - cta
 et ia - cin - cto or - na - ta tu - es cal - de - mi - a
 stig - ma - tum lo - i - fo - lum

IMAGE 60.²¹³

Another peculiar aspect of Hildegard’s music is the occasional inclusion of her own invented words. Most famously, perhaps, the above example of the *O orzchis Ecclesia*, where Orzchis is part of Hildegard of Bingen’s own

212 Excerpt from the so-called Riesencodex, one of two manuscripts that are thought to have been written during Hildegard’s lifetime, by her fellow sisters. Today it can be found online as a resource: <https://hlbrm.digitale-sammlungen.hebis.de/handschriften-hlbrm/content/>

213 Here the antiphon is transcribed to modern notation by Beverly R Lomer. Further insight into the transcription process and how Hildegard combined her invented words, notation and images can be found on the online source of the Hildegard of Bingen society: <https://www.hildegard-society.org>

language and means, according to the glossary included in the aforementioned *Riesencodex*, ‘immense’ (‘Oh, immense church’ would be the literal translation of the opening stanza). Though not particularly researched, her *lingua ignota*, which, besides a unique 23-letter alphabet, also includes a combined glossary of more than 1000 words is one of few remaining sources from her lifetime. Not much is known of how the language is used, but its conception and use are occasionally mentioned in the preserved letters to and from Hildegard, for instance:

Where then, will the voice of your unheard music [be], and the voice of your unheard language?²¹⁴

Her music did in all probability sound inside the walls of the monastery, and possibly also at some public occasions, such as the *Ordo Virtutum*, the first large work of a single composer with the intent of *one* work, a kind of staging of the passion of Christ. Of her language, however, few mentions are made in the sources of her life. Scholarly, it is not until the 20th century (with some few exceptions) that the uniqueness of her *unknown language* has been rediscovered.

A Second Space

The *Lingua ignota* was for my cello writing mostly a curiosity at first. However, with time it grew to influence the piece. There are visible traces of the *neumen* notation of the *Riesencodex*, there are passages with vocal passages (of the cellist), where both the *Lingua ignota* and brief, fragmented or transformed passages from the *O orchiz ecclesia* are—if not audible—at least possible for a musicologist to notice. However, it was never the focus point. It began as a curiosity in the preparation phase, it continued then alongside the more detailed and complex artistic process of conceiving the piece. The focal point was and remains, the growing realization of the *strategy of sound*. And as alluded to in the opening passages of this intermission the promenade and obsession with the space and its embodied resonance and strange aural sensation became the centre around which Hildegard of Bingen remained present, but in a sense always in the periphery. As a possible extraneous material, but also—perhaps—as a possible *ecstatic* source material.

²¹⁴ L. Higley, *Hildegard of Bingen's Unknown Language*, 21.

With the *strategy of sound* the transference from the *imaginative* to *reality* (in the sense of a graphical reality) is not the only aspiration. There is also a methodology for a reciprocity, that is, that the graphical *reality* also becomes a tool for the *imaginative*. The sound and transcription of gushing water is not something to imitate as a *still life*, it is part of an *ontopoetics*. It is a dialogue of emergence; of a sensation or an idea becoming music, of a feeling of invisibility which in some way seeks a form of dissemination in writing. Graphical, detailed, complex, yet a music sprung from ordinary events, yet focused with a different *listening*. Its difference, or possible *grace*, only realized through the imagination and suspension of the ear. Luigi Nono is, once again, its typical example:

Listen to the stones, the red bricks. Listen to the dark, listen to the way the sky is a creature of the stones, of the bricks, the water. To know how to see and hear the invisible, the inaudible. To arrive at the minimum level of audibility, of visibility.²¹⁵

The act of listening remains in my work to a great extent pre-verbal and, if not for the thesis, the non-verbal. However, its manifestation quickly takes form in graphical annotations. Below, I include early sketches from the brook in *Lerum*. What they all share is a conscious act of avoiding a left-right orientation. The sounds, or their representation, are impossible to trace chronologically. Myself, I have no idea, anymore, where the sound begins. The movement upwards or downwards, or the elliptical movement, is as much a depiction of *movement* of the cello as the movement of sound. And it should be important to point out here, that the sound is as much the cello as the space.

In the *strategy of sound*, a grounding metaphor is that of the voice, of how the embodiment of sound comes through the act of harmonizing between the voice and the external object, or as in the case of flutes, clarinets or etc., the evocation of the voice through its extended reality (the instrument). With the cello, it is for me already explicit. The cello is the voice of the string instruments. Both as experience (my voice aligns perfectly with the basic register of conventional cello playing) and as a poetic imprint. Kaija Saariaho mentions the vocal quality of the cello in connection with her double concerto *à la fumée*, and Sofia Gubaidulina alike in her many works for the cello—most strikingly articulated as voice in the duos (and their extensions) for cello and bayan, notably in *Sieben Worte* (1982).

215 Jonathan Impett, *Routledge Handbook to Luigi Nono and Musical Thought*, 1 edition (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), 407.

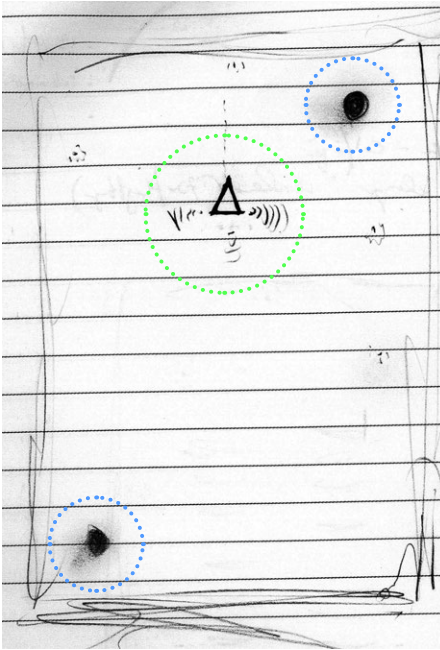


IMAGE 61. Early sketch. Ideas of centre and periphery.

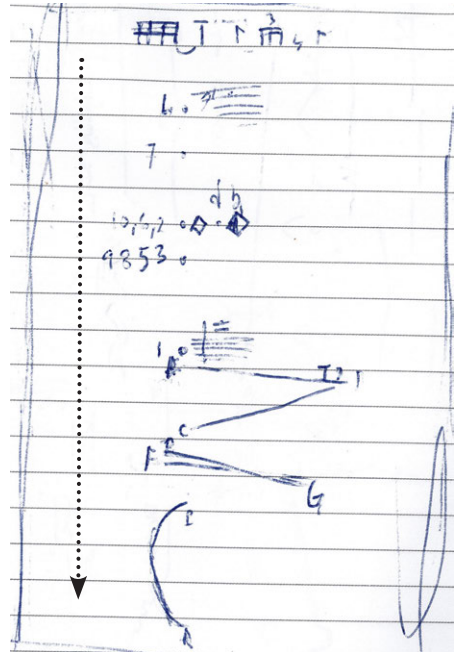


IMAGE 62. Early sketch. Vertical notes.

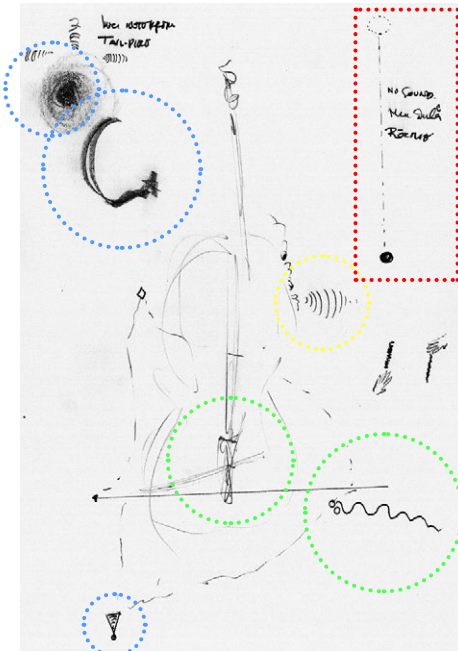


IMAGE 63. Elaborated early sketch. Centre and periphery combined with ideas of more 'distinct' timbral ideas; movements without sound, tailpiece, beatings between strings.

This explicitness of the voice and cello paired with the fact that I had been writing quite extensively for strings the past years: the violin concerto, *Pharos*, the violin solo *Insula. Pharos* and the viola solo, *Noein. Noaidi* created a conceptual difficulty for me. How was I to approach the cello without repeating myself?

Therefore, to find a path into this music I used two quite basic and, I would say, rational decisions. One which relates to the *strategy of sound* and one which nevertheless is emblematic of my work.

The first one is what I call *apophatic*, the other one *symbolical*.

Apophatic, as already discussed on page 48, is essentially a negation. The question is simply—what is *not* the cello? In a wider outlook, it also shadows another closing in on an instrument—the approach of an archaeologist. Imagining (naively) that the instrument and its sounding reality, or just physical apparition, remain unknown. It belongs not only to the desire for a *new* sound, but moreover to the further discussion in relation to the hand (see page 165–167). I want to find a point in the relationship with the cello, which in a sense brings the hand in a more innocent, inoperable, position. To discover the act which evokes sound, rather than the ones that are already in themselves in sound, along with all their further operational considerations. The focus is on the immediate sensation, on what is possible, what could become, rather than too quickly imagine the final result.

The second one, **symbolical**, remains in the dimension of graphical and visual non-sounding reality, but alludes as well to a more deeply layered meaning. In many ways the symbolical approach remains more intuitive. To make the hands work in circles, to make a cross, to draw lines, to lift, push, close, open. The list could be made extensive, and in each instance we could say that the symbolical dimension continuously relates to the basic conditions of our movements. Again, the movement of the hand; what we mean by an opening or closing gesture; what we communicate by signing. Its meanings run deep, and are informed by culture, history and awareness.

Apophatic

To make it clear a sense of poetry perhaps paints a better picture: knocking on the instrument; bowing on all possible and impossible places on the cello; removing the bow, only hands and body against the instrument; detuning, scraping along open strings; placing the cello across the lap, placing it on a table, on the floor and then, as it were, removing the cello, instead discovering the cello-stop: Removing the cello-stop from the floor, raising

it up. Using a bow, and later, a stick (and even later a manipulated stick, a rasping stick) to perform—now—as if this wooden board was a cello. In a sense removing the actual cello, but retaining it as an imaginative form; caressing, striking, and carving out sounds.

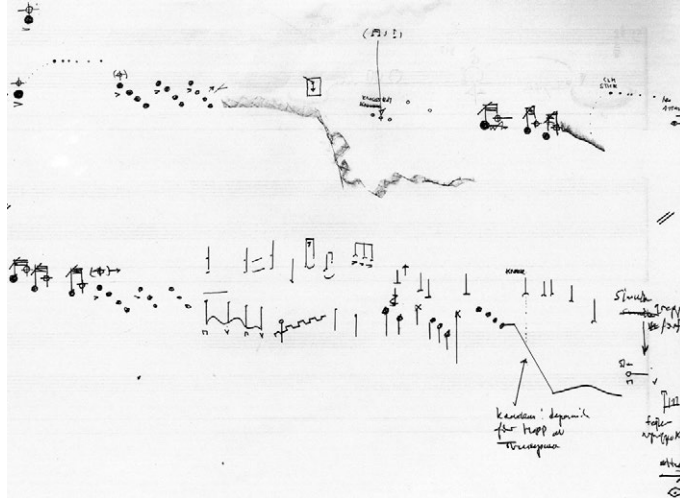


IMAGE 64. ²¹⁶

It is an approach of inspiration, escaping the clutches of *reality*. I am placed in a space without constraints. The sound of the cello is so distant—yet at the same time conceptually in focus—that the inspiration of gesture, of inclusion of any kind of sound seems possible. By the complete emancipation and integration of sound source (instrument), body (mine) and space it lends me the freedom to imagine sound as not limited to any of its categories. Rather, as much as the natural resonance of space, the cello is also the voice (mine), the arm, the feet, the corpus; all is interconnected.

It all led up to a wide variety of improvisations, where slowly graphical considerations (as above) were tried in different executions. With cello, with cello-stop, with different kinds of sticks, using even a long card-board tube. The tube was replacing the cello's fingerboard. Instead, my left hand moved across its damp surface, the bow or the stick adding sound, and the voice (my voice) creating different organ points filled with small ornamental inflections. Not least, the card-board tube was placed against my chest, causing more articulated beats of the left hand, or the sticks of the right hand to change the sound of the voice, inferring rhythm and a feeling of embodied pulse.

Symbolical Tracing

My poetical understanding of string writing, and most especially, cello, can be traced to the music of Sofia Gubaidulina. In particular her cello, bayan and string orchestra piece *Sieben Worte* from 1982. In connection with *à Sibyl—mōnē* her influence became—once again—increasingly important, with this project’s connection to the figure of Hildegard of Bingen. I furthermore knew, that one of Gubaidulina’s solo pieces (attributed to Hildegard) was to be included in the CD. In Gubaidulina’s cello and bayan duo *In Croce*, as well as in the cello, bayan and string orchestra piece *Sieben Worte*, especially the cello symbolically infers the figure of the cross. Typically, it is heard in the opening pizzicato and glissandi of *Sieben Worte*, where the two directions of the hands visually imitate the cross both as action and in the score:

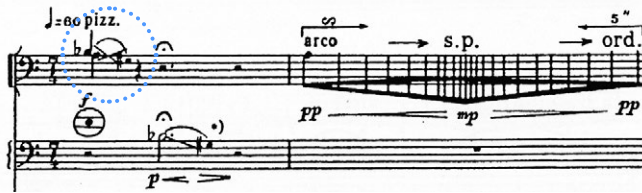


IMAGE 65.²¹⁷

Gubaidulina herself exemplifies:

I am thinking, for example, of the long-drawn sounds of the cello, crossed through glissandi of the neighboring strings. In the bayan this crossing with the orchestra takes place with the help of pressure on neighboring keys. In the string orchestra there is the possibility of glissando crossings from unison to multi-octave textures and again back to unison (the figure of the Cross). When the cello bow goes behind the bridge, this is, as it were, the entry to another world. These instrumental metaphors form the thematic foundation of the work, which unfolds in the course of six movements with the continual increase in tension.²¹⁸

My interest for Gubaidulina’s music does not stem from its religious symbolism, rather from how she manages to through this technique (which naturally for her is imbedded with a rich religious meaning) create a deep

217 “Sofia Gubaidulina—*Sieben Worte* (7 Words) 1982, ed. sikorski, opening bar”.

218 “Sofia Gubaidulina”, ECM Records, 2002., booklet.

connection between the way of producing sound and what a sound through this forming can be made to mean, through musical thinking alone. This symbolic approach to the sound and the presence of Hildegard of Bingen hovering over this project created a strong, emotional connection to my own work. Not the least, it gave way for an inclusion of Hildegard's *Lingua Ignota*. Even if the motive of Hildegard's language, or its use, remain eclipsed by history it seems to me to imply a domain in which Hildegard could dream outside of language. There she could imagine her *way-of-life* as the sum of all her activities. Letters (words), sounds, and thoughts became a magical place uninterrupted by the logic, theory and rigor of her historical time.

Harmonizing of Sound and Gesture

The method of the *non-cello* and the symbolical tracing of the cello remain in the final piece in different ways and on different levels. Audibly the *apophatic techniques* of percussive and vocal techniques are often highlighted, whereas the *symbolism* perhaps appears more prominently in the visual: in the score as well as in the actual performance, through the movements of the cellist. For instance, the *cross* metaphor clearly permeates the score. Gubaidulina's words at the end of the earlier quote: "When the cello bow goes behind the bridge, this is, as it were, the entry to another world" are here extended further: *à Sibyl—mōnē* begins from bowing on the tailpiece, a sound which not only distances itself from the normal sound of the cello, but also exemplifies how the cello is, already prior to being performed traditionally, considered as an extension of the voice. The microtonally high Bb of the tailpiece is as much a nasal voice as the reverberation of an almost primordial imagined cello sound, or just the magnification of the sound of *wood*.

The tailpiece gesture comes clearly from my previous piece *Songs for Antonin* where it functioned as both a suspension and sustaining of the voice in the *harmonic* material. Here again, it bridges and transgress, but now further. With the sound of the tailpiece, with its different sounding qualities and its slow transformation from *beyond* the strings to the harmonic, fragile sound of the cello to the voice which alternates between suppressed and forced qualities, we are also faced with the resonance of the space: the church space, with its 'immense' (Orchiz) reverberation. Again, my quote in the preface: 'Let's imagine that the Notation doesn't exist'. It means also to consider how the sound of the voice transforms inside of a space, namely that of a church. And how this vocalization of the word develops to a graphic memorization through a few points, and a few lines on a

precious parchment. We are dealing with a sound, and a performance of a sound, where there is an implicit notion of a reverb closer to six seconds.

That sound is not at all like the two-dimensional score sheet of our time, which shows very little traces of even the notion of resonance. There is not only no *real* conception of a score, but also no *real* notion of the ‘re’, only *sonanza*.

It is therefore essential to show how the apophatic influence is both deeper and more prominent than that of the symbolical, even if the *symbolism* perhaps is easier to identify since it is inscribed in the legible score, and visible in the live performance.

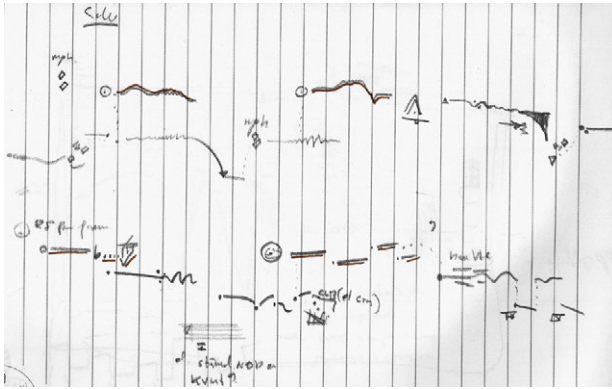


IMAGE 66. Graphical sketch of opening section of the cello solo.

To exemplify further: the remnants of the *percussive* exploration phase of the composition might perhaps easiest be heard in the knock on the cello in bar 29. However, the explorations done on the cello-stop, with for instance the drumstick, are far more important in order to realize how *à Sibyl—mōnē* came into existence. But we need a bit of *symbolism* also in the *apophatic*, in order to perceive its relevance. The transition from point to line, and, to paraphrase Kandinsky, to plane was once again a key strategy in this piece a key strategy. As in *Kuarup A & B*, the percussive attack, its graphical representation (of basically a point, in various degrees of dilution) is in *à Sibyl—mōnē* transformed to the merging of the horizontal and rhythm.

When returning back from cello-stop to actual cello, the key exercise for me was to find the *point/attack* in a cello sound, which at the same time embodied the power of the *percussive* and vocal explorations as well as the auditory hallucinatory sensations of the space by the brook in *Lerum*, the imagined space of the church, as well as the space in which most of my studies were done in, the organ hall at the Academy of Music and Drama at Gothenburg University.

When composing for an instrument with which I have a very limited technical (but the more theoretical) knowledge of I have used this exercise (at least since Kuarup A & B). Regardless of instrument (more or less) I can always begin to perform the sustained note. And through this *long, suspended* sound I begin to both search practically for another kind of difference (speed, pressure, dynamics), but it also gives space for the *mind* to act. To infer the imagination on ‘top’ of the suspended sound. To sing, grunt or in any way add what is missing. Similarly, at least for string instruments, the question of scordatura comes easily in focus. The cello has a depth of sound which is beautiful on its own. However, I find that the low C-string, when detuned, becomes more like my own *grainy* voice. Transposing it down to a G, immediately creates, together with the third-strings octave g a more organic, complex and ambiguous vocal quality. The shift of octave between the strings transforms with fingerings a versatile image of the shift between different voice-timbres (not only in low registers, but also in high ones, as in *Noein. Noaidi* where the shift between the upper strings in an extreme register invokes the timbrally complex vocals of *Diámanda Galás*). Furthermore, a possibility to slow down the sound of the cello-sound emerges through this detuning. It does not only creates a grounding sound of a depth (almost like the low sound of the aforementioned long trumpets of Tibet, the *Dung-shen*), but the harmonic spectrum of the cello shifts and becomes even more poignant through this detuning. In many ways this transformation of the cello blurs its instrumental identity, almost becoming a double bass, but at the same time, as a whole (with all four strings) retains its typical cello character.

The Shift From Sketch to Score

The passage from these basic considerations: scordatura, vocal-line, point to line to plane and the tailpiece as the border between voice, instrument and “non-instrument” constitute the basic material for the piece. To extend and modulate its form the piece had two general guidelines:

- 1 To create a never-ending long line
- 2 To somehow include Hildegard of Bingen, not as an explicit religious or conceptual frame, but as a secret stage. A presence in the score on a symbolical but also musical level.

The two guidelines were merged through a use of fragments. Fragments which first either bore words of Hildegard’s *Lingua ignota* as titles or just

numbers (if anything), then later on including different figures which in different ways alludes to Hildegard, or even more: the different sources with which I dealt with at the moment (and which can be found in this text's different paragraphs); the use of the *spherical* sound of Scelsi, the cross-metaphor of Gubaidulina, the reading of *apophatic theology*, the mystics of post-Hildegard (Terèsa of Ávila, Saint John of the cross... and Simone Weil). Figures or musical/philosophical examples which for me served as an inspirational basis. The titles of the fragment are not that important; they are frivolous in their nature and my opinion in hindsight is that their respective character could easily be interchanged. However, they do position the work, its poetics, and its composer in a common space and thereby the titles, possibly, aid the interpreter. At least that—if nothing else—holds true of the meaning of the different *movements*.

The fragments on their own contain no deliberate chronology. Rather they explore a similar musical expression but mirrored on different strings, in different tempi, with different rhythmical properties.

Although the *strategy* in chapter 5 could be considered a rational, step-wise description, essential is its circular, or rather spiral construction. The trajectory remains the finished piece of music, however, all its different steps are continuously present and possible to re-visit. In this sense the fragments of the tailpiece and the grounding, deep sound of the low register, although composed on their own, do function as a kind of moment of suspension in the piece, or contemplation: the gravity of the piece. I used them in the end with a somewhat rhetorical residue, but these suspended, wailing sound sections keep returning could also be argued with the aforementioned *formula* in mind. That is, the gestures emerge from one another through variation.

The form then becomes a necessity from within the material, by disclosing relationships and links and forces from within the material. Below, one typical such relationship is shown in different notational and technical forms; the opening sound of the tailpiece. Its movement its gestural qualities influence again and again the phrasing of the piece and how the *opening* and *closing* of the *formule* repeats, varies and extends itself:

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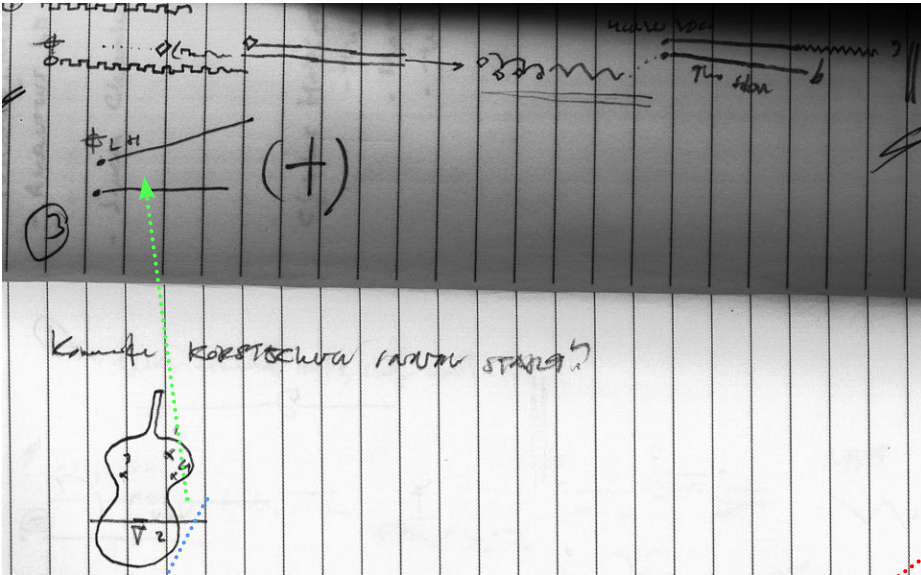


IMAGE 67.

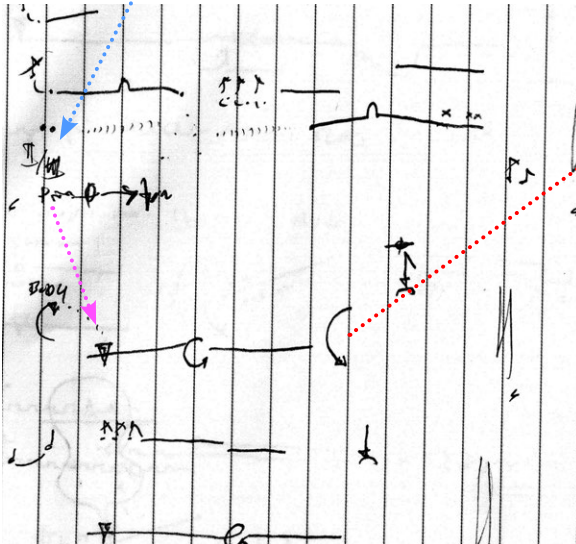


IMAGE 68.

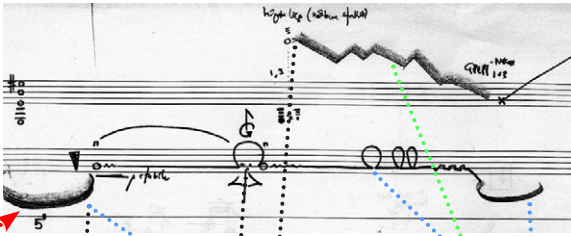


IMAGE 69.

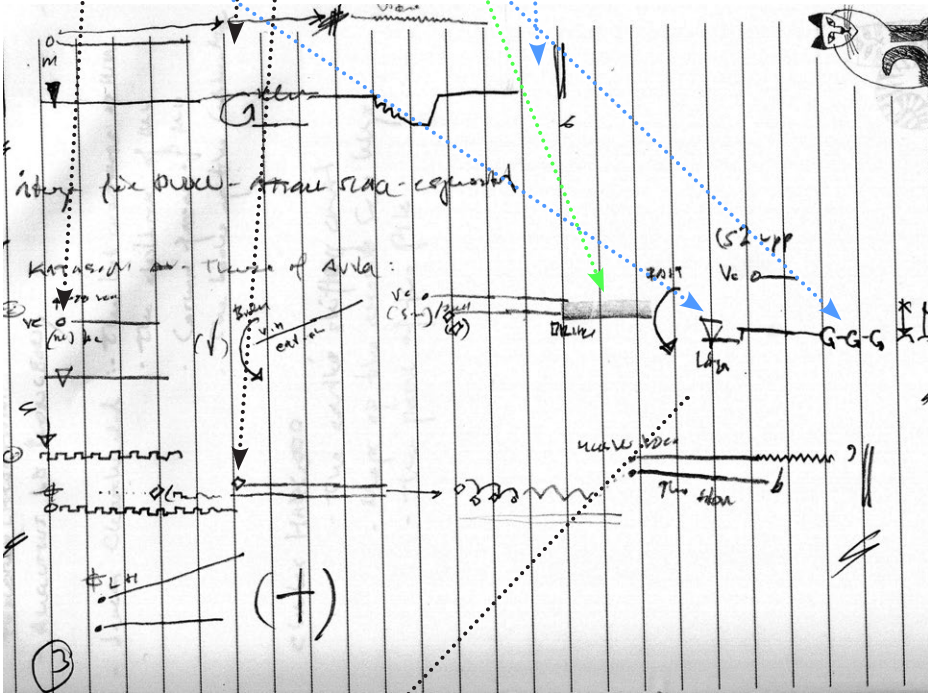


IMAGE 70.

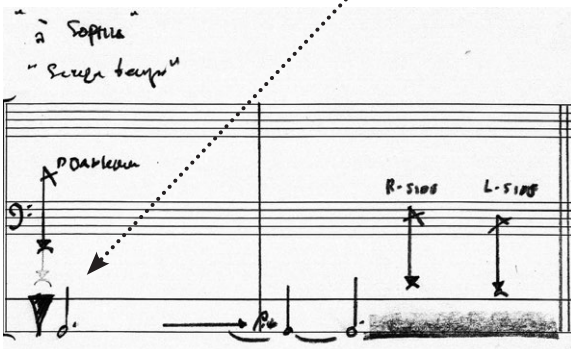


IMAGE 71.

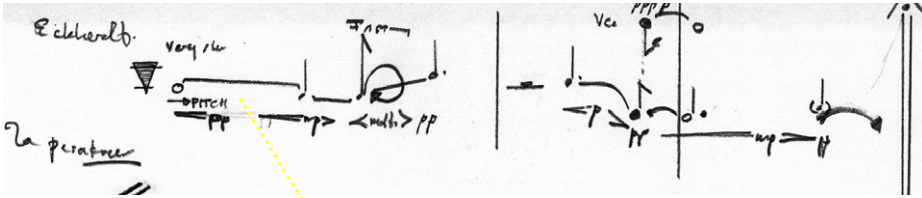


IMAGE 72.

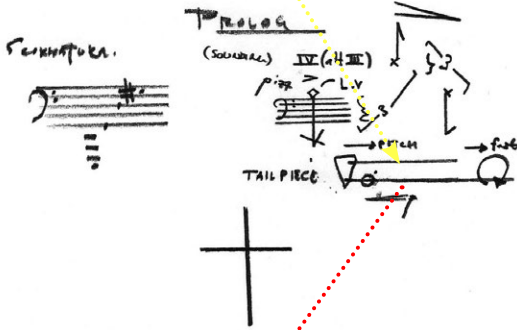


IMAGE 73.

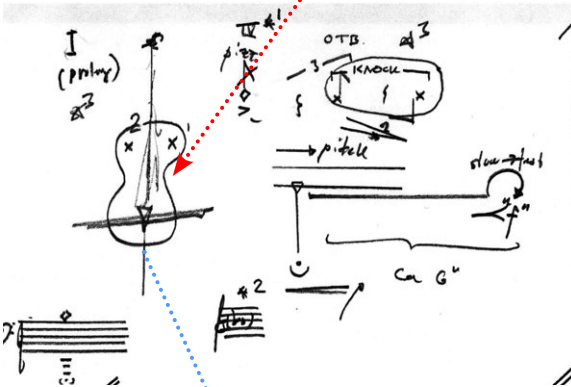


IMAGE 74.

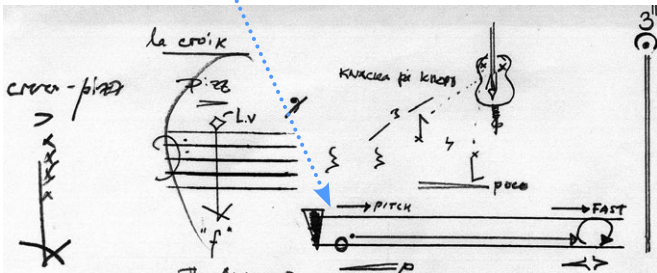


IMAGE 75.

I. A Eckhart

$\text{♩} = \text{ca } 52$

3"

Voice

General remark
Melodic/gestural sections - a wide range of expressions and dynamics; the cello should be considered as an extended vocal line - sing!
Stable (soft or loud) slow lines of sound - let the sound be "colourless", "stone-faced", with a sense of clear, linear direction.

Cello - strings

Tail-piece
pitches *

Bow position

circular bowing

fast bow

Don't leave fermata until long, buzzing sound is fully established.

Bow on the rim of the cello body (bow)

noise

General remark
- Never use *diminuendo* in end-phrases, unless called for.
- Remain with intensity and presence on fermatas - don't relax the sound.

Two tailpiece position pitches:
Upper line - low humming pitch
Lower line - higher, penetrating, pitch (ca Bb)

IMAGE 76. The opening bar of the cello solo, where this basic tailpiece gesture is clearly notated.

- 1 The long, sustained note on the tailpiece, the soft addition of the voice.
- 2 The use of adhering strings, which microtonally slowly go in and out of each other, thereby producing beatings which through bow-speed, articulation and pressure result in different rhythms and harmonic constellations.
- 3 The use of noise of both string and voice. Not as clearly creating a pulsation between voice and instrument, but in another sense (as in a different tempo and register) showing a similar relation between voice and instrument.

In all these explorations, the use of long, suspended notes (sounds) is key. The rhythmical figures emanate from intense listening. From the point to line, to plane, if one will. Or from plane to line to point, would perhaps more accurately encircle its *strategy*.

N

The question of the choice of rhythm, of meter, of tempo seems with each passing year to take form less and less systematic. Nevertheless, its properties become more and more defining. Although, I could beat myself senseless trying to *remember*, or trace how it came to be in *à Sibelj—mônē*, I have decided not to, it seems more honest. The choice of rhythmical form really begins in the practice. A certain sound, a certain articulation is found and without even being aware of it, it is sent to all other sounds. And then, the work of both mind and body start to merge, to dilute. The score is tried, a graphical reality is hinted at and the consequences of this—at the time seemingly

arbitrary—choice grows to immense proportions. The *strategy of sound* is in this sense the open question of trying to create the condition under which this decision (of rhythm) clearly can appear, regardless of its lack or width of systematization. The question of rhythm, of decision and of how something in one part becomes a common feature thereby once again shows its relevance to be sought in other parts of the artistic process than the technical ones.

As a final inclusion of sketch material, I want to demonstrate how the tracing of sound, already on a very, very preliminary level already establishes the condition for a future piece. Even if this piece begins with the knocking on a cello-stop, and ends with the reclaimed cello, the suspended moment of a non-cello is through the method traced in this *intermission*. Through tracing, through the act, what is as much a sound is also felt and understood as movement and thereby slowly made into matter. From *dynamis* to *energeia* (see page 24). Below, first—again—the *apophatic cello* and then the sketch of the opening gesture of *à Sibyl—mōnē*:

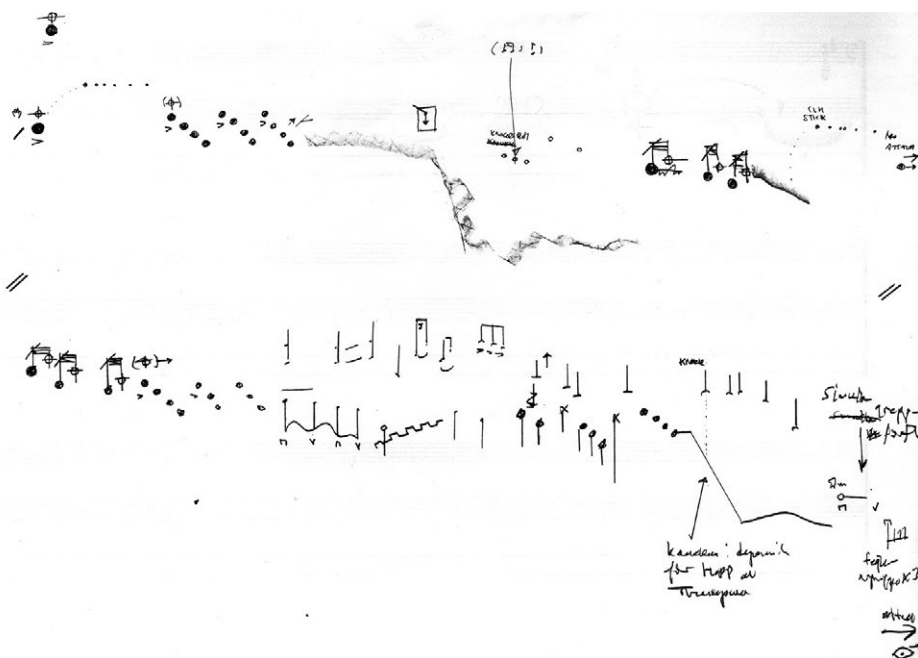


IMAGE 77. Cello-stop-gesture

IMAGE 78. Opening gesture on cello.

À Sibyl—mōnē—program note:

‘The piece is strung around two poles: the sybil of the Rhine, Hildegard of Bingen, and the 16th century *Carmelite* nun and mystic, Teresa of Àvila. Hidden in the sound and textures, if you are equipped with a microscope, you find traces of melodies, words (the secret *lingua ignota* of Hildegard) and possible even the voice of the extasis of Hildegard. In form, the *mansions* (*mōnē* in classic Greek) of Àvila’s book *The Interior Castle* looms as different movements of contemplation. In essence the piece comprises of 8 shorter movements strung together as one. Each with a different subtitle of “homage” encapsulating a wide range of my mystic and musical forebears.

Teresa of Àvila, in her book *The Interior Castle*, writes of the prayer and the monastic life, as not an activity, but as a state-of-being. For me, sound, is exactly this. It is not something I do for a few hours every day, but it is mode of existence; never possible to discern from life.

The opening sound of the tailpiece to the final moment of an unstable harmonic is an exploration of sound in an imaginary space where past and present resonates through the hands and cello body of the performer. Taking the sound from its explicit point of origin to—hopefully—a more mythical, primordial dimension.’



The Hand

What do you not have to do in order to produce a new sound?²¹⁹

In each paragraph, in each chapter of this thesis, we are dealing, properly, with the word (so far) as act(ion). I try to create a condition in which words and thoughts in extension slowly lose meaning, or importance. What is essential is the emergence of

- a The ear,
- b the hand.

Ontopoetics denotes how the ear is awakened and how an extended listening ultimately remains unexplored in our culture. The ear doesn't need a vibration to perceive sound, the question is as much how, as why?

The hand teaches the ear to listen, the ear follows the hand. However, the ontopoetics speaks of sound not necessarily as an acoustic event but as something else. The ear, the hand – we need to be able to consider them as containing something *preceding* sound.

We must imagine a sound which cannot be simply characterized as audible or in-audible. My interest resides elsewhere. This simple (yet paradigmatic) dualism is nevertheless required to have as starting point since it involves what in any sense is key in any part of *our* sound culture: a sound event must have a listener (be it as a composer/musician “inside” (creating the sound), or any kind of an audience). John Cage's *4'33"* is no exception, even if the idea could justifiably be said to be a first obvious step in the direction of which I am writing. However, I believe, a possible overcoming of this dualism resides not in its extension or exclusion of the normal *sounding* event, but in its most simple, and obvious part: the hand.

With this in mind we can once again consider sound not only as an acoustic event, but with a further perspective.

Again, Aristoteles through Agamben. In *The Coming Community* Agamben suggests that the idea of inoperativeness might be “the paradigm for the coming politics.”²²⁰ But what is inoperativeness? It is, for Agamben, the political extension of potentiality. It is not (only) simply the right to refuse. It again goes back to the dualism of potentiality and actuality

219 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 38.

220 De la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben*, 18.

of Aristoteles. The interesting thing (in the context of this thesis) to keep in mind is Agamben's insistence on a potentiality which not necessarily becomes something, but that can remain as (the promise of) becoming, (and thereby in a sense the image of impotence). Agamben speaks not only of a political, or ideological possibility, but of the thing itself, of what could be considered an *original* capacity.

This has bearing upon with the creation of sound, of a sound that doesn't need an acoustic reality, but that implicitly is its potential source. For Agamben the use of inoperativeness is not only to extend the notion of potentiality to share the space with impotence, but to imagine something which refuses to pass from the possible to the actual, something which doesn't exhaust itself, something which, in itself, is inexhaustible.

Now, the hand. The hand as a source of knowledge. The hand as potentiality, and as such possibly inexhaustible. The hand also as *community*, the hand as always in touch with the world (the object with which we connect to the world). The hand is always in a state of becoming, but it remains the same, it only *becomes* through extension; is as much becoming as a symbol of impotence. It is a possibility of sound and simultaneously mute. A sign. A sounding sign. A semaphore, a signalling sign.

Can the hand be considered inoperative? In our culture it is always *operating*, it is a tool, either in extended form or in itself. The digitalization/mechanization (of our culture) creates no decisive difference, but only transfers (through abstraction or mimesis) the logic of the *tool* to a different medium.

We can place almost the entirety of this project in the hand. The hand excites the immediate sensation of sound, the hand creates the perspective, and the anticipation and awareness of space; it outlines the scene by its articulation (with or without sound). The hand with its both passive and violent qualities represents both the divine madness and the introspective mystic.

However, it is necessary to really focus the hand. Only if we understand the hand and its relation to both the audible and inaudible is it possible to understand this assessment as something more than a poetic metaphor, for what is already discussed, aestheticized, and known elsewhere.

Not every motion of the hand belongs to a specific (sound)culture. There are general considerations to be made: we can open hands, close hands, we can press, inflict, punch. Caress, rub. We catch things with our hands, we cover ourselves etc.

All these actions are natural, they belong to what could be considered the normal rhythmical life of a body. We can collect these actions, gather them and place them in connection with an object. Something will happen, then, but but it is a stretch to immediately consider it a musical, or even

sounding exploration, it is only when we decide (as a musicians) to explore the contacts; to divide them into closing or opening gestures, when we combine them, or even more: when we react in relation to the object or surface that we are approaching what can be described as vibrating or constructed (developed) actions. The materiality of the exploration may not (yet) necessarily be on the level of sound, but remains on a level of act(ion).

The movement, or exploration, is simple, without any definition of art, music or even sound. However, the passage to development of the movement immediately changes the balance, and integrity of this essentially open gesture.

Of course, I cannot ignore that there is an implicit notion of intention that is not easy to rule out. A hand on the skin of the drum, as in my percussion solo *Kuarup A*, or the hand placing the cello between my legs, as in my cello solo *à Sibyl—mōnē*, how innocent is my touch? As difficult as it is to imagine a music without the psychology of language, as difficult is it to imagine an inoperational hand in relation to an object that in a sense already has a place in my (our) sound culture, or again: to imagine that notation doesn't exist...

Firstly, we need to forget that sound is not per definition music. We have to remember that there is always a first movement from which everything appears. The unmovable of Aristoteles gives echo here. The composer Giacinto Scelsi once beautifully paraphrased exactly this, with a scent of his oriental affinity: "sound is the first movement of the unmoveable, and this is the beginning of creation."²²¹

The hand, my hand, a musician's hand is never the beginning of all things, but there is a moment when it has no function, it only senses, it anticipates, it feels. This moment passes and the hand, with intention, becomes something which evokes and develops, starts to think on its own.

The hand ceases to be inoperative in order to become operational. This is decisive, a limit is overcome, but the direction is not without complication. The movement is as if simultaneous in two directions. This reciprocity belongs to the concept of *ontopoetics*.

221 Reish, "The Transformation of Giacinto Scelsi's Musical Style and Aesthetic, 1929–1959", 287.

Ontopoetics III: Inclusion/Exclusion—Noise/Rumour

A condensed re-capitulation; sound as a form-of-being. Sound not as an activity, but as existence. Sound as passion, as a direct emotional stimulus; the immediacy of meaning. Symbols, rituals and a heightened sense of perception.

Again, and again I am repeating what could indeed be considered different manifestations of a *Stimmung*. A mood from which a sense of being emerges. A being which in the context of art—without the ambition of a *λογία*; of an order, of a logic—can extend our conception of (what can be perceived as) sound, of music. I reduce words, to symbols and reframe them as acts; reduce progression to suspension; I view the activity of listening as a way of knowledge.

The need for repetition to slowly levitate further and further (deeper and deeper) to the question of sound, discloses a variation on the same theme but that is nevertheless directed at a common question. In the beginning section of this thesis, the question at hand was in much a question of how we define sound detached from a mechanical, scientific definition. If I try to deduce further and re-formulate what the preceding sections have all pointed towards, it is in fact a definition of sound which at its heart asks: how to isolate and identify difference. Difference in terms of my place in a tradition (my cultural background). Difference as a way of separating what seems obvious, to what is, to again speak with Heidegger: what is *unthought*. In likeness with Nietzsche who proclaims the world as an artwork giving birth to itself, Heidegger views the “uselessness” which Kant localize in the aesthetic judgment, not as a reduction (or a mere bridge between pure and practical forms of reason) but actually as the proper space to experience and come closer to something dormant, unthought and unarticulated:

Poetry [but also transferable to essentially any art, but then expressed by other means, my note] is the establishing of being by means of the word.²²²

It is the event which brings about new knowledge, new ways of being—of letting the world appear and change at the same moment. Before detailing what difference in relation to sound needs to be thought of as, we need to let the question or definition emerge from within the practice, and then especially through listening.

222 Martin Heidegger, *Existence and Being*. (London: Vision, 1968), 281.

The elusive qualities of composing become apparent as soon as we put sound(s) in motion. Immediately there is not only the acted sound that is present, but also something else. The space, the response—resonance. In Pierre Schaeffer's *musique concrète*²²³ the severing of the attack of the sound meant essentially that the study of a peculiar form of *sonanza* (the re-was taken away) came into focus. However, mostly on an intellectual level. As a composer, it only deepened my attention to space and time, to the actuality of the situation.

In listening I am in sound, there can be no gap between the heard and hearing, I either hear it or I don't, and what I perceive is what I hear. I can perceive a distance but that is a heard distance. The distance is what I hear here, not over-there. It does not signal a separation of objects or events but is the separation as perceived phenomenon.²²⁴

True, we are—as soon as sound is in focus—*in sound*. But the distance seems to me essential. In front of the paper, it becomes veiled, but I play with it, nevertheless. Its knowledge is at least contained in a temporal relationship, but one which is not reducible to the two dimensions of the paper, but a knowledge which forms itself in the sound itself. The separation is as much an acoustical representation as a possibility to give attention to its peculiar form of connection.

It is a balancing act, but a balance and a relationship stipulate also unwritten rules of gravity. There are always some things, some aspects of sound which eludes, or seem to be unable to be perceived. I consider these aspects to be perhaps the most acute area of interest.

Are they possible to think of? What kind of words, acts or approaches can we use?

On a fundamental level, we can use the word *noise*. Its meaning is reducible to simply: what cannot be considered sound. It is something which disturbs the balance and is not perceived as part of the intention of the sound.

In our time, we could say noise has become a *Klangfarbe* or an intellectual (and poetic) quality of inducing difference, friction, and resistance in the materiality of music. We find it poetically in Artaud, we can hear it clearly in the music of Diamánda Galás and many others.

223 Pierre Schaeffer, *Treatise on Musical Objects: An Essay Across Disciplines*, trans. Christine North and John Dack, 2017, 7–8.

224 Voegelin, *Listening to Noise and Silence Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*, 5.

The academization of noise does not philosophically or even aesthetically dissolve the question. An example: in the piece *Maknongan* by Italian composer Giacinto Scelsi (1905–1988) the score is written for basically any low-voiced instrument. The score is a simple line which alternates between two octaves with a very sparse pitch material (g-a, chromatically and with occasional quarter tones). In the preface a distinction is made between dark ('cupo') and clear ('chiaro') sound. Although not specified on all instruments how to perform it, it is clear that one should use/manufacture or consider some kind of mute or extended way of performing, in order to make audible this shift of sonoric quality. The music is single voiced, pending on the instrument there is the possibility of acoustic resonance from the instrument, but otherwise there is no second part indicated.

The double bass player, Joëlle Léandre, worked closely with Scelsi while the latter was alive and can be considered one of the few persons who really explored and extended the visions of Scelsi, working side by side. When she performs the piece something remarkable happens. In the passages of the work where the music suddenly shifts to the upper octave of the piece and is dynamically indicated as fortissimo (or stronger) she adds to the music a distorted, growling scream of despair. An addition which is not in any way described, or hinted at, in the score:



IMAGE 79.²²⁵

As far as I have found, this addition to the musical fabric is not used by other performers. For instance, transferred to, let's say, saxophone, clarinet or tuba etc. There is no technical (albeit personal) obstacle for using a similar expression. No other double bass performer seems to use it either. It is an interpretation of the work which is impossible to reduce from her musicianship and her connectedness with the composer.

The result of Léandre's scream is utterly disturbing. To speak with Heidegger, the *Stimmung*, created is indeed a clearing, and a further disclosure of what was only a potentiality in the score. Indeed, impossible—in our more or less still prevailing time of the sacredness of the score—to imagine

225 "Giacinto Scelsi, "Maknongan for Low Voice Instrument (1976)" Edition Salabert, 1986, Paris.

or even accept without the knowledge of Léandre's intimate knowledge of Scelsi's music and persona.

It is a memorable moment of complete despair in music. Immediately it places my listening in a position of insecurity. I have no idea of from where it came, why it appeared, how it will proceed—it completely opens a new understanding of the connection between performer-instrument—and space.

Where the violence of Galás is present already at the outset, Léandre's interpretation leaves the listener painfully vulnerable to sound as an immediate force of communication.

Composer Pierluigi Billone makes the following definition of noise:

***Noise** means: what breaks the balance of the identity. What doesn't embody in itself and does not show the recognizable sign of sound. What remains outside of the rhythmical world of sound. What is excluded from the relationships which defines and identifies sound. We could say: noise means what could not be accepted in the centre of the revelation. Or also: noise means what could put in danger, the law of balance of a revelation.”²²⁶

We are speaking not properly of an acoustical definition of noise (as I previously proposed regarding sound). It is something else. Something which allows the appearance of difference, but even more it gives us a clearer view of what I mean by difference: it is the appearance of that which *produces* difference.

Noise marks the absence of sound as music, it signals difference, but it opens the domain of sound. It indicates the limits of a culture; it indicates the periphery of a sound definition, but in so doing it also discloses—mutely—what is yet unthought. It allows us to imagine another centre in the constellation of sounds.

Noise (in any understanding of the word) marks nevertheless the limit of something. It outlines the limit of what we depend on. In this sense it once again relates back to the nothing of Heidegger, or the “no thing”. Since we are properly speaking of something which alludes to art, and something which defines itself by what cannot be included in other ways than through the philosophical category of difference, or antithesis, it also resides in a

226 “Lecture 2010—Harvard, Cambridge Columbia University, NY—Pierluigi Billone”, 1, accessed May 3, 2021, https://www.pierluigibillone.com/en/texts/harvard_cambridge_lecture_2010.html.

now-where. This means, that *nothing* is a utopia (no place). A metaphor, we could say, for something which remain (to include again, Aristoteles and Agamben) as pure potentiality. And its elusive actuality comes about only as a *Stimmung* or through the slow metamorphosis of tradition,

Essentially the “no thing” is incorporeal. Already the Stoics grounded the materiality of our world under the conditions of non-material categories. In contrast to how Kant treated the non-material, the Stoics don’t view them as *a priori* categories that are imposed on the world, but the very conditions through which the world *becomes*:

Things are surrounded and suffused by incorporeals, which enable them to have extension or occupy a location (place), have a time or history (time), exert effects beyond themselves (lekta) and have a limit beyond which there can be no things (void).²²⁷

The no-thing, or nothing marks the limit, and yet it contains the potentiality of becoming. Noise, considered as no-sound, as a category of what is incorporeal, similarly occupy the threshold of what becomes or rather is or is not perceived as sound.

The nothing to perceive, is with Heidegger—in all meanings of the word—the potentiality of becoming. It is indeed “no thing”, but still a possibility, it is just not yet there. It is the same with no sound. They are part of a sameness. Listening, to really listen, is acknowledging the exact same phenomena. There is no proper silence. The moment when we imagine silence, when we move the instrument, the ear, the body with the minute care of making no sound, we are in fact inviting the background noise of the body itself. We can feel the vibration of our own being. And in this moment the background noise (regardless of how we define it) rises to become the sonic base of sound. And by this almost gravitational act of the ground rising to the surface all conditions of being, of sound, of acting, places itself as start and centre in the body. As such, listening is thinking, and sound its wordless becoming. It is an act which slides through noise and brings to unity the external *rumour* of the space, to the internal rhythmic continuum of our being.

It is at this point that the closing gesture of both sound and action (Imagine the dobaci bowl slowly being moved toward the kkwaenggwari are essentially the same, regardless of their scientific acoustic properties. Again,

227 Grosz, *The Incorporeal*, 32.

by listening the world emerges before us. The composer, the listener and the musician intersect here. Only with different degrees of proximity and focus on the source.

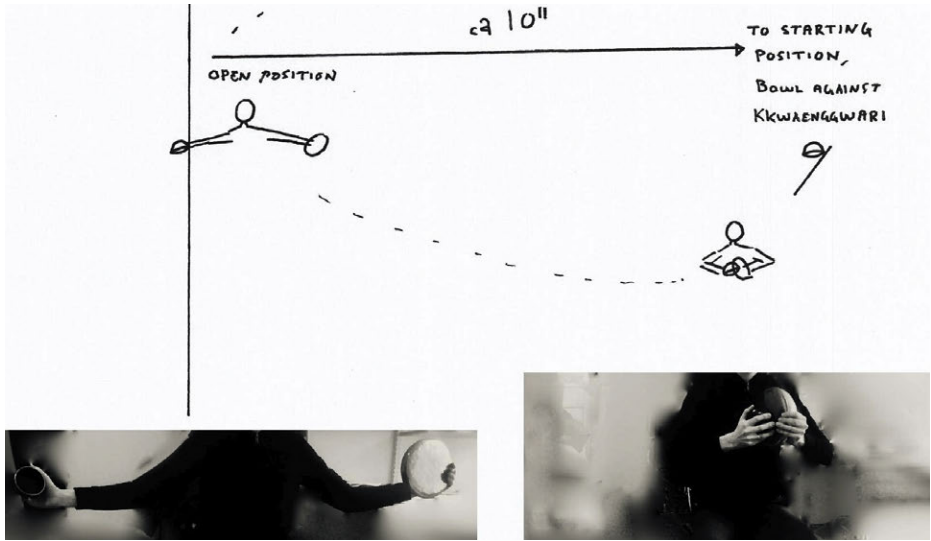


IMAGE 80. The open and closed position.

Philosophically, the notion of *nothing* and *noise* has been brought together by these texts. Additionally, they also contain—in more than one sense—the *techniques of ecstasy*. The apprehension of both nothing and noise comes before us as outside of a semantic or semiotic, and to some extent even, cultural context. They depend on them, but they belong properly to a category of perception which simplest is captured in the vagueness of *mood*; *Stimmung*.

The noun *noise*, comes etymologically simplest from old French, meaning anything from the ‘sound of a musical instrument’ to ‘outcry, shouting, a sound of any kind from any source to rumor, news of an uncertain origin. Its Latin roots *nausea*, or possibly *noxia*, frames the unclear meaning in the span between disgust, sickness, confusion to hurting.²²⁸ If we search for a classic Greek definition, we find a myriad of words which in different ways point to similar understandings of it, although a curious detail is also the inclusion of φθέγγμα (the noise of animals) and ψόφος (inarticulate sounds)²²⁹. As already pointed out, the animal or the glossolalic (inarticulate) communication holds the key to an immediate sensation of meaning.

228 <https://www.etymonline.com/word/noise> accessed May 4th 2021.

229 Sidney Chawner Woodhouse, *English-Greek Dictionary a Vocabulary of the Attic Language* (London: Routledge, 1910), 559.

Realizing *noise* as a metaphorical equivalent to *nothing*, is to also bring its mode of apprehension side by side. Anxiety, boredom, awe, illumination etc. These moments of either instant bliss or a suspended, let's say, dark mood, as we have seen is particular to the various mode of ecstasy or trance. The states are induced in different ways, with varying goal orientations, but their quality of attempted transcendence, rely on an induced perception in which, to speak with Deleuze yet again, "the ground rose to the surface"²³⁰. Something is elevated to the plane of immanence, which essentially means that ontology and transcendence share the same space, they have *become* through one another. They are present as a result of an immediate or suspended realization. And one of its modes of disclosure is through sound, and more precisely by a no-sound, a noise, a no-thing, an articulation of difference in which we perceive something which previously remained unknown. It is through this difference, the artwork can hold "open the open region of the world."²³¹ And when it does, its characteristics are impossible to discern from life.

230 Gilles Deleuze and Paul Patton, *Difference and Repetition* (Bloomsbury UK, 2004), 28.

231 Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, 109.

Chapter 5

In which a practice is detailed and explored in terms of an onto-poetics. that is; as an emerging conception of sound



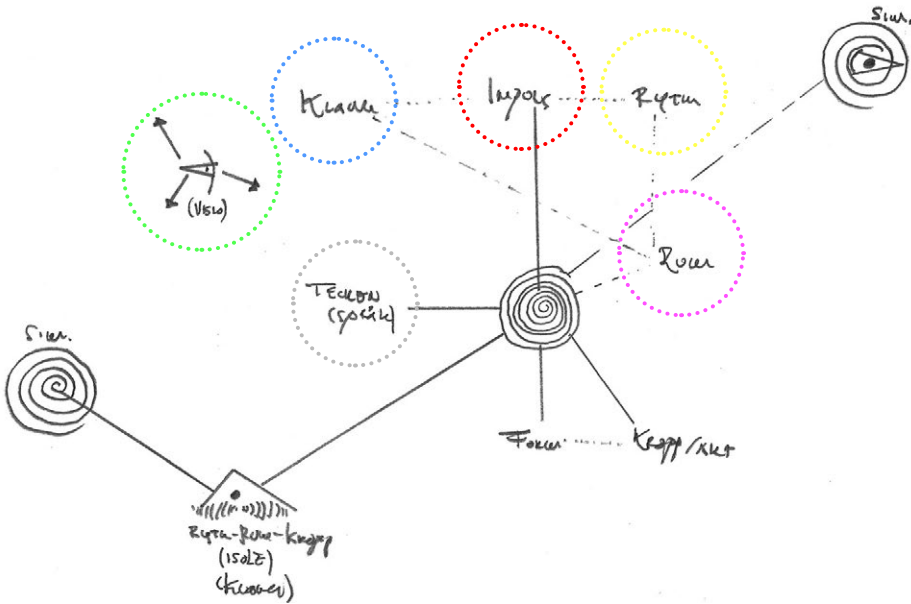


IMAGE 81. An early sketch on what would become the strategy of sound. Different words, in different constellation and graphical relation to one another: timbre, impulse, rhythm, space, sign (language). Spirals. And the word, visio.

A Strategy of Sound

Intoning the Rumour of Noise: An Oneiric Methodology of Informal Composition

The idea is a monad—that means briefly that every idea contains the image of the world. The purpose of the representation of the idea is nothing less than an abbreviated outline of this image of the world.²³²

Being a composer, positions me as both musician and listener. As a musician, blowing through a wind instrument, or plucking a string, beating a drum, the sound(s) dissipates and merges with the space; with the space and its reverberation, its height, its width, its temperature... One could say: the sound of the act enters inside of an already existing background noise, or a ground of seemingly neutral noise. A shift to the position of listener is properly speaking the act of gathering these interdependent forces and bringing

232 Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (London: Verso, 2003), 48.

them to the surface. Composing becomes then the excavation and the mode of balancing this terrain not only aurally but also as a topography. The intention of the act of producing sound also becomes the attention to form.

Through the practice my increasing obsession of sound has turned quite deliberately from attentiveness on form to what emanates from the rumour²³³ of the background noise. It's as if a point of gravity emerges. A centre from which I can sense every sound, regardless of how far away and faintly it resonates.

[I]nstead of something distinguished from something else, imagine something which distinguishes itself— and yet that from which it distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it. [...] It is as if the ground rose to the surface, without ceasing to be the ground.²³⁴

This chapter is a strategy of a sound practice, with the intention of gradually outlining several central concerns regarding sound and how to work with and construct sound. It is not a rule, rather perhaps an attitude or a *way-of-sound*. Its ambition is as much a description as an analysis. Most importantly is its ambition to create the condition of an emerging sound conception, the condition for something to appear, in sound and in mind. The conditions should lead to a more detailed discussion on sound. Both as a reflection on my experience, as well as the mapping out of an approach to sound which essentially—that is the utopian aspiration—brings to a common point the techniques I call ecstatic. Techniques which pre-suppose that music, noise, sound is embedded in the transition from sound—voice—language and can act with an *immediacy of expression*. The strategy is also intended to reflect and give insight to how I work, and in particular how the pieces *songs for simone*, *fragments of a broken order*, *rumori ii* and *archē* were conceived. This means that these pieces will not receive the dissemination of the *intermissions*, but instead are given another mode of exposition, one which I argue comes closer to a possible understanding of the artistic process. And as such, more

233 *Rumour* is at this stage a perhaps semantically poor reference to something distinct from background noise, but still not part of the acoustics of the music (produced by instruments in the space). Something intermediary which in some respect could be viewed as “silence”, but in a proper sense is the reverberation of the space which harmonizes with the sound as a unity, and is therefore distinguishable from both background and foreground, but that which in the imagination and actual practice of sound seems to me to be the “glue” which gives shape and aura to that which is brought into being from the point of view of the composer.

234 Deleuze and Patton, *Difference and Repetition*, 28.

accurately and interestingly makes way for a *knowledge production*, both in an academic sense, but furthermore in a way which harmonize with the my project as a whole. That is, chapter 5 and chapter 6 are as a unit the closest I get to a reply to *what are techniques of ecstasy?* And even if its reply most profoundly is given *in sound (the compositions)*, the reply is echoed implicitly through its combined wording and assemblage of images in these two chapters. Chapter 5 and 6 is the onto-poetics in act(ion).

Is it possible, to again allude to Pierluigi Billone, to escape our psychological or intuitive modes of understanding, to escape an understanding based on the limits of our language, to approach music in silent comprehension? Framing this three-folded, yet focused question, is (ideally) one whose reply is given emphatically in the *praxis*; the musical work. However, despite my distrust of language it remains one of the essential extensions and representations of our sensibility, and as such, language is also a way of outlining the organization of sounds. The letter (γράμμα—gramma), in this sense act more directly in the passage from sign to sound than the note and share in any case the basic aspiration of communicating meaning *through* sound, but in the form of the *gramma*, the letter is also mute, but a muteness with an inherent sound.

Taken at its word: *mot*, “word,” from *mutum*, an emitted sound deprived of sense, the noise produced by forming *mu*.

Mutmut facere: to murmur, to mutter—*muzō*, to do *mu*, *mu*, to say *m*.

Not saying a word: just *m* or *mu*, *muttio*, *mugio*, to moo, *múnjami*, *mojami*.

Muteness, *motus*, to become mute [*amuür*], disappearance of a phoneme [*amuïssement*]: of the *t* at the end of the word *mot*.²³⁵

Again, the hand teaches our ears to *listen*. Listening teaches our hands to capture its elusive form, we press, caress, draw, but also monumentalize its realization through words, symbols and notes.

Content-wise, the sections, has during the work on the thesis continually shifted and perhaps even changed its mode of exposition, depending on what I have done in my actual composing. For instance, the musical text is always a mere condensation of a work which takes place in a particular space and that uses continuously the body as its mediator; the pressure of the pen, the distance between objects, the anticipation or the excitation of sound is more or less only possible to make legible in a computer typed text through

235 Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*, 1st ed. (New York; Ashland, Ohio; London: Fordham University Press; Eurospan distributor, 2007), 23.

a poetic or meticulous wording. Another mode of dissemination, mediated through, for instance, other forms might prove more didactic or immediate. However, as of now, I think this attempt (and I am speaking now of the fact that I am writing this thesis about the impossibility to describe music using words) of description in words constitute the unavoidable starting point, although in future research it could be envisaged differently. Focus on these hundreds of pages has been *on sound* and with *a distrust* of language. However, they don't exclude one another, also sound and word are interdependent. Sound, is preceding voice, preceding the word, but the word, as well as the *gramma* is still searching for its sound, for its articulation.

The strategies focus on space as an integral compositional tool, they insist on the open hand/body—initiation and the obsession on sculpting autonomous sound sources which through embracing the idea of interdependence, essentially outline a methodology in which space, body and rhythm (in a quite different sense than normally is associated with it) remain key.

The strategy is phenomenological with a holistic claim. Its relation to ecstatic techniques will at this moment not be made explicit, although with the texts and case-studies which have preceded this section, I hope it will be made clear that all content aligns or revolve around a growing concept of extasis.

We are as though held, arrested before something, but this being arrested is also a being-outside, an ek-stasis in a more original dimension.²³⁶

The present as standing outside of itself. Time is essential, but we need to consider ourselves as emptying time, that is how history becomes. As a chronicle, seemingly happening in just that moment it gives testimony to.

Not a Circle, but a Spiral

To be more elaborate: this chapter of the thesis is an attempt at describing informal composition. A centre of gravity, from which an associative, asymmetric web grows that in its inception cannot be within limits, be circumscribed or generally monitored. It grows. Through time, beating, pulsing, like a heart. Giacinto Scelsi says of sound that it has a heart. That sound is a breath, an inhale and exhale. As such it is always on its way to death, but

236 Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, 99.

not as a final moment, but as a passage²³⁷. On Scelsi's tomb we read: Passing through²³⁸. The different parts of this exposition will in time be elaborated with comments, reflections, images and contextualized by actual sounds. Its growth will not be limited by its manifestations (its sounding residue), but in itself form a testimony of an artistic practice which essentially makes up the material and the result of my research. To define and authenticate artistic research does not necessarily (hopefully) take place in its philological resources, instead it is characterized by an attempt at an ontology, of how being takes shape. It is a regenerative ontology; an ontology that defines how subjects come into being. It is not a single event, but a continuous process. As such, it follows in the footsteps of Heidegger in which the ontological step, by its own originality is founding its own new worlds and thereby potentially re-founds our already existing worlds. It potentially shifts the paradigm of what is perceived; in our time, in an unknown future, but also how we remember the past. With such an approach, a primordial order inevitably comes into focus. And a first step toward overcoming a verbal description and replacing it by a sensuous knowledge, more particularly: a sounding one. Tim Hodgkinson quotes the stone carver Alexei Kagai-Ool of the remote Siberian Tuva area:

I watch the stone a long time, until I see an animal form. I don't have an idea: I look for the material, the material has to speak to you. A real carver puts in total concentration, forgets everything else: there is just stone, hands, eyes, there are no other thoughts.²³⁹

To radically change context and place, but nevertheless remain inside the same domain and sensibility I quote the composer Luigi Nono:

I always enter the Freiburg studio with 'no idea.' No program. This is fundamental because it means the complete abandoning of logocentrism, giving up the notion that there must be an idea that precedes the music, the idea as that which must be realized or expressed in the music or the story that must be told 'in music.'²⁴⁰

237 Scelsi, *Il Sogno 101—Reve 101*, 218.

238 "Le premier mouvement de l'immobile, dir. by Sebastian d'Ayala Valva (2018; France, Ideacinema)

239 Tim Hodgkinson, *Music and the Myth of Wholeness: Toward a New Aesthetic Paradigm*, 1 edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2016), 100.

240 Impett, *Routledge Handbook to Luigi Nono and Musical Thought*, 453.

Both the Tuvan stone carver and composer Luigi Nono alludes to an approach of *oneiric* properties. To dream, feel and slowly see or hear what should appear. The echo of Paolo Pasolini makes itself heard again: “why make a piece of art, when it is so much more beautiful to simply dream of one?” In the following statements, ideas, visions this is exactly what is given; a dream of something elusive. An elusiveness which in the practice often must be cut short, and only passages, shards and remnants of the oneiric reality will be carried through and delivered beyond the threshold.

The Imagined Space

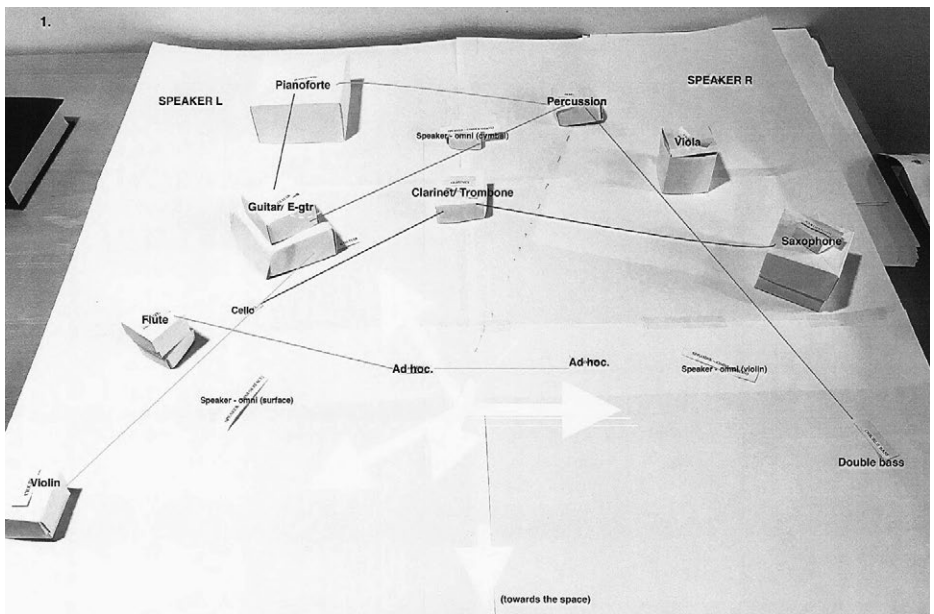


IMAGE 82. Four A3 papers formed to a quadrant. Small boxes representing different instruments. A certain hint of height. Small notes with instrument names, and then additional layers of specification done in the computer. A layout of the ‘imagined space’ which will be re-occurrent in the coming two chapters.²⁴¹

The starting point is an imagined space; evoking an inner room where future pieces will take place; to build an imaginary resonant, relational, embodied space. Please, give focus to the notion of the imagined, even if for sure this space will be partly defined or influenced by places of previous

241 Sketches of placements in space for what would become the piece *songs for simone*.

experience; memories of real places, but also hallucinatory ones: places which can only be dreamt of, or places only heard of and the imagination of how they could reverberate.

8

For instance, at the geographical location of *Point Nemo*, this near to mythical position in the Atlantic, where one is placed—in any direction—as far away from any land mass as possible, what is the sound of that place? In the depths below, in the roaring heights above? Nowadays, it is not necessary to visit such a place, in order to hear and feel its allure. However, to listen to the captions of the (for instance) NOAA (The National oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) deep sea sonar probe is but a poor rendition of the majestic movements of glacial and marine life—our imagination surpasses that with ease. Keep *Point Nemo* in mind.

Distances are defined within this imagined space; height, length from one side to the other, geometric constructions outlined. The floor, the walls, all material are imagined. If it is stone, wood, carpets, grainy, dusty, smooth etc.

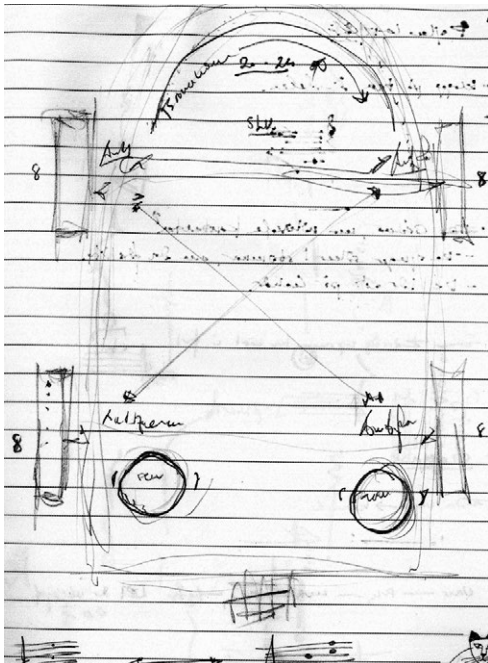


IMAGE 83. Placement sketch for the unfinished *Oneiros* in the Gothenburg Cathedral.

The objective is to focus the ear and the mind to define a point of listening. If it is enough defined, it will slowly be possible to explore and experience other placements (of the ear, of instruments, of objects). The knowledge and experience of resonance will follow and inform the movement of the ear and of the imagined movement of bodies (and instruments) in space. That is, the more in detail this space is built, the easier it will be to imagine how a clarinet, for instance, resonates, or the gentle bowing of a low cello string.

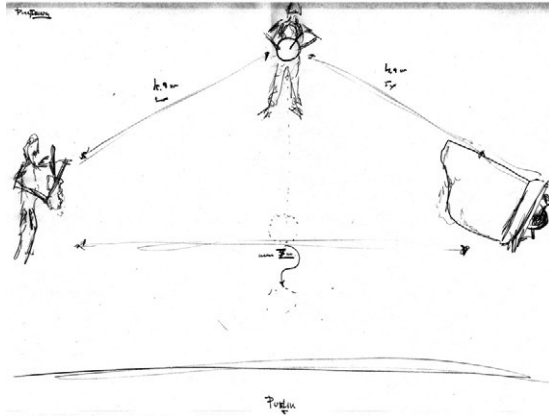


IMAGE 84. Trying out placements of violin, percussion and piano.

This is the manifestation of an imagined space in which future constellations of sounds will be projected. A space to return to, to deepen the experience of sound, to intimately learn, slowly, of the sounds I am involved with. To ponder and imagine the emergence of sound.

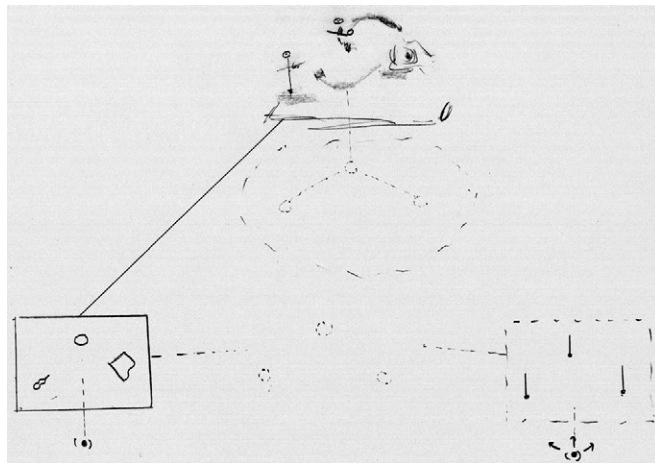


IMAGE 85. The same trio imagined in different real and imaginary levels (abstract, instrumental and immersed, see page 185)

It exists and doesn't exist. It resonates and is also completely silent. It is a vestige of raw potentiality.

In time, it will function as a reference point, which in any future work on sound can be used and explored with the realization and memory of past attempts.

8

In western musical tradition we can historically speak of primary and secondary parameters: pitch and construction (or duration) versus timbre and dynamics. Since the 19th century, through various evolutions of sound conception, this hierarchy has been questioned more or less deliberately. However, the evolutions of sound (serialism, for instance) still rely on what can be considered a formal compositional process. That is, even if the parameters of sound are made un-hierarchical, they are done so through a process in which formal categories of almost mathematical design instead define the limits of sound. The *strategy of sound*, growing stepwise from these writings, does not intuitively begin with the notion of space. Instead, this starting point encapsules its perhaps most essential feature; that of a search for an informal method of composition; to define a centre of gravity, from which all parts of a construction begin to resonate. It is a process, which can be considered as a second phase (or second evolution) of serial music. Its rhetoric is simply this: if dynamical graduations, the constructions of chords, sustained notes (pitches) or the clear attack of sound cannot be distinguished from timbre, the fluctuation of pitch, the micro-rhythm of even a steadily sustained sound or the effect of the sound spectrum, then the individual treatment of the musical parameters ideologically loses its meaning. In fact, what one is made aware of is the conception of sound as a complex force field which through the act of creation instead relies on a sense of asymmetry and sensuous closeness to sound. A methodology of sound which relates to the work of Giacinto Scelsi (most prominently), Luigi Nono, Horatiu

Radulescu and Pierluigi Billone, to name a few. This does not mean that the emergence of sound (in all possible aspects) can be located in one, extended, almost a-temporal, moment of revelation, it also requires a sense of rigidity and slow excavation of its different parts. Permeating in all exploration we (will) find the re-occurrence of:

- A sense of gravity
- A sense of shape, or the superimposition of various contrasting elements (the extension of a heterophonic or autonomous evolution of sound)
- Rhythm. A definition of rhythm will need to again and again be discussed. In order to make clear that the conception of rhythm that we are dealing with does only remotely relate to the simplification of the graphical, descriptive representation of western music. However, measurement is perhaps the singular most important category with which we can distinguish between the foundation for different conceptions of sound(s): "(t)o the transcendent, organizational plane of Western music based on sound forms and their development, we oppose the immanent plane of consistency of Eastern music, composed of speeds and slownesses, movements and rests."²⁴²

The imagined space consists of different levels:

- Abstract—geometrical, visionary level; essentially a level of 'no sound', only distance, perspective and the continuous feeling of presence and resonance.
- Instrumental level—bodies in space.
- Immersed level—body and instrument as one.

8

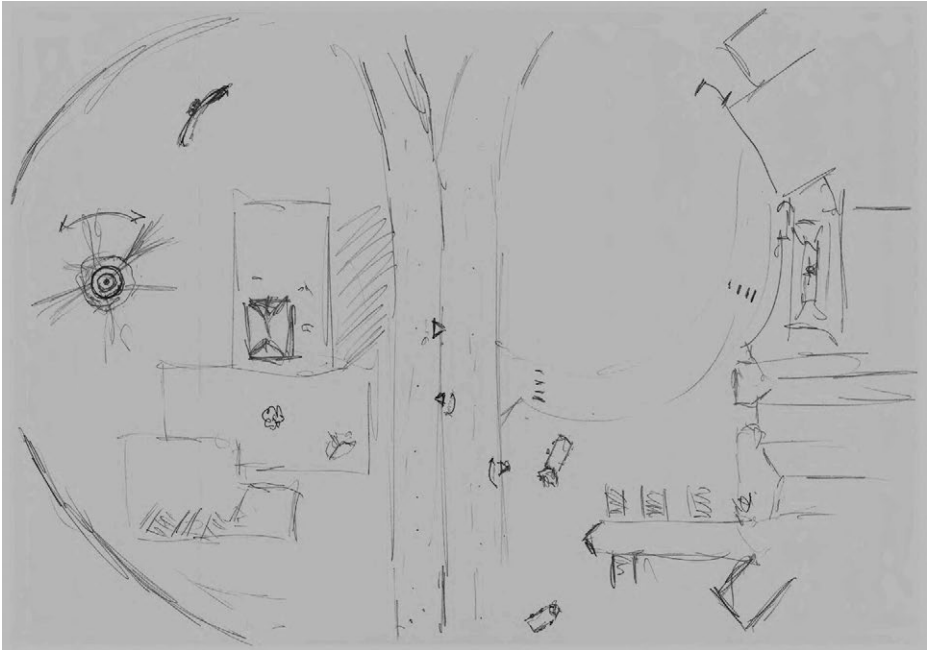
[It is also important to acknowledge that there is a continuous presence of an idea of a secret stage: All moments, processes deal continuously on two levels. One real, one secret. It is a metaphor, but not only—it is a dream (vision), yet active. The secret stage is always active, but does not rely on practical, physical conditions. The secret stage operates in a:

- Ritual dimension (symbolic, transitional (transcendental) etc.)
- Magic dimension
- Abstract sonic dimension
- However, as much as it is magical or secret, it also refers to a stage or a space which continuously exist outside of the performance. A sounding milieu without intention, the listening and embodiment of an open space. The act of listening, fused with imagination.]

It is true what Giacinto Scelsi says in his memoirs:

La musique ne saurait exister sans le son, mais le son existe en lui-même sans la musique. Or, c'est le son qui compte.²⁴³

243 “The music cannot exist without the sound, but the sound exists in itself without music. So, it is the sound that matters.” [My translation], Scelsi, *Il Sogno 101—Reve 101*, 22.

IMAGE 86.²⁴⁴

The First Contact

- i In order to establish the imagined space.
- ii In order to establish a focus of a particular attention.

A few preliminary considerations come to mind:

- Each instrument remains a *tabula rasa*. It can do/be/act in any way.
- Each contact between bodies (both physical and intentional) remains similarly unknown.
- The space is at this point defined, but its resonant properties can only be fully disclosed by examples, that is, when something is made to act.

They spawn and produce secondary considerations:

- Therefore, each instrument and each possible contact between instrument, body and space need to have the intention of being completely

²⁴⁴ Sketch for paragraph I, see chapter 6, page 236–247.

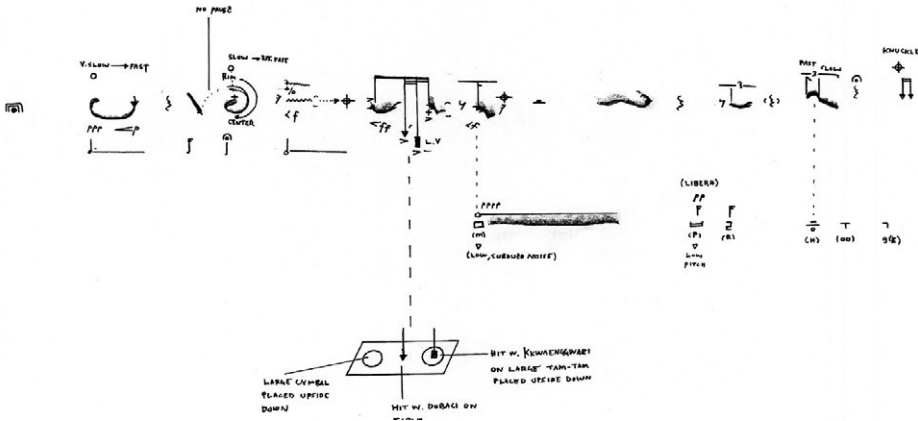


IMAGE 91. Extended with a table (wood-plate)

∞ Utopia

Far, far away in the South Pacific we find the oceanic point of inaccessibility. Popularly referred to as *Point Nemo*. Thereby, alluding to the Jules Verne’s infamous Captain Nemo as well as to the meaning of the word in Latin “no one”.

The point of inaccessibility is the place in the ocean which is farthest away from any land mass. Perhaps, thereby making it the most suitable place for imagining a *place of no one*, a *place of no-thing*. A manifestation of *Utopia*, also etymologically more correctly translated to: “no place”, or “no-where”.

Luigi Nono often calls upon *utopia* and sound in the same sentence. Not in a desire for a perfect sound or a perfected future, but for the creation and imagination of an unknown place. A place of *potentiality*. How the ingenuity of the artist is one of reaching beyond the limits (of the imagination).

Although clearly a poetic image, I have for some years now been collecting (by proxy, not in person) sound samples from areas around different poles of—so-called—*inaccessibility*. Not only, the referred to, *Point Nemo*, but also from the southern and northern poles of *inaccessibility*, points with a reference to *inaccessibility* by other definitions. Nevertheless, all share a sense of ‘no-where’. The National oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is its

most avid documenter²⁴⁷; recording deep sounds far below the ice. Tracing acoustically the eruption of volcanos, the tremor of earthquakes, the calling of majestic whales etc. As I am unable to travel to these remote places, these recordings and musings over the hallucination of how these places may seem have been of a growing interest. As a more tangible continuation of said project self-made field recordings of more accessible topographies has slowly been added to the mix; recordings of late-night rail-yards, or gushing brooks and just moments of sonic revelations, wherever I am at (be it in Seoul, New York, or a stone throw from my own doorpost) For the past years I have begun to transcribe or simply aurally trace these different field recordings. In pieces like *Songs for Antonin* or *à Sibyl—mōnē*, *Rumori ii*, *Songs for Simone*, *Fragments of a Broken Order* and *Archē* these rumblings of remoteness have slowly been introduced in my music. They are not used programmatic, or even metaphorically, rather they are part of a larger project of disclosing a relationship between an aural sensitivity, space, attention, and intention—as such they represent something intangible in essence, but tangible (real) as *objects*. I am not focusing on a reproduction of the obvious sonority (a one-to-one relationship), but rather to invoke the intermediary source of *sonanza* accessible by suggestive and hallucinatory *listening in* on what takes place *in between* source and ear. Alluding once again to the ears possibility to choose its level of attentiveness, virtual proximity and distance to the voluntary dilution and combination of events. I call it *rumori* and *think* of it through the framework of *ontopoetics*.

247 <https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/soundOI/background/seasounds/seasounds.html>



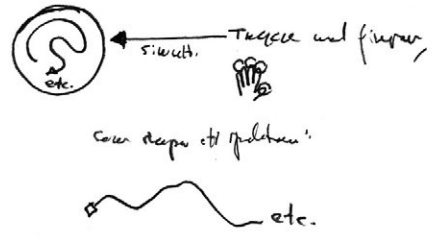
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page.

THE ANATOMY 145

✠



Lipogam pōrewe =
 SWAVE EKOWE
 VAKUNE

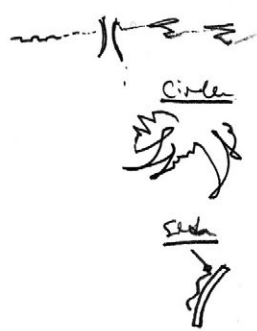


IMAGE 93. Ibid.

The text comments and reflects what is traced as *acts*, producing legible graphical representation of an imagined *reality*. Nevertheless, the inclusion of text and of comments highlights the reflective character of this phase—in relation to space, in relation to other bodies, in relation to the instrument, tradition... etc.:

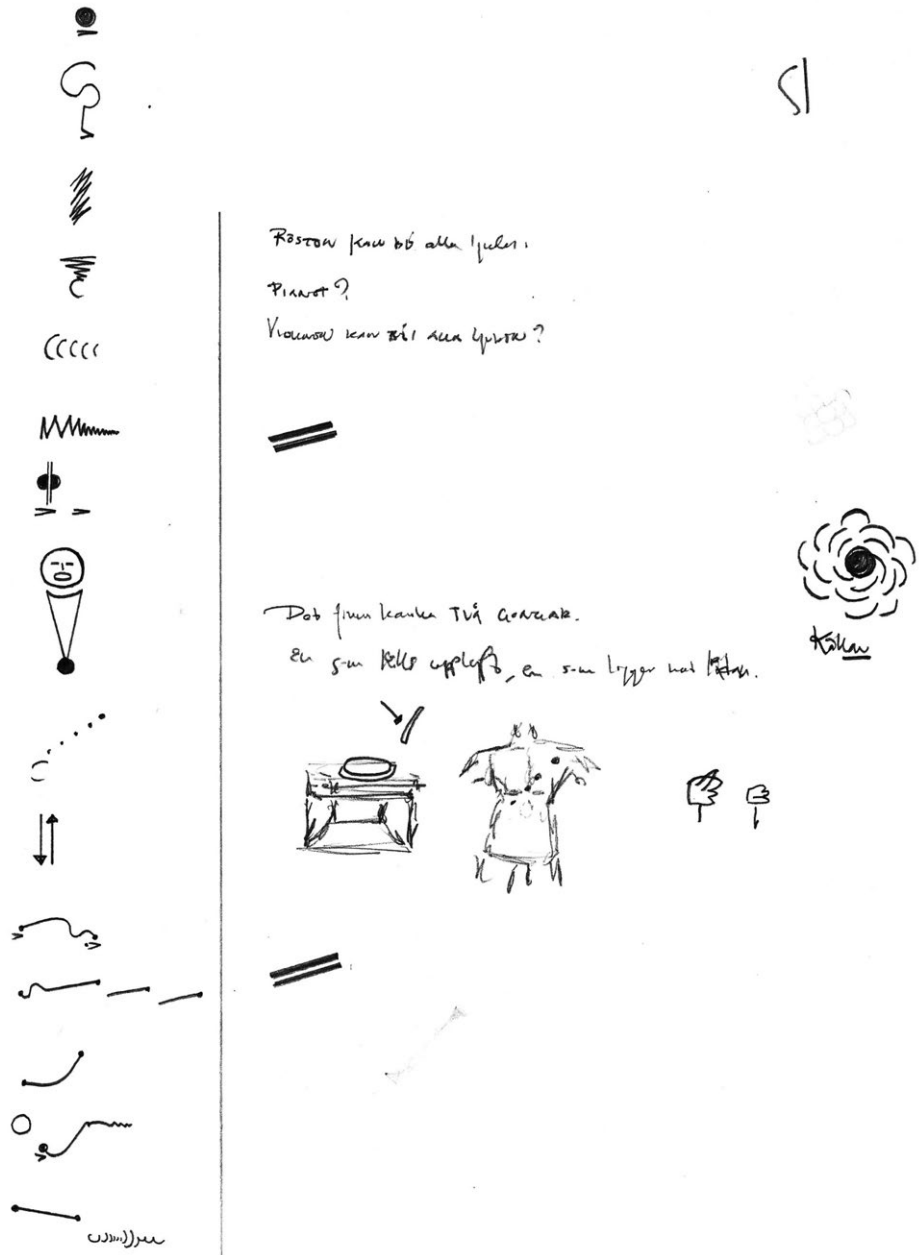


IMAGE 94. Developing the gestures toward 'formulas'

This paper or set of papers describing one sound or one action should communicate enough and be sufficiently elaborated to make it possible to re-visit and at any moment extend its qualities of sound.

The focus here is fixed on single aspects of sounds, however, this focus will immediately expand to:

- An exploration of their possible development (techniques, imagined techniques, limitations)
- Importantly—already here a first outline of a notation is present, but undisclosed, however a certain kind of harmony between sound and a graphical reality is in play. Meaning that each representation (regardless of what) should be imagined with a wide sense of difference and sensibility. The pressure of the pen, its relation to, for example, the diffusion of sound, the intensity of sound, the dynamics... and so on. The more possibilities included in the early stages, the more they will be present at later stages, or at least be possible to consider.
- What the graphical etchings imply (point to) should be as clearly defined as possible (if not through the pressure or direction of the pen, then at least as annotation), since with each further step it is essential that the memory of it is contained and embodied, regardless of how far (or short) the process will go.

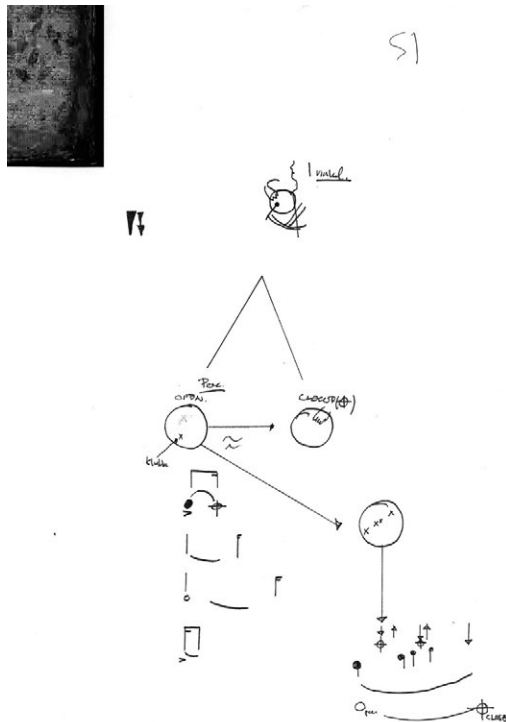


IMAGE 95. 248

248 Image 92–95 depicts an example of what the text implies. The exploration the images refer to is the basic gestures explored in the section of *the first contact*. All explorations refer to the work on the Kkwaenggwari.

By focusing one sound, or one contact, we are effectively dealing with a decision of autonomy. A decision which underlines the condition we are evoking: there is no distinguished whole yet, there is no narrative or chronology, only isolated, undefined, points and events in space.

The autonomy of the explorations is of course not done naively. The knowledge of a bigger setting is implicit in any of its reflections. As such, every occasion of sound should be considered to have a potential influence on all other sounds. At this stage, nevertheless, the question of how the connection is made or happens remains open. meaning that each, seemingly isolated event is radiating into all other events per definition.

In other words: it is essential to understand that the strategy should work like a body. The hand works seemingly autonomously, but is in reality connected and in continuous interaction with all other parts of the body. We pretend to make singular what is already by being put in motion as a part of an integrated whole.

To repeat and re-phrase: each exploration of sound, each single focus of attention will communicate, interact, influence, radiate on the whole.

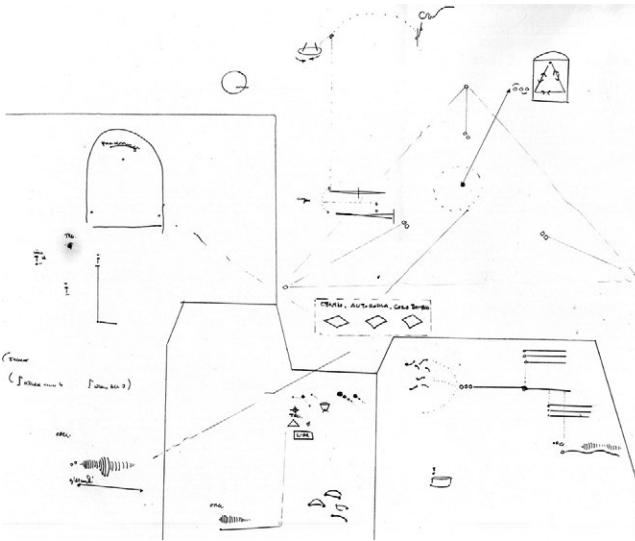


IMAGE 96.²⁴⁹

249 Integration of the particular sound focus and the work with space; here placed in a simple graphical multi-dimensional and atemporal representation; a tentative “etude” to focus the sounds in space, but not restrained to a particular time or logic of chronology. Included here is also the appearance of voice (choirs), since one of the three pieces (in progress) which the Kkwaenggwari is used in is an unfinished piece for percussion, organ and choirs (*Oneiros*).

∞ *Kkwaenggwari*

[Important. These very preliminary explorations propose a high degree of difference. The Korean gong *Kkwaenggwari*, an instrument of included in the images above entails (implicitly) everything from the “original” sound (the sound of its own tradition, the beating in a rhythmic pattern with many degrees of difference (damped, resonating, strong/soft etc.) to the excluded realms of its (the *Kkwaenggwari*’s) traditional sound—where the *Kkwaenggwari* is essentially another type of sound (held differently, evoked by the hand, scratched etc.). The condition of sound is not only limited to object/hand connection but also—already here—the connection between bodies in the space is present. The *kkwaenggwari* performer is also connected to all other instruments/bodies]

Tracing and Developing a Genealogy of the First Contact
[The different autonomous contacts are developed, through the metaphor of a spiral of contacts.]

A development of sound with the idea of an original, innocent touch and a further elaborated complex of contacts: A—pure contact (not necessarily sound, could be anticipation, for instance)—B—modulation of movement, pressure, speed etc.—C—a growing complex of all contacts—A1—to return to the pure contact (but now realized with the motion/complexity of a development).

The image shows a musical score for three parts: FRAME, SKIN, and VOICE. The FRAME part is written in 8/8 time and consists of several measures with rhythmic patterns and dynamics. The SKIN part is written in 4/4 time and consists of several measures with rhythmic patterns and dynamics. The VOICE part is written in 4/4 time and consists of several measures with rhythmic patterns and dynamics. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (ppp, pp, p, mf, f). The score is attributed to ERIC J. JÜRGENS (2015).

IMAGE 97. 250

250 Example from the opening bars of *Kuarup A* for frame drum, where this development of the hand-instrument-relationship could be considered exposed.

The connection between A–C is a spiral. In each instance (from A–C), it is possible to return to A, or from A to reach C, however upon returning something fundamental has also changed. It is not a circle; it is a spiral. The simple (but also guiding) metaphor is that of the hand. If a contact begins with the hand on the instrument, each further contact should always be able to return to the hand.

- It is a spiral of contacts consisting in its evolution of an extended rhythmic development and gestural inclusion. For example: the hand on the instrument (no sound), becomes an open sustained sound, becomes a short attack, becomes a repetition or variation of its own, becomes a movement, a tension between surfaces/bodies. Each development is explored through combinations. Always returning to the centre of the open, simple sound, but with each return a growing awareness.

This is the initial phase where a work on rhythm, properly speaking, emerges. The action on instruments through its development will multiply and extend rhythmical figures. Thereby, a form, perhaps more apt to say: a formula, will present itself. An evolution of sound will begin to take shape.

⌘ *Apophatic—via Negative*

[It is important to emphasize the rigor of the exploration here: we are faced with a specific instrument but exploring a first contact has the air of innocence. This innocence must be considered more or less in absurdum. That is, if we imagine a cello, the circle of contacts that are to be explored are also—at least preliminary—all aspects of sound which seem NOT to belong to the cello in the context of my conscious and subconscious concept of (cello) sound. For instance:

- What type, character of sound cannot exist within the parameter of each instrument's existence? What cannot be thought considering its position in its own culture and its alignment with mine.
- Example: can the instrument sing? If so, how? Can the instrument become a sustained sound? If not, why? Can the instrument become part of the hand, body? (If this relationship has not already been stated, asked)

- with the metaphor of the hand in mind, the question could be—how the body of sound is evoked without relying on the hand as a starting point]

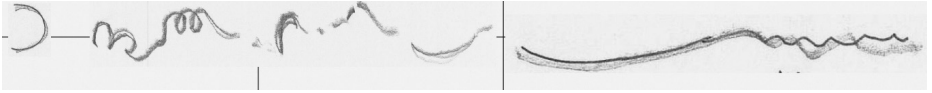


IMAGE 98. Only a graphical trace.



IMAGE 99. Developing a line.

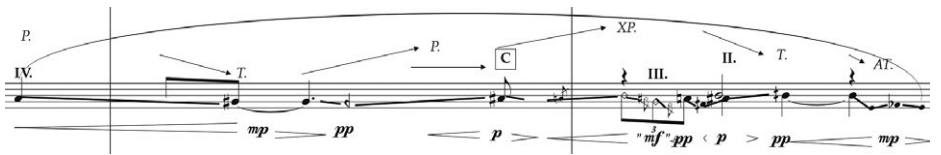


IMAGE 100. Creating gesture and articulation.



IMAGE 101. Ibid.

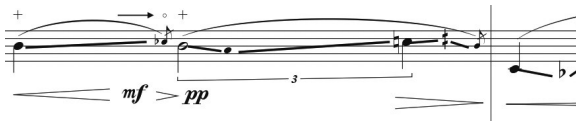


IMAGE 102. Changing to another instrument (from string to brass).²⁵¹

Relationship of Sounds

Each exploration of different sounds will reveal relationships. Between sound sources and between sounds and thereby creating a gravity where the different contact points are placed in shorter or longer distances to a centre.

251 Different try-outs in connection with *Songs for Simone*. Not limited to one instrument.

The relationship between sounds will reveal secondary centres, a periphery and it will be possible to define a hierarchy.

A proposed hierarchy (centre—secondary—periphery) will reveal essential features of the relationship of sounds. For instance, it will be possible to imagine under which conditions the different levels of sound could co-exist (or not). In itself this implies its own evolution of sound(s), which means that the singular evolution of sound has now been elaborated to include longer and more complex forms.

⌘ *Rumori*

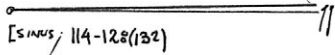
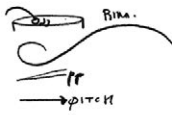
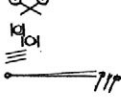
The act of composing is inseparable from the act of listening. Listening is the mode in which the ear distinguishes, embraces, and brings to the surface (in some way or another) what reaches the ear. Our listening, however, is typically focused on (when it comes to what we appreciate as *music*) the practice on sound. That is, the focus remains on sources in which we infer agency. As a composer my focus should be directed in both ways. Background noise is not only that which lurks in the beyond, but also the base of sound. It is the ambience (and space) of what is heard. It speaks of a particular kind of distance, not only the concrete sense of the vast expansion of noise from afar, but it creates a sense of sonic time and space which supersedes the ear's ability to separate and distinguish sounds. It places the experience of sound on the threshold of audibility and nevertheless we can *hear* all.

“It is as if the ground rose to the surface, without ceasing to be the ground.”²⁵²

Again: attention is also an intention. I want to evoke this ground to the surface and still celebrate its sense of suspense in a limitless spatial setting—invoking not background noise, but something intermediary.

SLAGVERK, SONGER FOR SOLO

EXT. SOFT MARCH.



RÖR KÄRVAAGGÅR: MED KROPPEN

TA BIRKA "MARCHEN" FRÖM RÖR-PLAZZ, LYFT DÖBACI (eller KÄ-MARCHEN):

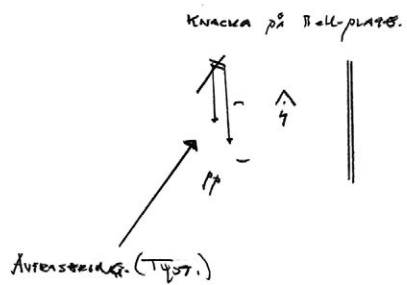


IMAGE 103. Percussion gestures with different instruments.

[an even further note]

It has already been stated, but I find its rephrasing important: I live quite close to a railway-yard. In the night when I go out on the balcony I can hear the distant thumps of the freight-trains coming in, the soaring squeaks of its corroded rails, the sounds fascinating displacement of space: how some sounds are perceived as distant, while others (pending the weather conditions) in the dead of night rushes to my ears. Furthermore, I spend hours every week roaming a picturesque nature reserve in which the open, unlimited space have an importance (for me). And I would say it belongs to the imagined space. If not else, it underlines the sense of breathing that I perceive in space. Of how, even the remotest sound, in the open space by the turning of the ear is accessible and despite its remoteness (or as with the opposite; a sounding, or just a “dead” object directly in front of me) can harmonize or completely negate all other sounds; listening to freight trains plowing in, the squeak of rails or as in the nature reserve, the sound of water gushing, tree branches creaking, far-away cries of civilization and the hallucinatory sensation of the rays of the sun, the movement of clouds as sounding properties. It comes before me as a deeper (existential) mode of reality. It speaks to me. This suspension of time lends itself not as a challenge, but as a further degree of this kaleidoscopic experience. I don't conceive of it as a technical act, it is not an exercise in which an unnamed instrument is asked to perform the sound of water, the feeling of horizon or light—such an approach would only give focus to sound as a mechanical reality. A reality which by no means occupy the centre of my interest in the multiplicity of the emergence of a (possible) piece of music.

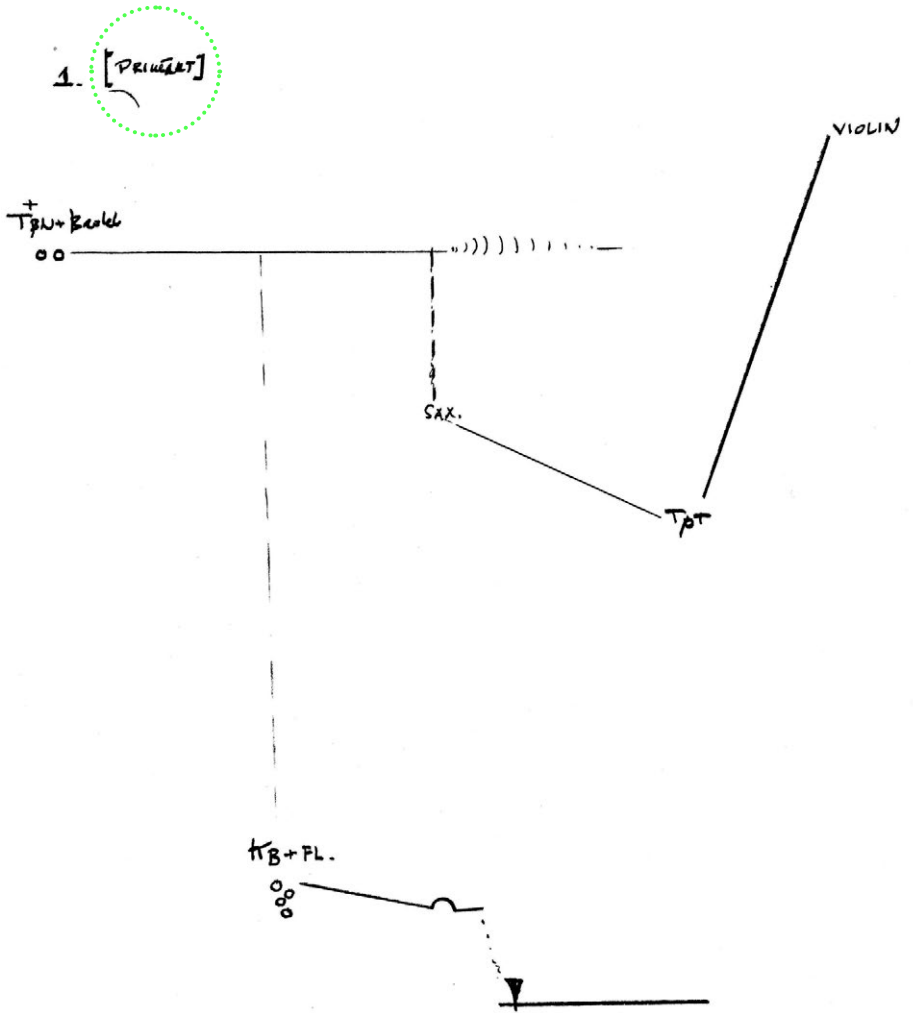
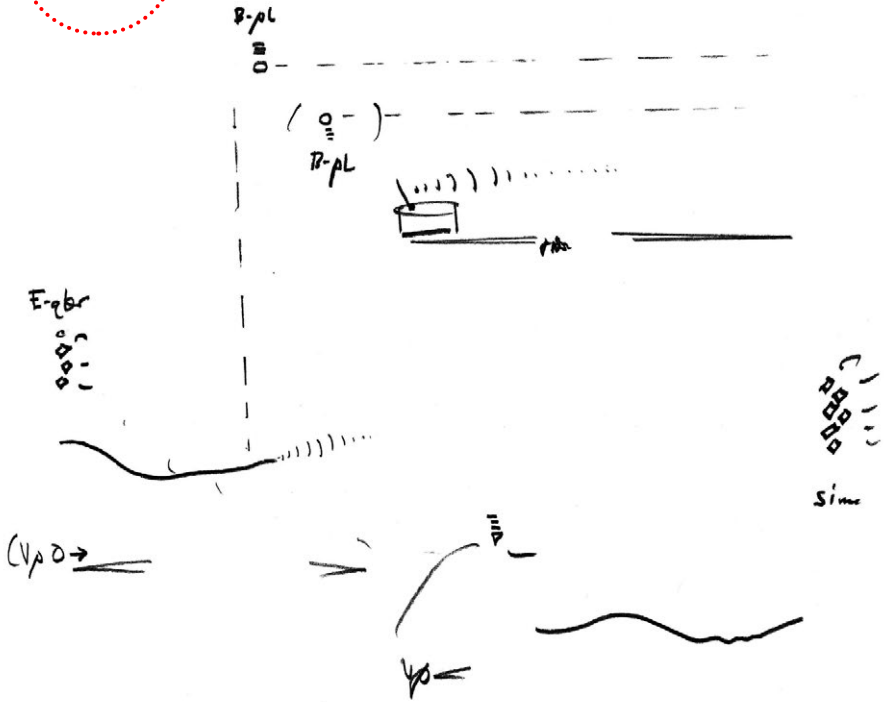


IMAGE IO4.

1 [SELECTION]



(TAPS)
 ↓
 SF 1 & 2 (SINUS-WAVES)

IMAGE 105.

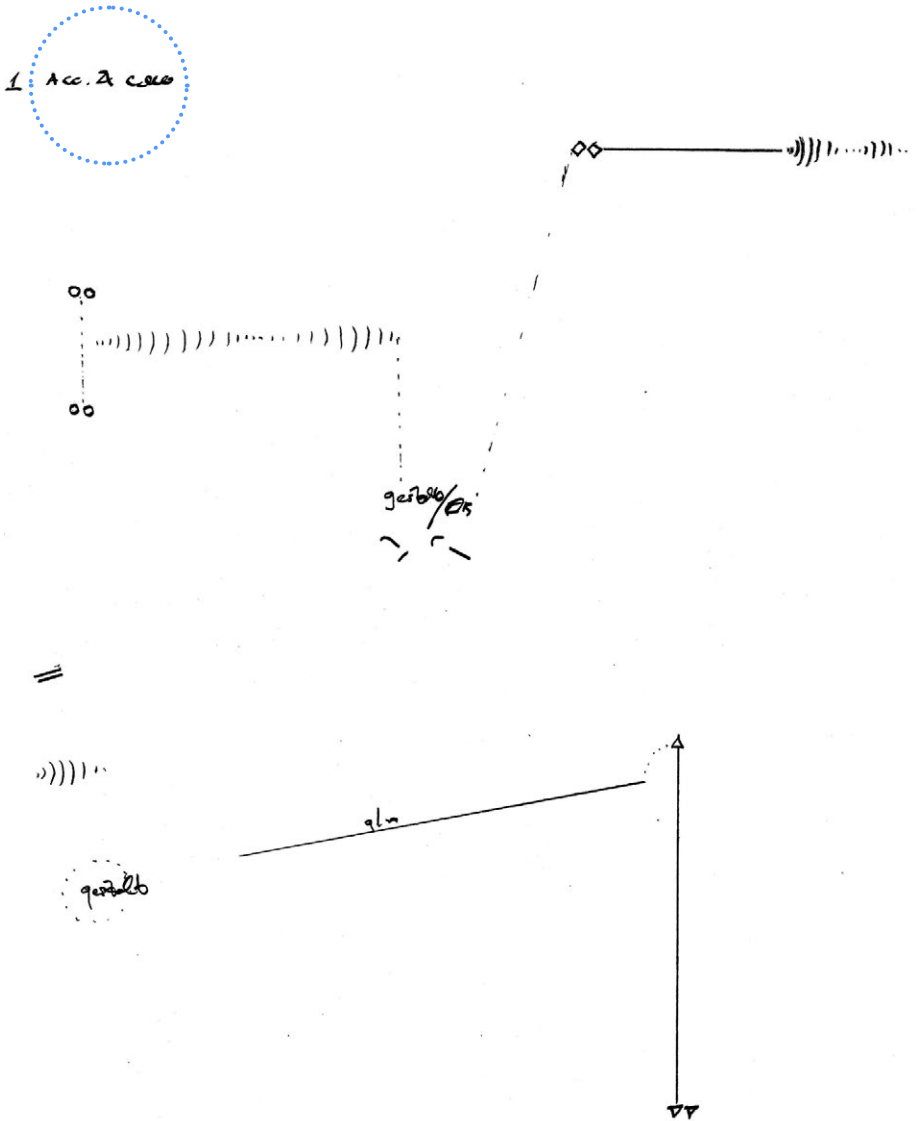


IMAGE IO6.

IMAGE 93-95 shows three different layers of sound material in the piece 'arché': a primary, secondary and a soloist layer (solo accordion, solo cello with supportive electric guitar). They are developed parallelly and are traced and conceived as their relationship grow, in the above images they are juxtaposed.

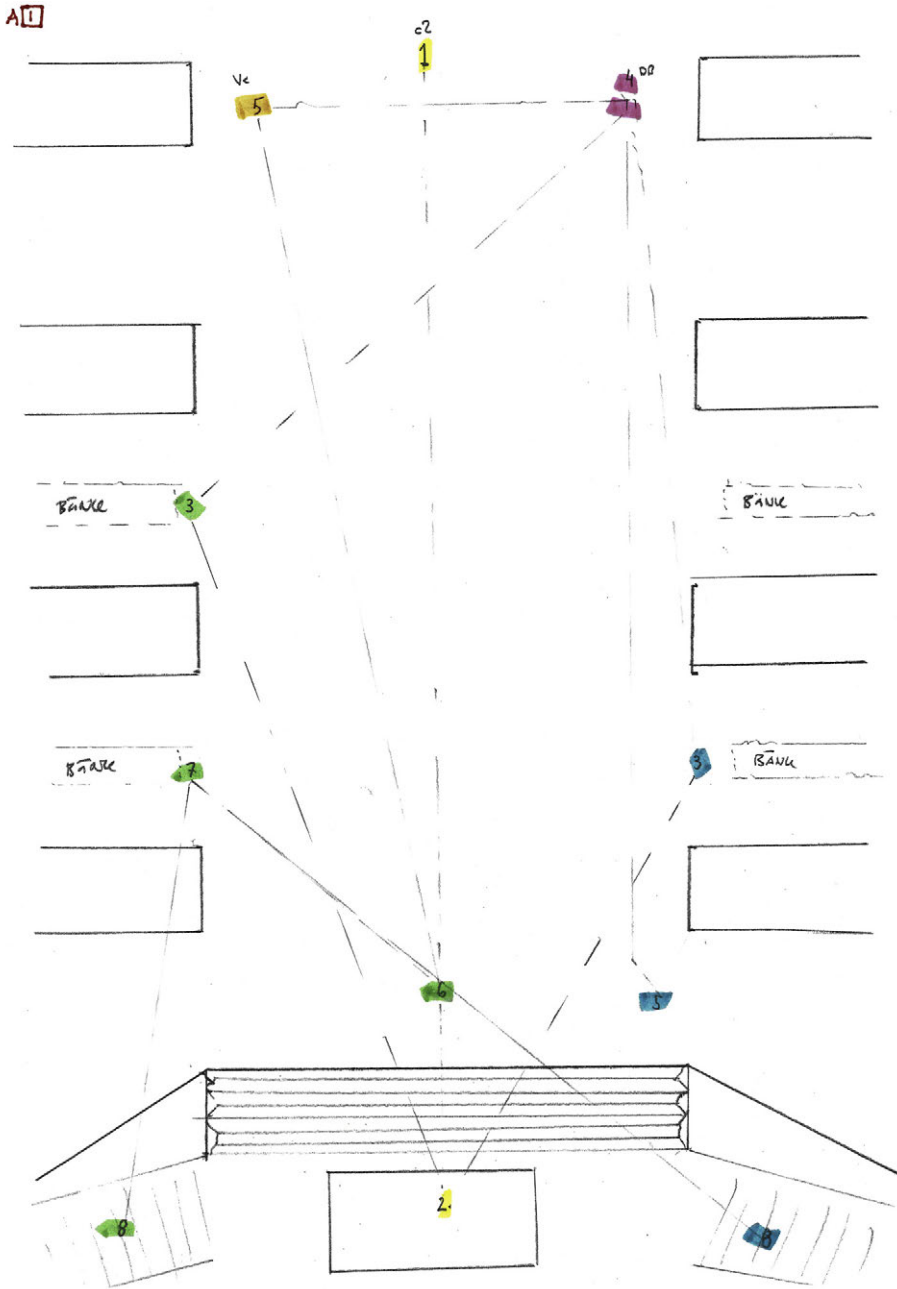


IMAGE 107. The constellation of sounds and their transition over time in the opening section of the piece 'arché'.

Constellation of Sounds in Space

[The focus to put the sounds in constellation to one another, and to extend it into the *imagined space*.]

The focus here turns to place the sounds in constellation to one another, but also to extend them into the *imagined space*.

A constellation of sounds, or the projection of a sound into the *imagined space*, is a focus of the imagination. A free, flexible discovery (*improvisatory* if one wishes) immediately focused and captured by the *cold hand* of the mind.

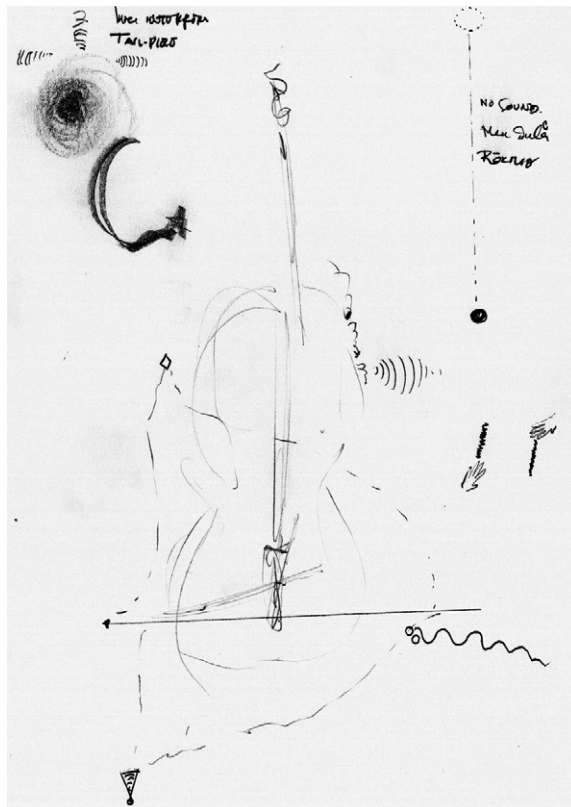


IMAGE 108. Sketches from the cello solo à sibyl—mônē reused for songs for simone

Slowly the sounds and their respective evolution will place themselves in constellation, in different degrees of proximity of space, both in time and room. The inferred resonance and tension which arise create continuously new connections between sounds, generating again new feed-back in the system. Once again, the energy between sounds in the *imagined space* might once again create a new focus of exploration. Possibly, a new spiral of contacts. This time, the evolution might be not only one sound source, but a

combination... one, two, three etc. The force of energies is continuously accumulating, re-building and extending any previous stage.

Essentially it is an act of imaginative listening. If the sounds (and their respective evolutions) have been enough *embodied*, then to place one sound (imaginatively) in one space, and another one in another space (or the duplication of the same sound...) one can properly speaking *listen* to how they interact or begin to *speak* to one another. Since this is an exercise of the ear, of the imagination, the sounds can also travel in the imagined space, slowly pushing and turning themselves around.

It is perceivable in the sketches throughout this chapter. The paper(s) shows how the idea of *movement* of sound is present. What cannot be perceived is the chronology. The movement of one sound, will inspire another. In turn this *inspiration* will influence the first sound. Remarks of interactions will follow, that will serve as indication of future elaborations. Important to note is a rhythm in between the different evolutions of sound events are beginning to be perceived. There is a weight on each of these pages to be considered. A slow, deep pulse.

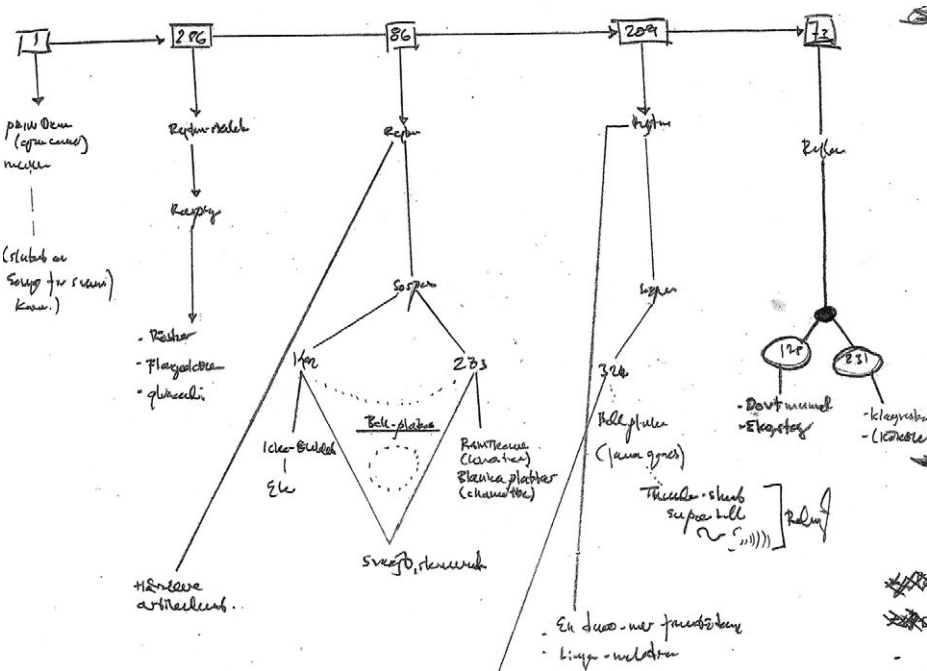


IMAGE 109. Connections, transitions, events (and adjacent spaces) in a reading of Den svarta solens paragrafs.

N
 IMPORTANT: *the two hands work together in their own capacity, one leads, improvises, tries, the other stabilizes, tries to balance—keeps the sculpture erect. It is the image of the unification of the body & mind.*

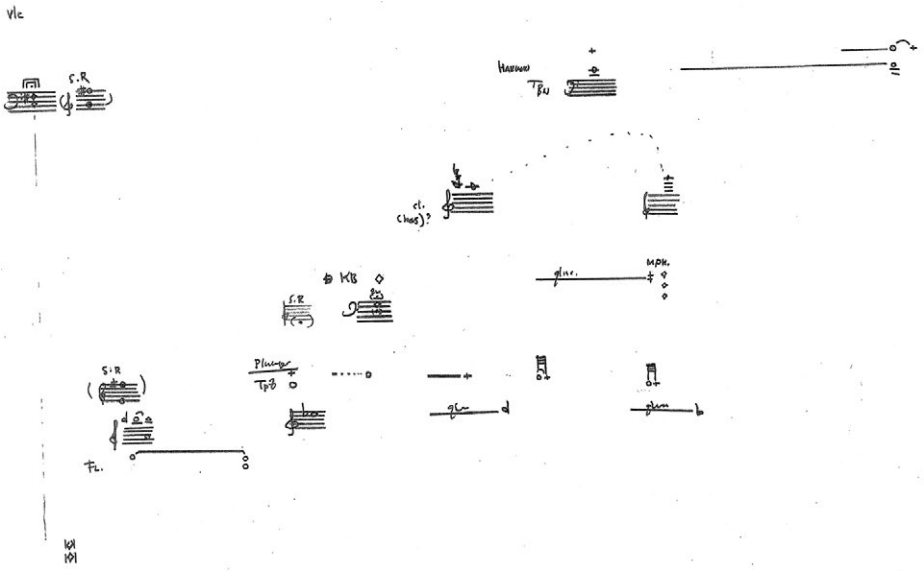


IMAGE 110. Klangfarbenmelodie.

A sound gives rhythm, a rhythm gives sound. Within itself (rhythm or sound) both parts multiply, reduce themselves, amplifies.—are articulated, accented:

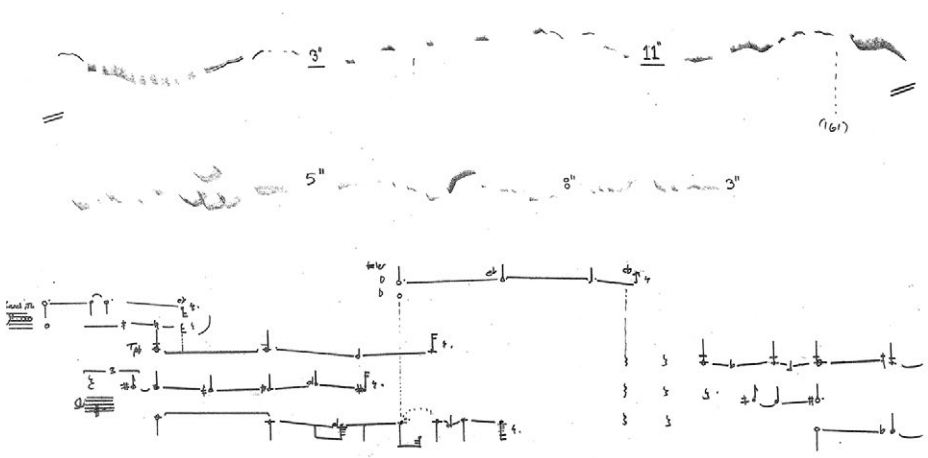


IMAGE 111.

What becomes rhythm becomes form, but only one of many possible potential forms. The alternatives grow with the magnitude of the exploration:

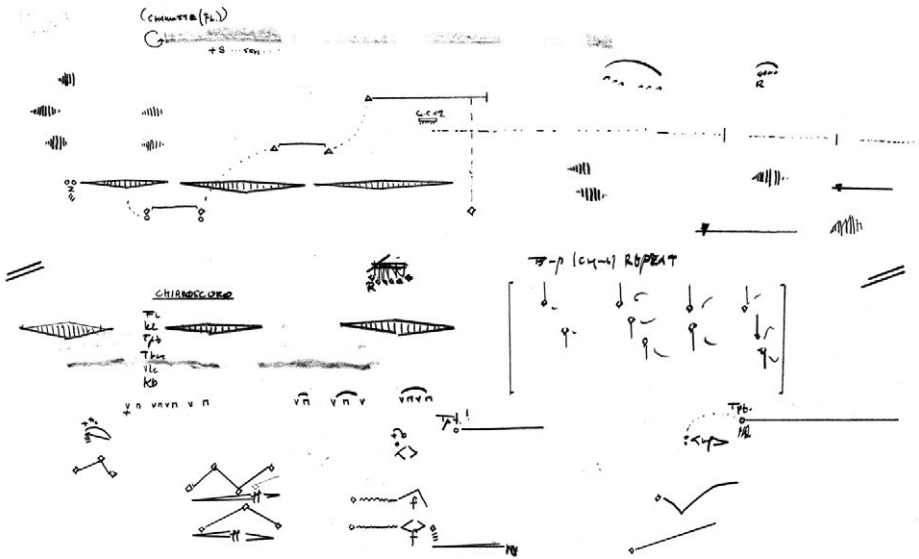


IMAGE II.2.

Therefore, each evolution of a sound and each evolution of the constellation of sounds becomes one of many paths. However, with the development of a particular sound focus, the future piece becomes increasingly more articulated:

256.

RAISING-STICK [VLC - DB - 2XG (CORN (FUNCTIONAL)) - NOCTURN]

FLZ. (WIND+BASS)

• EXTENDED VECTOR

ARTICULATIONS BY "SPINNING" AND "UNDOING"

273. → 142.

Perc - FULL PLATES

IMAGE II.3.

The *sound evolutions* themselves are not the piece, but they begin to interact with each other. They belong in and outside time simultaneously.

The constellations begin to gravitate towards, or away from each other. And as they do, the composer begins to imagine a horizontal, graphical sign which merges them all together. *In time*:

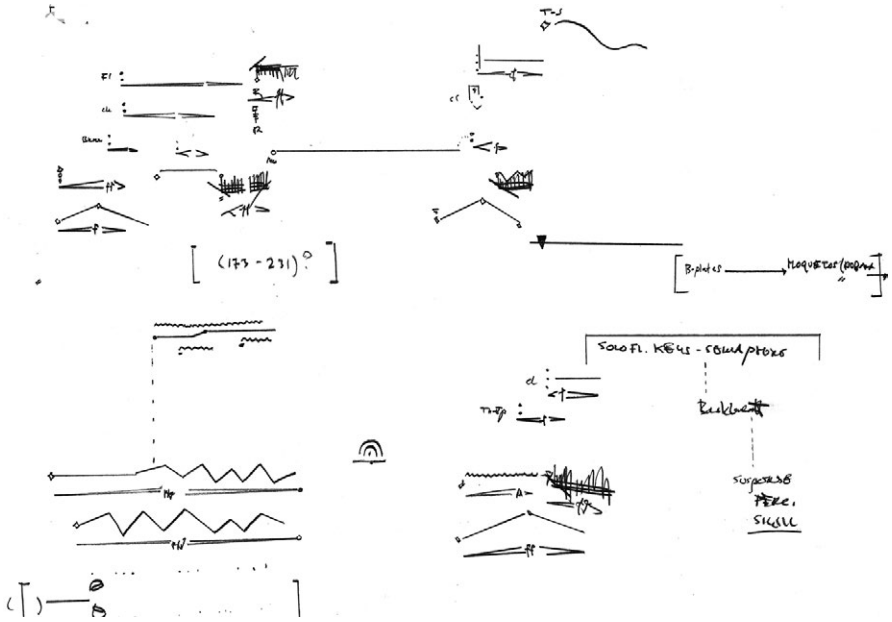


IMAGE II.4.

Projection Into Space

At this point an increasing number of things have been defined:

- The evolution of singular sounds, from simple impulses to a traced combination of affinities.
- The sounds have begun to be deployed and tried in relationship with each other, producing new constellation of sound(s).

A possible relationship in time and space between sounds has materialized, a hierarchy: a centre and a periphery. Primary and secondary sounds.

Each instance of knowledge about the piece should be tried in a projection into the imagined space of the final piece's (possible) topology.

A constellation, or a combination of sounds needs to be projected into the *space*.

Certain conditions exist:

- A preliminary work on sound consisting of a graphical reality, but also a rhythmical identity.
- A sensibility to how different sounds could co-exist, a preliminary topography.
- A space, an idea of resonance.

The *strategy* thereby creates sound forces, which still remain somehow on the limit of representation. They are embodied, they are graphically present, but even if a topography or a constellation of events becomes increasingly clearer, it is still essentially undefined in time, in the narrative of the future piece. However, with these conditions the following will be possible, without limiting the sounds:

- 1 To put them in movement.
- 2 To change the distance of them and their perspective.
- 3 To act on the internal and rhythmical differences.
- 4 To act on the sound without only reducing it to a two-dimensional reality, that is: to the paper).

To repeat: by projecting the sounds into an open (unlimited—yet defined) space it is possible to act on the border (limit) of representation.

I can now *hold* the sounds in my hand. I can *perform* imaginatively with them. I can trace and sketch numerous collisions and evolutions of different events, but I can in any moment change direction. I am not *forced* to a certain linearity.

I, imagine I am, at least—in the *techniques of ecstasy*, as Galás alluded to:

This music is concerned with [...] excessive behavior. An obsession, [...] within microseconds, coalescing one moment and dissolving the next, towards an ultimate dissolution, which is the soul's own Implosion. You do not go to a hospital to inspire the recreation of your own Death onstage. You know it by heart. [...] An actor may simulate the desired emotive state through a skilled manipulation of external object materials, or he may use the raw materials of his own soul in a process which is the immediate, the DIRECT experience of the emotion itself. The second concern is felt by performers who, not just professional, are *Obsessional* performers.

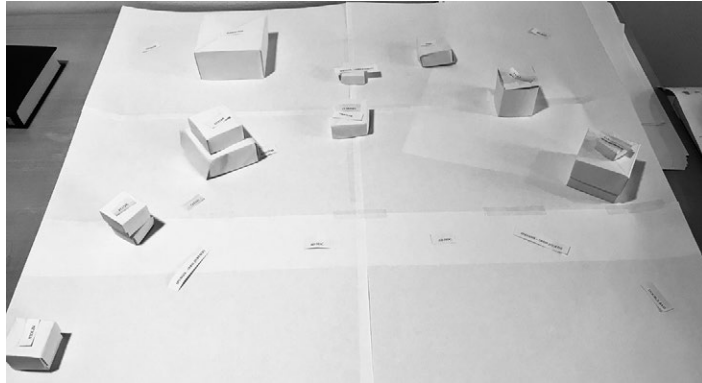


IMAGE 115. Only the space and the objects which makes it 'graspable'

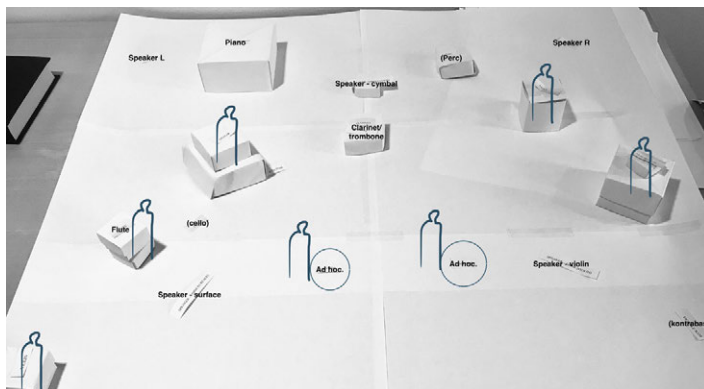


IMAGE 116. Introducing instruments, musicians, objects.

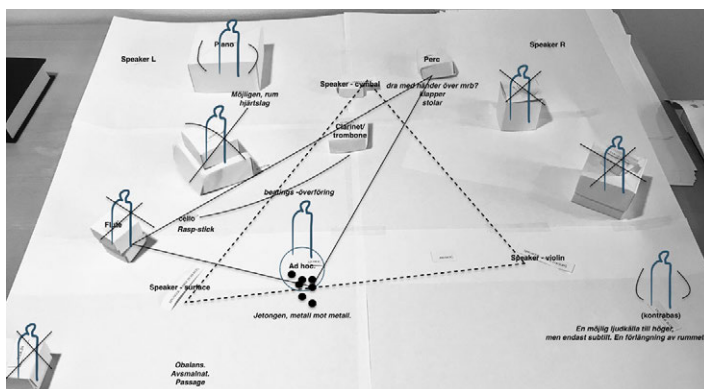


IMAGE 117. Establishing relationships, adding written notes.

Concept [21]

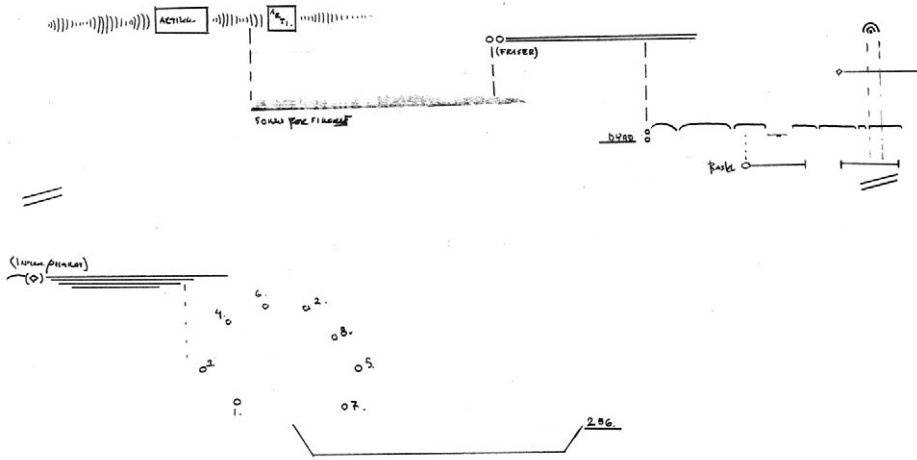


IMAGE 118. Exploring their interaction graphically. Tracing the movements of the sounds, of the interaction.

Strategy Toward Representation

Here, the work becomes in some ways simpler to describe, but more difficult to realize. It is the stage where the projection into space and time is finally prepared in an audio and/or graphical version.

It is the stage in which the knowledge of the sounds and their possible (and impossible) relationships to one another confront the reality of *composition*.

Throughout these pages it is possible to trace how the practice, its development and construction grows stepwise. At this point I would like to infer a didactic, ideal, excerpt of its progression:

The strategy has by now created independent examples. Evolutions of gestures, sounds and imagined spaces. These examples have been repeatedly tried out in the imagined space through explorations of their own and through *imitations*. That is, through imitating one evolution of sound in one instrument *on* to another.

The strategy has thereby started to produce real examples of music. Here in the *strategy toward representation* these examples are now being placed in a preliminary topography. Parts are being performed together. Either recorded or written out on paper. As they begin to now interact in a common time dimension they begin to develop and transform. One sound transforms into another, another sound begins to *listen* to another. A hierarchy of

gestures is beginning to make itself *known*. Issues of balance, distance and register begins to materialize.

As they do, I begin to repeat the strategy. Involving more and more sounds, tracing more and more developments. And, perhaps most decisively, I begin to articulate both the local and deeper pulse. Accents, pauses, suspensions, foreground, background... it is now that the topography is sculpted.

In itself this is a micro AND a macrosystem. To exemplify, I include, on the following pages, the graphic evolution of the opening sound of *rumori ii*. Some of the detailed work is left out, but as the *strategy* is coming to an end, hopefully it will be clear how it evolves. In chapter 6, for the piece *archē*, additional layers will be shown. How text, tracing and reflection builds these imaginary spaces and how they—almost by themselves—form and acquire a topography.

· 1⁶⁰

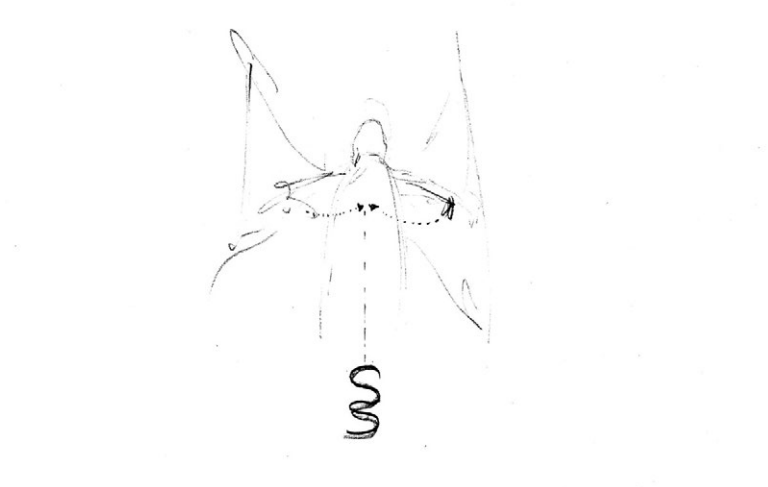


IMAGE 119. The imaginary performer stands in the centre of the space. Holding in her hand an instrument. A spring drum.



IMAGE 120. The tracing: the pen against paper—marking time, dynamic and a wave and force of sound.

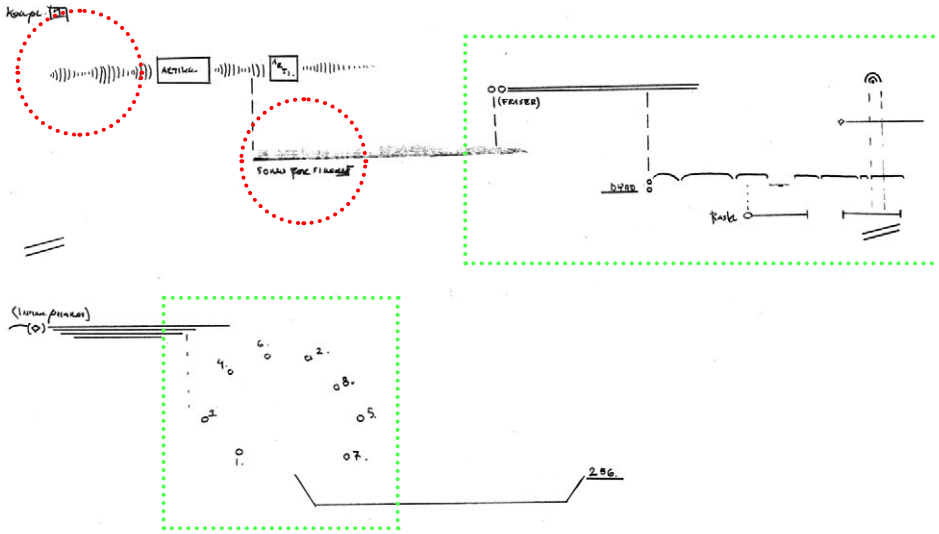


IMAGE 121. The sounds are placed in relationship to each other. The spring drum being mirrored in another and extended by the ensemble.

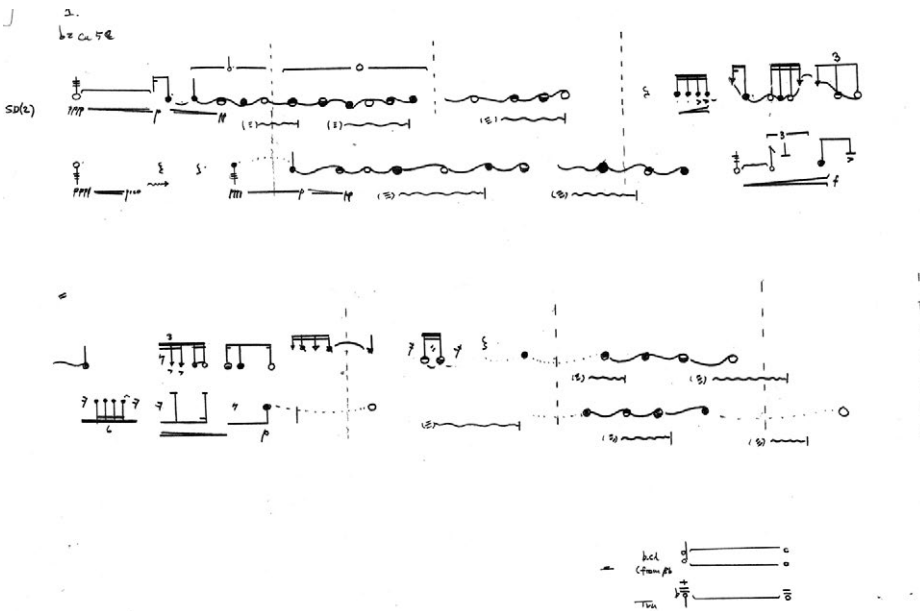


IMAGE 122. The details of the spring drum gesture in a quite late form.

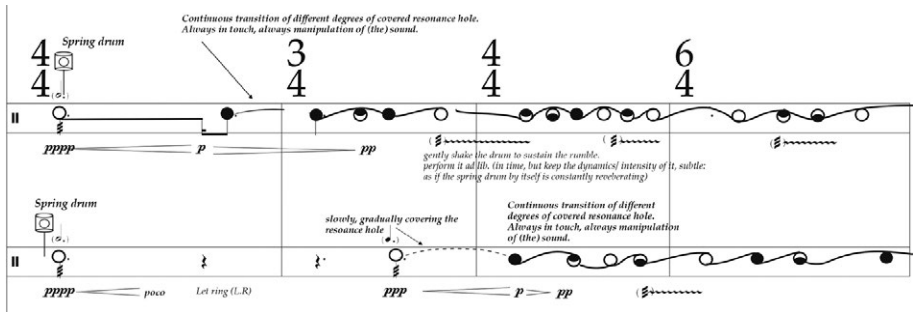


IMAGE I23. The same gesture transferred to notation.

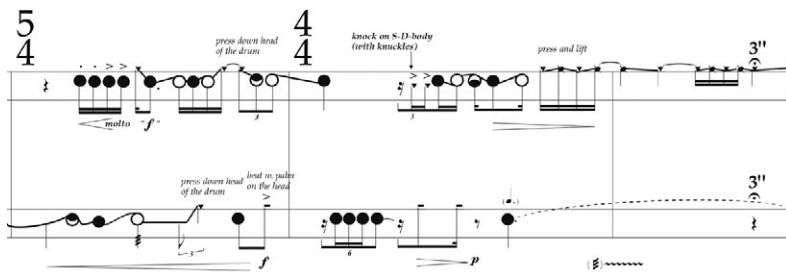


IMAGE I24. Continuation.

IMAGE I19–I24. The progression from tracing the body, and slowly moving it toward a graphical representation and finally finding a form in a score (the piece 'Rumori ii'). A condensation of a slow, exploring process.

This process constructs a possible force field of active sounds. It will now be possible to realize, by putting the different sounds together, new connections and furthermore to imagine them in a defined space.

Still, this should be a moment without focus on orientation. To go from left to right, or right to left (with the two-dimensional reality of the score in mind) should still be possible, but the motion is now implied and will gradually evolve from its energetic qualities, however essentially defined by the sensibility of what I can articulate, but more defining—what I can understand of what I have traced into sound.

It will be important at this stage to return to the disclosure of rhythm, since here we are faced with a more active and directional situation. Not only local, particular rhythms appear, but also the rhythm of the co-existence of two sounds (polyrhythms), and furthermore the deep rhythm of their phrase(s); proportions.

The decisions made in this phase can be made with different attention to detail. As can be seen above, in sketches for *Rumori ii*, the focus is rather on a rhythmical level. The sounds in themselves have already, in

previous stages, been disclosed, and with the trust that there are more stages of work prior to a final score, the sketch can still remain somewhat open. By this moment, the individual instruments, the different phrase-lines, even rhythms, are known. The question of formation is still open to negotiation.

(Last Step)

The final step is the phase of formalization within the dimension of the score. It will limit and reduce. However, the discipline of each previous step should lead to a possible notation which includes the widest degree of flexibility. The graphical reality has grown through each moment and by each new realization feedback is generated within the system.

It is not necessarily so that the progress of the *STRATEGY* will generate or progress directly into a score, it may very well disclose aspects which need to be once again taken back to prior phases.

I exemplify:

Let us imagine a high soaring sound, which articulates and directs itself for a long phrase. It begins to interact with another instrument. Possibly a connection is revealed between the two instruments, which was previously unknown. If this connection is possible to distinguish, then this aspect should also be able to imagine (again) in the prior steps of sound evolution. Is it possible to include it in each individual part? Does it relate to other sounds? How? When? If so, what then?

The last step is accordingly one of suspension. Any moment might be transferred to an earlier stage and so on and so forth in order to explore all possibilities. It is the deep breath before the plunge (into the score).

It is the moment to create *auxiliary moments* or to underline and identify the music's deeper pulse. Through articulation, be it soft or loud. To infer abstraction, for instance, as is the case with the pieces *songs for simone* and *archē*, the inclusion of moments of *semaphore*. That is, moments of suspension through movement, not necessarily even sounding. Thereby the piece, or the music, again begins to form a dialogue with its own beginning. Remembering how the gestures begun in the tension between no-sound and sound. The *inoperativeness* is a quality, almost stronger than its extension (sound), not because of its *impotence*, but due to its unlimited *potentiality*.

Semaphore 1

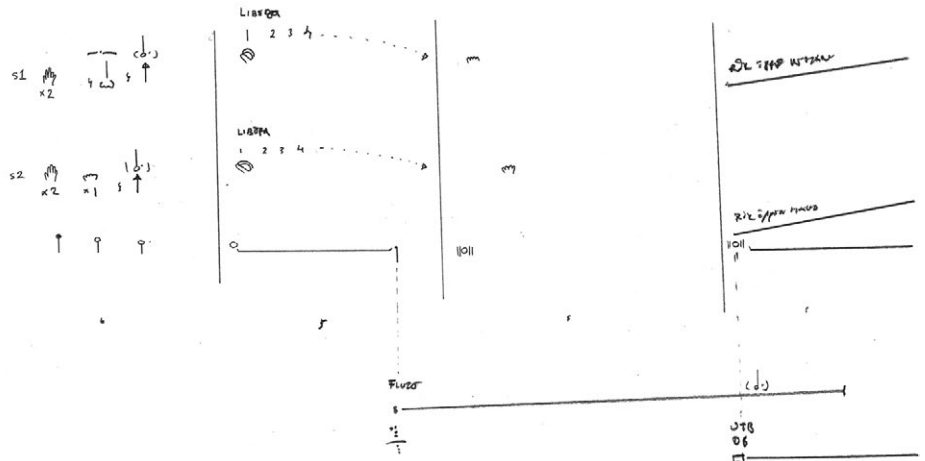
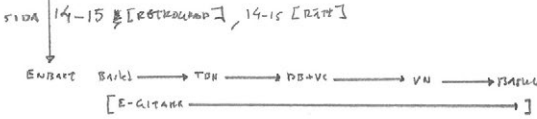


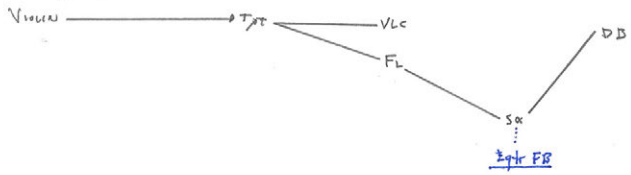
IMAGE I25.

AUXILIARY MOMENTS

1. - ТРАНСЛЯТОР с минимальной организацией



2. - Два Acc→Cals и минимальная:



3. - S, S[EH], CH [FL-CL-TD-Sx-Tp] минимальная

IMAGE I26. Semaphore and auxiliary moments for arché. Included in the last phase of the piece, as an extraneous layer, yet to intensify and/or suspend the form.

End note:

Each phase re-informs the others. Each new development is projected in the other stages, which means that the elaboration of the piece is a continuous amorphous growth. The final projection in space (defined in time and space) is but one of many possible realizations. It should be the one which focuses/makes real the furthest degree of the imagination. What this implies is also its mirroring effect on the process; what one does in one piece is but one of its many possible manifestations. In this sense the dialogue between musical pieces, and their developments, naturally continues and extends one to another.

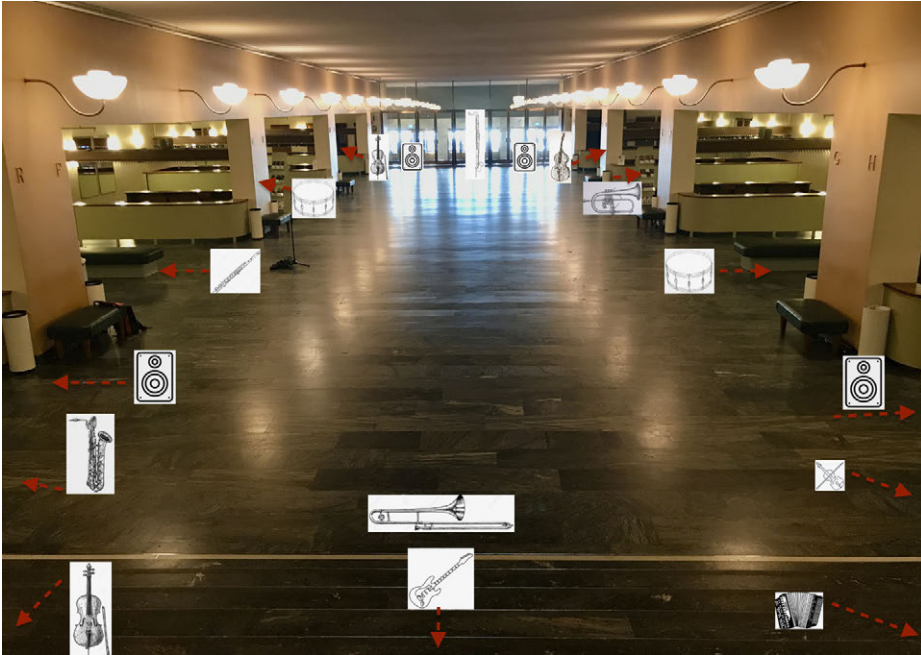


IMAGE 127. Final placement of musicians in archē.

Ontopoetics IV: Justice Is Nameless

With intent the strategy avoids the word *method*. Its use of strategy shows its reluctance to consider an artistic practice a system. It doesn't mean that within the practice this strategy in a particular piece unveils its own system, defined by the rules that the strategy develops. However, this system develops from within the sound and the space in which it imaginably reverberates. Categories, hierarchies, and language which comes from outside of the sound, is avoided, not forbidden.

Ontopoetics are related to and gives focus to an artist's poetics, but furthermore it evokes an inanimate object. The artist is not *the divine madness*, only the one who captures and articulates one of many possibilities of sound.

On the most banal level *ontopoetics* describe an attitude, in the context of this thesis, it reveals a way-of-life, an ambition which borders on ethical considerations, but in something particular; sound. Again, the musician is the one *who takes care of the sound*. Ethics are in this context without language, it escapes language. To quote Giorgio Agamben: "[j]ustice [...] is nameless"²⁵³.

The *strategy of sound* is governed by this simple rule of thought, nameless. It is implied in every step. The construction of a space which on its own is defined by what evokes the interest of my ear, the *rumori*. A development which follows the interaction of ear-hand-object-space. Then, as the project evolves the strategy teaches my ear what and even *where* the sounds desire, where the heart and ear wish to follow. And as the construction grows, its complexity grows beyond the possibility of the ear. The resulting heterophony creates the base of *rumori*, but as a complex presence. In individual parts all is embodied, therefore the construction in its entirety slowly unveils all limbs. Not just the heart, the feet, and the hand, but all parts become embodied. When I *move* my left hand, the feet know, the feet react, and accordingly all is put in movement.

It is a strategy which includes freedom, suspension, reflection, as well as the elaboration and harmonization of body and mind in the most flexible and non-circumcised way I can imagine. It does so in connection with a clear, intentional strategy in which the development is as focused as possible. And it builds upon an idea of a *technique of ecstasy*.

There is no "free improvisation", there is no pre-format, no implicit value system.

Through the Swedish writer, Stig Larsson, I learned many years ago to focus as little as possible, initially, on the notion of form²⁵⁴. It directed my work on sound to allow the sounds themselves teach me their formation. The *strategy of sound* needs to consider this, that the 9 steps put in motion the different parts of the hermeneutic circle which, taken as a whole, speaks not of an interpretation dependent on language, but on an interpretation avoiding language, and giving credence to the *act*. The *act* is seen as emanating from a *body*

253 Giorgio Agamben, *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience* (London: Verso, 1993), 22.

254 Stig Larsson, *Natta de mina* (Stockholm: Bonnier Alba, 1997), 40.

When Jean Luc Nancy was to lecture on the body, he gave it the title *On the Soul* thereby placing it in a tradition beginning with Aristotle's infamous *De Anima*, where—just as Nancy—the only way to understand the soul, is through the body²⁵⁵.

The body has form. A form *of* matter. And it senses its own existence, through being touched. That is, the opening act of the hand—through touch—closes and senses the act. Nancy remarks that Kant, in a note to his *prolegomena*, writes that the self is only a sentiment of existence. Nancy notes how this in itself places the self outside of existence (the *Ek* is removed), as a sensing, but furthermore a self-sensing, and thereby echoing Heidegger's *dasein* (being—there)²⁵⁶.

Essentially, Nancy, makes the dualism of body and soul go away, through the assessment that the soul is the experience of the body. And not as experience of just anything, but as *sole* experience. In the end, it reminds us of Heidegger, it even reminds us of Artaud, but furthermore it points us back to the *ek-stasis*. Being outside. The transition beyond limits. The trance state as leaving the body, is nothing but a realization of this experience, of sensing self.

This is what the hand does when it becomes *in touch*. It becomes outside by being in touch, the opening gesture of the hand closes itself. The phrase ends.

255 Jean-Luc Nancy, *Corpus*, 1. ed., Perspectives in Continental Philosophy (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 125.

256 Nancy, 132.

Chapter 6

*A poetic stanza on the
forming of a sound world*



Introduction

We have also sound-houses, where we practise and demonstrate all sounds, and their generation. We have harmonies which you have not, of quarter-sounds, and lesser slides of sounds. Divers instruments of music likewise to you unknown, some sweeter than any you have, together with bells and rings that are dainty and sweet. We represent small sounds as great and deep; likewise great sounds extenuate and sharp; we make divers tremblings and warblings of sounds, which in their original are entire. We represent and imitate all articulate sounds and letters, and the voices and notes of beasts and birds. We have certain helps which set to the ear do further the hearing greatly. We have also divers strange and artificial echoes, reflecting the voice many times, and as it were tossing it: and some that give back the voice louder than it came, some shriller, and some deeper; yea, some rendering the voice differing in the letters or articulate sound from that they receive. We have also means to convey sounds in trunks and pipes, in strange lines and distances.²⁵⁷

Ett maskineri i vilket alla delar oundgängligen skall löpa utan att staka sig, skava motvarandra. Kulvertar och vestibuler. Hissar, atrium och gångar. Tunnlrar, gångbroar och gallerier vilka sluter an till sidor, hallar, salar, trappor utan glipor. Rummen, ett efter det andra, avpassade till sin form och storlek. [...] Rörelser vilka redan beräknats genom antagna, abstrakta terminaler; ankomna, anlända, avresa utan att lämna det täta, täckande nomogrammet. [...] Ljuset faller ned i oskarpa rektanglar mot det matta golvet. [...] Andra korridorer sluter an till vänster → 86, höger → 273, och fortsätter framåt. → 142.²⁵⁸

[A machinery in which all parts must inevitably run without pause, rubbing against each other. Culverts and vestibules. Lifts, atrium and corridors. Tunnels, footbridges and galleries which connect to sides, halls, halls, stairs without glitches. The rooms, one after the other, adapted to their shape and size. [...] Movements which are already calculated through assumed, abstract terminals; arrive, arrive, depart without leaving the dense, covering nomogram. [...] The light falls in blurry rectangles against the dull floor. [...] Other corridors connect to the left → 86, right → 273, and continue straight ahead. → 142.]

257 Sir Thomas More. *The Utopia and Francis Lord Bacon: The New Atlantis*. (London: Routledge and Sons Ltd, 1947), 247–248.

258 Lotass, *Den svarta solen*, para. 256. (My translation below).

Den svarta solen [The Black Sun]

In the following 100+ pages the *strategy of sound* (chapter 5) is essentially given a poetic, but in many ways detailed form of its (possible) realization in connection to the musical works composed during 2020–2023. However, to understand, or to be able to orient oneself some basic conditions and explanations are in order.

This chapter, in particular, is indebted to the novel, *Den svarta solen* (The Black Sun), written in 2009 by Lotta Lotass. A novel whose both form and content need to be explained before this chapter, or even this thesis, can be understood in its entirety.

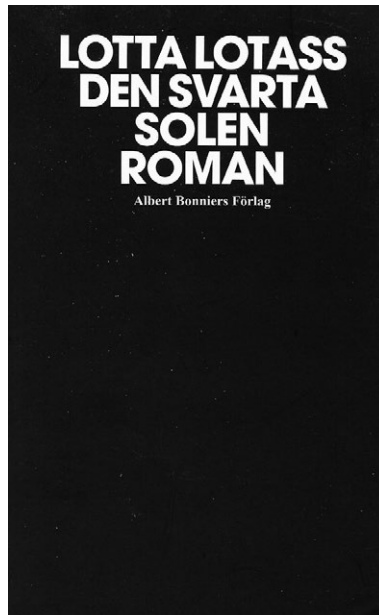
The novel *Den svarta solen* is a book consisting of 340 paragraphs of varying lengths (most about a page in length, with some longer and shorter exceptions). Its form can be attributed to both the once popular “role-playing”—novels in which you made your own way through a story (go left/right/engage in a fight/converse with this/that etc.), or perhaps its maze-like construction is inspired by Ts’ui Pên’s life long labyrinthic struggle in Borges’ *garden of forking paths*, but even more Lotass’ work do align with the French *Nouveau Roman*, among other things Robbe-Grillet’s famous *In the Labyrinth*. However, as a Swedish writer, the similarities to Sven Lindqvist’s *Nu dog du* (both in form and time), is difficult to overlook. In *Den svarta solen* you begin from a starting paragraph, after which you decide your own way through an enigmatic, claustrophobic, hallucinatory post-apocalyptic building. Some choices will lead you “out” of the book, others will lead you in circles and inevitably back to the *beginning*.

Together with the previous novels *Den vita jorden* and *Den röda himlen*, *Den svarta solen* forms a triptych of novels which all share (stated on the back sleeve of the novel) a common project; the three critiques of Immanuel Kant. Although not explicitly, it is possible to assume that *Den svarta solen* comments on Kant’s third critique, the one on judgement, and most importantly, the aesthetic judgement. Nevertheless, Kant’s *transcendental idealism* is possible to imagine as a basis for all Lotass’ triptych; the question of what we know and how. In Kant’s third critique the aesthetic judgement is the gap between the *phenomena* and the *thing-as-it-is* (noumena). The aesthetic judgement is not in itself a *subject* of knowledge, since judgements (according to Kant) only expresses the experience of an object and releases a “free play” of the mind’s faculties. The aesthetic’s ideas, for Kant, are:

“[...] representation of the imagination which evokes much thought, yet without the possibility of any definite thought whatever, i.e. concept, being adequate to it, and which language, consequently, can never quite fully capture or render completely intelligible.”²⁵⁹

Even more clues can be found in the intertextual and referential world of *Den svarta solen*. For this thesis one more title is important to mention, since it probably along with the critiques of Kant pose the clearest philosophical backdrop to the novel. The reference is also placed unambiguously through Lotass' title, *Den svarta solen* (The Black Sun), which easily alludes for an avid reader to Julia Kristeva's *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, and I will return to Kristeva later (in chapter 7), but her notion of melancholy and depression shows several keys to Lotass writing, and in the end Kristeva's *Black Sun* will align itself with my own project. However, this project is not one of literature studies, and apart from the fact that Lotass' poetic universe shares many traits of my own (for instance, the *Nouveau Roman*, was a key ingredient, mostly through the writings of Roland Barthes, already in my Bachelor-thesis back in 2008), during these years as a PhD-student the focus have, insistently, been on this projects possible ramification on the notion of sound, not on particular written sources.

259 Immanuel Kant, Nicholas Walker, and James Creed Meredith, *Critique of Judgement* (Oxford: University Press, Incorporated, 2009), 142.

IMAGE 128.²⁶⁰

The Structure of This Chapter and Its Connection to Lotass' Novel

Already in an article from 2010²⁶¹ I located an interest in Lotta Lotass use of space, materiality and non-narrative approach in her *Den svarta solen*. Although, the novel since then had faded to the background it kept re-occurring during the early process of writing what would later become my *Strategy of sound*, perhaps even by chance re-evoked by my work on Antonin Artaud's *Tutuguri* (the rite of *the black sun*), which was the first composition I finished during my PhD-period, *Songs for Antonin*. There were many signs of Lotass' reappearance in my work, in the end perhaps the most obvious one (besides the aesthetic affinity I have toward her work) being her novel's reference to Kant. Kant and his *disinterested* aesthetic gaze have remained throughout these PhD-years my constant dialogue partner filtered through the lens of Agamben, through Artaud, the Shamans and the mystics. In the end it would be through Lotass that I finally found perhaps its most enigmatic and visionary interpreter.

260 Lotass, *Den svarta solen*, cover.

261 Esaias Järnegard, "Yxhugg Av Mörker: Att Lyssna till Det Innersta Rummet," *Nutida Musik. LII/1-2* (2009): *Arbete Pågår* 52, no. 1-2 (2009): 52. The journal is dated 2009, but in fact it was published early 2011.

What Lotass actually does in her *Den svarta solen* can (and will) be discussed, but I believe we are in the proximity of a different reply (than Agamben's or Artaud's) to the Kantian separation of phenomena and noumena. One in which art is not only an intermediary, but an essential step toward an *ontopoetics*.

I enter in to Lotass novel and maze and work my way through. Space by space (numbered according to Lotass novel), expanding and transforming as I pass through. I trace, sometimes erroneous—for sure; the spaces of Lotass. The text of Lotass becomes the gravity centre of my *strategy of sound* and here, in chapter 6, it becomes the organ point of my own compositions. *Den svarta solen* becomes my dialogue partner, that allows for the re-emergence of *the word* in my strategy and assist me to extend my notion of sound further.

In Lotass' novel there is no development or narrative in a conventional, literary, sense. However, there is an iterated attempt to define space(s), but even more: to define this space through not only nouns, verbs and adjectives, but through sound, to approach sound with a symbolical content, to approach gesture with a heterophony.

In this chapter, the reader is invited to follow my exploration of the novel space by space, paragraph by paragraph. With the intention to show and exemplify, not only how the music of this thesis was brought to life, but also how Lotass' novel became the *solution* or *imaginary space* where the *strategy of sound* can appear. Or rather chapter 6 shows how what is written down in chapter 5 *became*. Although these two chapters could have been chronologically exchanged (for pedagogical reasons), I have chosen to remain with this order, since it mirrors how it actually (chronologically) took place. Out of the writing (or conception) of chapter 5, this chapter appeared. Regardless, there is reciprocity in between them which hopefully will be evident.

In this chapter my own reading of Lotass is mirrored, but through sound. I contend to show how I approach sound from a point of suspended time, rather than structurally, or didactically. That is, the point of development of this chapter resides in the harmonization of gesture, sound and text and how this exposition (that will follow) offers a possible reply in a written, reflected form of what in chapter 5 is more or less written out as a compositional method.

The aura of development in this chapter only appears as a consequence of the distribution in time (paragraph after paragraph, space after space). However, I hope that the reader, reads as much with the eyes as the ears. There is a sequence of paragraphs, thereby a kind of linearity, however, in the music, in between the spaces (or paragraphs), slowly this linearity

becomes less and less important. However, as much as there is movement, and change of scenery do we really change space? Or, perhaps like the narration of Marco Polo in Calvino's *Invisible Cities* we are actually experiencing the same place again and again, finding new corners, decorated with new ornamentation; testing again and again the reverberating properties of Lotass' architectural writing.

Essentially, each gesture, each sounding moment does not concern itself with time, it can at any point break with the appearance of linear topology.

I am creating a plateau from where I explore my music. Explore without a necessity to compose *a piece*. The paragraphs and spaces that will be shown in this chapter will include only remnants of its explorations. Some lead to notated scores, some remain dormant, others became dead-ends.

In passing through *Den svarta solen* a few musical compositions are implicitly (at this point) or explicitly hinted at through sketches or mentions: *Oneiros* for percussion, organ and choirs (2020, but never completed), *Rumori* for amplified bass flute (2021) (still unfinished), *Songs for Simone* for ensemble and electronics (2021), *Fragments of a Broken Order* for violin, cello, percussion and electronics (2022), *Rumori ii* for ensemble (2022) and *Archē* for cello, accordion, ensemble and electronics (2023).

The actual progression from 1. to 340, does frame the whole exploration with a kind of finality. However, essentially, it is but a *passing through*. The text of Lotta Lotass does change textually throughout her book. Indeed, the maze or the surrealistic descriptions, do become less and less stringent, the life-less characters of the text (the witness, the soldier, the Other etc.) do appear with increasing frequency and the suggestive sound comments do continuously intensify:

Ljudet är ett malmtungt, oupphörligt, stadigt, klanglöst dån.²⁶²
[The sound is an ore-heavy, incessant, steady, toneless roar]

However, somehow Lotass' text also mirrors the experiential quality of the exploration; we adjust and through adjusting we sense and learn to notice what we previously could not. In the *strategy of sound*, it all begins in *space*. Composer Rebecca Saunders says somewhere (paraphrasing), *space is already a part of sound, it is already sounding*. It comes close to my ambition: space (but then really expanded or suspended in an elaborated sense; void (kenon)—space (chora)—topos (place) is but a starting point, but as such decisive. All

262 Lotass, *Den svarta solen*, para. 316. (my translation below)

sounds are already there, some audible, some *silent* some risen to the ground, others fading away in the distance. There is an expansion of noise, which becomes both in resonance and dialogue by the articulation or decision of my own *poetic* act (to compose).

In similarity with Salomé Voeglin's *Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art* (despite its slightly misleading title for my point) the ambition (of mine) is not to detail a philosophy of sound, but to detail a sound practice in its experiential phase, not as a documentary act, but as a tableau of events which.—hopefully—will not only contain a similarity to the composing of (my) music, but one that also functions, by its mode of presentation, as an almost equal companion and thereby in itself with the possibility of locating, aiding, inspiring and informing the practice.²⁶³

Additionally, I would like to emphasize that the paragraphs of chapter 6 is originally (starting from §I.) written in Swedish. For obvious reasons everything has since been translated into English. Since it also contains many quotes of Lotta Lotass, this means that her text has been translated. For the novel there exist no official translation. I would like to stress that my attempt is only for the sake of this thesis. The finer nuance of her language is lost. I am constantly reminded of Gorchakov's reluctance to translate poetry in Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia*:

Gorchakov: What are you reading?

Eugenia: Arseni Tarkovsky's poems

Gorchakov: In Russian?

Eugenia: It's a translation. Quite a good one.

Gorchakov: Throw it away.

Eugenia: Why? The translator's a very good poet.

Gorchakov: Poetry is untranslatable, like the whole of art.

Eugenia: You may be right that poetry is untranslatable. But music?

Gorchakov: (hums music)

Eugenia: What is it?

Gorchakov: Oriental music.

Eugenia: But how could we have got to know Tolstoy, Pushkin and so understand Russia?

Gorchakov: None of you understand Russia.

Eugenia: Nor you Italy then. If Dante, Petrarch and Machiavelli don't help.

Gorchakov: It's impossible for us poor devils.

Eugenia: How can we then get to know each other?

Gorchakov: By abolishing the frontiers

Eugenia: Which?

Gorchakov: Between states²⁶⁴

On the following pages you will be able to trace the *strategy of sound*, it is partially laid out, but it contains only a fraction of all of the source material for each part of the compositions. It deals with almost 3 years of exploring the novel of Lotass. However, the passage follows the final installation of *archē*, but included are sketches from *à Sibyl—mōné*, *Songs for Simone*, *Fragments of a Broken Order*, *Rumori ii* as well as the unfinished pieces of *Rumori* and *Oneiros*. All of these sketches are, however, important for the construction of *Archē*. The continuous use of comments and poetic, as well as practical considerations are placed in different ways together with the sketch material. Quotations of Lotass text is always marked out by quotation-marks and bold letters. My own text alternates between italic and normal letters, the italic suggests more commenting sections whereas normal letters indicate passages where the text of Lotass is referred (but not necessarily quoted, sometimes interpreted, sometimes only discussed). The text is gathered (transcribed) from the rich source material, as well as my continuous notetaking throughout these years, some of it transcribed from the papers, others from notebooks or computer notes.

The paragraphs are numbered in accordance with the novel and shows the way through the building. Adjacent spaces are part of the description, often in italic letters, but not always. In any cases the adjacent ‘paragraphs’ are marked out in the text within brackets, for instance [103] to the right of the indicated start of the paragraph, for instance, §161. There is a continuous shift of centre and periphery. Not only spaces entered are part of the sound and the description, but words and sketches of adjacent spaces, residues of past and future ones intermingle and are in the end (in the pieces) probably as much part of the *sound* as what at first is described and explored by the novel.

For the piece ‘archē’ it is important to take into consideration the instrumentation, the placement there-of and the particular place which it is composed for. Already on page 220 the concert venue is pictured but on page 233–234 the same picture is included once again and an additional one is included which shows partly the placement of the soloists. ‘Archē’ is scored for solo accordion, solo cello, electronics (4 loudspeakers) and an ensemble of flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, 2 percussionists, electric guitar,

264 *Nostalghia*, Drama (Rai 2, Sovinfil, 1984).

violin, cello and double bass. They are placed around the audience and placed in the coatroom of the concert hall in Gothenburg. A place where I have probably spent more time than any other place (except the academy of music and drama) in Gothenburg besides my home. It is not just the familiarity of it, but also the eerie feeling of resemblance to the strange descriptions of Lotass'. It lacks perhaps its vastness, and grandeur, but there are numerous details present. The bowl formed lamps, the smell, the bleak, marron, and grey colours. The presence of nameless figures, the memory of past lives, of history passing through. The final instrumentation of the piece represents on one part most of the instruments explored while ruminating Lotass' paragraphs, on the other hand it also entails the people, the human beings, that have been with me during this journey that this artistic research has been. In different ways, with different roles, and different importance. Some are the outlined figures from Lotass' novel, the witness, the soldier, the other etc. Some are the nameless, Giacometti-reassembling figures. The passage through *Den svarta solen* is in chapter 6 shown from the perspective of the piece 'archè' (the linear progression of the paragraphs can be seen on page 235), as hopefully realized by now, the way through the novel is numerous. At the time of the finalization of this book around 60 paragraphs of Lotass' novel have been explored. 60 of 340. Many of the ignored paths are still present as adjacent spaces, nevertheless, the richness of her writing should not be understated.

A note on the colour coding of the images. On pages where instrumentation is marked out by arrows, circles or lines digitally, the different instrumental groupings are continuously coloured the same way: soloists (accordion, cello) & electric guitar (red), percussion (black), wind instruments (flute, clarinet, saxophone) (green), brass (trumpet, trombone) (yellow) and strings (violin, cello and double bass) (blue). Sometimes, when division in between these groupings are marked out, this colour coding is ruled out, but then the arrows or lines are attached to a more specific 'rule'.

In the following *passage of 'Den svarta solen'* the electronic part is seldomly mentioned. However, it should be noted that its connection to the *text-part* is where it is most close. To clarify this throughout the text without disturbing the flow of reading proved too difficult. Nevertheless, it is essential to imagine the 'voice' of the text as the articulation of what is possible to imagine both in written, scored acoustical setting as well as the continuous material for an electronic part.

One should always have in mind, that the tracing of sounds on paper are mimicked with the instrument in hand. This tracing is included in the tape part along with the abundance of field recordings. From sources which already in this thesis has partly been disclosed.

Below the colour coding is marked out in the seating of the instruments. Throughout the coming pages this clue as to how to follow more easily the, sometimes, illegible sketches will be regularly repeated.



IMAGE 129. At the top of the stairs that turn to the left and right upwards the two soloists are seated. On the platform, the electric guitar.



IMAGE 130. The view is from the position behind the electric guitar and with the inclusion of the color code used in the rest of the chapter to distinguish timbre and function (soloists+electric guitar, wind, strings, brass and percussion)

Before entering the *passage of sound and text* through Lotta Lotass *Den svarta solen* I would like to end with a quote by Merleau-Ponty, one which I think locates why a text like Lotass' has become so essential for my work on sound; the body-space consideration is always at the heart of my work. With Lotass, somehow, I have the intuition that its structural, architectonic and philosophical subtones will prove itself not only a creative force, but furthermore a poetic vessel which essentially will aid me in expanding on the notion of *techniques of ecstasy*, of giving me the straw that could give release to the questions implicitly and explicitly posed in chapter 1-4.

Similarly there is an objective sound which reverberates outside me in the instrument, an atmospheric sound which is *between* the object and my body, a sound which vibrates in me ‘as if I had become the flute or the [pendulum]’; and finally a last stage in which the acoustic element disappears and becomes the highly precise experience of a change permeating my whole body.²⁶⁵

Navigation—Overview

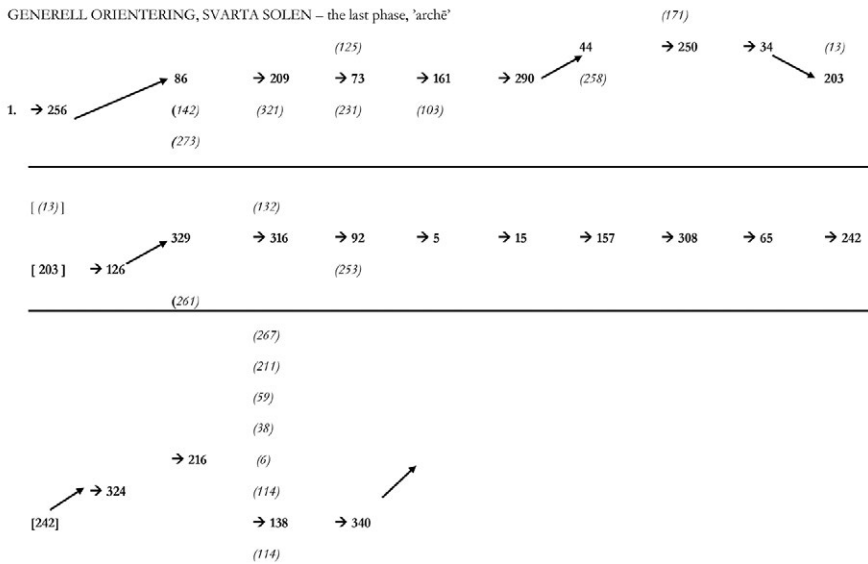


IMAGE 131. General orientation of one of many, many possible paths through *Den svarta solen*.²⁶⁶

265 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 2014), 264. Pendulum is the original French, however translated to “clock” in the English version. I have chosen to retain the French wording, for the simple reason that I find it more captures the poetic and sound-awareness of Merleau-Ponty and speaks clearer to my own project.

266 The way through ‘Den svarta solen’ in ‘archē’ for accordion, cello, ensemble & electronics [2023]

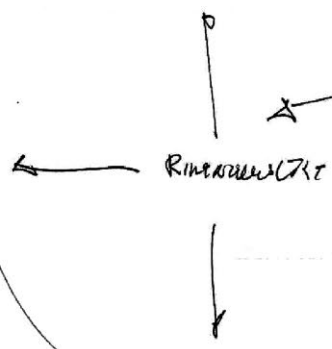


“Now I am high above them.” 

The sound is outside of the building, like a drone I hover above the roof. I emit no sound, I register a pressure from below; wooden sheds, fields, runways come together in a grid, like a graphic score; a silent testimony of sound. Silence, and yet suggestively vibrating.

1. *Pravilnost; Ljubi se R470 - Gnamulot*

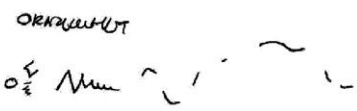
The earth tones first appear as mere hues, as I descend further and further down, the texture becomes more and more apparent.



Travest

As room after room is explored, the desire for an endless, ongoing music is awakened.

What initially appeared as peninsulas, nodes—piers; is now more familiar and yet empty; dehumanized, post-apocalyptic.



There is a presence of light. Light and sound, but it is as if they are rudderless [...]

Tracuu

“Machines lined up. Barriers.”

[...] a pressure on the eardrum; a dense vibration?



As if it is not the resonance I am tracing, but the movement. Press the hand against the surface. Loudspeaker membrane against the ground, against instruments, against objects.

The dream of a music that moves from room to room and generate its own change through exploring space.

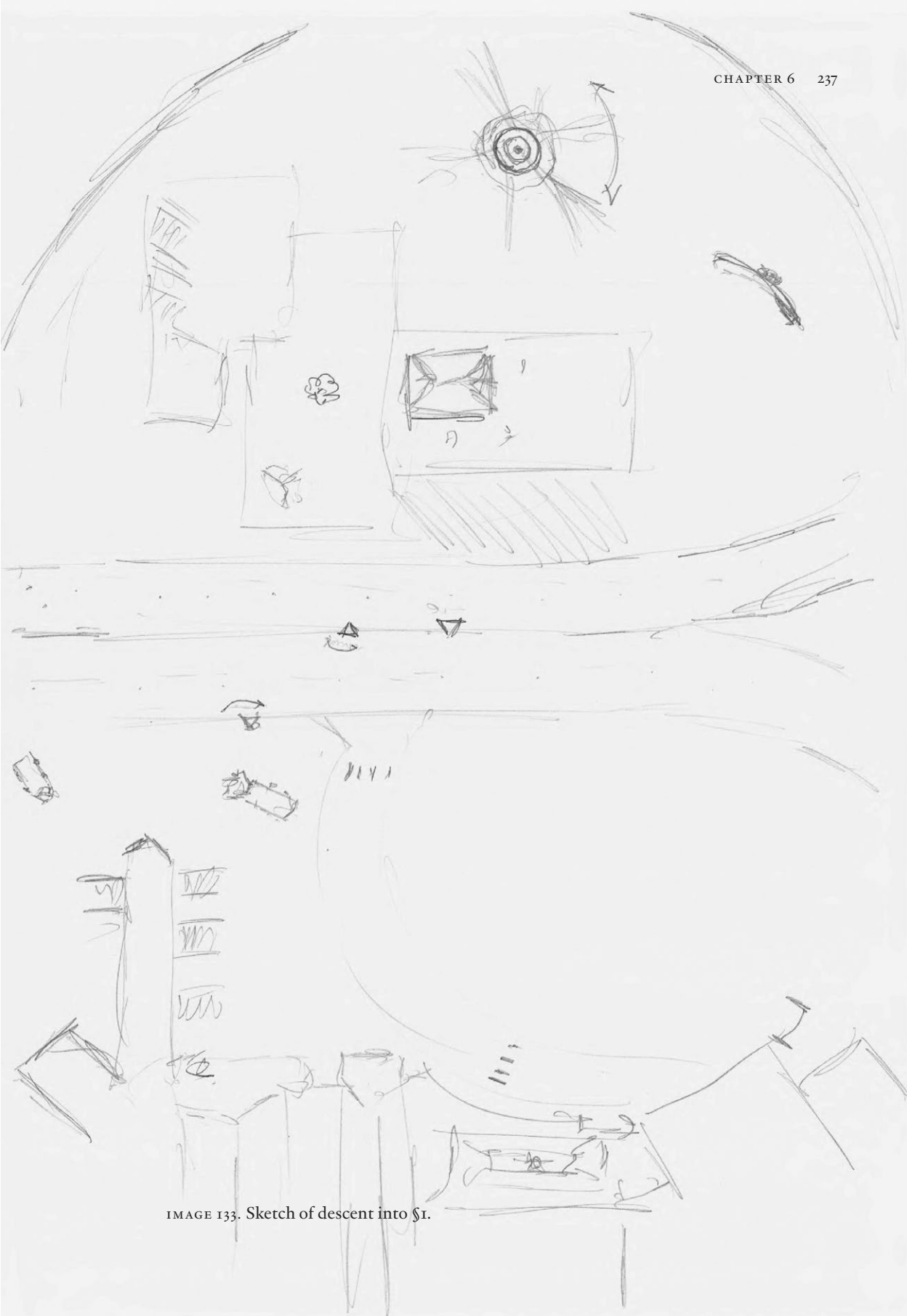


IMAGE 133. Sketch of descent into S1.

[§I cont.]

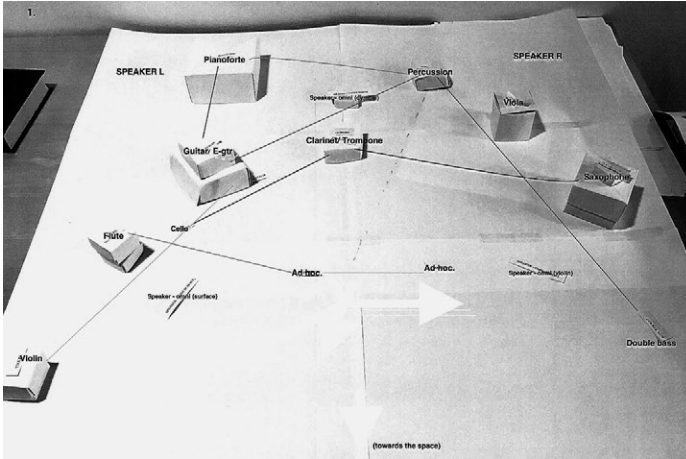


IMAGE 134.

How do I make the ground vibrate? Articulate.

The scraping.

Scratching against Kkwaenggwari. Scratching against the drum skin (gran cassa), against Jin.

“Piers, peninsulas, and headlands.”

Onomatopoetic sounds

Fragment. Spaces. Rumbling.

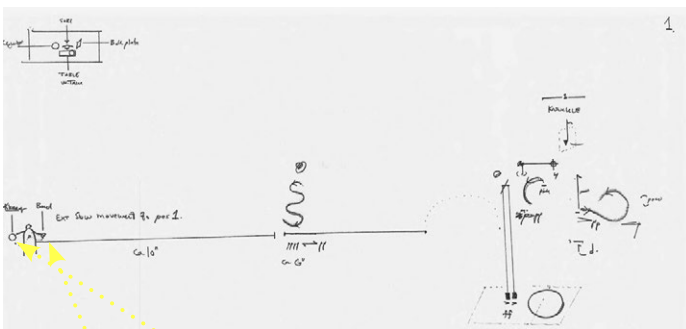


IMAGE 135.

Tune down the cello. Low sweeping sounds in clarinet and cello. Interferences that go in opposite directions.

The rooms are monolithic, radiating sound.

A never-ending music as if on the tip of my tongue.

[Above a preliminary staging of possible placements of instruments (IMAGE 134), and the tentative beginning of a basic gestural work (IMAGE 135) involving a Korean gong, Kkwaenggwari, and a Japanese singing bowl, dobaci]

[§I cont.]

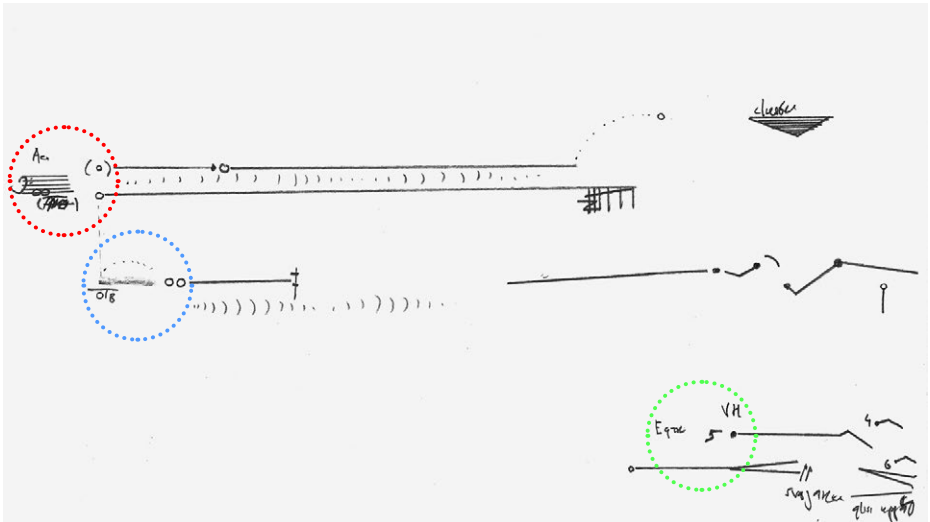


IMAGE 136. Graphical explorations of the relationship between the accordion, cello and electric guitar in the opening part of 'Arche'.

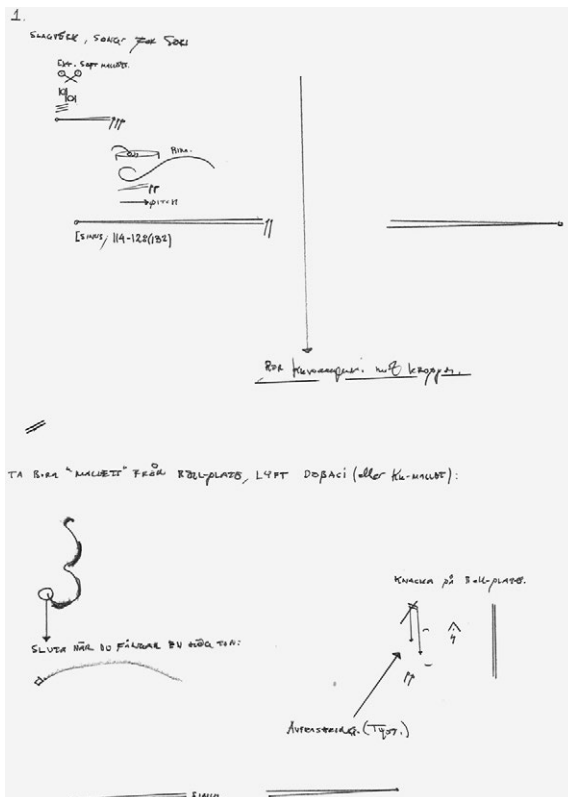


IMAGE 137. Preliminary sketches on percussion part(s). Gestural work as well as preliminary idea of phrase and time. In connection with 'arche'.

[§I cont.]

But if the resonance is 'open', not limited by walls and ceilings, where is the space of music?

It's as if in this I still "hear" a recorded space, a space crossed by a myriad of

Perspectives: sweeping down to the ground, the change in rotation of the ear, the difference between sounds from above, and from below. The sounds almost bounce off the densely packed ground, concrete, earth, gravel, asphalt. And then; the articulated sound of gravel, like an inscription of presence.

And in all of this the archaic echoes, as if the post-apocalyptic is just a background.

This place was abandoned even before it was inhabited. Time as a concept does not exist here or must be understood differently.

I am not yet inside the building, in the background; mountains, the outline of a skyline. I descend, lowering myself to the ground.

I think of Weil. Of gravity.

Sound: loud harmonics. Noise. The sound of cymbals, airy woodwinds. Yet a presence of the sine tones, low sweeping, but also high distant notes.

Each space like an imprint.

In order to shape the material, I have to extend and imagine further events. Further juxtapositions.

Can every space be defined by a sound, a shape, a movement—an action in sound or silence?

The inhuman: how is it shown?

As soon as it is touched upon... gone.

Yet an eerie presence.

Some of the sounds I set in motion still feel as if they could inhabit the place for an eternity: the scrape of a clay pot, the tremolo of a cymbal. I must let the 'going on' take place, but when I end the phrase, a rhetoric is formed that does not belong to the space.

The sudden accents. The accents [...] falling stalagmites; something breaks. Boom!

At the same it marks the space. The proportions, the measurements.

[§I cont.]

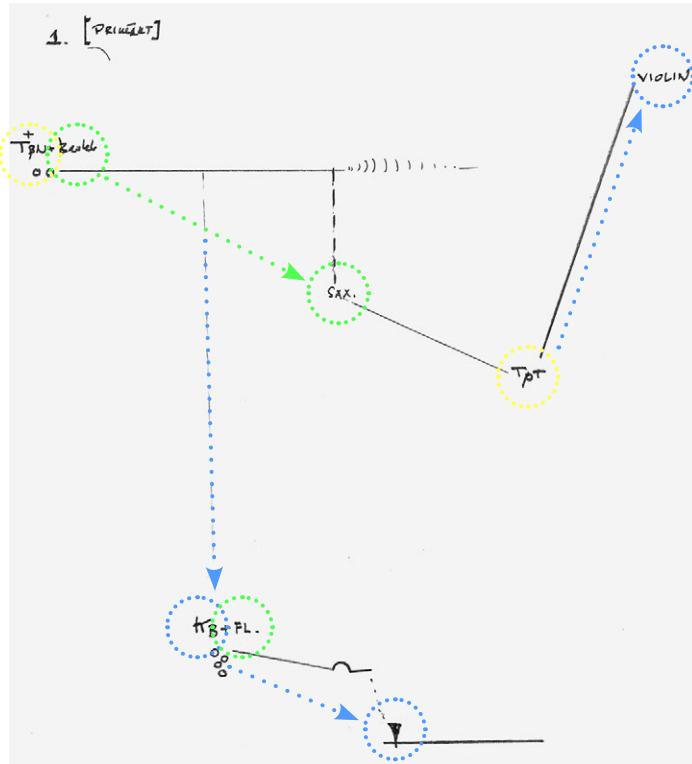


IMAGE 138.

[Above an example of the development of “autonomous” sounds. In the sketches for archē there are three types of these sketches, done on tree different papers. They are called ‘primary’, ‘secondary’ and ‘accordion & cello’. The primary explores one layer of gestures, the ones more in focus. Which instruments that take part in the different layers differ in between the ‘paragraphs’, even in one paragraph one instrument may at one point occupy several different layers. In this particular extract we can see the transitions from trombone/bass clarinet to double bass/flute dividing itself to cello (ensemble cello) and to saxophone and trumpet, ending the phrase in the violin. These layers behave autonomously but are still being developed in a shared space. They interact, but through this displacement I can more easily work with the juxtapositions of sound events and the ambiguity of timbre, focus, foreground & background. In a sense work consciously with the parataxis of the sounds.]

[§I cont.]

I mark the paper. Still linear, but it shifts,
and I feel each sound as if penetrating the
space from all possible directions... From
the ground, from the ceiling, from the walls.

*The image determined by silence. An image
that is not representation or illustration,
but the negative trace of an activity that occurs
on [... Somehow beyond language.*

I—the musician—stand as if in anticipation.
Raise my instrument. Toward my body.
Trying to shape the mouth. There are no
voices, but still an [...] anticipation of an
enunciation.

I cannot write further.

1 (A)

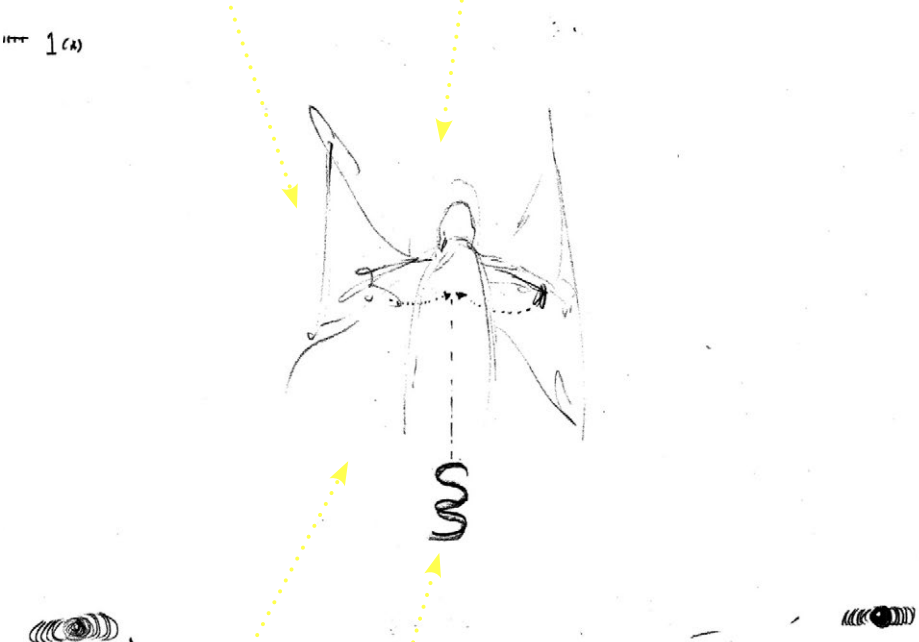


IMAGE 139.

Persephone

[Above the image shows another re-occurrent sketch of the 'open' hand/body position of the
'maker-of-sound' and the inscribing of sound, surrounded by resonance.]

[§1 cont.]

Rumbling, low sounds.

Sine waves.

Underwater sounds.

The voice filtered through the bass flute, low. Slow opening of the clefs.

Recorded sounds.

High tone, low interferences.

Once the witness is given a voice, what kind of voice might it even be? A heavy sound, an alternation between the open and the closed? And the valves? Soft, or hard. Metal or the tender touch of the hand.

Unlimited. The open, vast fields. The towering buildings remain undescribed. Everything is in preparation, but the sound ... is already present.

A stirring of a rumble, perhaps of ambience, but I hear it with more articulation. The distance between sound and music takes place here. Balance. Resonance. Sonance. I try to separate re from sonance. It is not a reverberation, but a pure—not yet applied (Hinduism's Anahad, or Sufism's Surmid) sound.

[§I cont.]

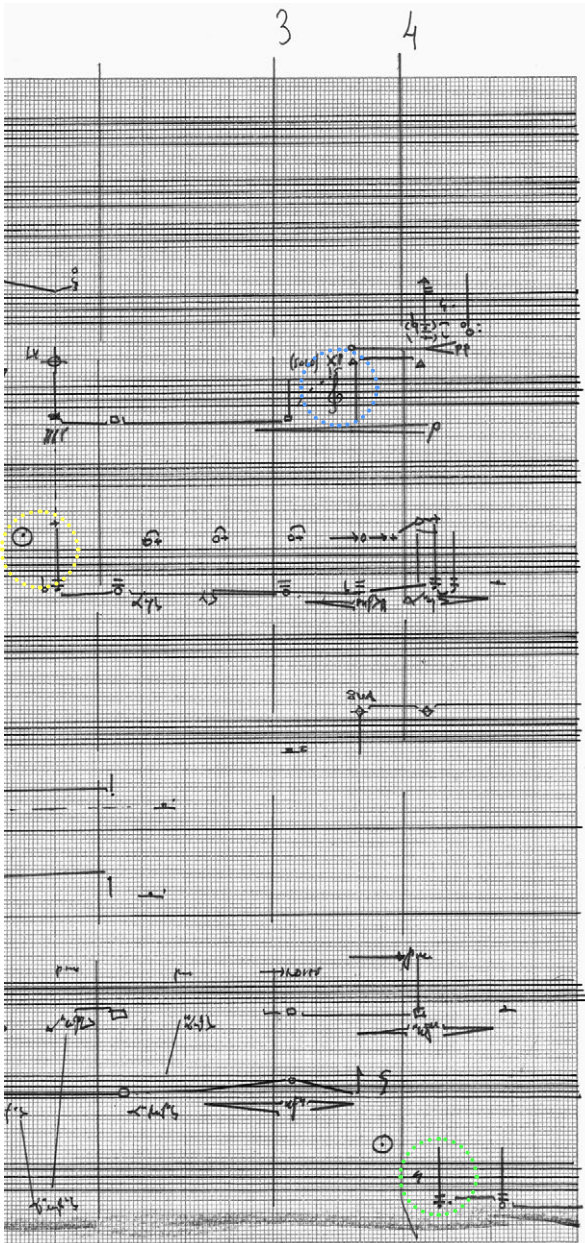


IMAGE 140. Here the transition on the previous sketch can be traced in the 'final' handwritten score version of 'arche'. The tbn/bass clarinet begins and continued in violin and on the following score excerpts (next example) its continuation in double bass and flute is seen, IMAGE 141.

[§I cont.]

The opening and closing scene of Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*, or for that matter, the fade-out in *Stalker*, but here high above; dusk, dawn. Dark light. In the speakers a muffled pressure. The trombone that opens and closes a low note with a mute. Cello and double bass with a stick, rasping, like a teeming, percussive sustain. The piano on the tuning screws makes the same sound, but with a pedal the sound is extended; in all this a dull, hollow, rhythm emerges.

The saxophone is a drone, beneath the opening and closing gesture of the trombone. The saxophone is also a different link; extended with water, sustained. [*the saxophone with water is an idea that keeps coming back in the different paragraphs. It is never used explicitly in 'arche' but is present in 'songs for simone' and 'antonin'*]

The percussionist, the sub-woofer, a tactile representation of a suppressed, but essentially feedback-oriented, sound. [*also the idea of a sub-woofer used with feedback through the use of a microphone and bass drum is used extensively in the first version of 'songs for simone' but later abandoned and remains more as a figure of resonance, and instead developed in other ways throughout the different paragraphs and composed pieces*]

Metal plate with friction, a wailing voice. The bass flute, [hidden] syllables. The violin as an intermediary, a horizon line that frames the sound with the help of noise, harmonics and pitch; allows the rest to have a background to lean against. The painter marks the horizon.

The resonance. Without the movement. Press your hand against the surface.

Loudspeaker membrane against the ground, against instruments, against things.

How do I make the ground vibrate?

[..]

As if it is outside that everything begins. Or have already.

The wind that blows.

Three layers of timbre. A line, a transformation, and a distance.

The need to fix the heart, the beat [...]

The first articulation, unnoticed. As if already there.

The space is not only Lotass' black sun, but it is also Artaud's Aztec temple, Scelsi's, but also my Ismantorp. The back against the limestone, the sky above.

[§I cont.]

[...] The long, embouchure-wrapped, murmur [...] Displaced. Sine wave merge with the vocalized sound. Dyads rise like horizons, contours. High, ethereal tones. There is no direction, no linearity.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on a grid background. It features multiple staves for various instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, and Trombone. The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Several areas are highlighted with colored circles and dotted lines: a green circle around a passage in the Saxophone staff, a blue circle around a passage in the Violin I staff, and a yellow circle around a passage in the Trumpet staff. A yellow box labeled '§256' is located at the top right, and a circled '3' is also present. The overall style is that of a composer's working draft.

IMAGE 141. Here the transition to double bass/flute is continued to cello, and then divided into saxophone and trumpet, and the phrase ends in the violin as §256 begins. Compare with what was already described in IMAGE 138.

[§1 cont.]

Where §1. has a clearer sense of temporality (I feel a distinct, slow, pulsation) the wider spaces are of a different character. There I hear a more pronounced atemporality. That is, in a way, the sounds go on continuously in there, but that doesn't mean that it sounds all the time, there is still room to create, but there is a greater degree of indeterminacy. The pulse is vaguer, it comes as surges, and as a deeper layered continuum.

[...] the tape part

The sound of the wind whistling. Recordings from WTC and field recordings from *Songs for Antonin* and *Songs for Simone*. Slowly introducing faint, faint sine tones (around low Bb, in octaves). The sound of the e-bow, like a secret foreboding of room 65. As a transition: the voice through the megaphone. Distortion. Erosion.

→ §256

The bell plates vibrate, time is given to form timbre, and then the slowly intoning interference. Can it be done instead in a transformative, soft, responsive movement? The drawing itself is so simple, while the action seems too complex, for the subtlety that is sought.

As if my inner self is constantly demanding the others, the invisible chorus that is in the periphery.

In the ensemble work, there is no contradiction.

§256

Standing on the edge of the building.
The sound of a myriad of aisles, corridors,
culverts, open and closed spaces.

The light plays through dim windows,
refracted in different colours. Shades of
green dominate.

Carriages.

Different dimensions. Rooms that gradually
widen, corridors that twist.

I am still outside. I can hear different muted
shades. Can we still talk about movement?
The wind is there. Or is it? But behind me,
like a roar. [non-legible]. And somewhere,
isn't there the murmur of anonymous voices?

The wagons, the tools... they stand still, and yet—to see them is also to set something in
motion; to imagine how it once was.

But [...] also [...] *with* something. I carry my
instruments, my voice with me. A simple,
quiet sound from deep down in the palate
spreads, bouncing off walls. As I stand on
the threshold, I can—mainly—only imagine
how it makes its way through corridors and
passages.

**“A machine in which all parts must
inevitably run without jamming or rub-
bing against each other.”**

*Imagine that the other person suddenly starts
making a sound... how long does it take for the
next one? Long, long pauses.*

*Focus on the low vibrating throat tremolo, like a
harp. It is the point around which the music
rotates. It is followed, surrounded by short, falsetto
ornamentation, low vocal lines, throbbing
harmonics and high rolling lines.*

*But there is a noise too. Sine waves that set
off a bass drum vibrating, a cymbal that starts
to rattle. And perhaps a membrane on the
floor, amplifying the room.*

*The feeling of an abandoned, ruinous, place.
The contours of tall obelisks, shapeless buildings.
Proportions of incalculable dimensions. Build-
ings without end, but also without boundaries—
and yet; the feeling of infinity as a consequence
of a dimensionality that does not behave as one
is used to.*

*[...] when I bring the sounds together, there is
the possibility of articulation, of dynamics,
of superimposition, of force fields.*

[§256 cont.]

But [...] also [...] *with* something. I carry my instruments, my voice with me. A simple, quiet sound from deep down in the palate spreads, bouncing off walls. As I stand on the threshold, I can—mainly—only imagine how it makes its way through corridors and passages.

[...] *when I bring the sounds together, there is the possibility of articulation, of dynamics, of superimposition, of force fields.*

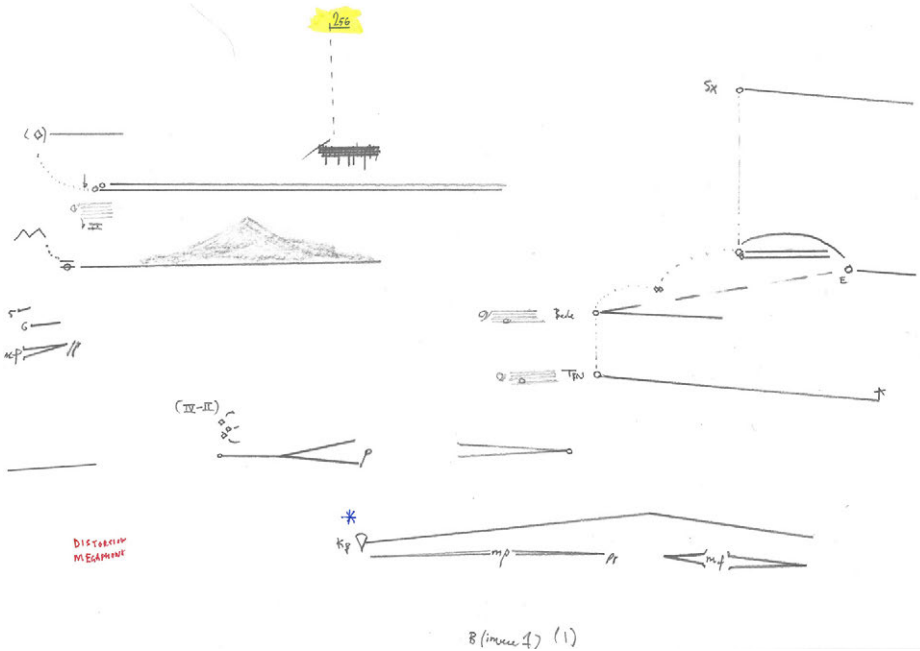


IMAGE 144. [Above an image which graphically traces the transition of instruments, the level of detail is reduced, but the dynamical, gestural and to some extent temporal and rhythmical level is marked out. It is the intermediary stage in between the aforementioned ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ sketches (on page 241). That is, here the different ‘papers’ are put in relationship to each other and tried out in a relatively ‘free’ graphical situation. A topography is approached.]

The gentle roar of the light. The low pressure of abandoned but still plugged-in machines.

The membrane against the surfaces. The membrane against objects. The ear to the ground. Continuously. Against the ground, and yet the other ear freely floating in the heights of the domes. The gap exists only as a weak, invisible partition, the ear can still hallucinate how the frequencies are filtered.

More silent, if possible, but still surrounded by space. In the pre-recorded: the presence of voices, the choir, the musician. Environments. Carriages.

Every instrument, every sound is an autonomous being. Some sounds share time and space, but they are independent.

[§256 cont.]

Two or three (or more) sounds (instruments) can act and perform together on cue to create a communal act of sound, but they remain their own.

Each sound event should be able to be imagined as a continuation. There are no isolated events, only if time is regarded as a mark of nothing.

Silence, absence of sound, paused should all be considered as suspended moments. Of only a passing through.

Silence in this sense should be imagined with the highest degree of energy. A plateau.

Not the calm before the storm. Or? Something is amiss here. I return to silence later.

Nothing, noise, absence, void

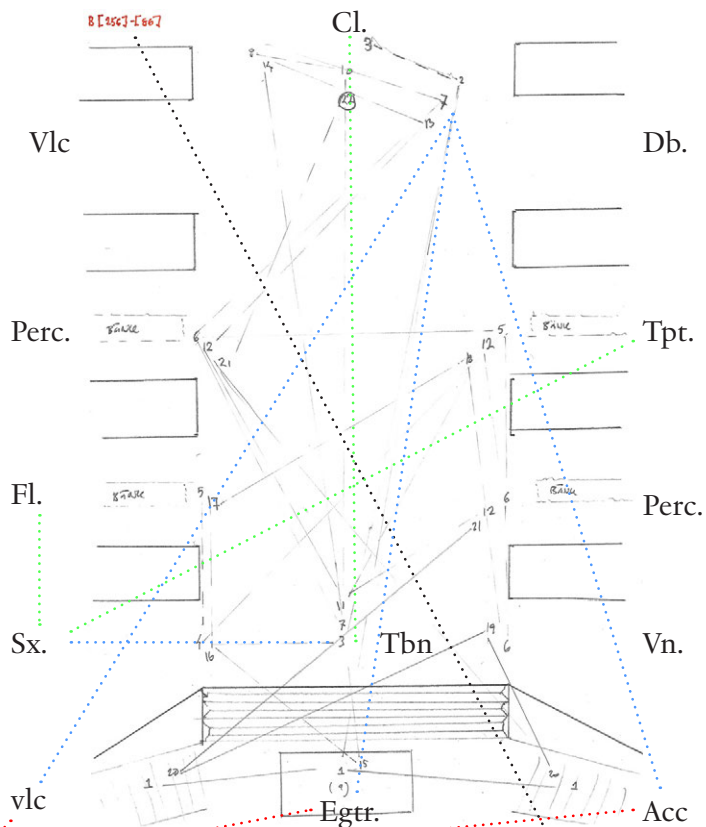


IMAGE 145. Here the movement of the sounds in the space of 'arche' is detailed chronologically: 1-2-3-4-5 etc. Not only in §256, but also in the preceding §86. It is difficult to follow but the pencil shows how the actions of the instruments are almost continuously connected and transitional in their character.

→ §86

§86. [142, 273]

The carpeted, smooth floor of the corridor is cut off and replaced by dark, wide, slightly grooved tiles.

A corridor leading to a staircase down to a cubic room. Steel panels along the ground. Glass at the top, light streaming in to reveal greyish figures facing the walls. Stroking with hands (?) over the cracked structure of the surface. The floor is perforated by penetrating traces of earth. Initially, the room has a smooth, soft shape; as the eyes become accustomed to it, the cracks in the facade, the floor and the seemingly numb or paralyzing limbo that unfolds are revealed.

Two doors rise on the sides of a dazzling white marble pilaster. A cone of light in the middle of a grey, cracked waiting room.

The murmurers are stone statues. Bald faces and mouths that escape the dynamic, but by gaining a focus still grow in (sound) strength.

A long, narrow corridor that shimmers in muted browns and blues from the glass panes of the walls that sweep up to the low, arched, light-coloured ceiling. Dot-shaped lamps covered by rippled panels. Along the right-hand side are plastered, rounded railings.

Further ahead, the long corridor divides into arched galleries, which further on merge again into a new elongated corridor.

On the left-hand side is The Other. Again, the painting is put down. The ceiling rises above the straight-cut floors and narrows towards a white pyramidal window.

The gallery runs across a cube-shaped hall, where stairs rise between two red walls.

A narrow corridor, which is entered via a glass archway. A low, ornamented doorway. Winding white vines. The tunnel is rounded with dense walls. Square, flattened crumbling blocks make up the walls. The shiny tiles of the floor echo faintly. Along the low ceiling, uniform lamps run in two rows. The light is like a haze, shimmering. The soldier is leaning against the wall. The taste burns on his chapped, dry lips. The painting sets itself aside. Boot marks in the floor dust. In the soldier's hand the worn coin. The passageway leads to a wide, grey and bright staircase, which is divided into three less uniform ones.

[§86 cont.]



IMAGE 146. Tracing the space and figures of §86.

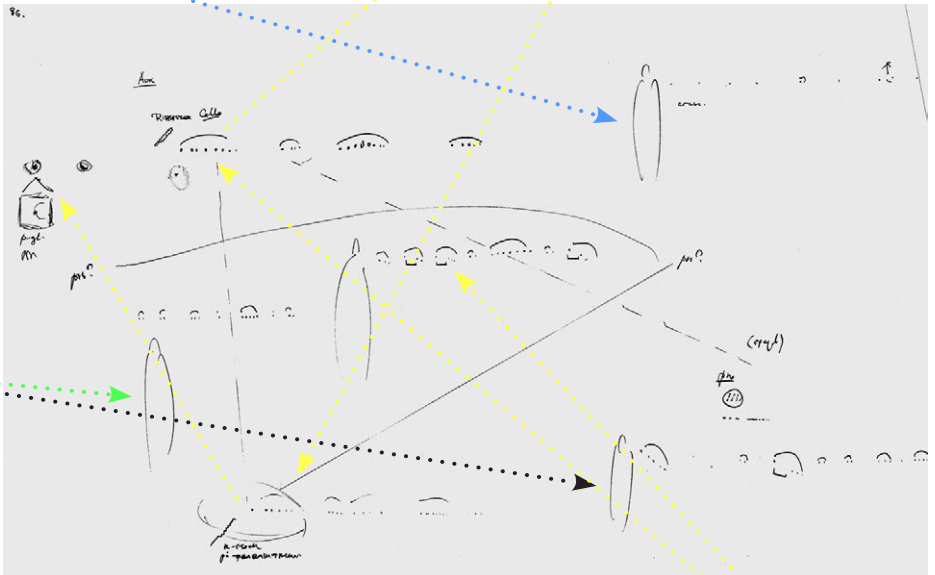


IMAGE 147.

Two images that shows how I continuously play with the placement, but also how the figures of the novel (described on the left-hand page) becomes more and more prominent. Not only as figures in the novel, but as sounding bodies, they begin to more and more move toward sound.

[§86 cont.]

A more subdued room, the corridor gives way to vibrations, the stairs as well, but once in the room the sound is constricted. The brick walls cause the sound to ricochet, but the bodies dampen the overtones, like a dense pressure. Hands against surfaces give the room dimensions.

A string tone, or woodwind, becomes the face of the dehumanized; the ability to discern something other than the cracks in the façade.

The glass reflection of the other, the doors are closed. The only thing I hear is what is behind me.

Can you hear the noise, the wind slamming against the window, the rumble of the runways' sweeping headlights?

The traces I leave behind (the murmur, the scraping of shoes, hands against walls, doors), how long does that resonance linger?

Strained speech far down the throat. Rasping, surrounded by rhythm, heart-beat, stone against stone. Hearing a background of a unison rhythm, but always in motion, in depth, in height.

Xenakis. The declamation. The exhortation. The musicians become the gallery of characters (the emissary, the dramaturge, the witness...), and their roles broaden: to be able to create music without instruments, to create expectation, to make the transition from the bodily approach to form sound deep in the throat—to articulate.

The columns of air rising up.

The room's ceiling breaks in a sharp linear cut. On the upper edge are bands of tinted, cut glass. Along the lower side is a row of wide, closed doors of clear lacquered wood. At the far wall, two stairs rise, under which doors of thick, etched, frosted glass open.

“The wall presses against his stony, rounded, soft shoulders.”

The length. The depth. How is it possible to even take in the complexity of this incomprehensible architecture?

Glossolalia. Lotass' ominous figures are stuck in a secret, incomprehensible language. One that communicates through phrasing, through dynamics, through duration.

The monoliths.

Elongated corridors that, in an ellipse, continue. An embankment, which somehow accompanies the view. Stairs leading upwards, and at the same time several closed and open doors.

The other is unveiled. The blackboard. The sound that may exist here is heard as the room, heard as echoes and vibrations from previous events, from other rooms, but perhaps also as the anticipation of movement. The other's attempt at articulation.

[§86 cont.]

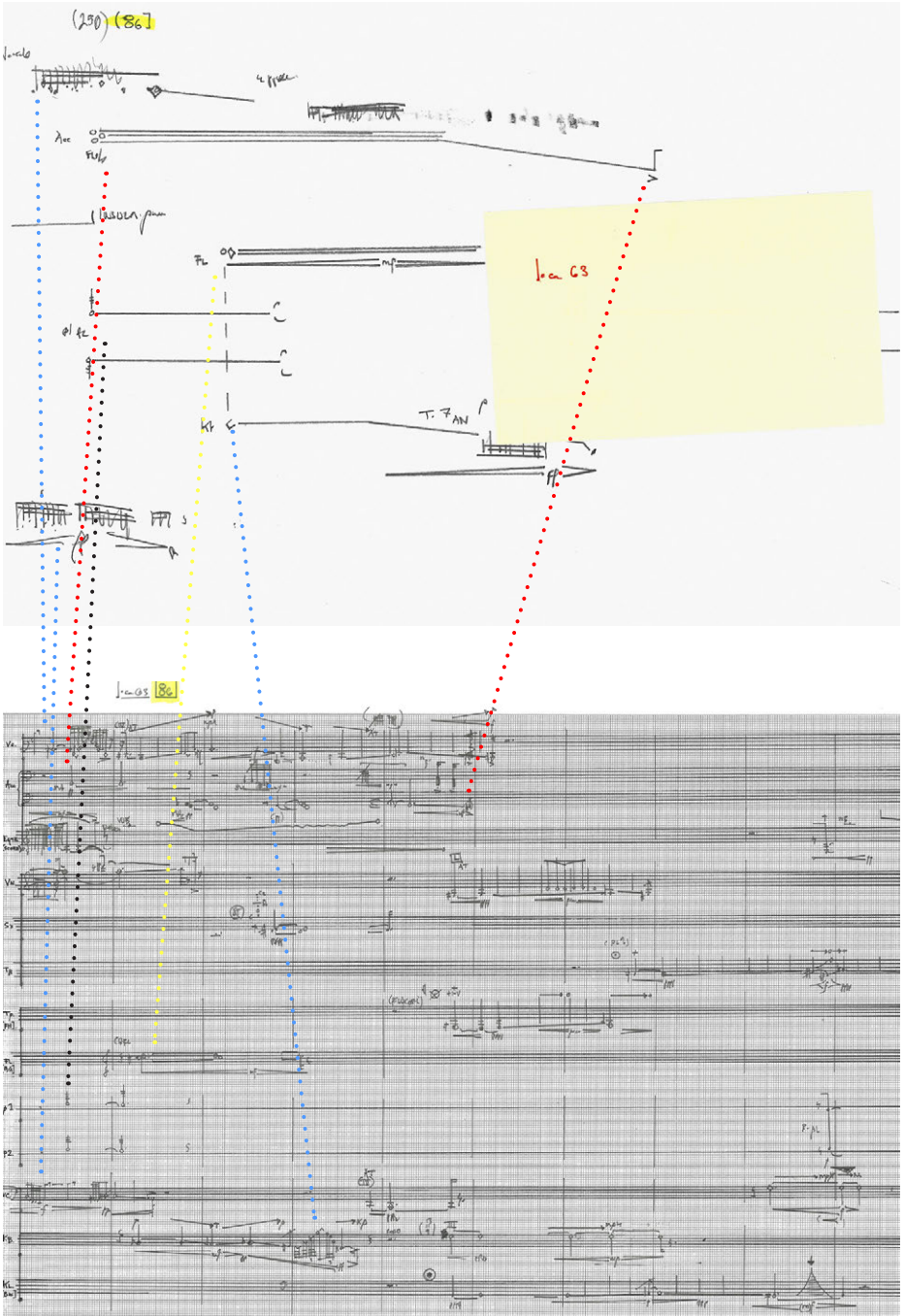


IMAGE 148 and 149. What is seen is the correspondence between the 'freer' graphical exploration and the more firmly notated version of 'arche'.

[§86 cont.]

Form is the deep, slow pulse of the piece. Another kind of rhythm. Closer or further away.

Another level of the “melody”.

But this is not where I begin the piece.

The constellation of the force fields of the sound events creates the deep pulse.

The deep pulse grows.

As such, it becomes a further development of the piece. The constellations create the topography, the pulse a further elaboration of the details. The shift from 2-dimensional, or perspective-oriented view, to a spherical or 3-dimensional realization of the sound.

→ §209

§209 [321]

A wide hallway. Low, expansive steps surrounded by a long, metallic handrail spread out at the end of the room. The height of the ceiling disappears in the dim light, but you can see how the ceiling comes together like a dome. The roundel is surrounded by ochre-colored windows that filter the light. The surfaces are covered with wedge-shaped black fields. Chairs cover the floor surface, illuminated by white-clawed lamps.

A cube-shaped room whose walls are covered by smooth doors. A cracked statue stands at the far edge on a marble plinth. A scarred torso breaks the bright light. Its hands and head are severed. The men stand along the ruined field. Out of the ground mountains seems to rise.

[§209 cont.]

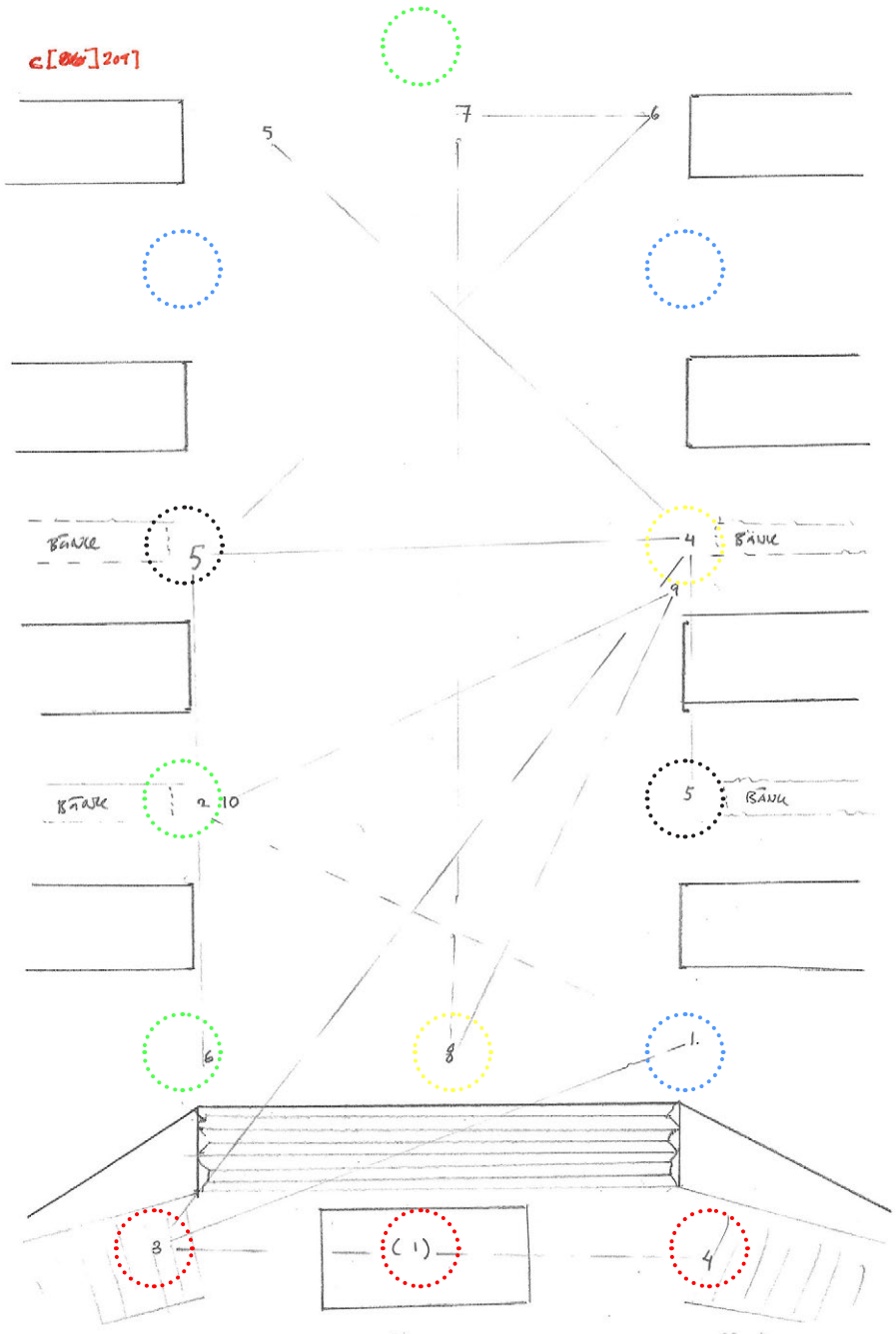


IMAGE 150. Depicting how the sounds move in space in §209 similarly as on page 251.

[§209 cont.]

A man and a woman are in the room.
A plaster bust. The bodies are decaying.
She—the witness, is sitting in an uphol-
stered (padded) chair [...]

Footsteps are heard. Echoing.

Where the wide staircase is located, three
long corridors/galleries open up.

The first time that sound is mentioned,
explicitly. It is rather a presence. Or the
reverberation of an echo. Is it my footsteps,
or the man? The witness is silent, but I
still hear the voice, or what will soon have
to be heard. The chairs. The waiting room,
but also the stage's sea of spectators, who
are making their way towards the extended
bleachers at the end of the room. The
metallic handrail, the humidity and the
raw cold that has already made itself
felt, becomes perceptible here as touch.

*The ground is covered in gravel, flakes, splinters.
The floor crashes under his feet. The ceiling is level
with the height of the doors.*

*How I listen for the movement. A movement with-
out sound, but with the intention of sound. The
intention will make the sound emerge. Stray lines.*

*The statue. Headless, handless. An architecture
without sense, mountains rising in a cube-shaped
room. A space that is not approached, only sensed.
Which at the same time is an opening into
another world. Is it inside or beyond? The moun-
tain becomes both an interior and a horizon. The
choir (the men) stand along a cleared field (is it the
mountain horizon?). The floor that crashes, only
crashes under one (the other?) man's feet.*

[§209 cont.]

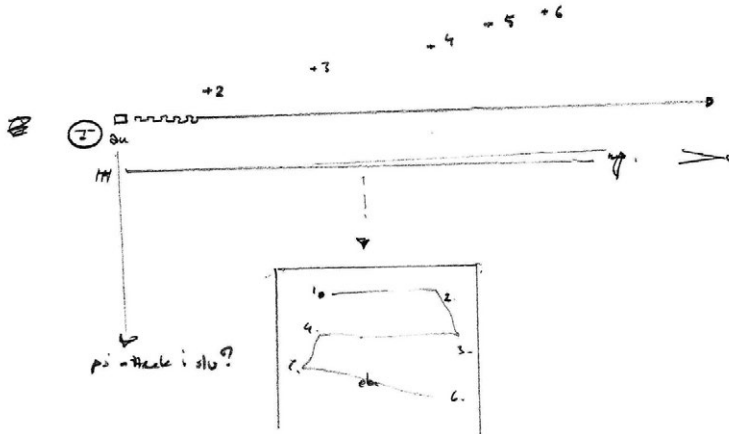


IMAGE 151. As mentioned on this and the next page (263) the witness is a prominent figure in this paragraph. Above in the image ideas of 'the opening of the mouth' are explored, with ideas of how the sound travels in the space.

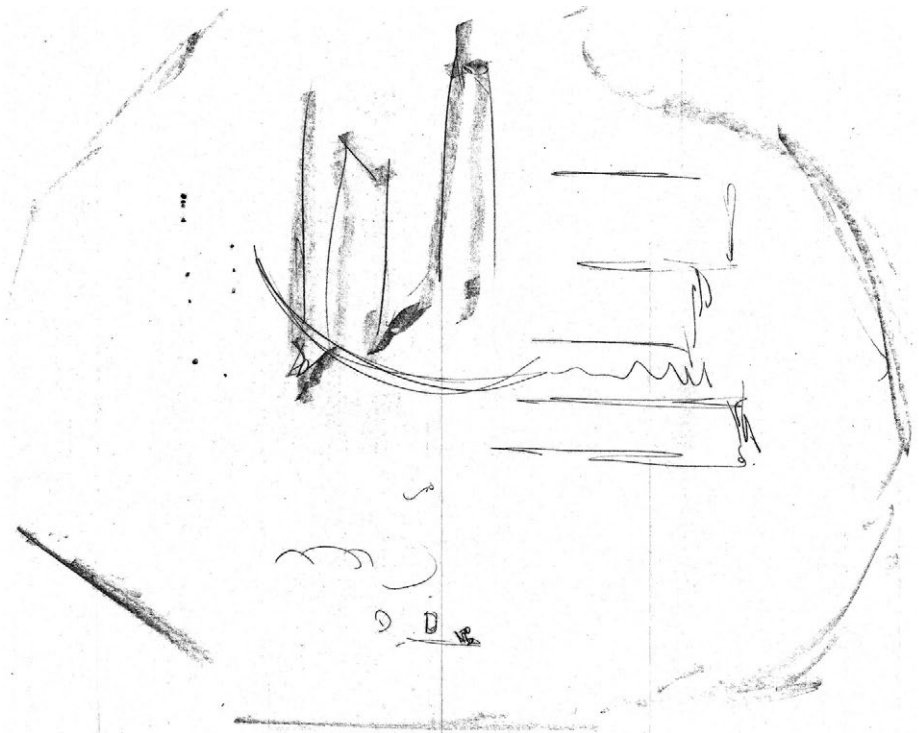


IMAGE 152. Undisclosed sketch from §209 but probably portraying the space, but not only the one off 209, but also the adjacent space of 321.

[§209 cont.]

The choir surrounds the space the whole time. The organ as an invisible presence. The balls, the chips, the stones—different forms of articulated heartbeats. And against the floor, the membrane is attached and out flows muted sine waves that mingle with the voice's attempts at articulation.

The three galleries towards the 'end' of the room. I can listen and take in all. This is where the clapping, murmuring, moaning begins. The room, with its great height and empty decoration will be an echo of other rooms as well. But I no longer hear the entrance, I am merely entering an already disoriented labyrinthine walk.

What does rumori mean? Noise, discord, rumor, something heard through the noise. Noise. Maybe even distortion.

Witness. Again and again, certain sources of sound come to me: the bass flute, the siren (megaphone), the scraping bowl, the kkwaenggwari, the cello and the bass clarinet, which share a reverberant shape. It travels from corner to corner.

Here, the witness is like a **Persephone** who has never returned to Hades. It is as if we are in a place where life, but also death, has stopped and is in a prolonged movement in two directions—towards the return of life, but above all as a gateway to the underworld. We are in a descent.

Gravity.

My one hand draws across the paper, the other one slightly elevated, conducts the sound. Closes and opens the sound.

[§209 cont.]

It's as if I can hear the seeds of the pomegranate breaking off, falling to the flat, stone floor. And here in this vast imaginary space it is as if each seed is a stone, and more: as if each movement has an articulation and an extended rhythm.

There is always a sense of deep rhythm. And sometimes, it is as if I hear bells and sirens in the distance. It's never close, but always coming from different directions.

Perhaps it is only here that the music really begins. When the sound can take place. In all the passages leading up to this hall, the sound is heard only as a mirage, or a premonition.

The metal bar. The witness who tries to take notes. The chairs. Persephone? Hades? It is as if the drama begins right here, as if what before was but a muted incantation, is now being articulated?

But there is nothing in the text that describes the pomegranate, instead it is the association of the witness with Persephone. With the Eleusine.

I hear the elysian. As well as the siren.

The ear does not decide if it is from the hallucinated (distant) urban presence, or if it is something else; the sound of the Tibetan rituals that I am transcribing in parallel.

Perhaps that is why here, for the first time, I hear again the bullroarer; the one sung of by Celan, but also the rumori, which together with the frame drum and the Korean percussion most clearly signals the tangent between the archaic (the past) and the place I implicitly embrace.

[§209 cont.]

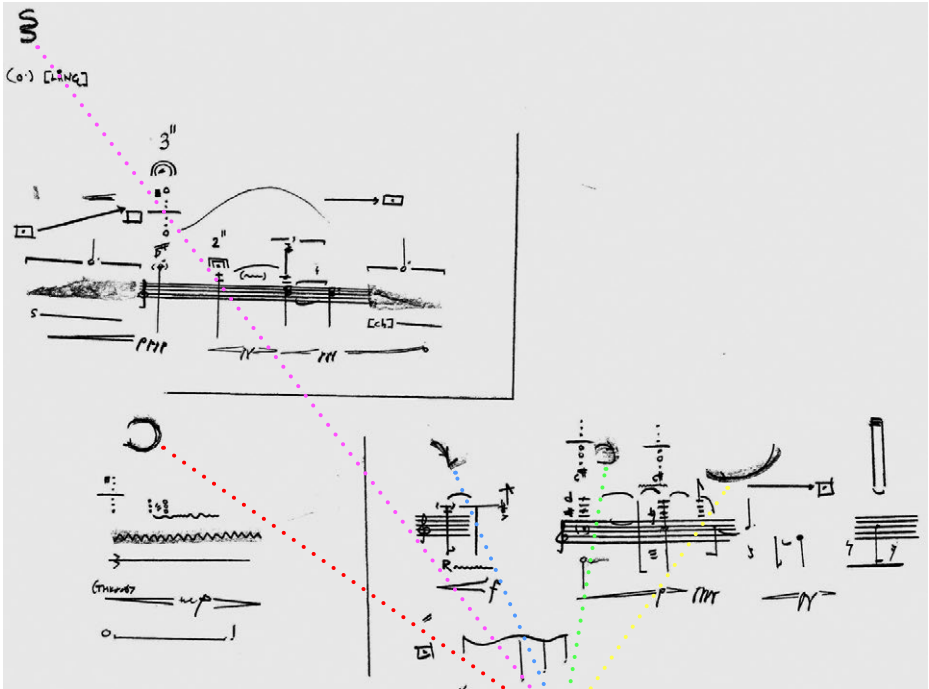


IMAGE 155. Sketches of transcriptions of the signs and seals shown on page 188 to different instruments; here excerpts for flute, used in rumori, rumori ii and ‘arche’

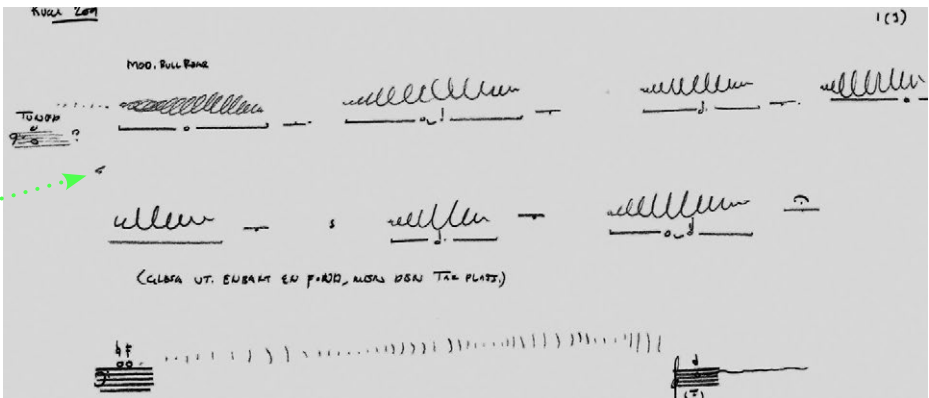


IMAGE 156. An early representation of the sound of the bull-roarer that permeates the score of ‘arche’, but was already in ‘songs for simone’ an important part. For a long time as an actual instrument, but in end only used in the tape-part. In ‘arche’ a special constructed bull-roarer called double windwand was built by Samuel Järnegard Fogelvik and is used by two invisible performers. Performers which are often referred to as ‘aux’ in the sketch material throughout these pages. That is, performers that can take on almost any role, a kind of musical cameolont, but often performs different non-conventional sound sources. In the end this bull-roarer did not end up taking place in §209, but in other parts. But it is exemplary for how the different spaces are not static but begin to ‘speak’ with one another as the idea of the composition grows.

[§209 cont.]



IMAGE 157. The double wind wand, built by Samuel Järnegard Fogelvik, a kind of bullroarer that is possible to tune with the two attached rubber bands and by moving the small flat, rectangular wood pieces.

A sound is always in relationship to another sound. There is a background, or even a foreground to the sounds. Not necessarily an action with instruments. It might be a premonition, a possibility, a movement.

The example of the space. To put sounds in movement. To follow each individually, to connect them, and then identify the deep pulse.

The graphical etchings. A vast number of permutations, but also: the instrumentation of each gesture. It is essentially possible to follow the strategy.

[§209 cont.]

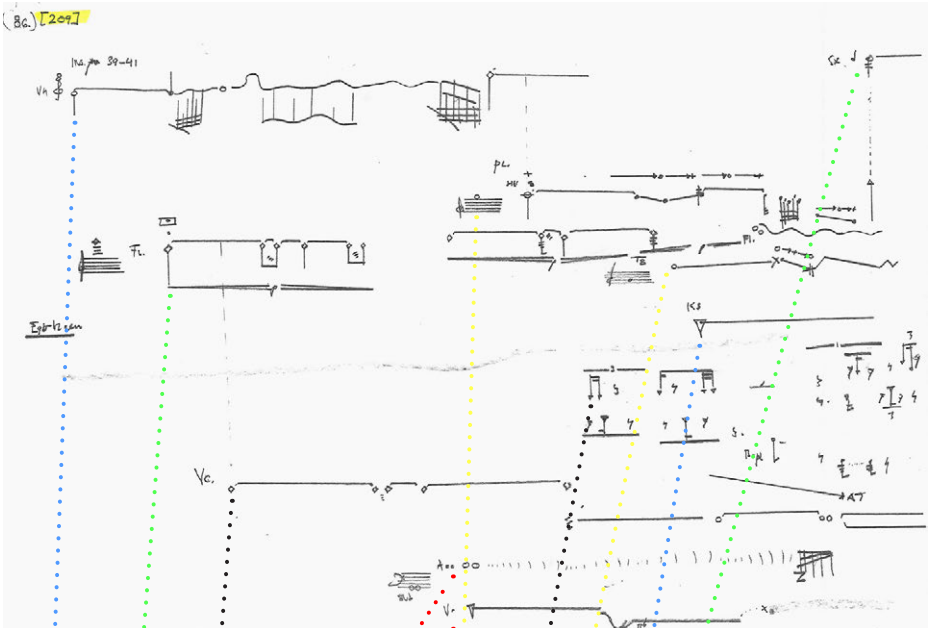


IMAGE 158. First section of §209 in traced, free and flexible form, below as in the score.

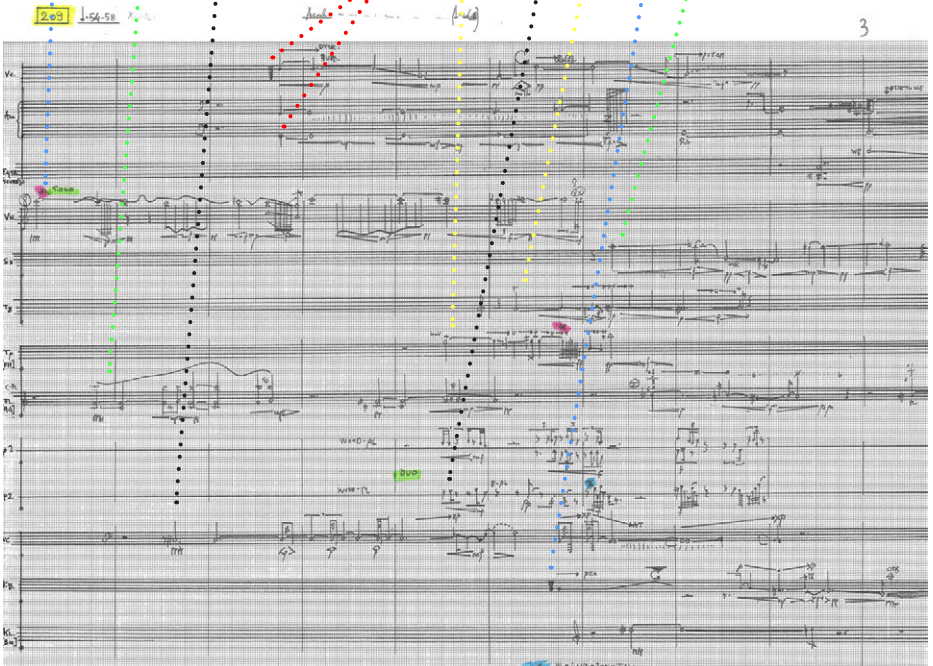


IMAGE 159. Similar comparison as before between the free, flexible graphical sketch and the final notated form before the computer typed score.

→ §73

§73 [125, 231]

The gallery reveals small, dark niches. Shards and chipped details lie in drifts against the moldings. Gravel dust crashes against shoes. The gallery is so vast that its end twists and extends out of sight.

“The sound is a single, sustained, muffled and muted murmur.”

He is there. The witness is there. The floor is a mosaic. In his hand a token (a coin), he puts down (again) the plaster bust.

The witness is standing next to a balustrade that runs along the (probably) central part of the room. Fingers to the eyes.

To the right, the room widens into a long, shimmering hall where chairs cover the floor:

The presence of the sign guard. A light bursts through from the roof's triangular window into the vast hazy daylight.

A lead-grey floor is visible through the glass of the sliding doors. Bright lights in a blurred, drawn-out line. He puts the painting down. Scratches, nicks and scratches. Formless figures. Takes out the shard.

A gallery illuminated by a multitude of lamps. Along walls, from ceilings, from barely visible nooks and crannies. The men. The soldier. All close to the walls, as if awaiting a procession. The sentry even facing a glass wall, looking out at the landscape.

The inner triangle, the vast gallery. The grey columns as surrounding monoliths. Pencil grey tones. It's not the first time the choir has been included, but this time the organ can also be sensed. Somewhere.

“The sound is a hollow, tuneless, single, steady clap.”

“The sound is a single, whining, shrill, drawn-out wail. The words flow in a rhythmic, habitual, uninterrupted flow.”

[§73 cont.]

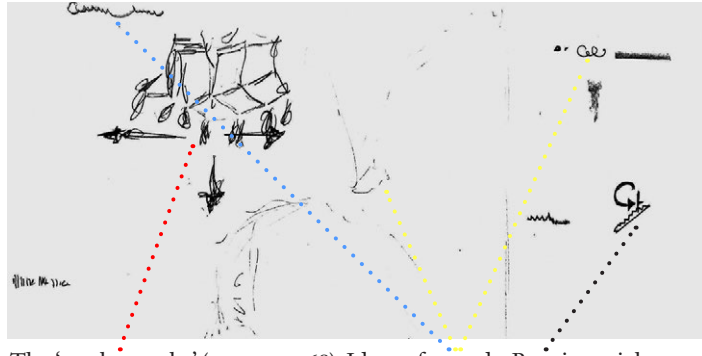


IMAGE 160. The 'steel-mouths' (see page 268). Ideas of sounds. Rapping stick.

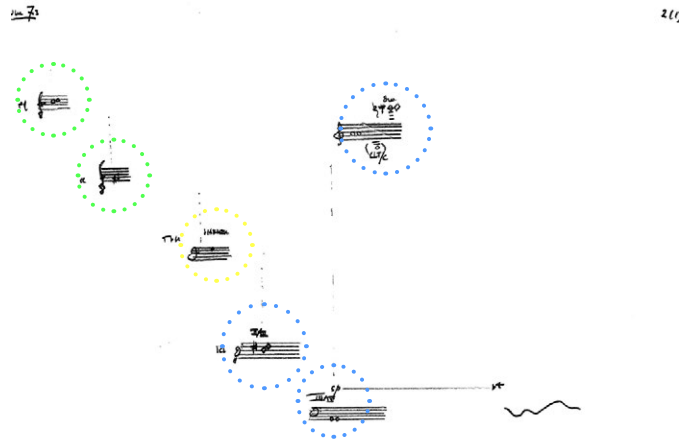


IMAGE 161. Early sketch on the beginning harmonic material of §73

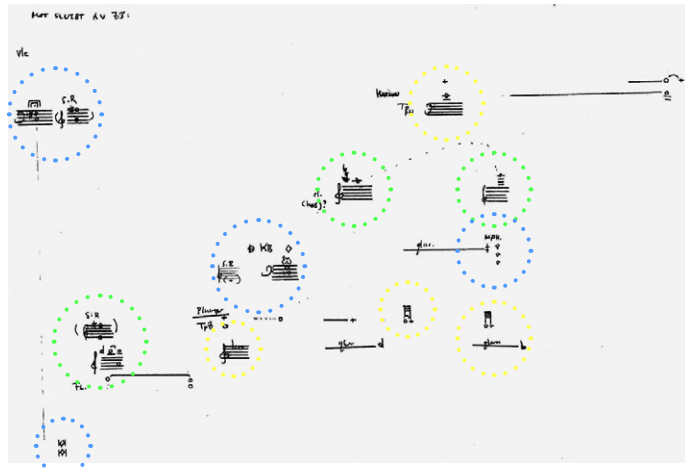


IMAGE 162. the latter part of §73's pitch material.

[§73 cont.]

Faintly, the outline of a tapered, ascending staircase is visible. A deeper darkness suggests a passage further into the building.

The sheets are mentioned as ordered, stacked piles. Again, the balustrade. Of glass, shards and at an angle to a cracked floor. The boots leave hard tracks. The soil flows. At the end of the room there are two narrow, dimly lit corridors.

The medallion in the centre, surrounded by dense clusters of cello, saxophone (clarinet) and bass flute.

A metal plate that sings along with the voices from the sides.

The “wooden body” rattles. Strap stock, tuning screws and tapping.

Every movement is here set in sound, the scraping of feet against shards, gravel and dust. The hand of the man pressing against a chip. Soundless, solitary, clapping. It is as if the sound the movement makes far exceeds the description. The feeling that he is rhythmically tapping the coin. With two hands? With precision? Effortlessly?

The final specification of a winding, prolonged wail is not the voice of those present (he or the witness) but is an orchestration of the chairs. As if their seats, called steel mouths—facing the sides of the room—carry an implicit voice.

The feeling of an unbalanced space, how the sounds can travel far and wide in the room, but the description provides an almost obscure setting, as if the gallery is rather a passage in another large hall.

The single, muffled murmur. The sense of the textures of the floor and walls. The presence of figures. The movement from painting to shard. The echo of the staircase through the room, the enclosed scraping of the passage. The light as a hazy, dense sound.

A passage, a background. Hardly a movement. Just a promise. The distant shadowy corridors, like remnants of sound. The choir waits for the procession. For the sounds, for the movement.

Delicate harmonies reflected along the walls. It is also the voices of children, a chorus of voices that is far more than just a wail.

The alternation between bridge and fingerboard invites the uneven overtones of the woodwind. Even though the trombone is not written out, I hear how he lifts the mute. Getting ready to give the sound an illusory bordun.

[§73 cont.]

Handwritten musical score for Image 167. The score is written on a grid background and includes multiple staves for various instruments: Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Fag.), Trumpet (Tp.), Trombone (Tbn.), Percussion (Perc.), and Cello/Double Bass (Cb.). The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols, dynamics (e.g., *ff*), and annotations. A blue dotted arrow points from the left margin towards the first staff. At the top right, there is a handwritten number '3'. The score is marked with 'E. Lotass' at the beginning.

IMAGE 167.

Handwritten musical score for Image 168. The score is written on a grid background and includes multiple staves for various instruments: Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Fag.), Trumpet (Tp.), Trombone (Tbn.), Percussion (Perc.), and Cello/Double Bass (Cb.). The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols, dynamics (e.g., *ff*), and annotations. A blue dotted arrow points from the left margin towards the first staff. At the top, there are handwritten annotations: '202', 'Amor', 'Jan 22', and 'Jan 29'. The score is marked with 'E. Lotass' at the beginning.

IMAGE 168. Sometimes it is just the inclusion of a pause, or a césura to allude to the Hölderlin quotation on page 139. On one hand it is the effect of the abundance of material of all the different explorations of Lotass' spaces, but also how different sounds, events and relationship of sound is continuously emerging in between the different 'imagined spaces'.

→ §161

§161. [103]

Greyed columns. Always this pencil grey tone, always shimmering. Columns that merge into silver-grey beams to which steel cables are attached that hold in place a folded, non-descript canopy.

A bright hall opens up, crossed by narrow footbridges between the side galleries. On the left-hand side, the men's taut backs spread out. Field grey coats. Faces turned towards shimmering grey fields (is it the walls of the galleries or is it the round windows of the hall, or the floor?).

The sign guard. The sand piles up, dust fills all the cavities. A blindfold is wrapped around the mouth and nose, as if to make it easier to breathe, filter out the dust and at the same time moisten the throat. The feeling that the sentry is on the move, or at least was.

“The sound is a deafening, shrill, unrelenting roar.”

The hidden capitals of the column. The possible ornament, which disappears in the described canopy of the hall.

The choir standing along the walls.

The sand, or dust that seems to swirl around. The wind that covers the mouth and nose.

The columns appear to be the most resonant. As monoliths. As sources of sound. 4 trees [Billone—Dickinson]. How are they placed? Suddenly, like a sweeping light of sound. The voice.

A tall, bright and deep hallway. Gleaming columns.

Ochre colored beams supporting the pearl white canopy of the roof. Wide arches extend the perspective, long narrow walkways are outlined. Trees. Black trunks.

An embankment along the walkway that the eye follows. Heavy, dark silhouettes appear. Frost in thin layers. Lime. The witness's gaze follows him. His chapped, sore, dry lips.

the deafening, shrill, single roar. And yet, only as a mirage. Unheard. I only make notes of it.

[§161 cont.]

The covered mouth changes. The bass flute rumbles faintly, as if the deafening roar of the neighbouring room finds its way into the space between the mouth and the mouthpiece. The enclosing mouth lets the vocal cords rumble faintly and turn into faint, recurring wails. Everything is constantly coloured by the keys. The song breaks out, turns into delicate reverberations, dyads that beat. The size of the room both conceals and enhances the sound. When the arms are lifted, the mouth is also raised; sliding the mouthpiece forward, blowing with full force.

The witness is no longer nameless but declaims like Katina Paxinou, shouting a glossolalic harangue. Everything stops, absorbed by the fury of her invocation:

The paper is moved to the right, slightly upwards. A new one in its place. The tip of the pen close to the fingers, in circular or diluted motions. The other hand against the table. Open hand, feeling the rhythm.

[notes on the strategy]

On one of the papers, a further use of the empty space. Annotations of different textures, different pens, even colours. Inscriptions of shapes, figures.

As this progress the constellation grows. The activity and tension grow.

Gravity remains invisible, but it is increasingly felt.

With Persephone, the Elysian mysteries are re-enacted. Korea. Goddess of the Underworld.

I hear the murmur, deep inside the flute; which is given a depth, a richness by extension in the room, brought together with sine waves.

I must constantly remember the deaf and mute. Always remember that language is always (also) the promise of a sound.

I need to build my own glossolalia. Onomatopoetic.

[further notes on the strategy]

On a local level, each sound evolves as a human body, grows, develops and becomes; there is in each individual part a directionality.

[§161 cont.]

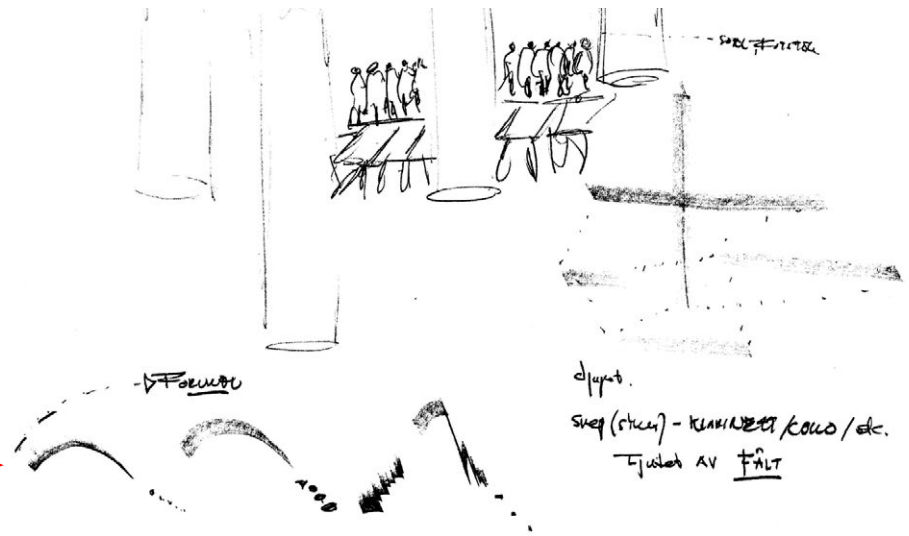


IMAGE 171. Hints of frozen figures. Tables. Stones, Traces of movements, reminiscent of the notation used for the Kkwaengwari in all pieces connected to ‘Den svarta solen’.

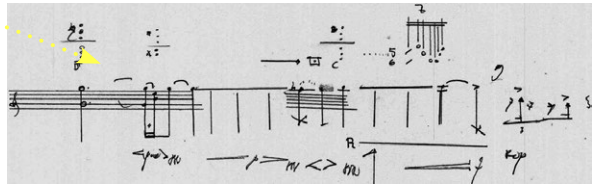
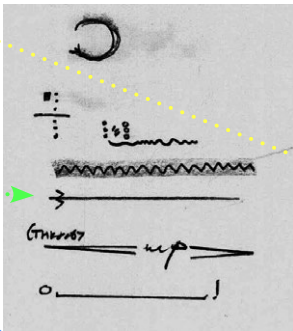


IMAGE 172 and IMAGE 173. Both of these images show the work on the flute gestures mentioned in the text. Rumbling sounds with covered mouthpiece and dyads that turn into long, forceful notes that turn into vocalizations and end with sharp consonant sounds.

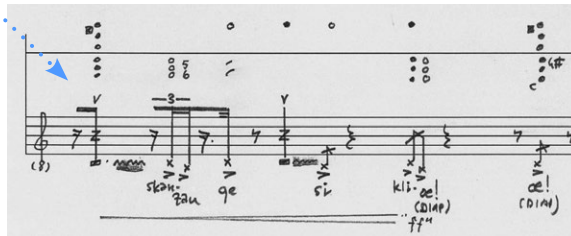


IMAGE 174. A segment of a more articulated notation of the ‘flute-declamation’, used in rumori ii as well as ‘archē’.

[§161 cont.]

Question: what about harmony, what about the blending of sounds, in these instances either my use of pitches must be extremely limited, or, the music allow for new constellations. I need to *let go*. [ék-]

However:

Each constellation of sound creates a force field, which in itself projects and influence the reverberating sounds, but also the musician wielding the instrument.

→ §290



[§I61 cont.]

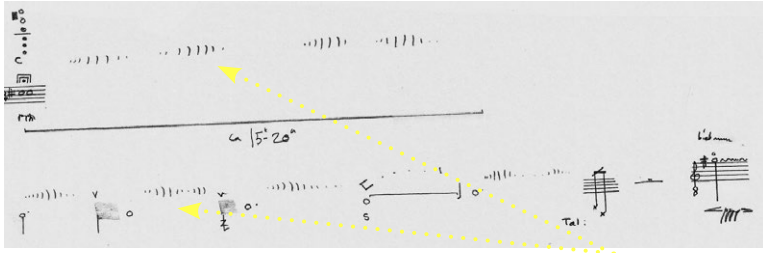


IMAGE I75. The murmur inside the flute. The hint of sine waves or ‘beatings’ emanating from the multiphonic

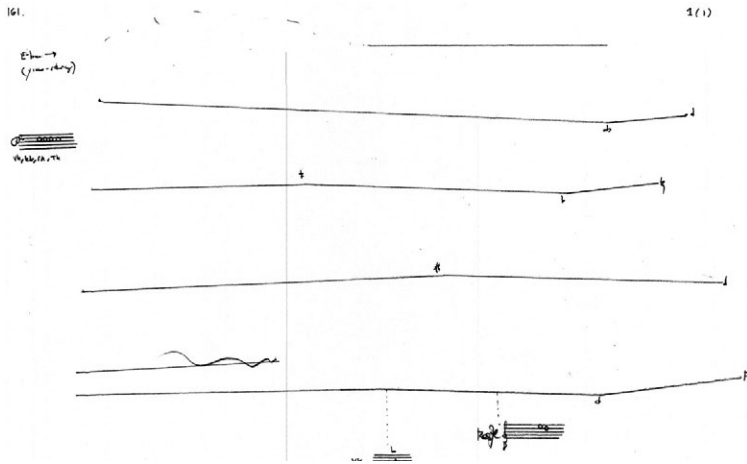


IMAGE I76. Trying out different slow glissandi.

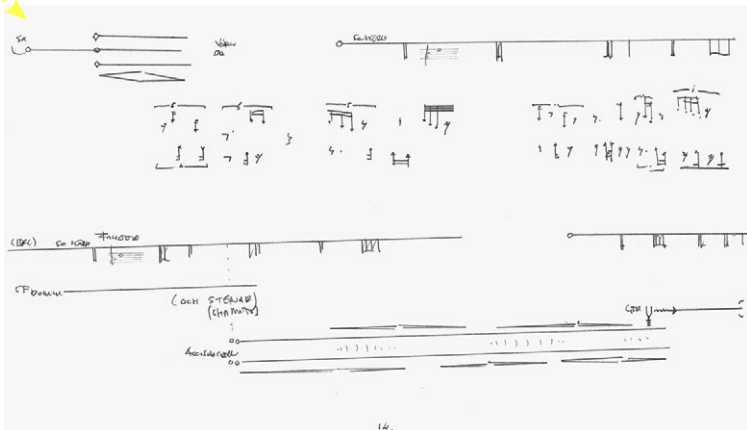


IMAGE I77. Extending the glissandi with the ‘force-fields’. Adding rhythm.

§290.

A room that unfolds in a semi-circle. Piers that spread out, like galleries. The terminals leading away, glass covered. The columns spread out. Nondescript capitals hold up a transverse beam. Paintings adorn the long, narrow aisles. Round-shaped lamps give off a faint glow ornamented by ornate steel vines. The room reveals staircases winding underneath the plateau, creating an image of bridges crossing almost a lake-like background. Cube-shaped rooms frame the space. Its sunny, blurred surface dims the light.

Soft brown carpets run along the walls. Chairs are lined up in straight lines. On the left-hand side, an oblong disc is visible. The emissary sits next to it. On the table, stamps are lined up in a glassless rack. The emissary's neck stretches the collar, and along the top of the head, lead grey, marked veins. The left side also reveals the other.

The mouth set in a faint smile. Hands clutched together. A circular plinth stands in the middle of the room.

The soldier sets down a muddy chute. The sentry stands stiffly next to the shield cage (guard cage).

A wide door opens at the back wall.

I am here in a room with several distinct levels.
 What comes from below is never in view, but there
 must be a layer of sound. I hear rushing footsteps.
 Objects being moved. Hear figures that barely move.

“The sound is. a single, buzzing, muffled, persistent murmur.”

It is this invisible, sometimes seemingly immobile effort and presence that is heard. I am listening into a space that doesn't really sound, doesn't exist, but as it fills in with ornate details, with repetitive, monotonous additions, I also expand the presence of vibrations. Rumble, *rumori*; the emissary whose throat must hiss with every slow movement.

[§290 cont.]

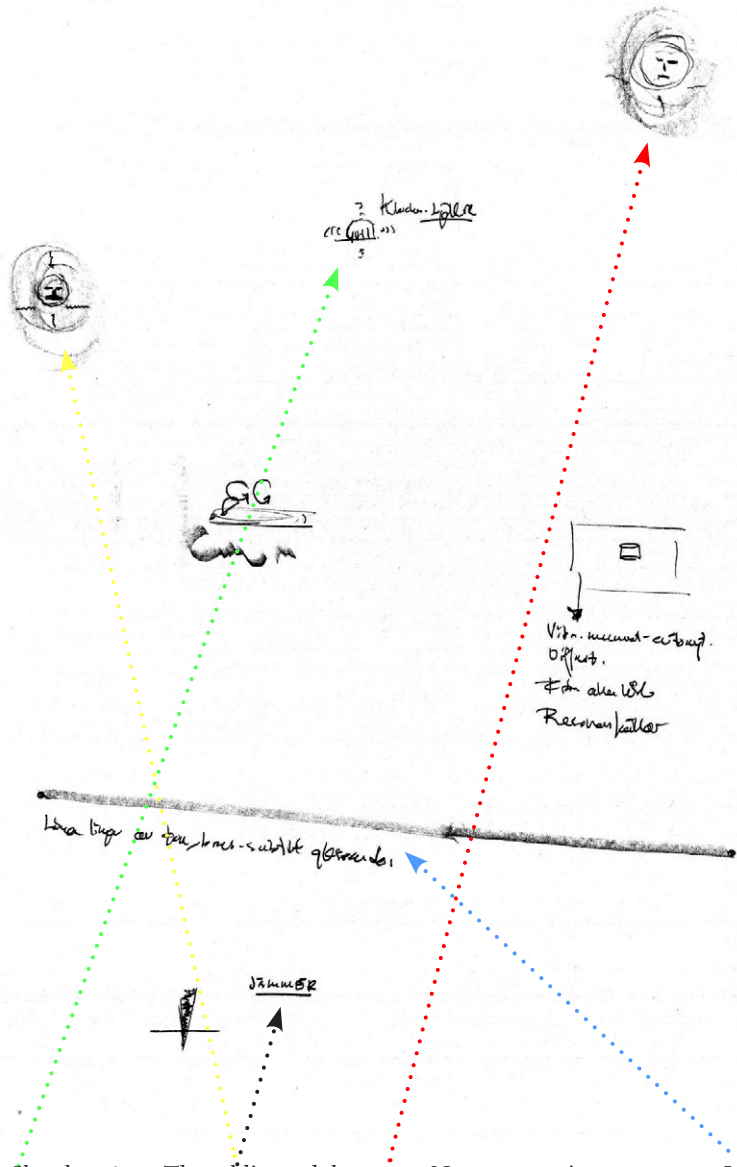


IMAGE 178. Sketch to §290. The soldier and the sentry. Notes on persistent murmur. Long glissando. The small ritual bell. Wailing. Essentially, all what is here on this page is found in the score of said § in 'arche'.

[§290 cont.]

The other who, even if he only stares, still changes the soundscape—I direct myself towards him, direct the illusory sound waves towards him. The joined hands caress, or shape something. A bell? A small, ritual bell. The sentry standing guard in his cage. Surely, it must be the case that at certain given times he moves in a certain predetermined circle?

There is a rhythm, both precise and slow. The soldier close by may be a sounding body, but it is as if he is a reference point in the room, as if it is from his position that I am suddenly listening.

The single, buzzing, muffled, persistent murmur is more than a background. It surrounds me. Both around, underneath and from above.

A long line of a penetrating sound from outside (like a mixture of the dense reverberation of the *cello* and the roar of the *singing bowl* against the *jin* in rotating motion. Inside the room it becomes the warmer timbre of the woodwind. It bounces against the floor like debris; the voice-like wail of the tailpiece. Protracted. Sustained. Here too: wailing.

The focus is inevitably directed towards the round plinth, as if it carries an invisible force. The point of gravity that slowly draws all the vaguely drawn figures towards it. The first smile? Can you hear it?

I move a few feet back. The instrument in hand. What is evoked by paper, is now magnified in the hands.

Just by hovering with the fingers on top of the instrument the sound begins. It sings. Sound remains invisible.

[*notes on the strategy*]

Preliminary considerations:

The constellation of sounds, the projection into space, the development of sound, takes place in strange dialogue between score, performance and concert. There is no clear (obvious or constructed) separation between the two, rather its existence depends on this formation of strategies, sounds and constellation. In the book, the idea of a dead-end doesn't exist. Or there exist no back-tracing, when reading, such a procedure would be difficult to imagine. Rather, these dead ends must be manipulated by me to actually by themselves re-direct back into the construction.

Secondary considerations

Would it be possible to construct a preliminary exercise, that emulates and makes possible the different possibilities?

[§290 cont.]

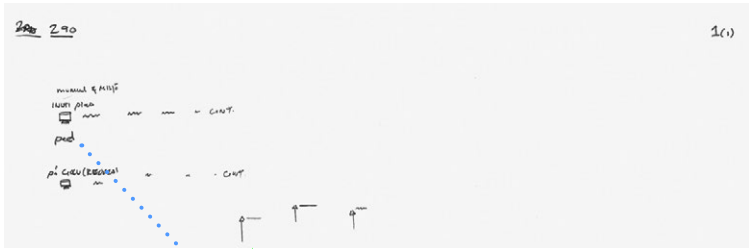


IMAGE 179.

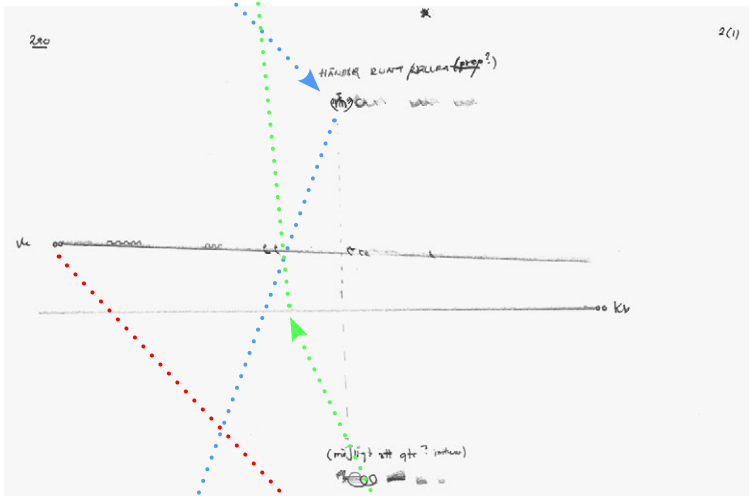


IMAGE 180.

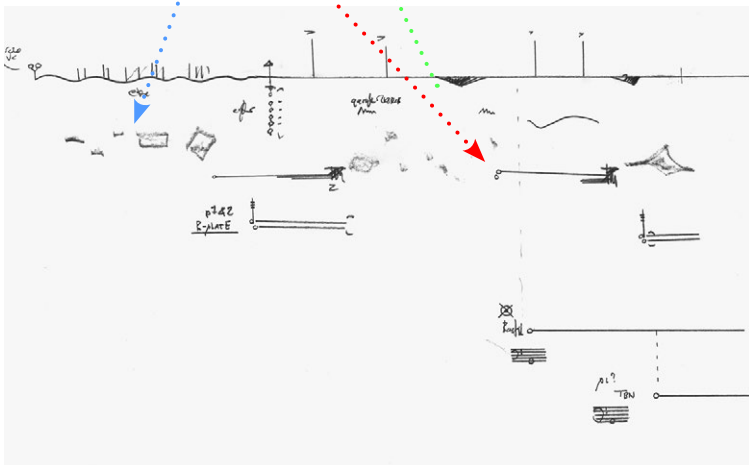


IMAGE 181. The images show the elaboration of the “ritual bell” actions together with a slowly developed glissando. The bell shifts from object to the accordion. To air, to invisibility.

→ §44

§44. [258]

Wide, long hallway. High sides. Misty view, above, the ceiling slopes towards a rear wall of columns closing in on windows; sunken, discoloured windows that reduce the strong light (from outside?). On the sides are long rows of chairs. Those waiting sit with their hands open, resting on their legs. A straight line (?) cuts through the field (of chairs?) and the low, dark room of the hall.

The vaults that surround appear as triangles. Steel-shod. Again, an oblong slab delineating the massive forms of the columns. The panel reflects the lines of the room. The emissary at the far side in an armchair. On the left side, the witness moves in a pattern. Those waiting in the chairs are now facing each other (pre-viously they appeared to be sitting side by side). He sits down against the high white wall. Wraps a blanket around the painting. The light creates a field of daggers. The soldier stands next to the disk. In the background heavy, shimmering curtains. His skin, throat and appearance merge with the pale grey of the place. It seems that the emissary is him. The chair is described in more detail. Side cabinet. Green-tinted top.

The images on the light boards change with a slight metallic rattle (the departure boards?).

“The sound is a faint humming, low, muffled and muted drone.”

“The sound grows into a single, sustained, tuneless murmur.”

“The sound is a single, sustained, hard and toneless clap.”

“The words merge into prolonged guttural roars.”

The door leads to wide stairs that reveal uniform, systematically arranged planes. The steps are carpeted and faintly patterned. A murky light cuts through the shaft-like, square architecture.

Picture frames in white marble cladding. Narrow doors can be seen on the sides. Wires are in twisted bundles along the roofline.

“The light flashes with a faint, metallic tone.”

[§44 cont.]

Here I hear the choir, not as song, but as that which embodies the rumble, the sound that gives space, body and background to the voices.

I pull along the spring, let the voice start in rhythm, slowly increase the speed, the pitch evens out the sound. Instead of constructing the words, I let them come to me. All the time as an expectation, as something deep. Ko-no-kno—(m)ktu—kò—mò—tù

Continuous accompaniment, extension using the instruments.

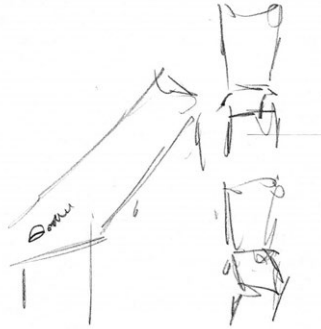


IMAGE 182. Two chairs and a table. The Dobaci and a movement along the wood.

Standing in the centre of the organ hall. Surrounding myself with sound. Closing my eyes, imagining the gestures. Searching. Constantly looking for moments when articulation occurs.

Gradually, the reverberation and activity become so high that the longer lines can only be taken in as hallucinations. But they are in front of me. All around me on music stands, in outlined form.

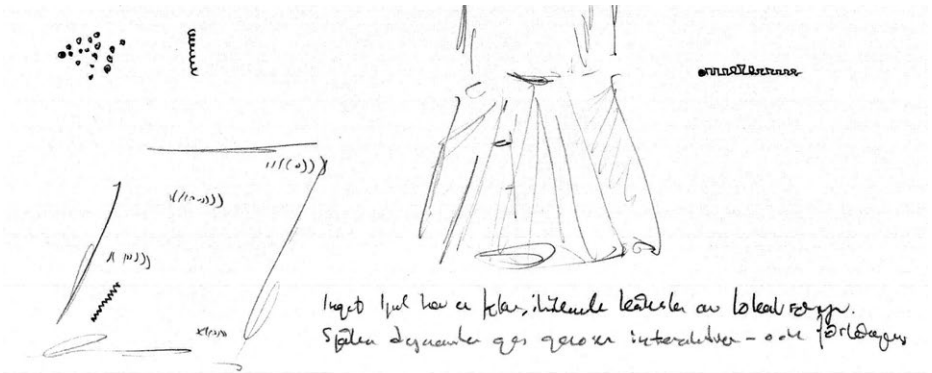


IMAGE 183. Sketches of sound placements.

Relocation.

The papers grow, they begin to combine. What was once in one, is inferred in another. All the while short recordings, vocalizations, imitations.

[§44 cont.]

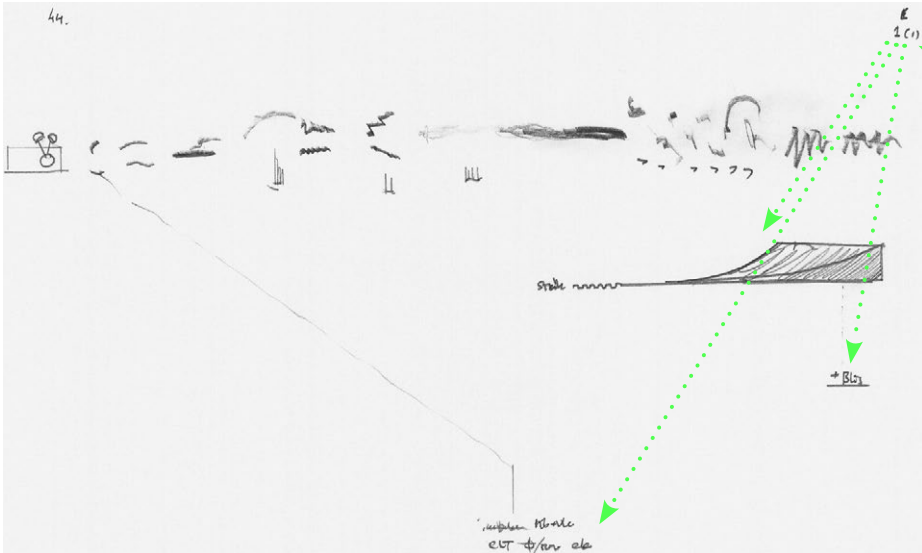


IMAGE 184. The dobaci on the table has now in the sketches become a more articulated sound, surrounded by other instruments in a more linear presentation.

Suppressed (don't disturb anyone), yet, inside. Full stop. Screaming.

Sound is now on the limit, yet without articulation. Gravity is still invisible, but its hallucination omnipresent.

And then night.

The black sun. The imagined sun. Bright and black at the same time.

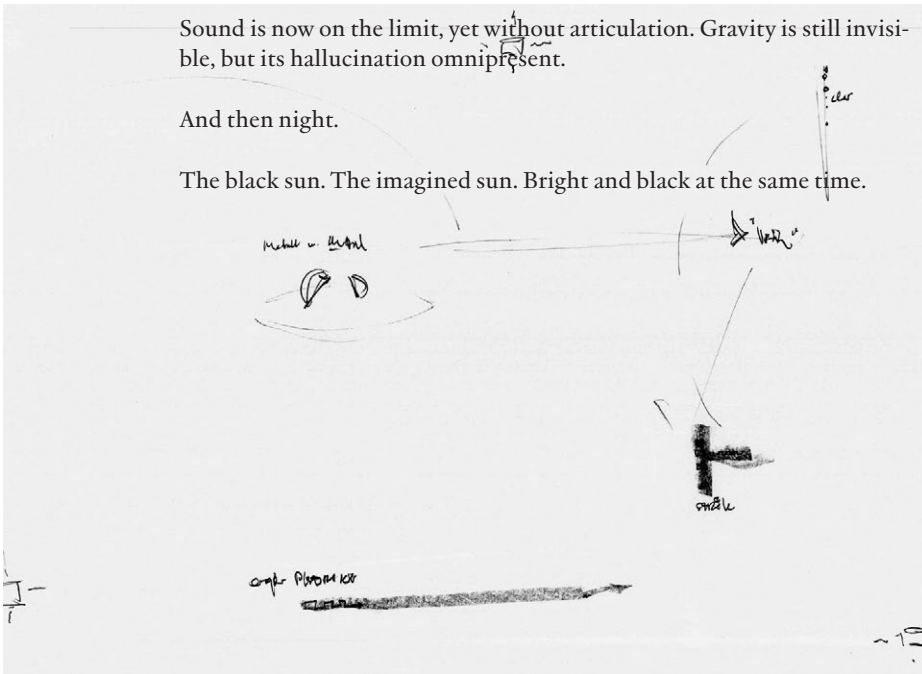


IMAGE 185. The dobaci on the table part extended with resonating sounds sources (spring-drums).

[§44 cont.]

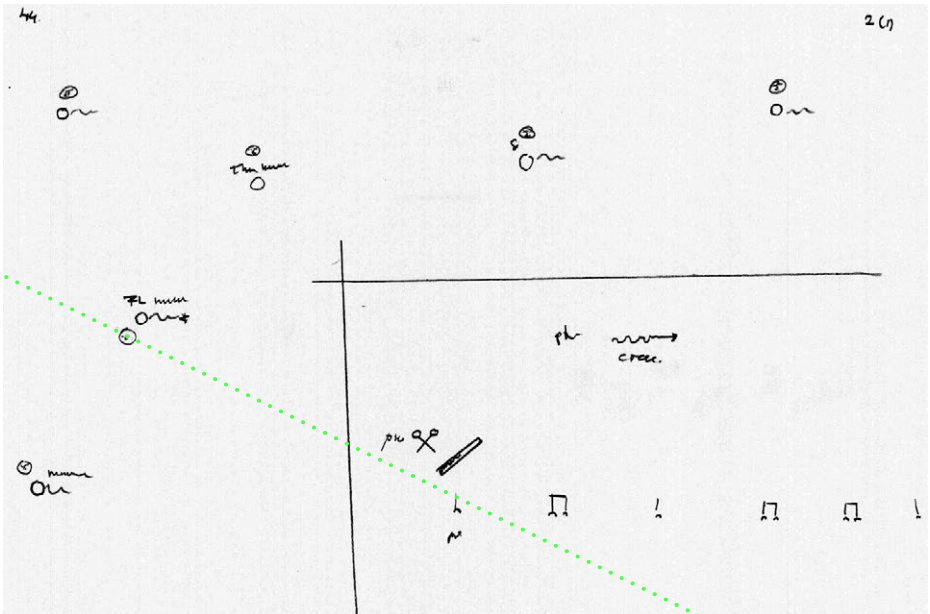


IMAGE 186. Inside piano rhythms surrounded by voices. Sketches later abandoned.

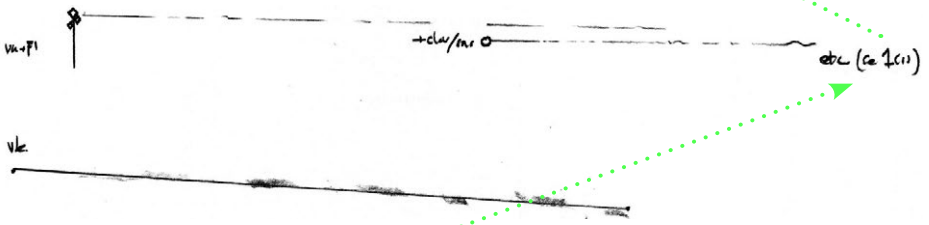


IMAGE 187. The timbral canvas placed 'behind' the sketch in IMAGE 184, a 'harmony' that becomes foregrounded as the dynamics and closeness of the harmonic tension increases.

[remarks on the strategy of 'arché']

To focus:

With sound(s) the passage, to remember becomes a reality. The shift from space to space makes possible the memory of what has been left behind.

Sounds from future places (through different speeds) are made available.

The question of intensity and dilution becomes a factor. Does the sound merely fade away (again and again) or do they through the joint forces of sound(s) become intensified.

[§44 cont.]

The tape part, to extend into multiple sound sources (loudspeakers/channels). As the *lontananza* by Nono.

A limited set of sound files extended ad infinitum through diffusion.

To use the space. The imagined space. ■.....▶

With this project, all parts of the strategy begins to work like a real body, even in the sense of becoming.

There is no “work” only a continuous becoming. There is an end, but it marks (in all probability) the possibility of a new beginning, where some sources slowly fade away, and leaves in the end only a singular repeated sound source.

The heterophony of the construction makes way for the singular, autonomous sound.

A stele. ■.....▶

[§44 cont.]

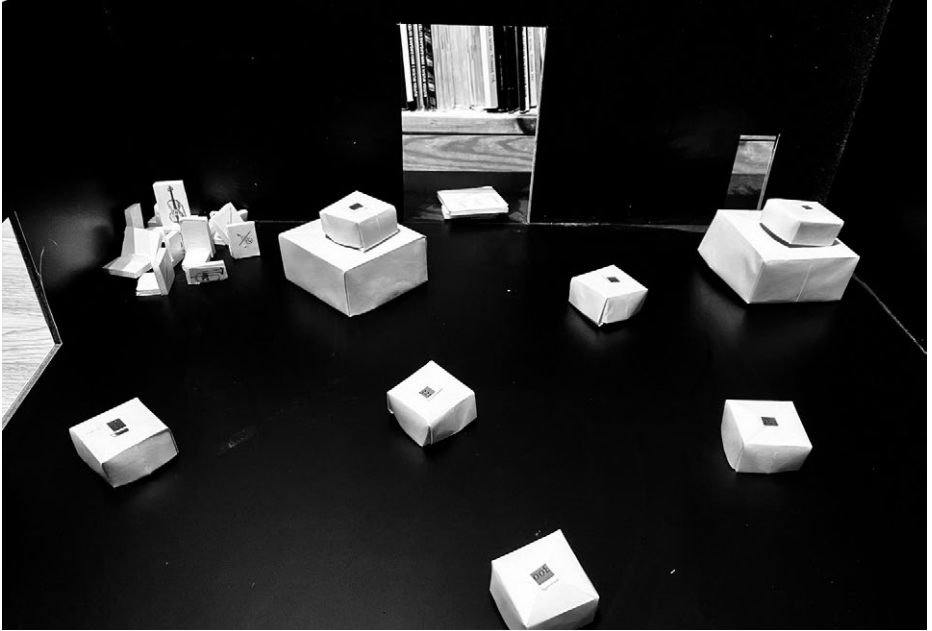


IMAGE 188. Yet another place where I experiment with the placement of instruments. A stage (theatre style) with exits and entrances. To the right the figures with portrayed instruments. On the 'floor' boxes with numbers and of different heights.

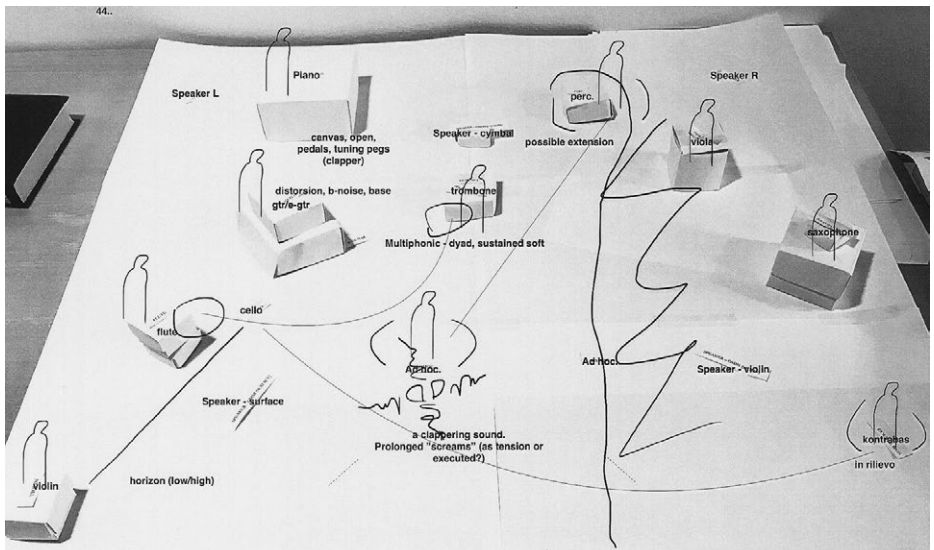


IMAGE 189. Again, the placement in space. But here the 'play' with the theatre-stage is formalized and over-layered with remarks in the computer.

→ §250

§250. [171]

Portraits in uniform, wide rows. Extensive hall. The men. Blurred, scuffed, worn and pale. A softly frayed carpet absorbs the steps.

“The sound is a low, prolonged, single, sustained wail.”

The room narrows against a deep, dark background. Light falls from—what appears to be—yellowed lamps (bronze). A purple-red tone in the distance, as if scraped off.

The soldier. The waiting people move in rhythm.

Informal silhouettes. The other. His grey-white teeth chatter with a shrill, hard, soundless smattering.

Perhaps there are two obscure passages on the far wall?

A moan and a clatter. It is not described, but the sensation of bodies being touched. Scratches, worn, wounded surfaces against each other. The portraits as a presence, but also an extension of the waiting.

Cube-shaped room. Chairs are stacked along the walls. Light from long white lamps attached to the low ceiling. In the middle of the room, a long, narrow cabinet made of lacquered sheet metal. He puts the painting (portrait) away. The frame is cracked in the left corner. The soldier at the scourge. On the cabinet, black and white photographs.

The other in an armchair in front of velvet grey draperies. Mouth opens, neck back. The painting is wrapped again. The draperies flutter in a light breeze:

A straight corridor runs through the narrow room towards a steel-shod door that leads into a bright, even larger, hall. As if it barely resonates, rather than the breeze (wherever it comes from) is the opening to the vast space. A passage. The whining sound is like from somewhere else. From the past or from the future? From which direction does the wind draft come? It is muted.

The instruments against the body, strike and hear how it sounds inside. Not heartbeats, but compressed, softer, less harmonic, and still carried by this wining, drawn-out breeze (mumble).

Oneiro's circle. I am now so deep inside the building that the different floors, the different rooms, the halls, the galleries echo. And somehow, it seems that the distance is now only increasing in strength.

This means that every new place has almost a constantly low-sounding feeling, as if I have to turn down the volume so that the ear listens to the surroundings instead. Or as if the Giacometti sculptures come to life when left there. Distant tapping, vibrating strings. And the stones, the stones! Shards. In Oneiros, the spacious hall is just one of several active places:

[§250 cont.]



IMAGE 190. A drawing for the piece *Oneiros*. Columns in the back, and the percussionist to the left, someone else on the right. The seating is more or less re-occurrent in my different sketches for this §, but used in the trio 'fragments of a broken order', but then the 'drum' in the middle, the violin to the left, the cello to the right.

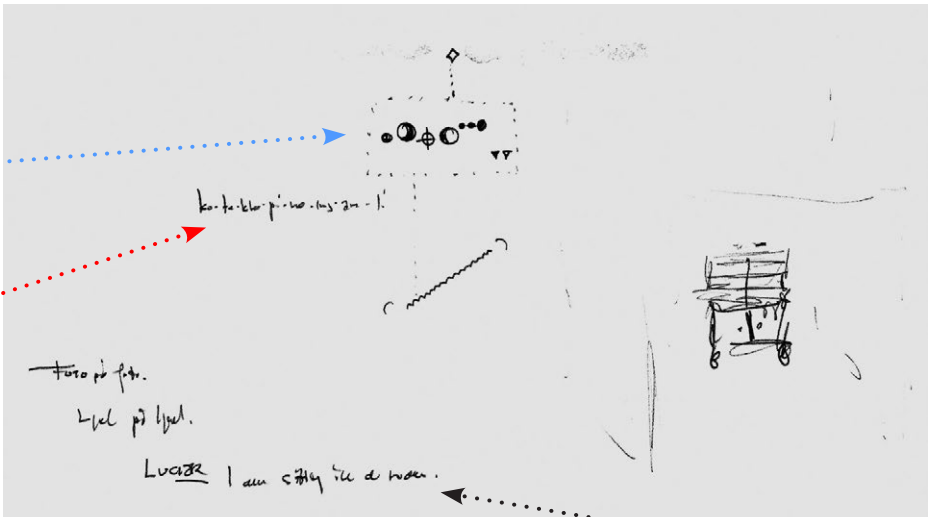


IMAGE 191. Notes on the paragraph. A brief mention of Lucier's 'I am sitting in a room'. A piece which continuously and increasingly has been a point of reference, particularly for 'arché'.

[§250 cont.]

What is a soundless smattering in a room where the size and details are reminiscent of echoes?

“The sound grows along the elongated, closed, dense row.”

I hear Nono’s voice: dong, dong, dong. The sound of boats and church bells, the lapping of the waves. The feeling of distance and closeness at the same moment.

A machine is not a human.

A human is not a machine.

Remember Tibet. Wind instruments. Always two sound sources.

Real stage. Secret stage. A mirror.

Linea Mundi [Klaus Lang]. A violin, and far back in the room, a bass drum. Slow in the middle a brass section.

The opening:
A possessed shaman. Screaming, evoking an otherworldly presence.

And then the expansion of breath, of voice, intersected with sustained multiphonics or subtle pitches.

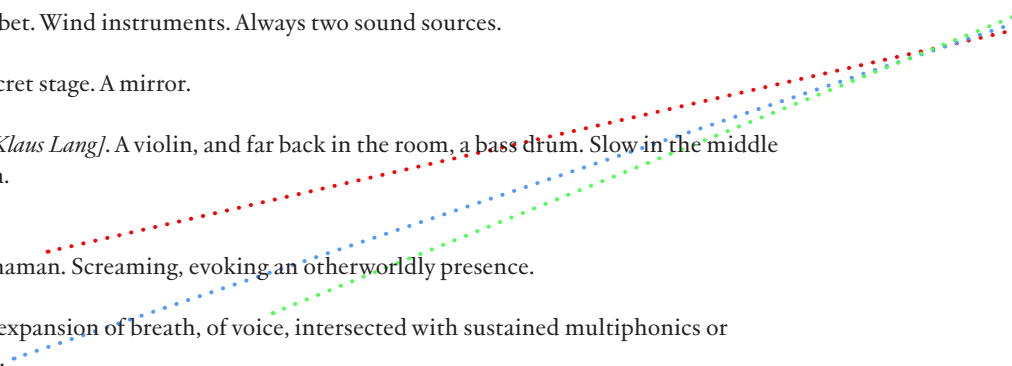
How to embrace and include a sense of deep, hovering, time? A pulse permeating the music relentlessly.

Some pages are larger than other, some annotations stronger than other, some lines longer and thicker. However, what draws my eye, and what activates my ear is something else. Sometimes only the faintest graphite marking. An almost invisible long line. Yet it sounds: strong and persistent.

The transparent paper. Superimposed, gives depth. The order. There is no given order, just an informal placement, which in itself—through the action being performed—gets a certain, given focus. The sign, the placement, the blackness, the intensity, the distance. Just as every action (in the room, on the instrument) gives an immediate experience, drawing becomes its own listening. One that constantly operates in two separate spaces.

The real, and the imaginary. Or rather; two imaginaries, where one is immaterial, the other a fantasy.

It is a way to engrave a secret language, but also to establish a secret stage.



[§250 cont.]

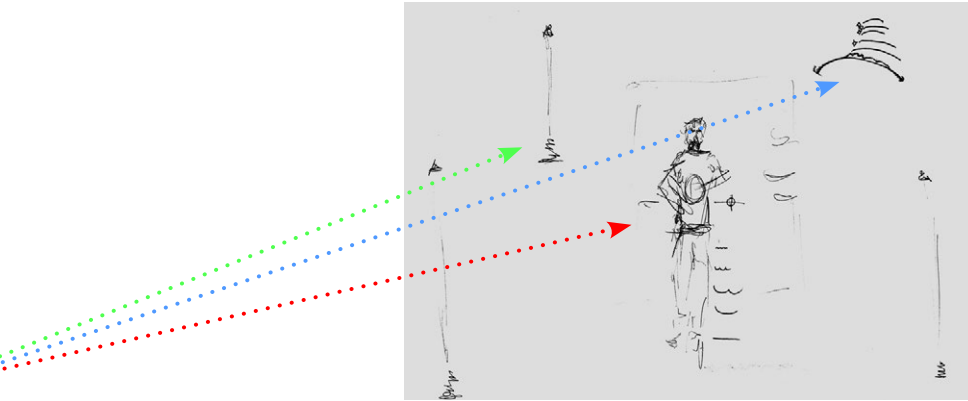


IMAGE 192. The percussionist in centre, surrounded by 'smattering' sounds.

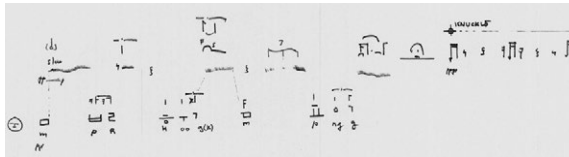


IMAGE 193. The figure in image173 begins to 'inscribe'.

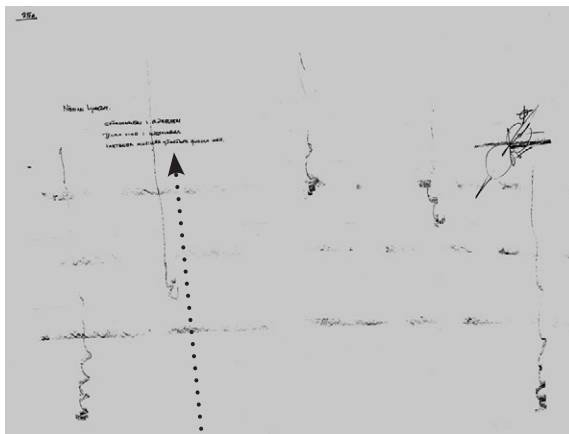


IMAGE 194. The beginning of a 'semaphore' moment. Notes on an almost silent section but given focus by the cello.

→ §34

§34.

A vast hall. Monochrome patterns. A diamond window in the right corner. The roof in a lace. The light falls on the glossy floor. Carts in rows along the wall (?). High pillars towards the ceiling. White bridges over the galleries (balconies) that run along the sides of the hall. Chairs stand around low, smooth tables. The straight, high backs of the chairs rise above the bald heads. The walls are covered with stained (dark) panels. Men in grey suits. The carpets are thick, flaming. The men line up tiles in repetitive patterns.

“The sound is a sonorous, shrill, hollow and monotonous smattering.”

Along the back wall hang narrow, blackened seating pieces covered in serigraphs.

“The blinds raise with a whining, metallic screech.”

The trays fall to the ground with a clatter.

Almost out of sight, towards where the soldier turns, there are two low arches leading to adjoining halls.

“Breathing is a strained, thick, heavy, hoarse and raspy noise.”

Like a persistent bark, or a dull bordun on which dry, wooden empty (soundless) sounds. The blinds as a distant, faint squeak. The breathing, the rustle. The falling tiles. How much resonance occurs in the room?

The pulse. The deep pulse. Alternating between the papers that cover an increasingly large part of my desk, floor, and wall. I just touch them, and I feel the gravity.

Dreams linger.

Anamorphous forms, dormant. Along abandoned hallways. Ruins of a lost dwelling place. Monoliths and sculptures. Ingenious buildings of sublime construction. Hieroglyphs covering layer upon layer, row after row.

[§34 cont.]

The sense of space, distorted. Twisted perspectives seemingly—although logically out of place—askew yet leading in circular ways to a labyrinth of sort. Where one expects a corner, a ceiling, a wall, one is continuously surprised and lured on in a new direction.

Inside of this maze of shapeless forms, all things extend in a never-ending fashion. Sounds echo persistently throughout. The *great old ones* sing. However, the vocals protrude all senses, not only the auditory. There is no sense of stability. Time is suspended. As if all voices simultaneously echo through the past, present and future.

[notes on the strategy]

(Reflecting whether or not 'archē' follows through on the 'strategy of sound'):

The imagined space—the placement of different paragraphs on the extended paper. [note: why is the space flat? Is it possible to imagine a shift in height? To create two (or even further) planes? To use the cardboard.

The first contact—a placement of sound sources. The different instruments placed in an imagined space (in one paragraph). I refrain from moving the instruments, instead the sounds shift. This consequence comes later. The placement in a specific paragraph is a compromise.

Model of enquiry—tracing and developing the first contact; the development of individual sounds. Phrases, recordings.

Relationships of sounds—an idea of presence, proximity/distance. To describe the relationship/connection to the other sound sources.

Constellation of sounds/projection into space—in this project, in a sense, this part is suspended, however, connections between sounds can still be pointed out, and revisited [in connection with *rumori ii*, etc. these considerations could influence (or should, perhaps) further developments of sounds, perhaps they rather point to the inclusion of “signals”, which could (or could not) influence the interpretation. “search-lights”, “silences”, “accents”.

Strategy toward representation—the superposition of sounds, the decoration, ornamentation, construction creates the possibility of further worlds. Which one to choose. This should be done, on a vast, extended paper.

Last step—the finalization of parts, of instructions, of interaction. The closing of the book.

[§34 cont.]

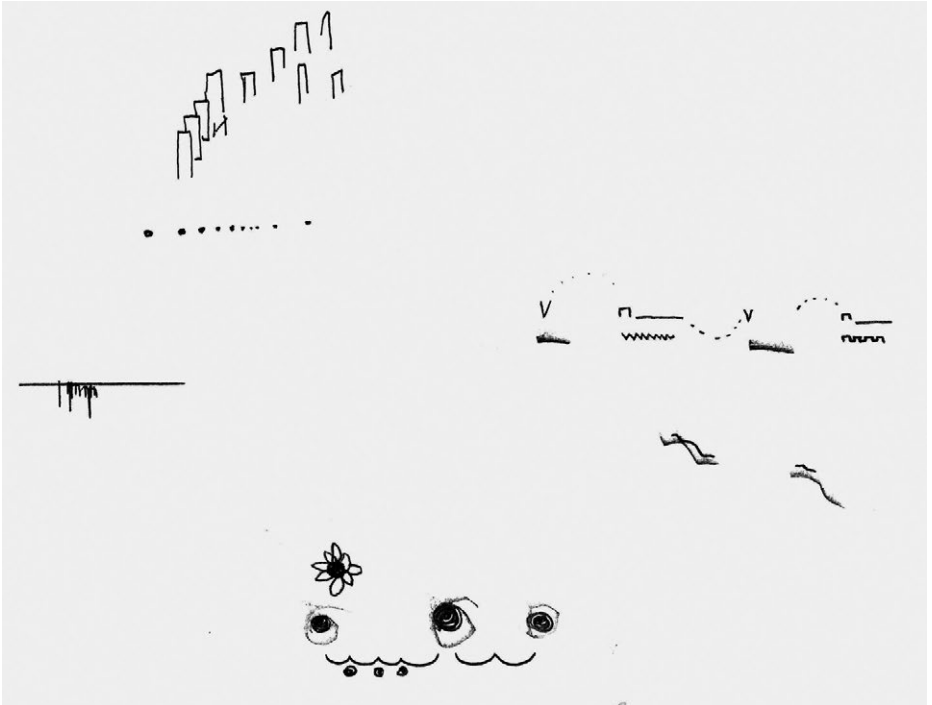


IMAGE 197. A parallel or prior (or further) development of the gestures of IMAGE 195.

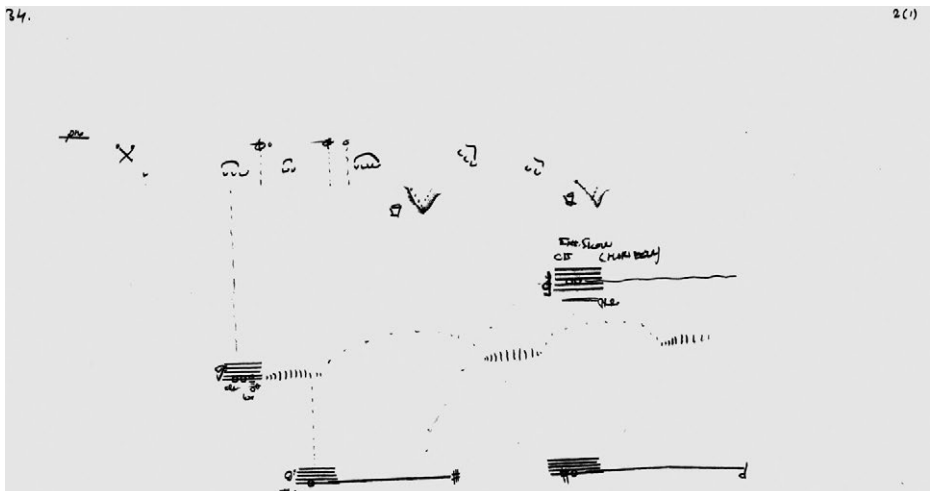


IMAGE 198. The same as IMAGE 197., but more precise in terms of the addition of pitch and some kind of consideration of duration.

→ §203

§203 [13]

The hall is high, hazy and vast. In the background, an extensive rectangular glass wall through which huge buildings tower.

In the ceiling, wedge-shaped windows look out from below the canopy. The wedges meet in a slightly rounded arc.

The construction is supported by three tapered columns attached to massive base pieces.

On the right side of the hall an arch of slates ending in a tall, wide column decorated with geometric shapes.

On the left side, the room is broken off by a partition that shimmers with a grey-green pattern. Behind the wall is a soft carpet.

A massive, stained table in front of which are two ash grey armchairs. The emissary in one of them, next to him (on the left) stands a heavy shapeless statuette with deep grooves. The table is surrounded by a tightly cut meander. Shields in an even row. The sign guard stands at the left side of the table.

In the open area of the hall, the floor fields shimmer in dull, yet shimmering shades of red. The soldier takes out the token. Vague figures move in the haze.

In the far part of the hall, behind the partition, there are rows of chairs.

A narrow, elongated hall with high, layered rafters. High domes that shimmer. Carpet chairs in rows. Glazed balconies can be seen up the right side. The soldier puts down the board. Those waiting are seen in regular ranks. Thin, curved shapes.

The crooked legs stand straight, stiffened in the middle of the step.

“The sound is a sustained, clattering, hard, metallic rattle.”

“The words fall in a staggered, cut-up, irregular stream:”

The strong signal echoes through the vast hall.

[§203 cont.]

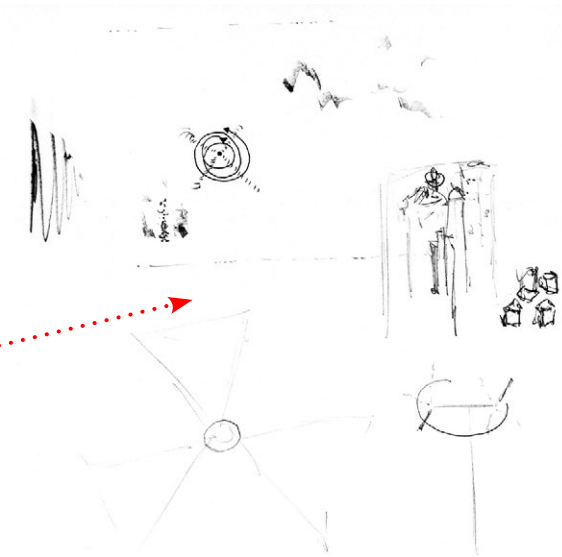


IMAGE 199.

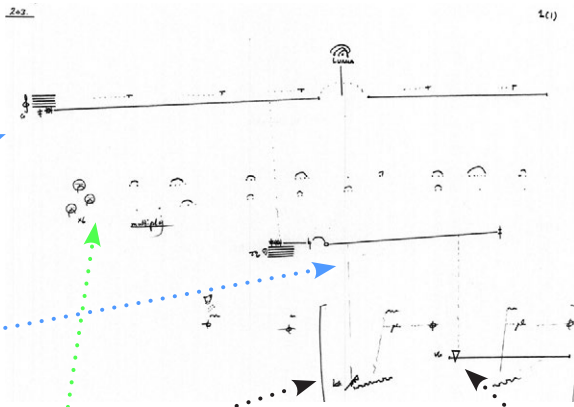


IMAGE 200. Sketches of the 'strong signal echoing through the vast hall'. Surrounded by 'signals', some through voice; others through semaphores, and also, the tailpiece wailing and the rasping sticks.....

[§203 cont.]

The witness's hands move like a semaphore (silent signal).

“The crystalline, dense, lackluster, pencil-grey structure is refracted in loud, shrill, cutting, sonorous, sharp tin screeches.”

The arms continue in a silent signaling (the witness?).

He (the witness?) wraps the plaster bust in the blanket. Along the back wall (beside the glass wall?) are four white bricks. The hall narrows and runs between two rounded cones into a stone-paved, narrow passage.

The siren echoes in the room, a wooden clatter and metallic rattle fills the soundscape. The words (syllables) are in staccato. There is a pulse, there is a smattering, but also subtler levels; a bow on the head, a figure representing a semaphore. The tangible siren is surrounded by an equally visual clear, but inaudible bodily signaling.

There is a movement in the room that is one of rumbling, but the resonance that the ear and the eye notice, is transformed.

I hear the oboe, the clarinet, the trumpet, the trombone... turning the siren sound to every corner. The partition is like a bracket. The view through the glass fund is like an extra room, like the illusion of a complex, composite string and brass sound floating in the distance.

A vacuum perforated by shrill, sharp pewter screams. The strings of the piano screaming out, or the woodwind in extreme registers.

It's a remote, inaccessible hall. The bodies within dampen all.

“The sound is a toneless, hard clattering, steady, rhythmic beating.”

They came from the stars.

expanding sensibility and suspending time, space and being.

[§203 cont.]

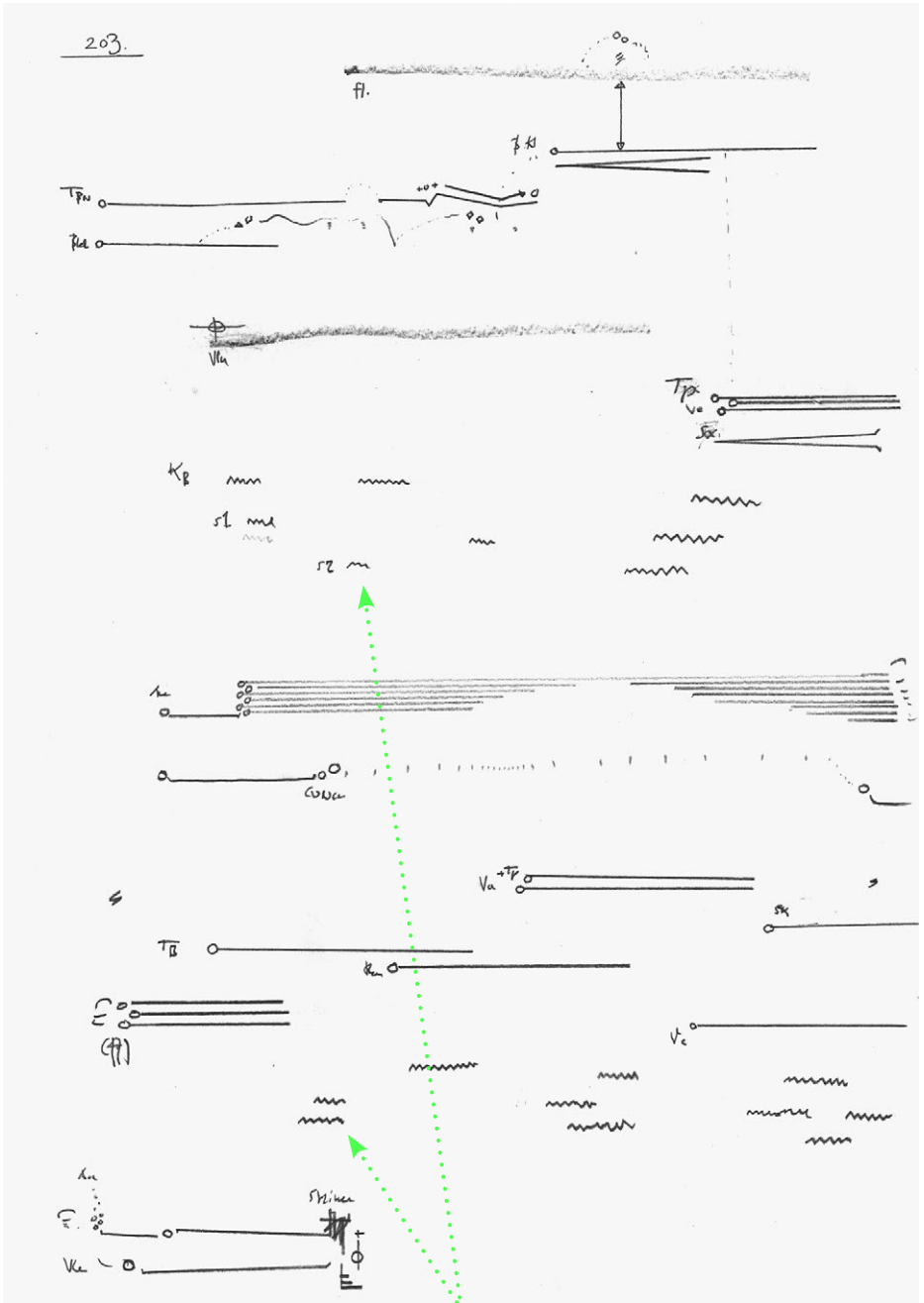


IMAGE 201. Sketched overview of §203. The saw-line indicate the use of rasping sticks, distributed in the ensemble.

[§203 cont.]

⌘
pacing.

It should emerge from within sound. I hear it. The sound of stones and wood decaying. The glissandi of the voices, but where, how, when? Which durations, which pitches, which rhythms? And if I decide, it seems as either through transcription (which contains an implicit limitation—either my ability of performance, or my limitations in listening) or through more or less arbitrary decision-making.

I turn to Lotass for a possible solution. The archipelago of the black sun. I lean over Hildegard's shoulder.

The tape part. Create each electronic part in each space. Perform each part in an actual space. Record. Then re-iterate the process, until hardly anything remains. Lucier, "I am sitting in a room".

Each part is continuous, repeating, but diluted. Between each "loop" a subtle hum, or noise, for instance a sine wave, hardly noticeable. With each repetition a growing spectrum of noise.

The instrumental parts do not follow the same procedure. However, it is possible to imagine sections, or resonances of each phrase that could be repeated. The repetition of a space could be an optional possibility, just as certain focus points of "search-lights" or solos in a similar way can be activated by the musician.

[§203 cont.]

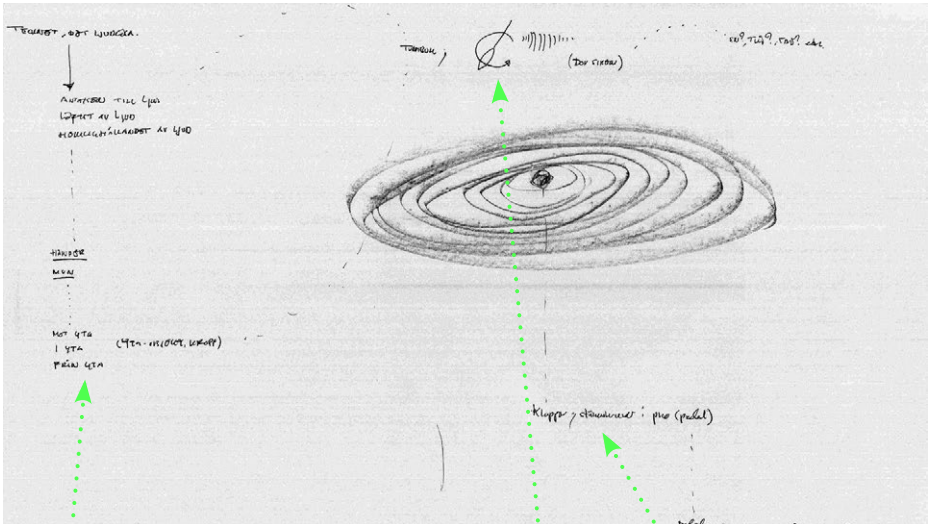


IMAGE 202. The spiral of sound. Markings of the bull-roarer, clapping sounds, anticipation of sounds; hands, mouths, deep subtones.

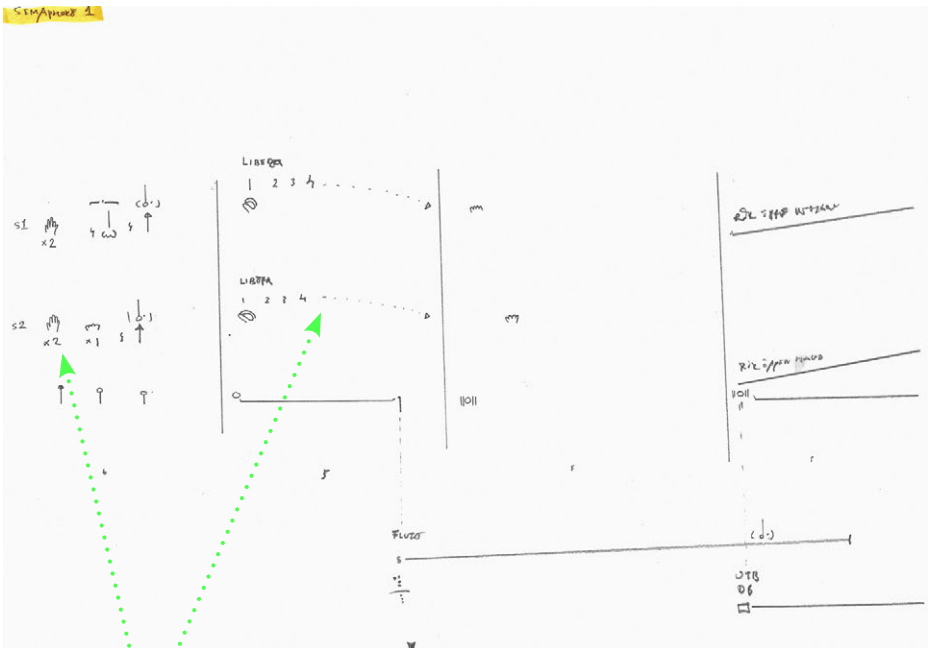
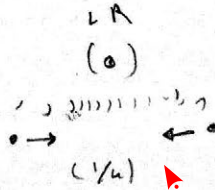


IMAGE 203. In §203 in 'archē' the first 'semaphore' moment appears. Moments which essentially are like a 'suspended silence with some kind of articulation. This first one, is more or less only movements, which subtly yet evoke the presence of sound, or a tension of presence.

→ §126

§126

A carpeted floor. Grey, dense, frayed. Lamps from which light falls in hazy, thin bands. High, vaulted ceiling. Walls of polished (shiny) stone.



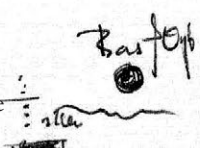
He runs sore hands over the surface, which muffles the muffled, yet thunderous sounds. Sets down the marble skull. Straight cut pillars in a row. Jacks stand in ring formations. Like tin soldiers, but their heads are veined.

A wide meander runs through the wall, its geometric pattern repeated in the chiselled key-stones of the vault.



His shoulders are heavy against numb hands. The passageway opens to the left and right on either side of a broken, skewed column.

Damping, release, shock, pressure. The movement that was previously explored on different sound sources becomes here still and yet far more space-shaping.



The sound of hands against walls. And yet; it roars, but from another place? Or is it the roar in the man's mind, muffled by the touch of the wall. Otherwise, a sense of parenthesis.

"The body is not an addition to the world, but belongs to the world."



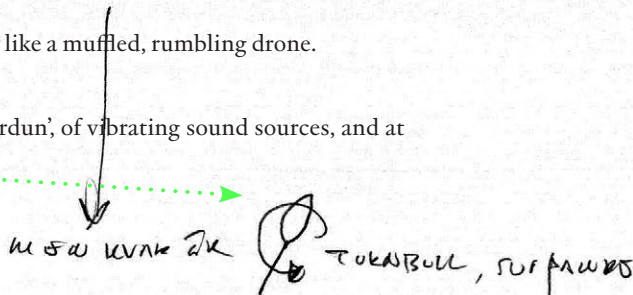
It is impossible not to hear how it sinks in pitch, by turning the head, the fan noise breaks and interferences disappear. The ear carefully delves deeper.

Sospeso. The description zooms in on the people in the room, on the colors, or the remnants of a color scale, the graininess of the skin, the veins and the sense of dissolution.

De vibrereads hæg borden! - Bostmann

It is like a muffled, rumbling drone.

IMAGE 204. (Behind the text). Different ideas of 'bordon', of vibrating sound sources, and at the bottom the bull-roarer.



[§126 cont.]

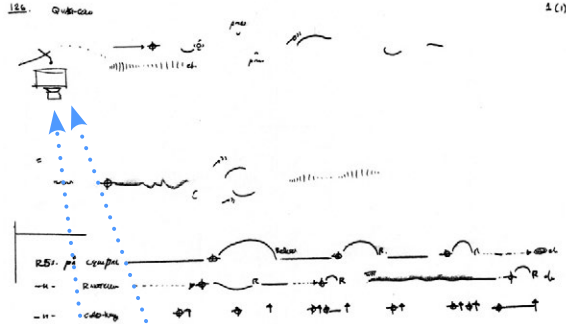


IMAGE 205. The bass drum solo (with the feedback set-up) that was explored and in the end abandoned during the work on 'songs for simone' but nevertheless became important as a reference and continues presence, and material to orchestrate.



IMAGE 206. The semaphore moments continue in §126. Here more sustained, yet still a movement. Of the bow, or the whammy-bar; still a pressure and a release.

→ into a spiral of possible extensions.

The bass drum under which an active sub-bass is activated by an overhanging microphone; the hand moves across the surface, pushing, releasing, pulling with tools. A sinusoidal sound pulses and vibrates in front, reacting tactilely.

→ §329

§329 [132][261]

We are taken towards an atrium. Set in stone but surrounded by glass (?). Around the atrium the waiting ones, in long lines

The ground covered in a white, frosty film. The men blend in with the white background. The soldier puts down the bust. Still rubbing shoulders against hands (how does this happen?).

Narrow lights under the straight-cut glass (is the atrium covered by a glass roof as well?).

The men lying on the broken surface. Their hands hold the rigid ingrained grips. The soldier moves along the inner row. Their boots leave no trace.

An impenetrable hall through which dense shadows move across the changing fields. Near the edge, a rectangular vault leads into a long, narrow, high, bright, glassy, shadowy hall.

An impenetrable hall through which dense shadows move across the changing fields. Near the edge, a rectangular vault leads into a long, narrow, high, bright, glassy, shadowy hall.

The feeling of a room surrounded by corridors (passageways). A central part with a different height in the acoustics. And yet the timbre doesn't seem to have changed significantly, but that's where the roar is coming from, isn't it

“The light boards alternate with a metallic sound.”

“The sound is a toneless, hard, metallic, shrill, continuous rattle.”

A glass-decorated, long hall along the length of which there are massive, straight columns. A bright white light falls through the rectangular openings of the windows. Chairs stand in rows. Uniform lamps contribute with a point-like light. Multi-coloured bricks in stacked stacks along the inner wall.

Low, round cones delineate a narrow passage leading to a collection of well-worn carriages. Various spherical objects lie in drifts next to the fund.

He kneels beside a symmetrical plane (the one described?). Something near him causes the sense of perspective to widen, lengthen out of sight. He takes off something. A body, the bust, the painting?

[§329 cont.]

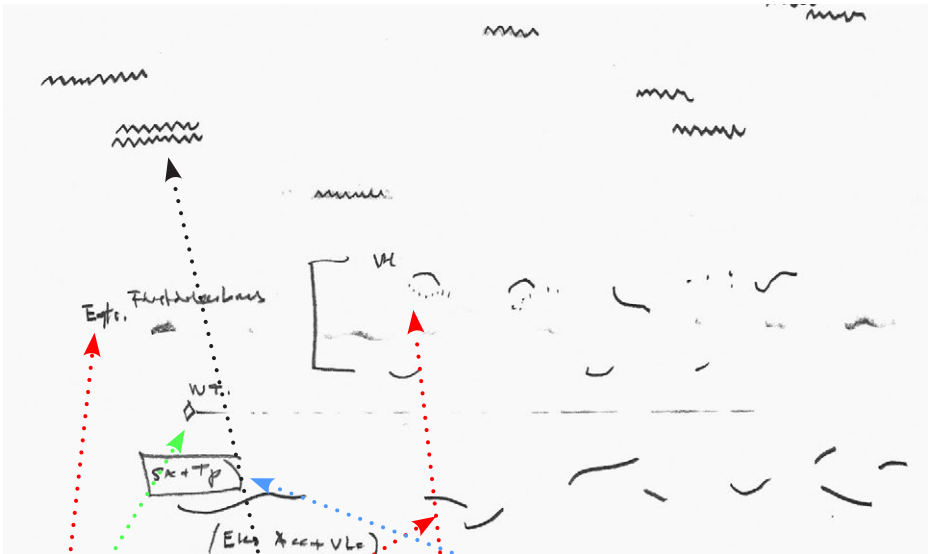


IMAGE 207. Again the saw-lines indicate the use of rasing sticks. In the centre ideas of electric guitar and gestural phrases with shorter, rhythmic impulses as well as whistle tones in the flute. At the bottom short melodic gestures in saxophone and trumpet supposed to be mirrored in accordion and cello

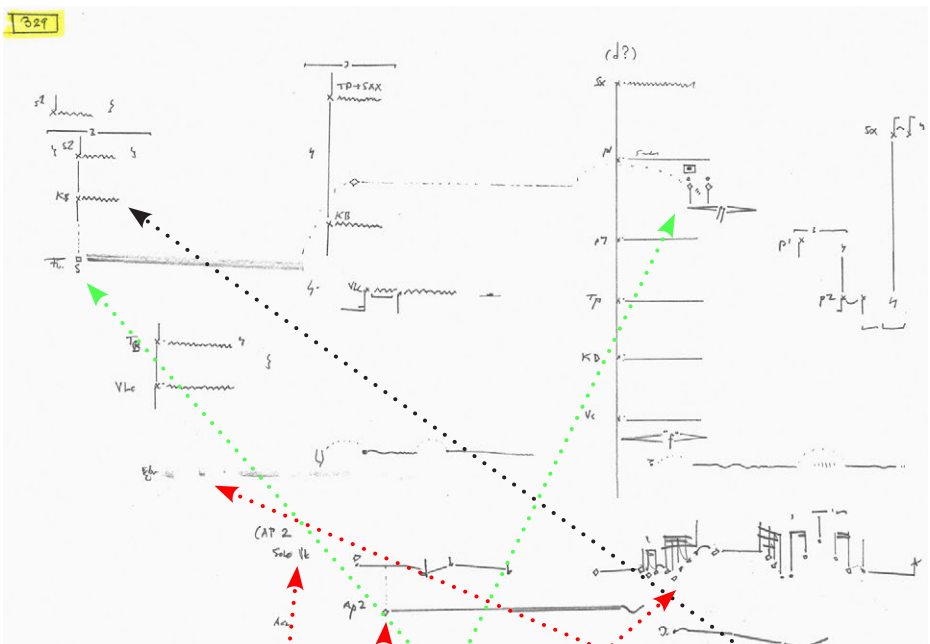


IMAGE 208. The same section as in IMAGE 207, but now more detailed. The rasing stick is still there, but now less of the other layers. The flute alternating between air noise and whistle tone remains, otherwise the cello and accordion still articulate gestures. The electric guitar gives timbral 'space' to the actions, alternating between amplifier noise and tuning fork feedback.

[§329 cont.]

A glass ceiling is sensed in some way (but never written out).

The roar of machinery that gives a distant echo into the room.

The notion of a Roman basin, of the feeling of different levels, but never described. Instead, more choreographic; bodies weighing down the ground. Shoulders hanging, stiff backs on others. There is a tension in the room, as if waiting for (the attack of) a sound that is accompanied by the changing light boards in a single metallic rattle.

The semaphore, the siren. The silence. And yet a glass-splitting intensity:

What is in front of me: a paper, a score, lines and dots. The necessity for a deep rhythm. This is key. An imaginative, but at the same time brought into presence, deep, rhythm of the sound.

I hear the sound as emanating from five directions; below, above, left, right and from within.

Presencing a presence.

All positions bring with them their own deep pulse, yet they begin to breath together. Like an imaginary organ. The gongs and cymbals.

If the sound is the first movement of the immovable. The stone pillars, the statues at Lotass. The murmur. To slowly come into being in the room.

The tone sounds shrill and strong through the bright, wide hall. The clappers hits hard against the polished, shallow bowls of the watches.

“Those waiting stand in orderly ranks.”

“The sound grows into a hollow and harsh metallic wail. The glass rings evenly the dull, deep, heavy tremors. The hatches are opened with woody, sharp clattering blows.”

“The cries rise like bright notes over a dark, dull, muted and solitary tableau.”

Unusually many sound refinements. It's like an escalation of events. Clocks that strike. Underneath it all the dull, dark tableau. But it is still an untrodden room, I only see it out of the corner of my eye, sensing it mainly with the ears.

[Symbol—Seal—Timbre]

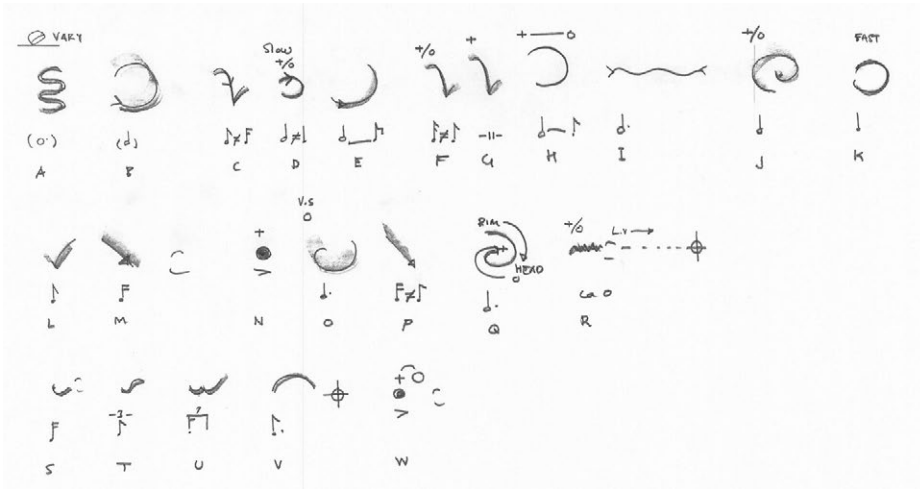


IMAGE 211. The ‘seals’ which to a large extent make up the material of the percussion parts, but also the gestural work for the whole ensemble. Besides a shape, there is also a rhythmic identity. The letter below each form has no deeper meaning than being used to order the shapes, but also to easier set them in different constellations.

Can each room be defined by a sound, a shape, a movement—an action in sound or silence? The Kkwaenggwari gestures are continuously extending their importance, a growing force of gravity.

As I write this, each seal begins to combine in larger set of movements. The sound of the Kkwaenggwari begins with something else.

The seal, like a base or promise of a sound, a reference point for both graphics and movement. And thereby by extension for time, chora, void [kenon]—structure.

In some way, the inner image becomes a *Stimmung*, but slowly evolves *through time* into a heterophony.

All the while the dull relief of voices, sinus tones and noise.

[in this way, everything becomes—almost by itself—as if it were in parentheses (epoché). And thereby something is released, a sound is no longer described by its source, but according to other denominations.]

I am sending seven pages of seals—in an articulated and sculpted (and instrumented) form—to Sori Choi in Seoul. I ask her to explore the graphics almost unconditionally; go to different places, arrange the material according to her own whims, but I ask her to keep the framing gesture of the pages, although she is free to interpret it in a different way, but keep the sense of introduction/conclusion and anticipation.

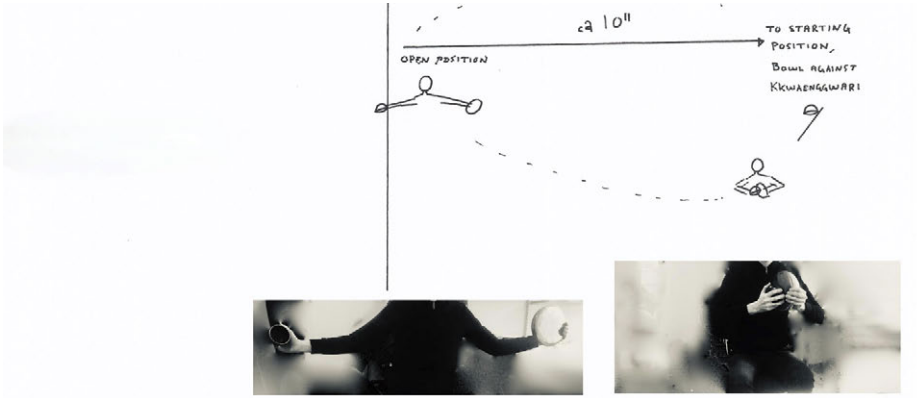


IMAGE 212. A semaphore moment. The anticipation of sound, and the tension of sound. Potentiality, and the key to almost any kind of beginning (or end) in all of the pieces part of this thesis.

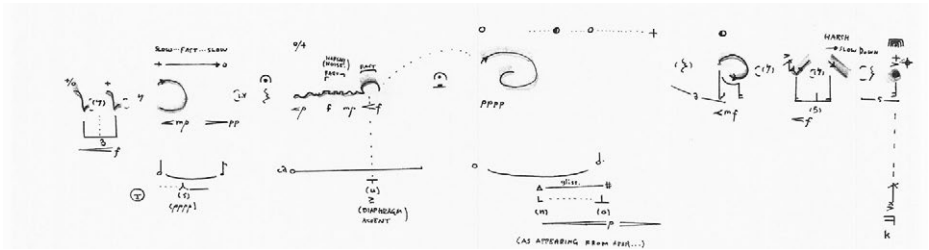


IMAGE 213. A typical exploration of these 'seals'. Here on a potential percussion part.

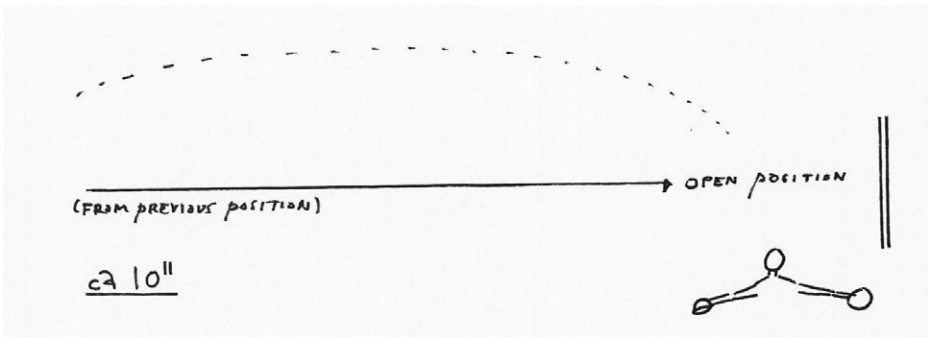


IMAGE 214. Similar as IMAGE 212, but here the 'sound' comes to an (tentative) end.

§316 [132]

The hall is framed by two high, wide colonnades. Within these, colons continue towards a deep fund. The floor is cracked. Chips and splinters lie in drifts. The roof is covered with glass in clear, thin, glossy sheets. The field of the *architrave* (the upper part of the column) repeats itself in the obscured pattern of the roof. Steel structures. The base of the pillars is grey and rests on a conical extension along the floor. A tall balustrade is lined with carved figures. Glass-enclosed cube-shaped rooms can be glimpsed along the gallery. On the upper edges of the hall are rows of chalky windows.

It is a narrow corridor. A soft, light grey carpet illuminated by narrow, white lights. The walls are covered with reddish-brown, shiny wooden panels. I glimpse rows of doors along the sides of the aisle.

“The sound is a dull, sustained, toneless regular rattle broken by muffled, mushy, moaning breaths.”

“The sound is a dull, sustained, toneless regular rattle broken by muffled, mushy, moaning breaths.”

He (?) pulls the coat tightly around him. The men fill the aisle.

[...] perforated by breath. The feeling that the men's movements are in sync. Like a forgotten rite, where time is stretched out and waiting.

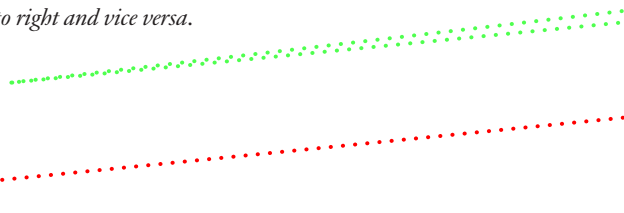
(flute notes)

There is a prior. A deep sound, sine tones traveling from left to right and vice versa.

A bass flute, a regular flute. Imitated, mirrored in the tape.

The bass flute as voice, mpb and lying notes.

Build phrases. Like the cello solo.



[§316 cont.]

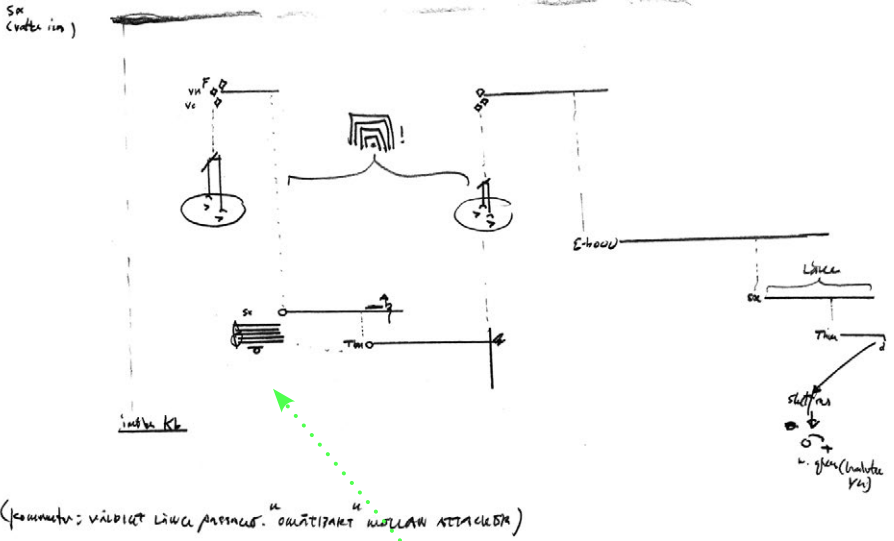


IMAGE 215. Sketches on this vast §, where the sound and the space is as divided in two, where the resonances spreads extremely slowly. Above, the saxophone is given a key role as the 'merging' of sounds. Something which is retained in 'arché'.

MERCEAU/PASTEL; un son objectif qui résonne hors de moi dans l'instrument.

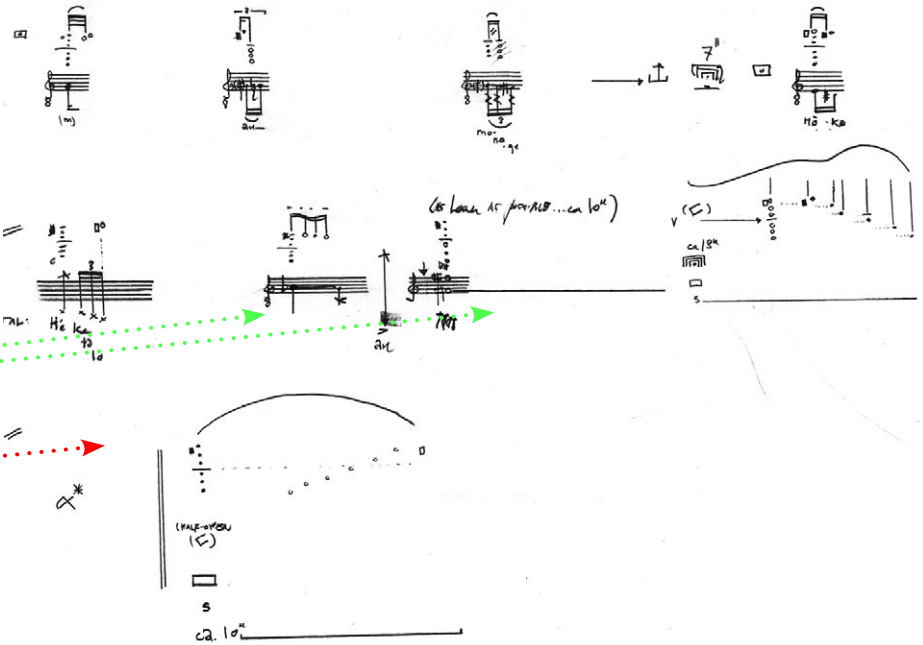


IMAGE 216. The flute notes grows into cells.

[§316 cont.]

Only occasional high notes.

The resonance from surrounding rooms.

The heart (of) sound?

The tremolo, let each sound cell become another, let the point of gravity shift. Make every move different:

Those waiting walk in rows through the colonnades of the hall.

He picks up the worn, worn amulet (token?).

“The words fall in a staggered, bumpy, rough sequence.”

The sign guards next to the pillars. Hands resting along the sides of the body.

“The sound is an ore-heavy, incessant, steady, toneless roar.”

The soldier faces the far, tapering side.

Flakes, shards and splinters crash brittlely under his heavy boots. The stairs echo in the high one. Bright and spacious hall. The steady, regular and single beat merges at a colorless, gritty surface [...].

[§316 cont.]

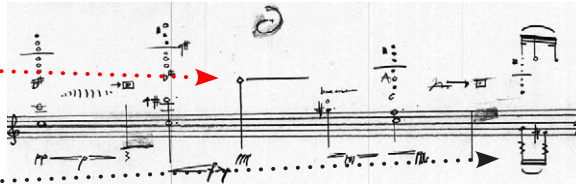


IMAGE 217. Flute material.

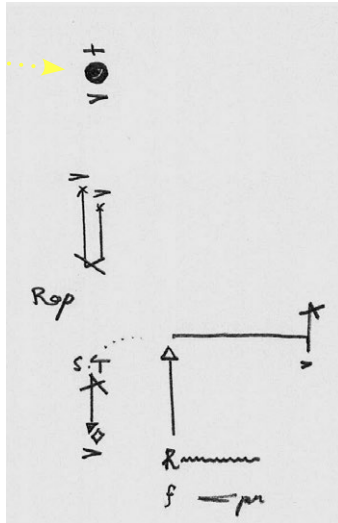


IMAGE 218. Ibid.

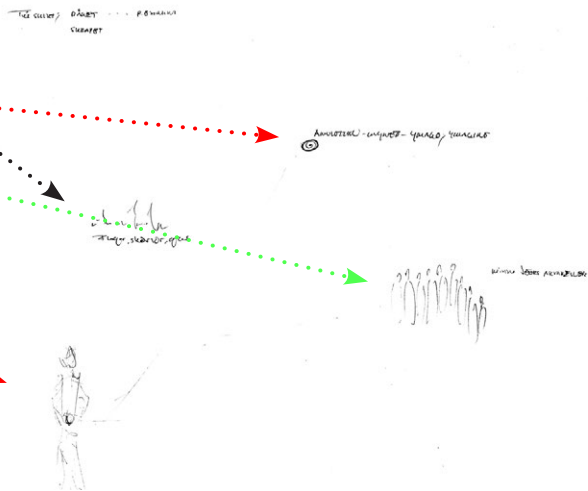


IMAGE 219. Overview of the §. The spiral figure indicate the amulet (held by the figure in the left-hand corner. Here associated to 'ymagino', an old kind of amulet, but also an old violin piece of mine, whose material is included in many parts throughout the different pieces associated with 'den svarta solen'.

[§316 cont.]

Although the materials and patterns give an image of modernist or functionalist remnants, the environment constantly gives an echo of classicism, or the ruins of a Greek temple, a Roman building. The paint is peeling. Everything is as if in decay.

Here, the sound of the great hall's reverberations is heard like heavy breathing. The scraping of the feet against the floor's demolished varnish comes into focus as soon as possible. The ore-heavy roar becomes no more than an experience.

Xenakis, the notational solution of the glissando, not only on a macro-level, but in details, the short melismatic and ornamental glissando.

Rhythm is central. But not as duration. It is another, a pulsating, non-stop now. The sound is spherical, I just turn it. Around, around, pulling forward and alienating me. It's like I can play anything, as long as the deeper pulse, the extension is maintained.

Over and over it's like I'm starting from scratch. There is an ocean of sound waiting within me, but it is as if the extent of this ocean is overflowing. I am—it feels like—at point Nemo, and at the same time it is precisely that point that I am drawn towards, want to, want to resonate with.

I have all the material in front of me, but the order eludes me. Still.

[§316 cont.]

The image is a composite of two parts. The upper part is a graphical sketch on a light background, featuring various musical notations and symbols. It includes a vertical dotted line on the left, several horizontal lines, and various musical symbols like notes, rests, and beams. Colored dotted lines (red, green, blue, yellow) originate from this sketch and point downwards to the lower part of the image. The lower part is a handwritten musical score on a grid background, showing multiple staves with musical notation. The same colored dotted lines from the sketch are used to trace the flow of the music from the sketch to the score. The score includes staves for 'Vc' and 'Avc'. The overall image illustrates the transition from a graphical sketch to a final handwritten musical score.

IMAGE 220.

IMAGE 221. These two images shows the transition from the graphical sketch of §316 and the final handwritten score.

→ §92

§92 [253]

The deep hall slopes towards low, glazed ledges. The horizon of the room overlooks castles, towers, domes, pylons and domes rising.

Formless shadows move through the hall, forming a jumble of vague, sparse links. The soldier patrols the upper ledge.

The hall plunges down, where he sits, into a dark, impenetrable darkness.

The murmur is back. Grows in the extended embrace of the room but maintains the expression. There is a stronger sense of markings in the room. The levels, the placements give a more multifaceted (and complex) acoustic.

“The sound is a muffled, muffled, sustained and continuous murmur.”

I hear the transition as two different levels, the upper one towards the skyline of the horizon line, the lower towards the more hidden parts of the building.

Under the stairs run two narrow passages of shimmering polished onyx.

The further into the building we go, the more unlikely its architecture seems. Here, placed as if on a ledge against an unmanageable, almost city-like, skyline. Or a landing against an entire terminal building. It becomes increasingly unclear whether the buildings (structures) described tower inside or outside.

The glass walls, glass ceilings and generally the admission of light from the outside blur the dividing line. But the light?

An Agartha, a utopian or hallucinated sister world.

A dyad that recurs, is reinterpreted and the low, granular drone.

The fingers as a sculptor, but also sound.

Air as a natural part of every sound, but not always in focus.

Possible element of Korean gong, like the seal.

The low vibrating throat tremolo, it is the point around which the music rotates. It is followed, surrounded by short, falsetto-like touches, low vocal lines, and soaring high R-articulated, sung, lines.

[§92 cont.]

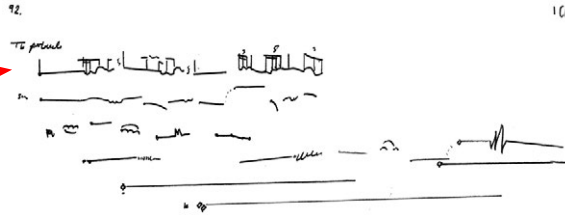


IMAGE 222. The murmurs.

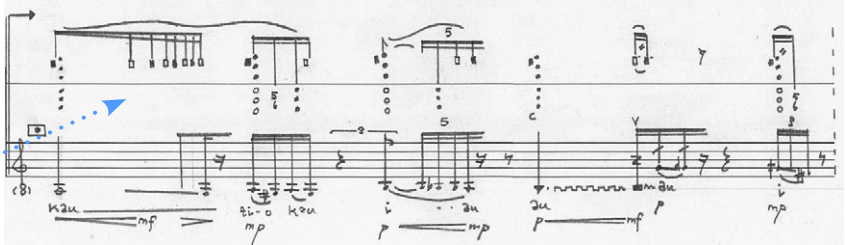


IMAGE 223. Flute explorations; voice filtered by fingerings, and a deep, throaty sound.

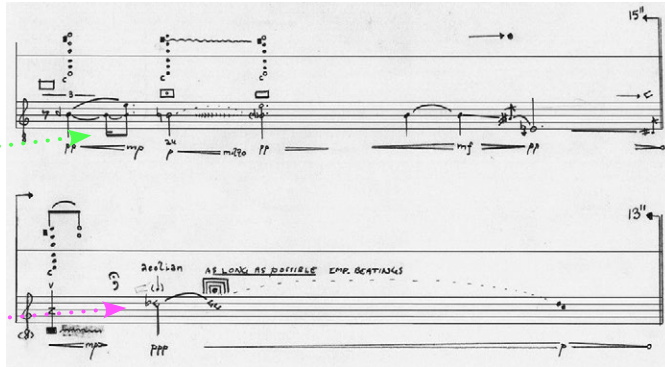


IMAGE 224. Continue flute techniques, alterations between dyads and air, fingered glissandi.

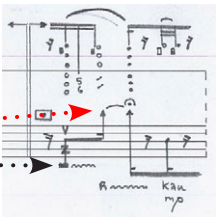


IMAGE 225.

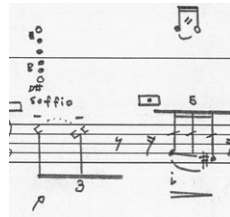


IMAGE 226.

IMAGE 223–226. all trace basic 'motives' explored in relation to an unnamed flute part.

[§92 cont.]

And the semaphore with maintained intensity.

A rectangular, long, hall with longitudinal white, rounded columns that support the beams of a low-lying roof. Chairs attached to the floor, facing the room's expansive dais. On the sides, tall, wide windows in white. The floorboard arranged in one. Simple pattern. The walls as in two matte fields of grey-white and dove blue tone respectively. Lamps hang in rows perpendicular to the room.

On the left side of the room are overturned, slanted shapes. At the edge of the platform, a raised desk. Heavy dark red draperies hang from the ceiling. The dais extends to the rear surrounded by shifting soffits.

The sides of the room are obliquely angled and at its (cut off) sides, prismatic shapes sow. Somewhere (on the stage), against a flattened edge (of the stage?) stands the grand piano.

A chair is described, a crooked, scarred green, black with a back with a floral pattern. His hands stroke softly.

There is an obscurity in the room, through the fine grain of which you can discern pieces, shapes, images, figures. Along the edges of the field is a dense, murky hatched darkness. The room leads in two passages, one of which leads into an incomprehensibly bright and glazed hall.

It is an abandoned concert stage. For the first time an instrument. The grand piano that stands somewhere peripheral on the stage.

Its lingering tones can still be heard, but can the impact still be heard?


A pedal; the timbre almost imperceptible change. Endless.

Is there anything more here? I hear only the darkness from the dimly described pages.

Again, the description of the room is based on a strictly non-Euclidean logic; as if the angles and sizes are only described as the most simplified representation of something unmentionable.

[§92 cont.]

Above the instrumental parts hovers a plan. A final, tentative, topography of sounds, which essentially needs to be followed.



To remember, the accumulation of the tape part will create a special eerie sound world when the final space appears.

It could be important to note, that for this sound-passage it could be wise to decide upon a final orientation. In some ways this method (of the tape-part) and of the topography excludes a complete free will of orientation on the part of the musician, or it demands multi-layered topography. It needs to be reflected upon. The simple direction has a practical sense, the multi-layered direction has a more poetic sense, but comes across as much more complicated to control (or even realize).

[§92 cont.]

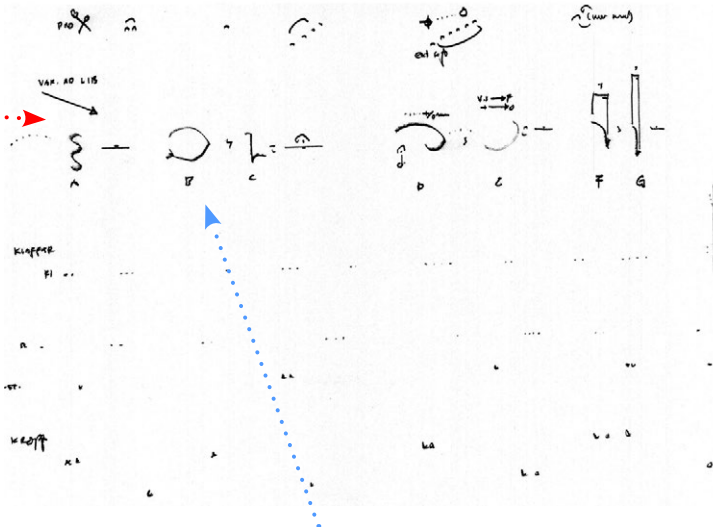


IMAGE 229. Elaboration of the Kkwaenggwari-seals. The mallet on the 'roundel'. The hinted rhythms of the nameless others. A clapping, a murmuring, an endless stream, yet this sketch is written over and over again, continuously with variation. Inversed, reversed, extended (suspended), contacted.

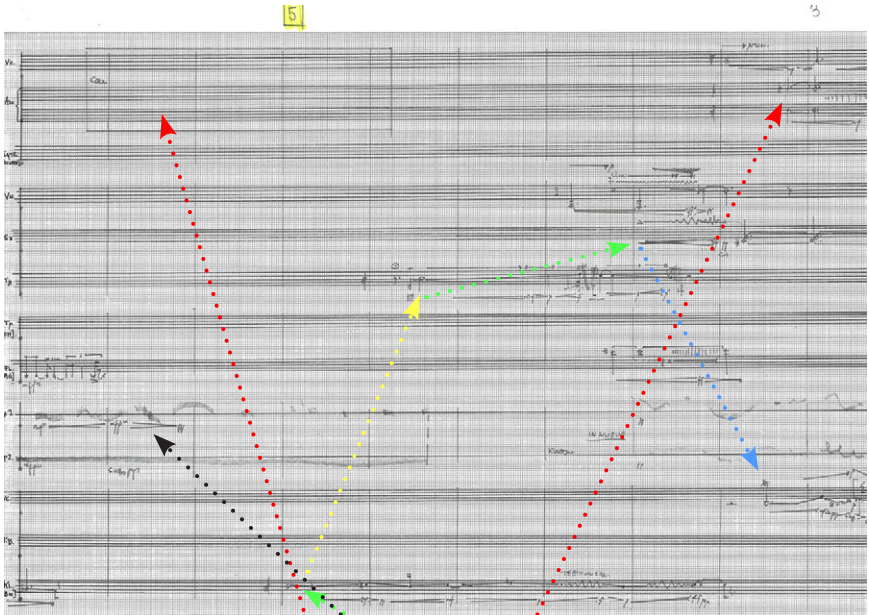


IMAGE 230. In the end, in 'arché' the seals are still left (traced), the clapping is rather transformed to murmurs (through megaphones) and suspended sounds. The repetition is hardly heard but is rather noticed in the Klangfarben melody where each entrance mimics the previous one, but far away, and always hallucinating: baskl/trombone to saxophone to cello.

→ §5

§5

A deeply cut and shimmering vault leads into a dim, cube-shaped, grey room. The levelled floor cushions the steps. His boots in the dust. Picking up the scuffed, worn-out coins. Cut into his already sore hands.

They were waiting by the back wall.

“The sound is a solitary and muffled, faint murmuring gurgling.”

The light is filtered grey through the murky haze. The scratches, notches and marks of the walls are reflected in the grey figure of the Other. The coat hides his shoulders. His outstretched hand is a finely shaped and chiselled roundel.

At the rear edge, two tall gates open.

The falling words. But not from The Other. Not from the coins. Cut the hands. The outstretched hand, a roundel? I see in front of me the round part of the percussion mallet, the hard stick of the Kkwaenggari. The body that moves and the surrounding (almost invisible) nameless figures.

“The words fall in a steady, steady and uninterrupted stream.”

Mere hint of a room.

The sky somehow shines down the corridor, whose walls reflect its light.

The other's face emerges from the walls. His faces alternate in a regular sequence. Detailed descriptions of the other's physiognomy, set in the same pale grey, listless character. The soldier leans against the wall, strokes his hands against the surface. The other's faces line the walls.

The faces are as if etched and mirrored along the aisle. Hands that simultaneously pull along the wall. The sky shining through from above. It is

[§5 cont.]

quiet, suggestive. Above all, it is a retake. Something (like the multiplication of faces) returns, again and again.

The room revolves around itself, but there is no hint of a round shape, no sense of labyrinth, but is found primarily in the feeling that the duplication of faces on the glazed walls must work as hypnosis. I stay and let my eyes go around, around, around.

The sounds are repeated, varied, stretched out, the perspective slowly shifts away, backwards, forwards.

Proportions. Distance.

Over and over again. How long is the pause?

The knuckle use of the Kkwaenggwari and the thunder drum. Surrounded by residue of stones, thunder sheet and cymbals. Skin, wood, brick. Still, it is through that which I bring them together, the use of the voice, that they continue to evolve their phrase. The voice is not only a way to emphasize the human being, but it also delineates the space, creates the form which—however unstable it might be—brings the sound to a temporary articulation.

The question then is how I portray the possibility of (a) voice. Where and how (when)? And the stones, I hear the stones all the time. As soon as I let my vocal cords sound, a stone is dropped on the ground. The symbolism strikes me, and at the same time it gives an experience of the resonance of the space. It gives relief to the line, and I can go further and further into shaping the gesture.

The orchestra is extended with an additional cello and accordion.

These two have a special role. They are ad hoc. They follow a different linearity, one which ventures into adjacent spaces. Perhaps they do not even begin from outside (§1). Perhaps they only act in adjacent spaces (from afar).

→ §15

§15 [185]

The square hall is bounded by a gently undulating soffit. The room is obscured by massive, angular shapes. The men stand in a row. The shoulders sink into the wall. The room tapers towards a wide, high fund. The land is scarred, ravaged.

The soldier. The sand flows in thin trickles.

A wide, dark opening is visible in the far part of the room.

The feeling of a Shinto temple. The instruments are there, but hardly in action. The bodies were in prayer, contemplation, thoughts. I just hear the presence vibrating.

“The sound is a muffled, soundless, dull, steady, single roar.”

The high hall arches in pearly white tones towards the ceiling. The arches, in several parts, extend the perspective, deepen the spatial image. Beneath the ceiling (or sunken) stretch marble white arches, which catch and amplify a dim light. The walls are covered with white structural fabric.

The height in the hall must be well over five meters. Narrow footbridges cut across the room. The light boards rattle. Frost on the glass windows.

The waiting ones move aimlessly in clusters over the fine-grained foundation.

He sets down the plaster bust. The edge rubs. The dust swirls in spirals.

“The words fall in a cut-up, irregular, staggered stream.”

He puts his hand on the other. The grey of the rock does not prevent the feeling of stone.

The soldier lifts the disfigured skull.

The men are resting against a white shimmering embankment, the field of vision is illuminated by a blinding white light (which comes in periods?).

The hall narrows to reveal two identical grey arches leading into adjacent rectangular halls.

Here it is only heard as a space. Possibly as an echo of the bust being set down again. I don't bear where the falling words are coming from. The light is ringing. Scelsi's Maknongan. A completely surreal element in a place without direction, but still a foundation (sound).

[§15 cont.]

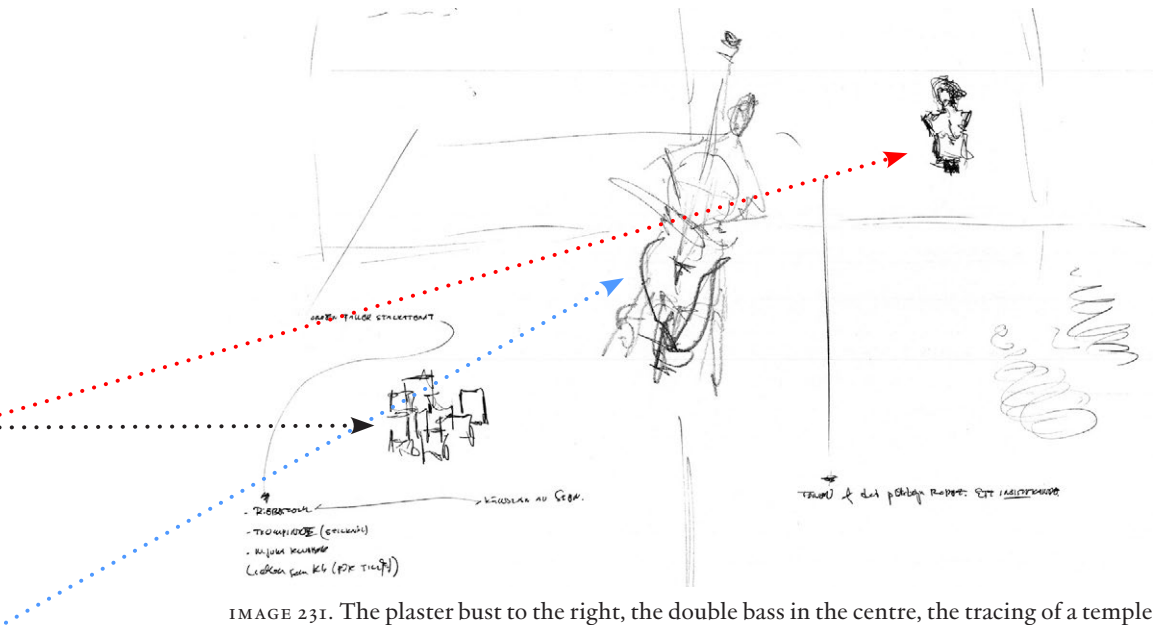


IMAGE 231. The plaster bust to the right, the double bass in the centre, the tracing of a temple in the bottom left corner together with markings on mallets, objects and sensations (stone, dust, chalk).

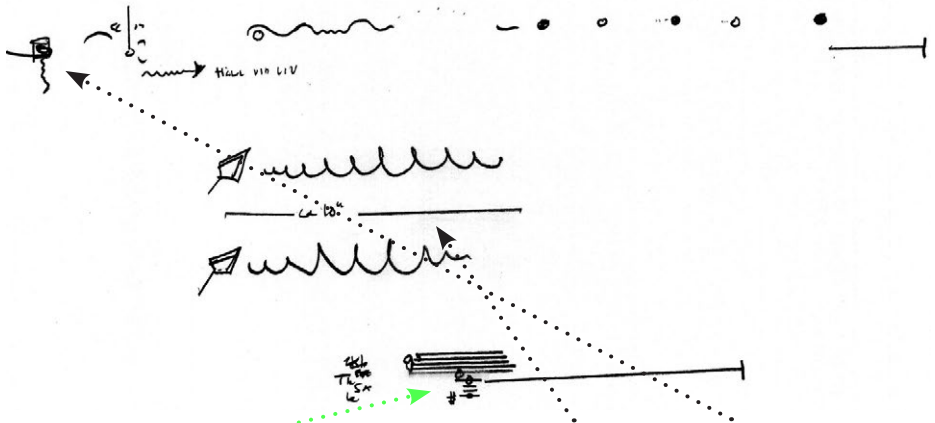


IMAGE 232. The double bass transformed into the windwand and spring drum, underneath a moving bordun. From front (trombone) to back (bass clarinet) to the right-back (double bass), ending toward the front right (saxophone). In 'arché' this passage was never completely included, although used partially in 'songs for simone' in §185 which is a parallel space to §15 (that is the sound of both paragraphs coincide both in time and space, they are adjacent spaces.)

[§15 cont.]

The feeling of stone. Made of plaster. The pond. The dazzling white light.

When she shouts. Completely enclosed in the double bass.

A single, deep glissando.

A double bass humming softly. Disperses in cello—trombone—percussion—clarinet—viola—accordion—oboe—violin—flute etc.

At certain points the timbre widens, the glissando changes octave. Sometimes the glissando extends itself, sometimes it is only hinted at. Sospiro.

At the same time, there is another layer. Horizontal sounds. Clarinet and trombone in crescendo movements. Similar in strings and brass. Like an outer room that alternately closes and opens.

There must also be voids, endless horizon lines and rushing shifts.

Rhythm? Yes, but as glissando, at least in timbre. I hear rocks. I hear stone against wood. Everchanging, ever shifting.

Saxophone multiphonics slowly extended through superball mallets on thunder sheet—the guitar enters. The piano's extended skeleton gives the bass, the voices come in slowly.

Battuto on contrabass and cello with soft, soft mallets.

The Gran cassa's deep sound. The wood on top creates a tense and higher tone.

A restricted use of the hair of the bow, only intermittently the full bow. Suppressed. Restrained.

What are the two voices? Now no more than shadows of each other. One barely audible and still in focus on stage. One drowns out the other, but underneath something else grows.

The surge of the intense ambient sound is noticeable.

§15 is almost as a paragraph that in 'songs for simone', 'rumori ii' and 'archē' materialize elsewhere. The deep glissandi, the mallets, the low voices, the saxophone multiphonics... They appear in other sections, but here they are only kept within. Fixed. As a potentiality, but without articulation. Fragmented. In ruins.

§157 [74]

Echo. The feeling of an abandoned, yet not empty, place. The outlines of tall obelisks, shapeless buildings. Proportions of incalculable dimensions. Buildings without end, but also without boundaries—and yet; the sense of infinity is also a consequence of a dimensionality that does not behave as one is used to.

A cry, a murmur, is amplified through winding passages. The rasping that propels does not produce echoes, but forms clusters along with it. And yet a kind of silence must also be prepared. This first feeling of just “gazing” into an empty space. The first touch articulates a starting point, but the timbre is already there.

The murmurers are stone pillars. Bare faces and mouths.

[notes on ‘archē’]

Each instrument receives a paper on which each “space” is detailed autonomously.

Each such “space” is placed in the “small” group:

Vlc+acc [+egtr]

Basklarinett—flugelhorn/tpt

Bfl + Kb

Pr & 2

Vn+vlc+tbm

(Speakers)

This means that both of these spaces influence each other

From this one more consideration is made (a reflection on resonance or how they can affect another group)

If possible, each of these spaces has the possibility to contain a solo/outburst/silence that breaks with the linearity or logic of the individual space.

The result of these explorations are placed in constellation with each other.

Force lines between a tentative topography are deduced. What could break/extend/suspend the constellations?

These extensions/changes are added in the individual parts or focused as gravitational points between the parts.

The final realization is then done. Either a scored, fixed combination—or rather an individual process of progression in which (during which) certain points of articulation/synchronization is constructed.

In a sense I imagine a vastly extended and slow piece, with clear points of explosions.

[§157 cont.]

Below: IMAGE 235–236. Parts of the realization of what was hinted on page 328. From the description of which material to use (from the actual paragraph), to the graphical 'topography', to the transition of sound in the space.

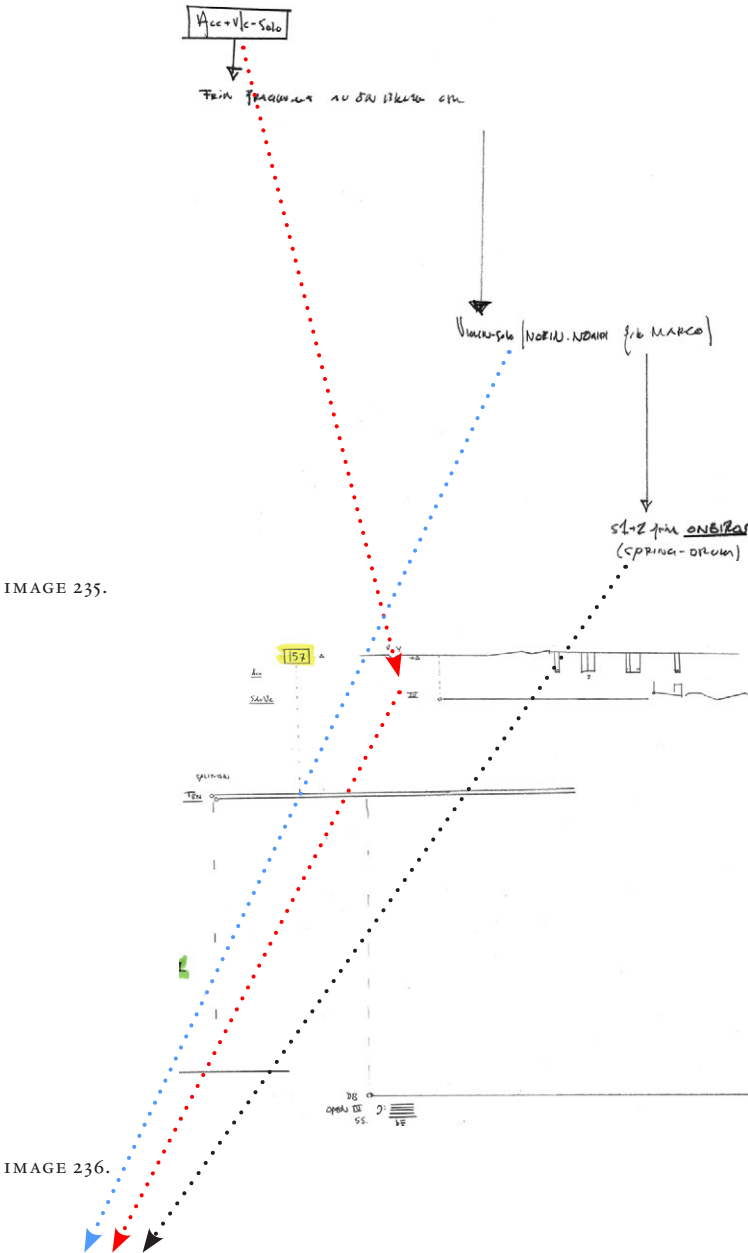


IMAGE 235.

IMAGE 236.

[§157 cont.]

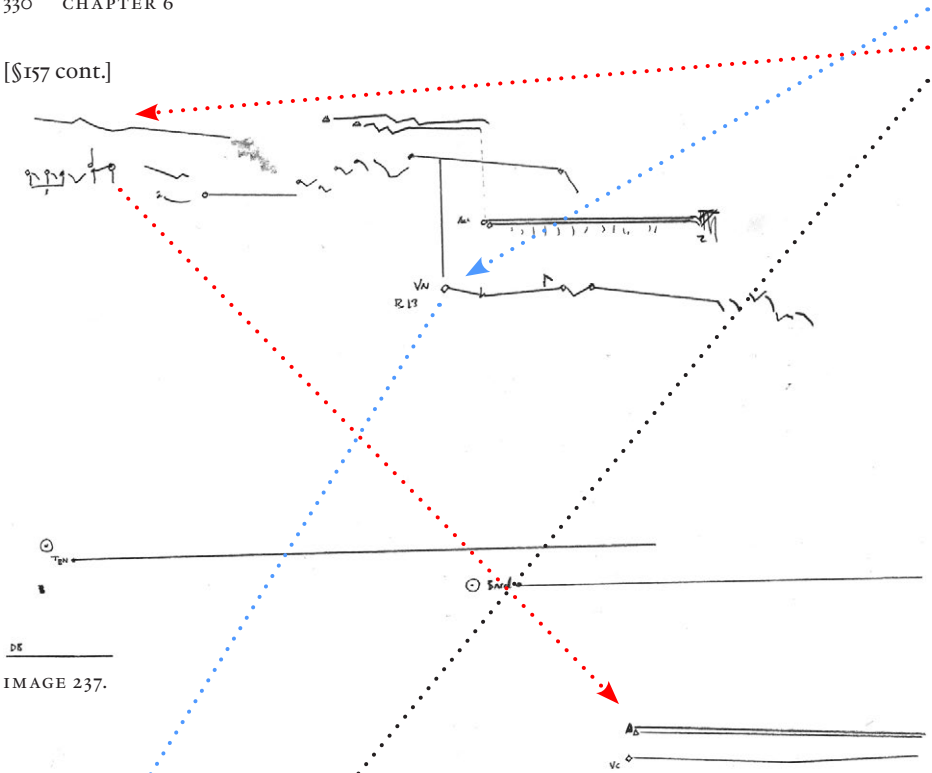
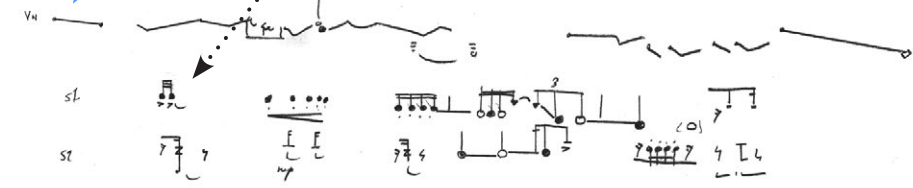


IMAGE 237.



Handl.
IMAGE 238.

[§157 cont.]

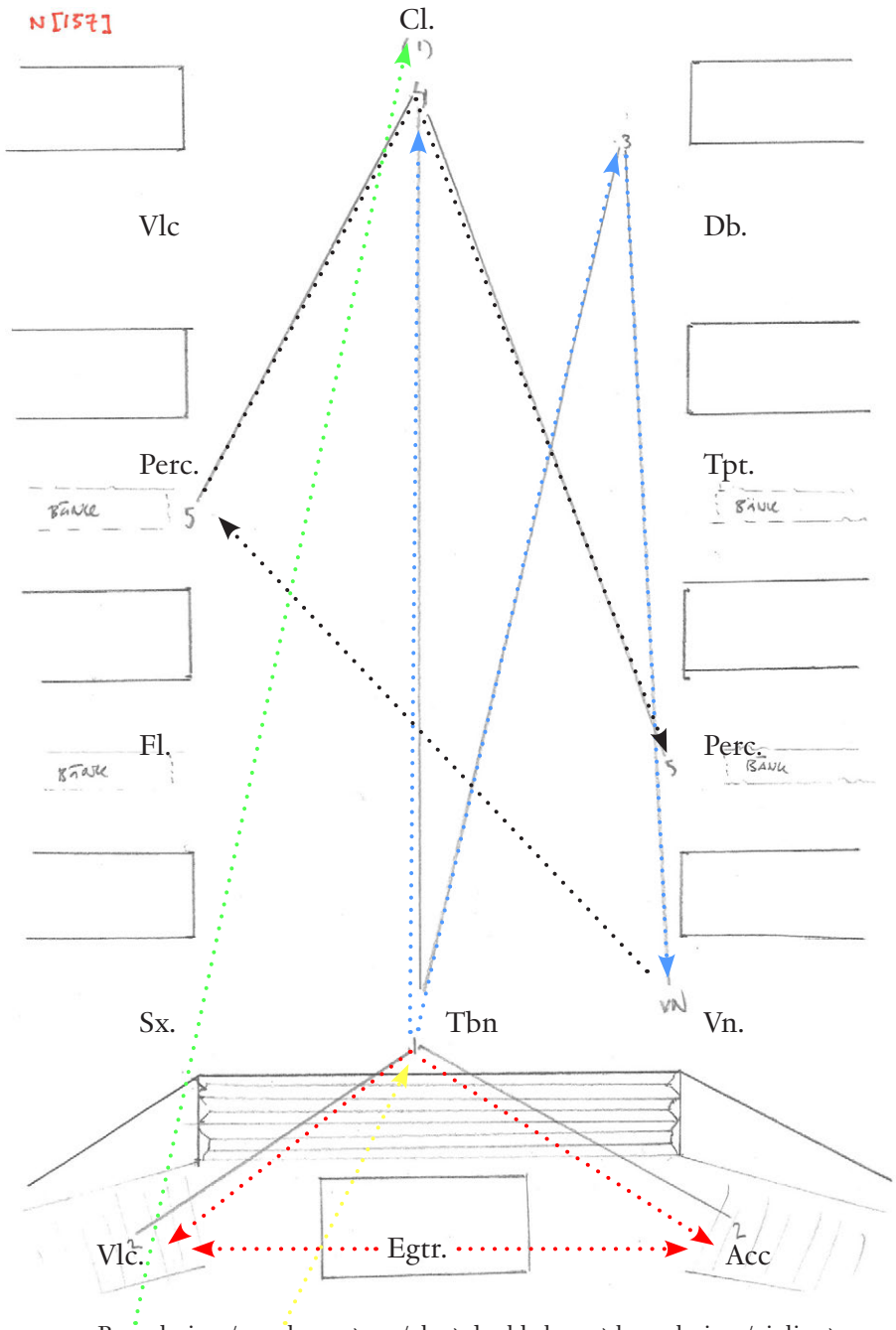


IMAGE 239. Bass clarinet/trombone → acc/vlc → double bass → bass clarinet/violin → 2 percussion etc.

→ §308

§308

On the floor of the oblong, bright, high hall are rows of attached chairs. They form similar dark fields that lead towards the tight fund. The light from a shiny outer wall (NB!). The floor sounds faintly under hard, glossy tiles.

A pale strip of sky spans the room. The hand strokes the neck.

“The sound is a dull, muffled, faint, sonorous, hissing murmur.”

On the far side, nine uniform passages open:

Only the activity that produces sound remains. Only the faintest, dullest, carry through, and yet they are as if the hands can now draw sound out of the ground. As if everything is waiting to be redeemed.

The calloused hands in rigid extent.

Puts the arm on the other person’s shoulder.

At the rear edge of the room runs a deep, cut gutter that leads through vaults into wide adjoining halls.

“The sound is a brittle-sounding, bright and faintly tinkling rattle.”

[...] **The memory of an accordion. The sound that travels from one manual to another, the feeling of height as the notes merge, beat, reverberate. And then the end of the phrase.**

“The words fall in a bumpy, choppy, staggered stream.”

The words (and their rhythms) which at first had the feeling of a distant, but also close, evocative presence, become increasingly difficult to take in. Is it rather the poet’s (Lotass) text that is described?

The glazed stone slabs.

The other’s face is covered by a sheet of metal, the whole figure (like the tin figure he may still be said to be) begins to crack and bare bit by bit, perforated by metal. Like Giacometti’s towering statues, both The Other and the surrounding, nameless, choir appear.

[§308 cont.]

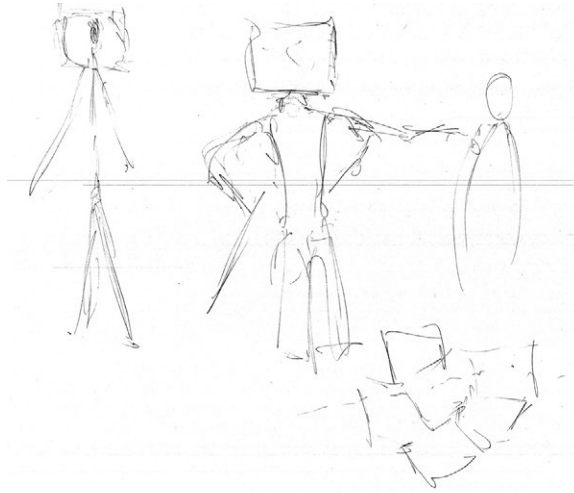


IMAGE 240. The hands against the shoulders. The tracing of Giacometti sculptures. Faceless.

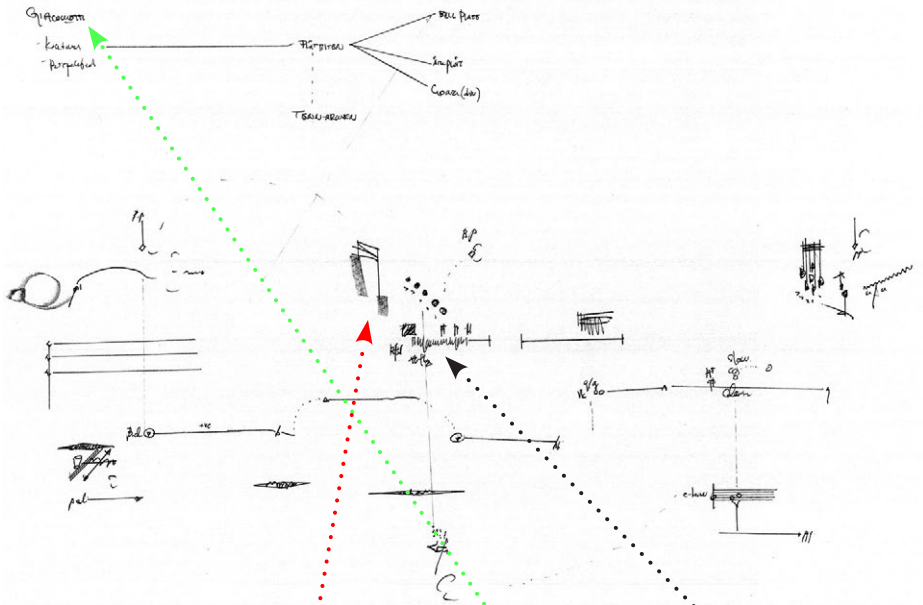


IMAGE 241. Sketches. On the top left hand, Giacometti, and then staggered stream of cut-up sounds, with the imaginary accordion presenting itself. It is in this space and the annexed §89 that the accordion shifts from elusive to real.

[§308 cont.]

The inhuman. Every touch [...] presence.

inhabit [...] an eternity. A clay pot. A tremolo. A cymbal.

Falling stones. Accent.

Presence.

The percussionist open his arms, closes them, without a single audible sound [...]

The organ. Now, an accordion. Density. Manuals. Strange echoes.

Air. [...]

IMAGE 242-244. In the final topography of 'arché's' §308, before the score, the rhythms have disappeared. Instead, the accordion has taken over. The Giacometti figures are nameless, faceless, motionless, but the sound transform across the distance of the concert space. All emanating from accordion's two manuals. The accordion part continuously placed at the top of the page.

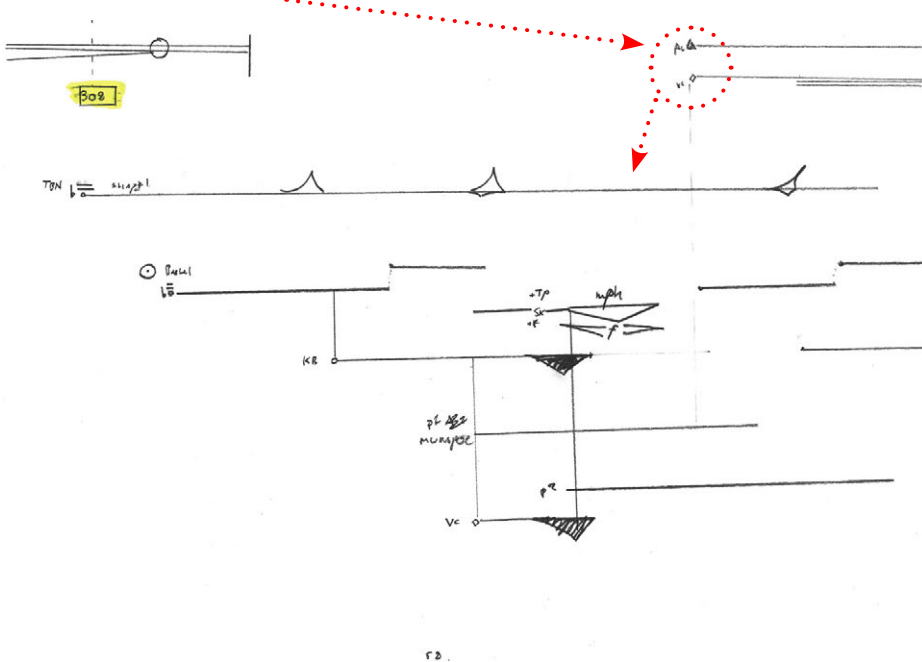


IMAGE 242. 308:a

[§308 cont.]

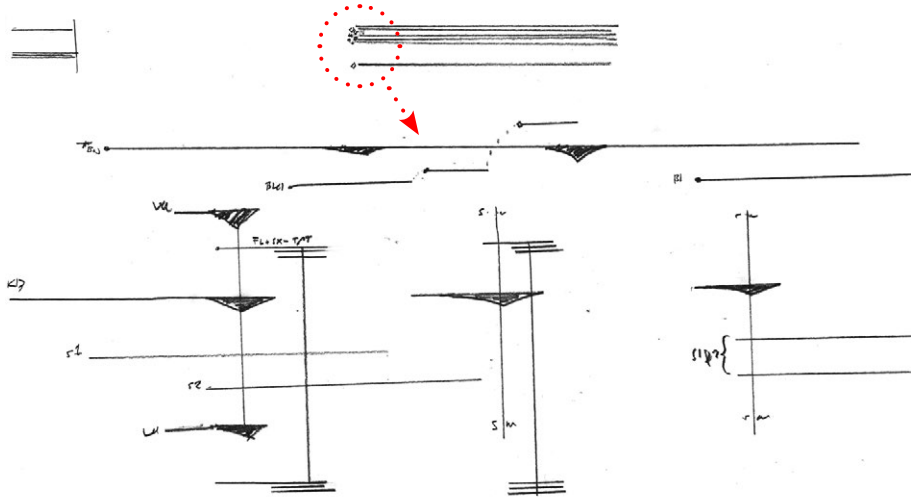


IMAGE 243. 308:b

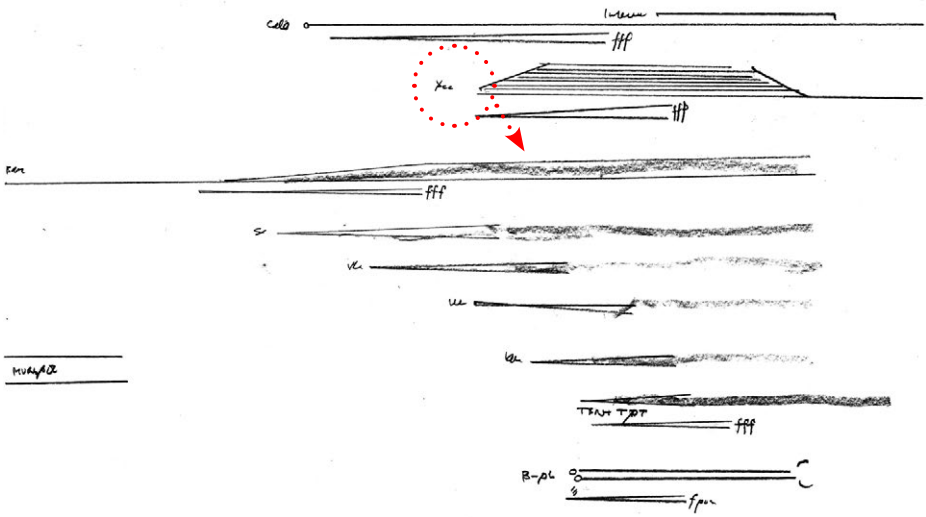


IMAGE 244. 308:c

→ §65

§65

As close as I get to the paragraph of the organ. And still far away. The outstretched body is repeated in a labyrinthic field. The soldier walks along the edges of the vast room. The stench burns. The soldier's scarred wound. The sound sticks to his dry lips.

In the images on the following three pages the transition from graphics to score is made visible. Not all layers are present (the development of acc+cello-part or the 'secondary' sound level), additionally the sketch work as has been seen in previous paragraphs are hardly present. However, it shows how the 'strategy of sound' and the exploration of the paragraphs of Lotass' work together and create the final work. Here, a particular focus on the tracing of the percussion part. Follow the black arrow.

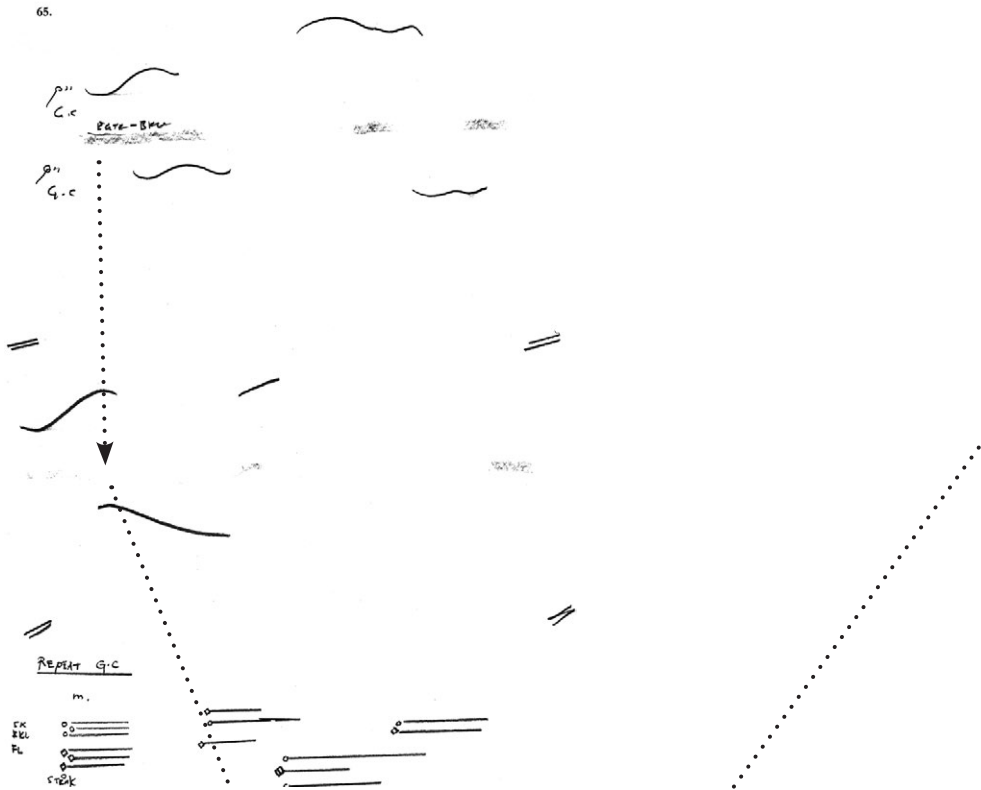


IMAGE 245. Percussion material with hints of the electric guitar. At first considered 'primary' material, but in the rather an in-between.

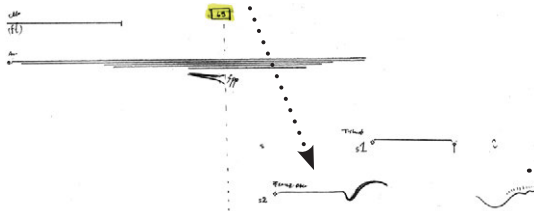


IMAGE 246. Ensemble sketch for 'arché'

[§65 cont.]

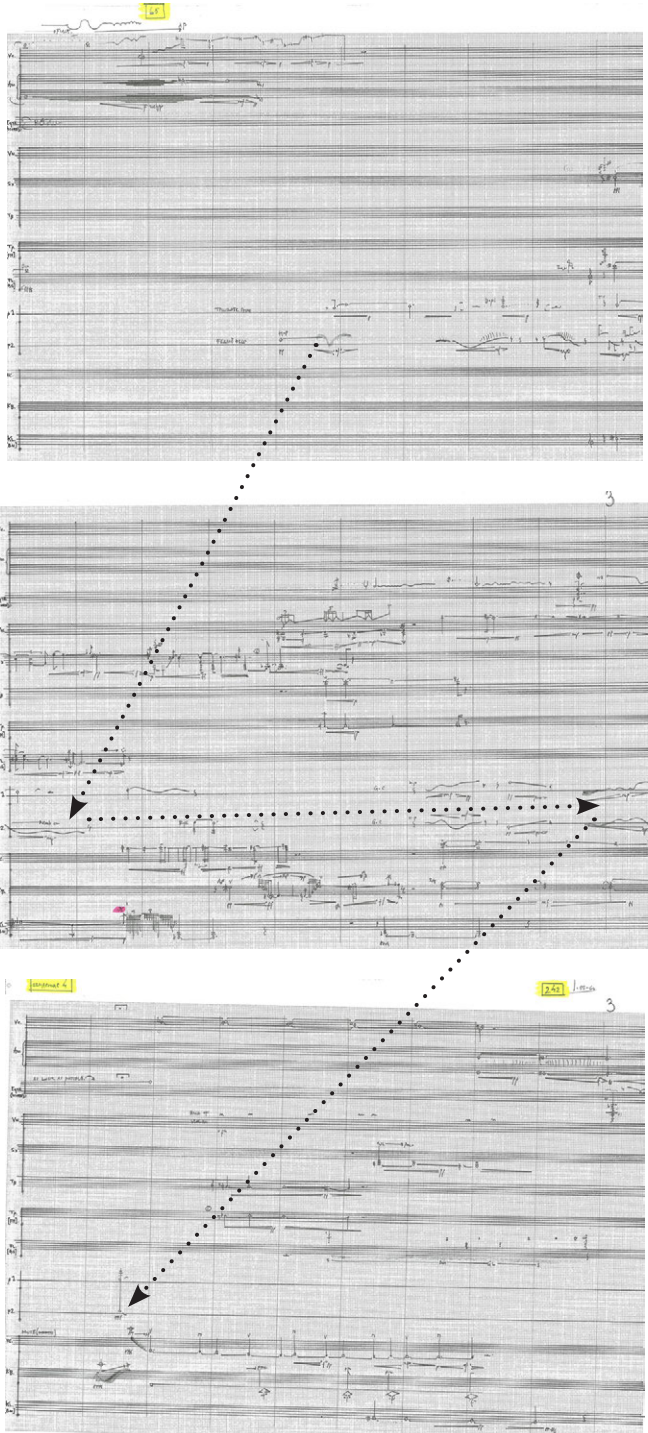


IMAGE 250–252. Final score of ‘arché’ corresponding to IMAGE 247–249.

[§65 cont.]



IMAGE 253. Placements.



IMAGE 254. Placements.

→ §242

§242

The men stand in a row by a narrow passage. The hands brush against the cracked wall.

The straight cut edge rubs against the hands.

Once again inside a grand room, immediately the sounds are more active, vague figures and traces of motion and sound.

The sense that the movements are as they were.

How far does my ear reach? Is this as far away from every entry and exit as possible?
No-place.

The sunken city of the south pacific.

The metallic rattle, the toneless words, the murmuring, monotonous. Endless. Hands against the wall. How the room cuts into their hands.

Seven statues. Hovering. Standing tall and luminous. A sound, or a number of discreet sounds, similar in essence, different in appearance.

[§242 cont.]

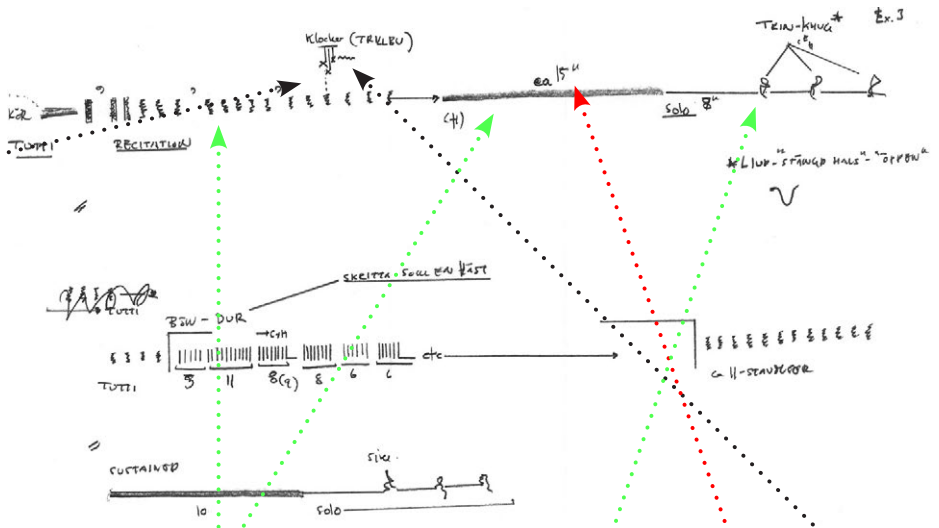


IMAGE 255. Tracing a Gyüto Monk recitation (DUR—the sound of horses trotting) of a Tibetan monastery. The repeated actions, notes on particular ornamentations, durations, instruments. Although, Lotass never mentions Tibet, her writing repeatedly places me in an archaic place, where the monoliths, the steles, the statues easily begin this chanting, this repetitive, yet varied, incantation.

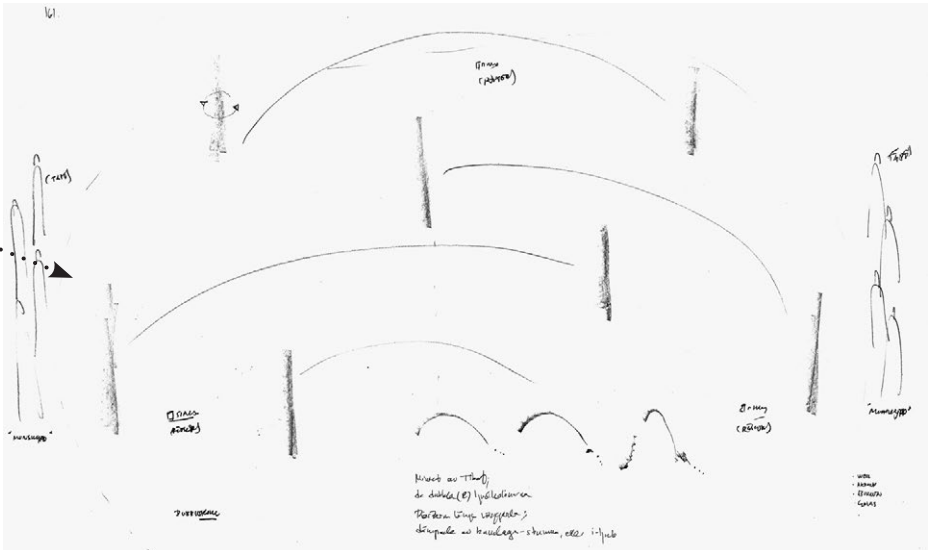


IMAGE 256. Again, the monolithic sounds return. The sketch from §161 returns. In the §242 in 'arché' the movement of sound is continuously moving from one side to the other, shifting from foreground to background. At the end of the hall the continuous activity of the soloistic, hidden, duo atop the staircase.

[§242 cont.]

“The images of the light boards alternate with a brittle, metallic rattle.”

The sine waves of something ominous, growing, but still—seemingly—unmoving presence.

“The words fall in an unrelenting, sonorous, steady sequence.”

The voice of Simone Weil. Gravity and grace.

“The sound is a murmuring, single and monotonous murmur.”

The voice of Saint Teresa of Àvila.

“Sound is a hollow, prolonged, muffled, single, wailing sound.”

Interior spaces. Interior castle.

“The words fall in an even, steady and uninterrupted stream.”

A place. A space. Labyrinth.

“The sound is a single and muffled, faintly humming rattle”.

The voices of six or seven performers. Placed adjacent to the statues (which remain invisible?).

“(the Witness) the words flow in a monotonous, single-sounding stream.”

The statues emanating the sine waves. Waves creating a different space. An imaginative space corresponding to something mythic.

“The sound is a faint humming, low, dull and muffled tableaux”

“The sound grows into a single, hollow, dissonant murmur”

[§242 cont.]

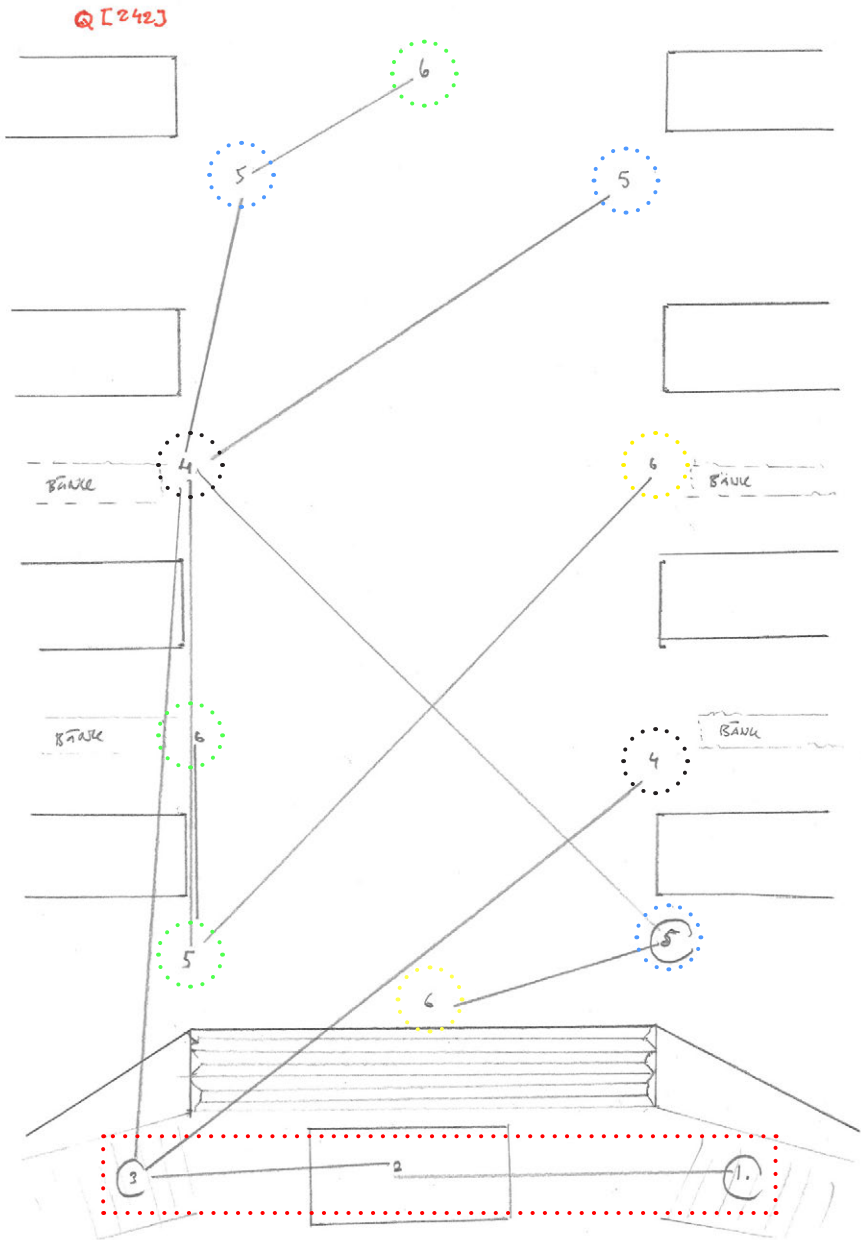


IMAGE 257. The transitions of sound. Each sound entrance, except the soloists, is continuously shared by at least two instruments, alternating between foreground and background dynamically. The soloist hovers above the constellations sustained by the centrally positioned electric guitar.

→ §216

§216

On the floor of the oblong, bright, high hall are rows of attached chairs. They form similar dark fields that lead towards the tight fund. The light from a shiny outer wall. The floor sounds faintly under hard, glossy tiles.

The waiting ones surround the dark hallway, grasping stiffly. The tin shapes form dotted, closed lines.

He puts the painting down, the strained arms resting. The glass covered by a faint hue.

“The sound is a

Next to the left side the Drabant watches. A pale strip of sky spans the room. The hand strokes the neck.

dull, muffled,

On the far side, nine uniform passages open.

faint, sonorous,

Only the activity that produces sound remains. Only the faintest, dullest, sound carry through. The hands draw sound out of the ground.

hissing

Elongated, dark passage on the sides of which glass-covered viewing cabinets are attached.

murmur.”

The men rest against the towering rampart. Their tin grey bodies in rigid grips. The light falls in high arcs over the tightly strained sky.

Deep field of extended lines.

The soldier’s hand against the glass, stroking with numb hands.

The men in ranks across the dark bowled field. With their curved bodies, they form sparse streaks.

The Other stands inside the flattened wall. The light against his ashen skull. The mouth is silky smooth.

It leads towards a hidden staircase → 80.

Hands against surfaces, hidden (closed) bodies. Presence only. The stiff grips.

[§216 cont.]

The voices of six or seven performers. Placed adjacent to the statues (which remain invisible?). The statues emanating the sine waves. Waves creating a different space. An imaginative space corresponding to something mythic.

Tracing:

- Point nemo. A place of unknown sound, presence and essentially a place of absence.
- Picatrix—ymagines—talismans, the undecided place in between sign and signifier.
- Antediluvian notions.
- Eleusinian mysteries.
- The black sun. The roar of the lion.

The audience is almost placed in between parenthesis, placed along a long line. Some placements will be "better" than others, but I am not sure that the locus point of resonance is more interesting than another.

The speaker part differs from the instrumental parts in the sense that it:

- Repeats continuously in the sense of Alvin Lucier
- Is accumulating, but through the process of repetition diluted.
- The tape part needs to be considered as a very low-voiced entity.

I need to define a path through the book. In "songs for simone" and "rumori ii" I have already chosen two different, actual, passages. What if I imagine a fictive version? One in which only a pre-formed conception of spaces rather than passages is invoked.

But it needs to start in 1 and 340? Or can some instruments have their own individual paths?

The choice of spaces? It should be important to reach the space with a piano, and a "scene", or?

IMAGE 258. As 'arche' comes to an end, the material and sketches from the explorations of the paragraphs becomes less and less important. Instead, it is as if the material of the other spaces wants to be heard again. Lucier, and 'I am sitting in a room' points to this. Of repeating the same thing over and over, and with time changing from sound to space. Again, Calvino's invisible cities. I am never leaving Venice. Nono at the docks. Gibigiani. Only the ear listening for different parts of the sound. Through listening the world emerges.

→ §324

§324

A tall, bright hall with rows of wide columns. A glassy, gently sloping wall reflects a pearly white light. The floor is covered by a grid of wide, square tiles. Geometric, heavy shapes hang from the ceiling.

At the far wall, an oblong disk divides the waiting people.

“The images on the light panels alternate with a brittle, metallic rattle.”

The men stand next to the embankment.

Round, dark shapes in the illuminated foundation.

Endless galleries stretch across the walls of the hall.

The men are lined up along a narrow corridor. Their hands brush against the cracked wall.

“The words fall in an incessant, soundless, steady succession.”

The razor-sharp edge scrapes against the hands.

“The sound is a buzzing, single and monotonous murmur.”

The dragon at the right side seems to dissolve against the white background. Behind him is a narrow passage (197). In the upper left-hand corner, an archway leads to a dim, obscure hall:

Back in a grand room, immediately the sounds are more active, more figures in motion. Is it possible to sense that the movement is now back to the starting point? Is it possible to hear the other rooms?

The metallic rattle, the soundless words, the buzzing, single mumble. Hands against the wall. How the room cuts into their hands.

→ §138

§138

The narrow passage slopes out into an elongated, shimmering, high, light and glassy hall.

Uniform chairs along the sides of the room.

A pewter grey flame patterned rug covers the floor.

Long, narrow footbridges span the *fabulous* gorge.

Pyramidal pattern from above.

A grey-green light settles. The bodies of those waiting fill the chairs. The faces turned towards the stone-paved fields. The drawbar on the right side.

The broken men along the rear edge.

The waiting ones.

Their mouths open softly.

The cobbled fields dissolve in the dazzling white light.

In the distance, the glass door opens onto the elongated, sloping, high, glossy white pier.

Is it the only way out of this maze? Melody? It is held within them. The witness is missing, the soldier. It roars, it rolls and yet so tight, so tightly held.

Inception.

A very vivid moment along the water in Lerum. The sounds of stones. Stones and vocal lines. In the middle the percussionist with log drums, hands—hard objects. The sounds of mumbling from different parts of the church.

“The words flow in a weak, melodic, low-pitched, muted current.”

“The sound is a single, rolling, dull, booming rumble.”

Soft, dense, pencil grey carpet covers the floor. The white walls sweep up towards the low, vaulted ceiling. Light from rectangular lamps.

The witness stands leaning against the white. Her pale hands moving across the wall.

The words flow in a monotonous, solitary, soundless stream.

The floor gives way under his heavy boots.

The lights merge into an elongated band.

The passage slopes downwards.

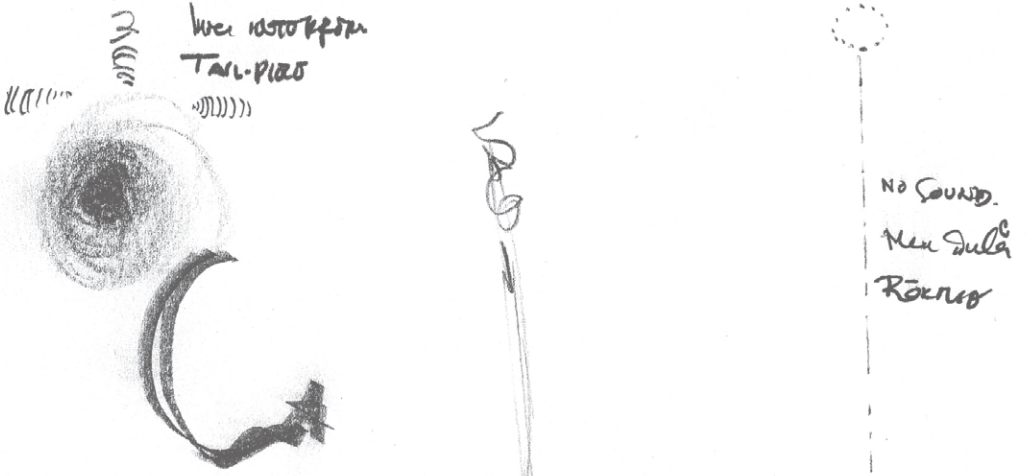
It opens into a vast dark hall.

Somehow, I sense an arch not only in the height but in the stretch. How the sound twists around.

Only the movements of the hands and the words that flow seem to remain.

[§138 cont.]

The cello-supportive wooden frame, placed on the floor. Bringing it up, against the chest. Banging with drumstick and clenched fist while singing.



The sound of the cello support board echoes over in a glissandi on the piano-string-knobs with a glass/hard plastic container. As response a soft, yet persistent violin, piercing the acoustic ceiling on the left.

The cello solo emanates in all of this as a sacred, slow ritualization.

The cross-sign, the connection between string, body (of cello and performer) and bow. A phenomenological struggle where the presence of immobility and the catatonia of Therese of Avila grows strong.

In all of this a strong idea on the representation of sound avoiding a left-right orientation. Pages, images and senses of new ways of representation happened also in Lerum. Most importantly while sitting where the sound of the river flows extremely loudly, like a water-fall, deafening and constantly protruding in the “wrong” direction.

Time was suspended. The sense that composing, making art suspends time, or rather focuses its presence by simultaneously having the sensation of being in touch with the past and hearing the future. When I started this passage art’s meaning seemed to be to shape our world, by the end art is my way of reconciling with death.

IMAGE 259. Sketch for à sibyl—mônē, the cello solo

→ §340



§340

“Now we are high above them. Alphanumeric fields. Stone fences”.

“Bridges, piers, peninsulas and headlands. Nodes, paths, transitions.”

“Your soft hands rest on my rounded shoulders. Your soft lips touch my scarred cheeks. Your clear eyes are endless, shiny ovals. Your strong arms hold my ravaged, heavy body.”

“The sound grows into a roaring, rushing, loud and sonorous roar.”

The drone takes to the sky again. The building abandoned.

It is no longer just a description, but an embrace.

An undefined I, or it, is now, a we? And we are taken away, away from the architecture, away from the sounds, from the geometry, the bricks, the blocks, the things.

We lift. Removed, but embraced. Body to body. Tenderly. Poetic. In withdrawal we become an embrace, a warmth.

The sonorous roar is almost distant, like an extinction.

I close my eyes. And here I hear the most powerful of the roar, Lotass' ore-tongued pulse, but of course also the faintest of nuances. When I close my eyes, I can project the absolute tiniest noise onto the most distant position in imaginary space. But my inner self senses it in the most intense of shades.

rumori.

IMAGE 260 (behind the text). Water-colour painting of 'Ismantorp' (by Samuel Järnegard Fogelvik) from above. The magical ruin of a fortress on the island of Öland. A place whose purpose remain veiled. Still, the few moments I am left standing at its centre it holds my work in its strained, bleak, grip.

Chapter 7

In which a project comes to a temporary end



Ekphrasis

As this research comes to an end, it will be clear that we don't reach definite answers or end points in terms of written formulations²⁶⁷, rather the whole project puts in motion the opening of a field of future explorations. However, the way of asking questions throughout these pages, have in many regards unconsciously produced a method which needs to be acknowledged. It belongs in itself to the form of this particular thesis, but in many ways, it also alludes to the field of artistic research on a general level. The search for knowledge within the artistic practice becomes a quest for *a* language that as far as possible can unveil an artistic practice. This means that within this text the *vision* it describes has, in fact, the form of an artwork. There is already an ancient name for this method, *ekphrasis*. In *Techniques of Ecstasy* this holds true on several levels. The text of this thesis describes explicitly both the poetics of my work, and several musical pieces (although some of these are described rather implicitly). Furthermore, the writing of Lotta Lotass in her *Den svarta solen* also explores a ghostly form of ekphrasis, where the narrative is exchanged for re-occurring displaced artworks and nameless characters that are reminiscent of sculptures or semaphoring shadows. Ekphrasis also shares the prefix of ecstasy, the *êk* of classic Greek. The verb *ekphrazein* (ἐκφράζειν) could be translated into *to name an inanimate object*. And it is what this thesis does.

It conceives of both the real and imaginary construction of this project of *tracing* sound. The traces of theories, and of both hidden and explicit concepts in the different chapters all create their own story of an ontology of sound, one which oftentimes is expressed by absence, or apophatic (even dialectical) strategies. Here *ontopoetics* adds to its understanding, as the search for a mute origin where the act is in itself its own end, and as such both directed toward the creative act as much as toward the condition of a possibility of *sound*.

267 The only possible end point of this research can be found (or rather, heard) in the actual music. Not only because of the finality (although interpretation in a sense holds the door open), but also since it is the topography and decision on the essentially open strategic method of chapter 5.

Melancholy

The labyrinth of Lotass has only one way out. If one manages to avoid being directed back to the first paragraph, and continues to number 216, then the reader is left to choose between 9 different “similar passages”²⁶⁸. Only one of them will guide the reader toward the final paragraph, 340, all others end up in paragraph 339 which directs you back to the first (1) section.

The return to paragraph 1 is always prepared by different phrasings which end with the closing of the eyes:

[d]et bländande ljuset lägger sig i skiftande ridåer som sveper över varandra, och han sluter sina ögon.²⁶⁹

[The blinding light settles into shifting drapes that hover over each other, and he closes his eyes. (My translation)]

In paragraph 340 an important transformation takes place, the initial “I” of the novel (which throughout the book is never elaborated, but quickly abandoned—for an anonymous, and non-existent narration in the third person singularis) is exchanged with a “he/she”, and in the final paragraph transformed to a unified “we”. ”Nu är vi högt ovanför dem. Alfanumeriska fält.” (Now we are high above them. Alphanumeric fields. [My translation]) The beginning sentences of the final paragraph mirrors the initial one²⁷⁰, only with the difference of the pronoun. In a sense Lotass doesn’t merely by this transition exit the space, but through the shift of words seems to transgress the whole artform, and with the inclusion of the “other” exit-point (or return-point”) the more often occurring passage back to paragraph number 1, the tension between the living, the dead, the awake, the sleeper becomes an image of the suspended potentiality of the text and the artwork. We are reminded of the liminality of the fragment of Heraclitus, the one who kindles a candle in the night.

Lotass’ novel manages to place itself on the limit of art, content, narration, forms, and symbols. As previously mentioned, its title also alludes to Julia Kristeva’s *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*. A book which shows how the melancholic person is one suffering from (among other things)

268 ”Vid den bortre sidan skiftar den genomlysiga fonden bakom vilken öppnar sig en rad likformiga passager.” Lotass, *Den svarta solen*, para. 216.

269 Lotass, para. 246.

270 ”Nu är jag högt ovanför dem. Alfanumeriska fält.” (Now I am high above them. Alphanumeric fields. [My translation])

*asymbolia*²⁷¹, that is, losing the ability to understand symbols, signs, and essentially, what Kristeva means is *language*. For Kristeva this is expanded not only to deciphering the symbols surrounding us (written or materialized) but also the loss of speech. And with the implosion of language, meaning shatters and “[l]ife no longer matters”.²⁷²

Melancholy is a state in which the patient loses “[i]nterest in words, actions, and even life itself”.²⁷³ The melancholic presence becomes a form of the disinterested, in detail but also on a metaphorical level: depression is a state one usually is considered to be able to leave or is condemned to be captured by (either leaving the text of Lotass or having to begin the paragraphs again) its grip.

With the loss of language, with the insistence on melancholy as a state of disinterestedness, the reader is placed, unknowingly, in the midst of the third critique of Kant. Furthermore, the use of the paragraphs in combination with the constant use of *third-person* narration suspends the idea of a sequence of events. There is on one level only descriptions, and the descriptions are not arranged in time, rather staged in space. They use different speeds, they repeat or slightly vary, but there is no sense of directionality.

Again, Lotass mirrors curiously Kristeva’s notion of melancholy with its description of the patients “skewed time sense”.²⁷⁴

However, Kristeva’s *Black Sun* describes how the patient’s loss of language, essentially is healed through its reinstatement. Lotass’ “reply” cannot be considered to give in to this solution. The first person of the first paragraph, the third person-singular (‘he’, ‘she’) of all other paragraphs except of the final one’s third person-plural (‘we’) offers a transcendental quality of the text, but essentially there is no conventional development.

Rather, the loss of language, the shattering of meaning, the description of space seeks something different. Through minute and monotonous descriptions, through subtle transitions and through revelling in a sense of a suspended space-time, Lotass comes in touch with the performance of its own creation, of the performance of a state which continuously places itself on the limit of representation. Instead of progressing to finality *Den svarta solen* remains as a condition and a potentiality of becoming. The loss of language isn’t, for Lotass, an essential loss, it gives way to another realization

271 Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1989), 45.

272 Kristeva, 6.

273 Kristeva, 3.

274 Kristeva, 67.

of the world. It is, to speak with Heidegger, directed toward death. Toward no-thing, but as such it gives way for a clearing. For noise, as *sound*. For a *Stimmung*. What defines an artwork, not the least in the context of this thesis, cannot be placed in the perspective of the form, of the concept, or of the *story*—there is a purpose, but one without purposiveness. It belongs to the artform in a much more intimate way. For the composer as the one taking care of sound. And it is here that we can tentatively return to Kant.

The Third Critique

The third critique of Kant functions as a bridge between the author's two former ones (the critic of pure reason, and critic of practical reason). Thereby, it introduces explicitly the notion of aesthetics (although transcendental aesthetics is mentioned already in the first critique). It introduces a complex trail of thoughts where one of the more important parts—for this thesis—can be found in the aesthetic realm independent of language and even concept:

[...] representation of the imagination which evokes much thought, yet without the possibility of any definite thought whatever, i.e. concept, being adequate to it, and which language, consequently, can never quite fully capture or render completely intelligible.²⁷⁵

The Kantian understanding is what gives way for the romantic notion of art. That is, that art is a force that induces the sublime, and thereby propels humanity to the metaphysical. Even if art on its own doesn't convey knowledge in the traditional sense, it is achieved through the genius, one bestowed with special qualities not possible to acquire through technique (but they need the acquired technique to be shown).

Where, or how does Lotass book offer a further reflection on Kant's ideas? Kristeva is one clue. The loss of language, of representation. Kristeva proposes art as the bridge out of melancholy and the reclaiming of language. Metaphors and allegories are used as *hypersigns* that re-instate the understanding of the world, and its connection to language.

In *Den svarta solen* the use of artifacts (artworks), objects and nameless persons continuously express absence. They act apophatically. They seem to refer to what at the same time is absent. However, Lotass does not explicitly narrate

275 Kant, Walker, and Meredith, *Critique of Judgement*, 142.

anything by artworks. The symbolical, and language-ripe, part of the world does not appear necessary through these objects. There is a sense of *Ekphrasis*, in other words artworks are used repeatedly as references through the spaces, but not only as objects, but even on a meta layer in the mentions of sound, or the growing web of instruments, things, and historic references. However, the allegorical or metaphorical level never achieves anything but an asymbolic aspiration.

In *The Black Sun* Kant's critique is essentially reflected as a condition. Kant is the invisible architect from which Lotass' writing departs. In the translator's foreword to the Swedish edition of Kant's third critique, Sven-Olov Wallenstein writes of Kant's critical philosophy as "[en] arkitektonik, med artikulationer, passager och mångfaldiga övergångar mellan sina olika sektioner".²⁷⁶

Wallenstein's assessment brings us directly to the project of Kant, in which the latter alludes to the myth of Babylon to emphasize the limit of what mankind can fathom. We can never truly understand the reality, but only its apparitions. And art can create ghostly apparitions, but they are only transcendental illusions. The, in this context interesting, idea of a building, or an invisible architecture in which our reason and perception exist is used by Kant already in the first critique (its last, and probably least read section, the one on the *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements*):

If we regard the sum of the cognition of pure speculative reason as an edifice, the idea of which, at least exists in the human mind, it may be said that we have in the *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements* examined the materials and determined to what edifice these belong, and what its height and stability. We have found, indeed, that, although we had purposed to build for ourselves a tower which should reach to heaven the supply of materials sufficed merely for a habitation [...] not to mention the confusion of tongues [...] Our present task relates not to the materials, but to the plan of the edifice; and, as we have had sufficient warning not to venture blindly upon a design which may be found to transcend our natural powers, while, at the same time, we cannot give up the intention of erecting a secure abode for the mind, we must proportion our design to the material which is presented to us, and which is, at the same time, sufficient for all our wants.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Kritik av omdömeskraften* (Stockholm: Thales, 2003), 14. "[an] architecture, with articulations, passages and numerous transitions between its different sections." [My translation]. The similar wordings of Wallenstein and Lotass may well be worth the attention of literary scholars.

²⁷⁷ Kemp Smith Norman., *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (Macmillan And Company Limited., 1929), 431.

The novel of Lotass and Kristeva's melancholy—even the building of Kant's three critiques (and in extension all other parts of the meta-material that Lotass alludes to) is the image of what is unmentionable. The object, which is lost, which is incomprehensible, but only if we stress to understand it by the faculties realized by the paradigm of language. The Kantian notion of the uninterested gaze, described by Agamben as shifting from the observer to the artist through a suspension of disinterest to the artwork becoming uninteresting thereby underlines the fact that with Kant the realm of the tacit is in fact brought to light. The limit of our pure reason unveils what we cannot grasp, the thing-in-itself is the lost thing for our consciousness understood with the category of language. The solution does not take place in a new, strong, conceptual narrative, but rather a *weak* one to echo Vattimo, one which puts doubt on the relationship of language and reality. The narrative can only be felt and made apparent through acts. In this specific reply – which my thesis aspire to – through the act of sound. It is not a matter of a technical construction, or as a conceptual frame, but an act which acknowledges ecstasy, acknowledges the immediacy of experience. Immediacy and ecstasy become the ontological base of sound: a combination of prescription (rather than description) and a strategy of sound where the idea of ekphrasis functions as an equally real and imaginary vessel of sound.

Time and space are throughout these pages more important than the *object*. In Proust's search *In Search for a Lost Time*, the objects or events that spark the remembrance of the narrator, are not for the thing itself but for its time, and the experience of its complex construction of an imaginary space of the *real* and the hallucinated. Time and space inform Lotass', Kant's, and my own project. Space and time are not absolute concepts, they are subject to our perception, they are representations, and as such they place themselves, as the artwork, as intermediary concepts, between what we know and what we cannot know; between the phenomenal and noumenal, to speak with Kant's terminology. In the context of this thesis, we are reminded by the shaman's evoking of a ritual space, or the stoics' thoughts on the immaterial, the inner castle of Therese of Ávila etc.

Techniques of Ecstasy III

The techniques of ecstasy are the intermediary to reach the transcendental. As such it is a free domain, art encourages to go beyond what is known. However, this transcendental world is never made known using language, at least not language as understood in a literal sense. For Artaud, for Galás,

Scelsi, Nono (the list of all names in the thesis...) its strategy is one of a creation of a peculiar condition, one in which the transcendental can emerge. According to Kant this still does not give us knowledge of the *otherworldly*, but it gives a kind of representation of it, and in the third critique it takes form as *judgement*. Let us remember again Kant's judgment of taste which basically proposes a purpose without purpose from which nothing can be known and proved. Kant puts forth a thesis and antithesis that illuminate the paradox of our (at least his) aesthetic judgment:

Thesis: The judgment of taste is not based upon concepts, for, if it were, it would be open to dispute (decision by means of proofs).

Antithesis: The judgment of taste is based on concepts, for otherwise, despite diversity of judgement, there could be no room even for contention in the matter (a claim to the necessary agreement of others with this judgement)²⁷⁸

Kant's "solution" is to imagine something with characteristics of a concept, but which cannot be determined as such—essentially there can be no proof. Agamben's metaphor of the dead body (see page 49) can be used as a later counter image: we seem to have developed a theory of art where we only learn to identify what is *not* there. In the light of the ecstatic techniques outlined in my thesis this might evoke a poor image of art (Agamben's argument). The conclusion of an aesthetic which is based on a concept from which nothing can be known falls short of the archaic function of artworks. However, Kant can be read differently (or emphasized differently), and furthermore as this thesis is closing in on its final phrase there are parallels and conclusions to be made in the intersection of Kant, the ecstatic, the strategy of sound and the novel of Lotta Lotass.

Kant is, in the third Critique, essentially describing the communicability of the imagination. It takes place from a highly subjective level, and although the inclusion of the idea of the genius, this communicability of the imagination is easily associated with spirit. That is, what we are communicating is something beyond us, and something which is not present in what we perceive, but in what we imagine. And even for Kant, despite his technical language, this ephemeral beyond can never truly be known.

However, this is where we need to consider knowledge in relation to this thesis. Knowledge is primarily sought by describing and *tracing* acts, by creating

278 Kant, Walker, and Meredith, *Critique of Judgement*, 166.

concepts, or rather by allowing for a condition with—in fact—a lack of purpose. The *strategy of sound* does have in each paragraph a directionality, however for instance *the imaginary space* has a purpose to create a relationship to sound, but there is no “real” purpose of a particular piece. Similarly, the exploration of the first contact rather tries to avoid an *operational* efficiency (compare it also with the section on page 165 and onwards, regarding the hand and the voice), allowing for rather the *inoperational* to discover and explore sound as sound. The purpose is, evidently, again and again to avoid purpose. And yet, in the end a concept is indeed evoked, a purposiveness exposed. In likeness with the labyrinth of Lotass, or the Kantian stipulation of an architectonic space in his Critique of pure reason, the work is built through its parts. In each instance with care, and attention. The parts begin to relate, communicate and resound.

It is a structure built on freedom, of imagination, of unlimited possibility, yet at one point a subjective judgement is made. A final form defined. It meets limits and rules. In part it is dependent on cause and effect, but simultaneously it wallows in negations, in the apophatic, in heterogenic processes; its process is transfixed on the ecstatic vision, of a way of being in sound, of a feeling of suspending time, being present in the flow of creativity.

Possibly the Kantian notion lacks the obvious passion of Artaud or the will of Nietzsche. Moreover, the judgement of taste, the judgment of beauty, the separation of phenomena and noumena, marks a limit of knowledge that the mystic, or the shaman in many ways perceive as completely impossible to discern from life. Or, to iterate, how Simone Weil frames her definition of *Metaxu*: “every separation is a link”.

The bottom-line is this: *Techniques of ecstasy* are, in the end, nothing but a transposed *judgement of taste*, but emphasized as a practice. Not as the Kantian idea of practice²⁷⁹, but as one impossible to separate from life. And it is indeed a transcendental strategy, one which embellishes in the immediacy of experience, in the communication of the imagination, and which doesn't treat the artwork as an object, not even as a representation, but as presence, immediacy and ecstasy.

It should also be noted that the *form-of-life*, or the impossibility to separate art from life, despite its closeness to a religious practice also navigates within a minimization of a separation of body and soul. The *strategy of sound* signals also an affinity to a Deleuzian perspective: the imagined space then, as alluded to in the strategies' introduction, being both the *ground* as well as the

279 which is essentially—in the critique of practical reason—described as morals, or belonging to the realm of the noumenal, and what in the end—to be overly blunt—is formulated as the *infamous* categorical imperative.

territorialization. As the strategy continues it articulates a process not unsimilar to *de- and reterritorialization*, and the establishment of a *plane of immanence*. The process of deterritorialization is more articulated as apophatic, or as negation (sound as *sound*), but in sections such as the one on *the hand* this kind of breaking of organization, context, culture is clearly alluded to.

The inclusion of noise/*rumori* and Deleuzian-related concepts within the theories of Kant and the somewhat esoteric connotations of *techniques of ecstasy* on a larger scale also serves to make scarce the incomprehensibility of the transcendental realm. For Kant, and in much of our romantic heritage, the soul exists beyond us. As a musician, obsessed with the immediacy of the touch, of the sound, of the knowledge of *tracing* and *listening*, this only touches upon me as a figure of thought. In the practice, in the actual work on sound there is no distance between the body and the soul, instead there is an implicit play with them. As only two perspectives of the same. The separation of body and soul only seem to work as a figure of language. The growth of form, the evoking of immediacy, the becoming of the material—the unlimited potentiality of the original movement is mirrored in the idea of my proposed onto-poetics. It isn't only the transition from material to form, and not a mere reduction from form to material. Onto-poetics is both. The material grows into form, the form becomes the material, out of it emanates a constantly open topography. The different parts of the strategy work indeed like a body. Gravity is but a metaphor, but it is nevertheless metaphorically activated between the spaces of *Svarta solen* and the different stages of the *strategy of sound*.

To sustain the notion of gravity of thought further. *De Anima* of Aristotle speaks almost exclusively of the body, even Kant in his preliminary work of his critiques speaks of how the self senses the existence, the Deleuzian body without organ, even through the lens of Artaud speaks with a common voice joining the Greeks, the romantics, the post-modern with the avantgarde. Of one where the flesh, the *corpus*, the materiality of existences is continuously sensing itself from within and through the touch, from the outside. However, its realization comes not through a particular use of language, but rather in its absence, in a suspended moment, in a direct experience, or in a meticulous excavation of deterritorialization.

In the end it is a paradox, close to the aesthetic judgement metonym of Kant, but the limit is the enunciated word. Evoking again the image of the dead body on the operation table. Where that precious thing called life actually resides, eludes us. It is absent both *in* life, and in *still* life, yet we perceive it. We feel it. Ask anyone who has stood by the bedtable and witnessing the last moments of a life. When life leaves the human body, it comes

across crystal clear—with immediacy. Standing in front of the last supper of Da Vinci in the convent of Santa Marie della Grazia. There is no need for words. The impact is immediate, even when surrounded by 50 tourists. It is not only the fresco, but also the space, the light, the formation of figures. The experience is a complex net of relations, but its transcendence takes place in the absence of words. It is mute, yet it fills us with the *techniques of ecstasy*.

Ontopoetics V

Poetically

I am surrounded by pile after pile by notes. Each stack of paper is indicated by a number, referring to the paragraphs of Lotta Lotass. They contain different facets, different explorations of sound, but they are also communicating with one another. My hand and mind is stuck inside each of these pillars.

Every single paragraph contains written reflections, graphical tracings of gestures, spaces, and instruments. Within each paragraph the movements traced on paper alternate between actions that evoke sounds, and actions that do even less. That only touches, that only feels. Surfaces, objects—instruments. In the end they all co-mingle.

There is no real sense of direction. Only a distinguishing line: the first and final paragraph always mark the opening and the end.

In between the pieces *Songs for Simone*, *Rumori ii*, *Fragments of a Broken Order* and *Archē*, there are more than 50 different realizations of these stacks of paper. Some explore active spaces in focus, other resonant distant rooms.

The greater part of chapter 6 shows the evolution of the piece *Archē*. What it fails to show is how a singular, paper by paper evolution continuously work on the whole construction. How the topology as well as the detail is informed by all of the spaces in movement. What transpires in §161 does not necessarily precede in construction what happens in §15. The construction of the piece grows from the emergence of its own becoming. To go through the entirety of the source material is to discover that sketches in §1 are repeated in almost all other paragraphs. However, if this connection and *sameness* and *variation* technique is disclosed in an individual piece is for the listener to discover. To trace aurally.

It is the *sameness* of Heidegger. It is the *clearing*, which for a moment unveils the *being of sound*. It is the *meta ta physica* of the whole construction. The written note is marking the limit. The unavoidable *border* of what must materialize to pass from the *potential* to the *actual*.

In chapter 6 we are also again referred, inside the *tracing of sound*, to the *techniques of ecstasy* and its allusion to a form-of-life, or at least the impossibility to distinguish between aesthetics and life. More importantly, the monastic form-of-life speaks of a different conception of the mind-body-relationship, one where there is no clean-cut separation, but equally a form *with* matter, as well as a matter *of* form.

Finality Without End

An *ontopoetic* places itself in the transition between sound and music, but further still: between the limits of potentiality and actuality, in the suspended zone where what is evoked by the hand, by the mind, by the *rumori* of the space has yet to take form as an intention. An *ontopoetic* is a both passive and active attention to the emergence of a *clearing* for sound.

This emergence does not ask how, what kind of or why *a sound*? An *ontopoetic* acknowledges the immediacy of sound, an immediacy which says that not even the consideration of *sound* = (or even on the way *to*) *music* has yet to be articulated.

Therefore, an *ontopoetic* does not need a musical piece or a performance, but it needs certain conditions. It needs the realization of a stage. Imaginary or not, it presupposes the clearing. An *ontopoetic* recognizes how the hand, the body, the ear and the space interact, not as tools but as extension. The instrument is not music in itself, but an extension through a body and placed in a space.

In this space, evoking actions can materialize in dialogue with space. The hand that rises, as if directing the space. The hand that closes as an act of concentration.

Noise therefore is the term for both ~~music~~ and ~~sound~~. It is a *no-thing*, but with a potential of becoming. It is important to understand that *noise* as a musical category (as in *noise music*) is not in focus. Instead, the previously introduced term *rumori* could be used as an alternative to both divert the focus and acknowledge both passive and active qualities of *rumori*.

The *rumori* of this project is explored in *the imaginary space*, in the *first contact*. It is the evoking part of the project's inception; however, it is also a character of its orchestration. In the *strategy of sound*, and its elaboration of *The Black Sun*, *rumori* permeates all parts. *Rumori* becomes the base of sound, the limit of the space and the potentiality of what the ear can perceive, but it is also, through developing *the first contact* transformed into actions which are *for sound*. That is, when the inoperativeness of the hand, the reflection,

and the immediacy of the starting point, is forced to begin to act like a body, to act both on a level of detail, and one of form.

In the former, we can hear the simple transformation of the spring drum. Through acts on glass plates, to reverberating opening and closing extension of its resonance, it manages to balance and navigate between the different instruments. It seems to evoke the ground, but also to mark its ceiling.

But there are also the *empty* acts, as the opening gesture of *Songs for Simone*, where the hands of the percussionist is slowly elevated, while a low, low sine wave spreads in the space. Only analytically do we perceive it in a dialectical sense, in fact it works like the gravity of grace; what emerges and spreads toward the ground is at the same time the *thing* which seems to dissipate in an upward motion.

Or, in the same piece in bar 43–44, when the percussionist, again, moves her hands apart, removing the connection between singing bowl and gong, and then slowly closing the movement during which an opposite sounding movement unveils in the sounding part. Again, the gravity of sound moves contrary to the intuitive law of physics.

On a formal level, *rumori* takes place in the *constellation of sounds* and in the *topography* or *constellation in space*. The attentiveness to all parts of the body, to all the different *imaginary spaces* is continuously active. I hear the echo, and rumination with the same sense of presence as that which takes place in my hands. Words are not enough to describe the process, but the *rumori* is the activation of the entirety of the project. It is the image of my wall, my floor, my desk filled with the spread-out notes of all sounding spaces. How I can raise one part up and simultaneously begin to put the other parts in movement. This is the *strategy toward representation*. It grows without words, but it does so encircled by annotations, of developed sounds and relationships. It grows through a realization of the space, the distance, the proximity and tension (forces) between sounds.

Ontopoetics is to learn to perceive this intermediary state of construction, where the boundaries materialize from within. The method in this sense is immanent to the object it explores. And the thing explored, sound, is an act. At first without purpose. Sometimes apophatic, sometimes passively. Nevertheless, it is an act, and a gesture, and one which direct itself to a pre-verbal state. The immediacy of expression of the newborn, or of the one without language. Perhaps art in the end, is simply this: the longing for our lost infancy? The time when we imbued a piece of cloth with a soul. Our own secret soulmate. The loss of our secret world is what the act and the gesture is contemplating? Is music's tacit knowledge the key for understanding how

to return to the original moment, the unexpressed part of the expressed, the secret version of the open, the realization of being?

the secret name is the gesture that restores the creature to the unexpressed. In the final instance, magic is not a knowledge of names but a gesture, a breaking free from the name. That is why a child is never more content than when he invents a secret language. His sadness comes less from ignorance of magic names, than from his own inability to free himself from the name that has been imposed on him [...] ²⁸⁰

The gesture is an intermediate. The sound is essentially an intermediate. It is an act, it doesn't need words, explanations, and language. When the gesture happens the sounds, the acts go beyond themselves, but not as a referential, but as a strange double movement: the act *shows* both its own origin as well as its own finality. A finality without end, to allude to the theories of Kant once again.

The Preservation of Secret Names

The *strategy of sound* does not only give an account for a music and a model of an onto-poetics, it is furthermore in itself a reply to the questions of immediacy, forms-of-life and especially the ontology of sound. Lastly, hidden within chapter 5 & 6, there is as well a reply to the Kantian aesthetic judgement. The reply complicates the tentative beginning of this thesis, where Agamben, through for instance Artaud, Galás, and even the shaman asks for more *original* conception of art. By the end of this thesis we can now notice how the question is in fact articulated by Kant, by his insistence that the inner world of things essentially remains hidden. Our thinking eclipses our knowledge of this inner world of things, but as transcendental apparitions through art they nevertheless present themselves for us. They are wordless, mute and in this sense indescribable. Only art (or religion) has the ability to vaguely give them *names*, but only referential, never as the thing-in-itself.

The subversive nature of this project, exemplified by the notion of techniques of ecstasy, calls for a strategy where rather the absent is sought. The development of sound (or music), not as continuation, but as something apophatic. Here the immediacy, or the infancy, or even the idea of origin can be traced. Not as a sensuous character, however, such a character would

imply a clear intention, which owes itself to tradition; to a cultural consensus, to the idea which in any culture constitute what can be perceived to belong to the domain of music (acoustical considerations aside).

Instead, the immediacy, or the ecstatic—as argued throughout this thesis—presupposes a moment where certainly a particular culture is active, but it remains passive, and as such ontological. The secret language of music, or the secret dimension of the *strategy of sound* as sketched is intent on *giving* names but it does so through acts, gesture—continuously through the intermediary, but an intermediary which breaks with language and which (to repeat myself) contains “its own origin as well as its own finality”.

This strategy destroys the common idea of experience, it presupposes experience. It dreams of pre-experience, in the same way as it dreams of pre-speech. It dreams perhaps like the child, in the quotation of Agamben above, of inventing a secret language. The conjuring up of secret names alludes to what has been lost in their power when we learn them, through experience and culture. For the child knows what the artist senses, knowledge is nameless, it acts independently. Or as Agamben continues in the same passage:

And justice, like magic, is nameless. Happy, and without a name, the creature knocks at the gates of the land of the magi, who speak in gesture alone.²⁸¹

The addendum of secret or magic through gesture also imbues the project with also a further context: that of the ethical. The gesture *shows*. The gesture contains its own goal, consequently this showing has ethical meaning. It is a silent expression with or without sound, but is—an expression. Even if it communicates (primarily) on another order than written/or spoken language it still communicates at least the equivalent (but in my world, something even further) of an act (of words), but it also traces the world (in a meaning essentially beyond what we with Kant even can grasp). Again: justice is nameless, but it is felt.

The thesis has chosen a form with an archaeological approach. Not in the sense of excavating the knowledge of sound throughout the centuries, but one of carving out the traditional categories of both sound and art. It does so with the intention of asking other questions. The avoidance of method, or distrust in language. Nevertheless, a thesis relies implicitly on both. The method is instead outlined and reformulated as a strategy, but essentially it comes across as a methodology with which the surrounding

281 Agamben, 22.

chapters build the theoretical framework (with language). However, metaphorically chapter 2 & 3 (and in parts chapter 1) work in the same way. The section of ecstasy, immediacy, Artaud, language—and further on discussing space, body—the hand etc. work essentially as the *strategy of sound*. First the formation of an imaginary space, then by increasingly developing the abstract thought toward a more materializing function (Artaud, Grotowski, Galás). Finally all is poetically brought together by the particular pieces (Kuarup, Noein. Noaidi etc.) and the inclusion of sections of *Ontopoetics* and the paragraphs on specific related topics.

The *ekphrasis* of chapter 7 ends the circle. In chapter 6 Lotass' labyrinthic prose delineates the project as a poetic condition, but also intellectually through its own realization of the theories of Kant, the melancholy of Kristeva, and the exemplary way in which she destroys language (as we know it). Lotass' work does not necessarily need an interpretation. The strength of her work might even diminish by such an attempt and I have in this thesis tried to minimize its discourse. The focus is and remains on what it has led to artistically, exemplified by the latter part of the artistic appendixes: *Songs for Simone*, *Fragments of a Broken Order*, *Rumori ii*, and *Archē*.

Extending the Space

At the end of this research, exemplified by the final piece *Archē*, one particular piece of music comes to mind, *I Am Sitting in a Room* from 1969 by the late Alvin Lucier. The concept is simple. Lucier sits in a room and speaks into a tape recorder. He describes how he sits and listens to his voice and furthermore he explains what will happen throughout the piece. His voice is—as he speaks—being recorded, and the recording will be played back immediately in the same space, while—again—being recorded. The procedure is done over and over again. The space will slowly begin to interfere with the spoken words, with repetition the words will change, and slowly transform into resonance. By the end of the around 40-minute piece (its duration dependent on the properties of the space in which it resounds), what we are listening to is the room in which the looped voice is being projected into. A fact the words have already clearly explained.

It is a remarkable piece in all its simplicity, and one which perhaps could be viewed as guided by the enunciation, but it does so by simultaneously making it scarce. In the end it seems to mostly serve a pedagogical purpose.

In the piece *Archē* Lucier's concept haunts the composition. Lucier's "room" slowly emerged as a solution of how to make the concluding

realization of the maze of Lotass. Both thematically and artistically. At my first (or second) composition seminar for the undergraduate students at the Academy of Music and Drama, the Lucier piece was used as an intro, before posing preliminary questions of our western conception of sound. I view it now as a premonition which was far from articulated at the time in my own work. Not least, since the novel of Lotass had yet to even be introduced in my research project at the time.

By the end of the pieces *Songs for Simone*, *Rumori ii* and *Fragments of a Broken Order* the abundance of both written and electronic material was almost difficult to over-view, yet I clearly felt that the material lacked a different, more congenial, articulation. In the previously mentioned pieces, the shift from space to space veiled the fact that while the space shifts, transforms and extends, it is not obvious that there is actual movement. At least it is not obvious that something else takes place. And furthermore, when composing I need to pay closer attention to sound, to the “language” of sound, not the one made by letters and pages.

Instead of thinking of the construction of the different spaces I thought more in terms of *staging*. The imagined space should not be considered only as a utopia, but as one which departs and finds a form in the *real*.

In my notes an inventory of spaces has continuously been a repository for the construction of the *imagined space*. Some have passed through this thesis: the brook in Lerum, the railyard close to my home. Both spaces unbound by walls. At the same time I have made notes of many others; certain large spaces in the local art museum, the organ hall at the Academy of music and drama, the space in front of the art museum, the reverberant pit of Kulturtemplet, the church in Kalv, and many more, but especially the coat room inside of the concert house of Gothenburg, with its left and right ascending stairway that bends from sight on both sides. The latter is an intriguing one. The resemblance to the opening space of Lotass’ is not a far-fetched. There are points of contact on many levels. I began to hear the music of *Archē* as placing itself at this particular, real stage. I began to imagine everything I had done, placed here, over-layered, sustained and extended by the use of the invisible second floor.

It is a stage which in itself is one of transition, in itself one of entrance and exit. It is emblematic for how I use the extension of space as informal category of sound.

As can be traced in chapter 6, within this space the technique of Lucier is in a sense made as a background and deep base of the piece. After the initial moments of the piece, the electronic part begins, in fragments, to repeat itself in slow breaths during the entirety of the piece. Small fragments which either

belong to the many field-recordings which make up so many of the sounds of the pieces belonging to the exploration of Den Svarta Solen, or fragments that belong to previous versions of the different spaces of the piece. The iteration is slowly extended by the ensemble and also subtle additions of electronic nature. As with all my sounds, there is continuous presence, even if inactive, the hand is always ready to move and induce difference, silence and movement. For a listener it will be impossible to recognize the concept of Lucier, since I don't repeat the actual, obvious, procedure, it is there in another sense. I am reliving and relistening to it while progressing through the paragraphs. It is the *third* ear with which I can retain the echoes and reverberation of past and future spaces. It places my project in a time-less void of infinity. In my music I only articulate a segment of its topography.

✕

Whatever I do, I tend to be drawn to noises and other sonorities that surround me. It would be a stretch to assess that I hear ideas, but I feel as if I sense them, like an eerie presence.

The simplest condition or situation is this: the drawing or tracing of an undefined line or circle. It sounds while I am pressing the pen against the paper, but it is as if it is already reverberating around me. Overly idealized, yet, it urges me onward. This is the reason why I am so careful with composing *the first sound*. The decision has such finality to it. With too little preparation, something is lost. The opening sound, the opening act... there is no turning back.

I remember very early how this shift from instrument to representation not only defined a path to composing. Furthermore—and that is essential—I realised that drawing with the intention of sound gave a distinct promise of unknown worlds.

With each passing year experience, knowledge, experimentation and, unavoidably, age has continually shrunk the sense of utopian sound worlds. At the same time other aspects of the exploration has given more depth (or perhaps replaced the unknown with layers) to the music.

It means that the guiding words Luigi Nono once wrote (spoke) in the seminar *Error as a necessity*:

Silence. / It is very hard to listen. Very hard to listen, in the silence, *to others*. Other thoughts, other noises, other sonorities, other ideas. When we listen, we often try to find ourselves in others. [...] a violence that is totally conservative. [...] perhaps it is possible to try and reawaken the ear.²⁸²

becomes increasingly more difficult, or requires increasingly more creativity, ambition, courage, and ingenuity to achieve.

With each passing year the conviction of the *necessity of error* to reach beyond is challenged with the growing fear of failure, of age, and of a thousand other lesser reasons.

Where can I then find the creativity, ambition, courage and ingenuity?

The reply has been verbalized and traced throughout these pages, and through its musical practice.

It is about transference of experience and displacement of sensibility *in* another mode, *through* another mode. And just as Luigi Nono once pointed me in the direction of the *error as a necessity*, already in the same lecture he was anticipating its continuation—the act of listening. Of listening to silence, of listening to the other, of listening through sound rather than on/with/using sound.

For Luigi Nono this essentially meant to listen *with* the space. To allow for a medium (sound) to transform with another medium (space), thereby, somehow, merging reality with potentiality.

In his pieces like *Diario Polacco no2*, *Prometheo* and *la lontananza nostalgica utopica futura* the use of space, extended with equal parts electronics (amplification, transformation, manipulation) is central. The exploration begins in space, with space, and with continuous research of instruments and their possible manipulation:

The project of my thesis is related, yet

282 Luigi Nono, Angela Ida De Benedictis, and Veniero Rizzardi, *Nostalgia for the Future: Luigi Nono's Selected Writings and Interviews* (University of California Press, 2018), 367–69.

it also proposes a more abstract listening paired with a different sense of evoking sounds which were previously not known.

I call it *rumori*, and I give it a framework through *ontopoetics*. *Rumori* is not *only* noise, not *only* background noise. It is not, properly, *only* a sense of space, instead it is something *in between* sound and background noise. An ethereal construction which in a sense binds the two together.

What is *Ontopoetics*? It is to learn to perceive this intermediary state of construction, where the boundaries materialize from within. And it is taught by the ear, through the hand.

Rumori.



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Swedish Summary



Ansats

I denna doktorsavhandling utforskas det filosofiska begreppet ontopoetik i relation till en konstnärlig praktik där musik (ljud) och lyssnande står i centrum. Begreppet ontopoetik används som bakgrund till det i avhandlingen centrala resonemanget om extatiska tekniker. Extatiska tekniker ses i huvudsak som en evig länk mellan lyssnande och språk och blir till ett mer djuplodande och samtidsfilosofiskt ramverk genom införandet av det *ontopoetiska*. Ontopoetiken blir i denna avhandling bron mellan det arkaiska och den nutida människan.

Min avhandling är ett exempel på 'praktikbaserad' forskning, men det i en form där ordet, ljudet och bilden samverkar som en kropp.

Genom att spegla schamanen och mystikern (ursprungliga användare av extatiska tekniker) gentemot konstnären av i dag ger avhandlingen en fördjupad förståelse av konstnären och möjliggör inblicken i en poetik där ljud, lyssnande är en *livsform* (förstått som ett sätt att *vara-i-ljudet*) som fortfarande är det sätt på vilket vår värld formas.

Schamanen och mystikern är också vägvisare till ett utforskande av ontopoetiken som ett sätt att förstå ljud, lyssnande och kommunikation – det är något som föregår tolkad mening, men *är* ändå kunskap.

Flera komponerade verk av författaren i detta sammanhang av likvärdig status som avhandlingstexten – utvidgar och materialiserar det som i avhandlingen föreslås som potentialitet och villkor för det *ontopoetiska*.

Denna ömsesidighet mellan ljud, ord och bild visas tydligast i det som i avhandlingen kallas en strategi för ljud i kapitel 5. En metod, men samtidigt inte; strategin ger plats och visar på den process som leder fram till denna avhandlings försiktiga slutsats, eller snarast anmodan: lyssnandet är en väg till kunskap. Genom lyssnandet framträder världen. Denna kunskap står oss till buds genom musikens *omedelbara uttryck*.

Avhandlingen genomsyras av resonemang och exempel på en praktik och en filosofi om ljud och musik. En omfattande författardialog upprättas, av både musikalisk, konstnärlig och filosofisk karaktär. På det skönlitterära planet är den framför allt exemplifierad av författaren Lotta Lotass, för det filosofiska utgör Immanuel Kant, Martin Heidegger, Simone Weil och Giorgio Agamben navet. Antonin Artaud, Diamanda Galás, Giacinto Scelsi och Luigi Nono är de främsta företrädarna för konsten och musiken. Författaren till denna avhandling placerar dem alla i ett märkligt och delat rum, där konstnären och schamanen förs till ett gemensamt, ordlöst slut i en musik som är lika mycket ljud som tystnad.

Avsats

Titeln *Extatiska tekniker* valdes på ett tidigt stadium som en tillfällig rubrik. Det fanns, från min sida, en viss motvilja mot titelns suggestiva karaktär. Som läsaren kommer att märka genom hela avhandlingen, och inte minst i *ljudstrategin* i kapitel 5, är den inledande idén ofta definierande. Den manifesterar sig som ögonblicket av en första definitiva rörelse från det potentiella till det faktiska. Därför är avsnitt efter avsnitt i denna avhandling inriktat på att förlänga och reflektera över detta skifte från möjlighet till förverkligande. Så länge som möjligt vill jag låta fantasin över de filosofiska övervägandena vara i någon mening fria från varje form av paradig. Försökstiteln *Extatiska tekniker* började därför efter ett tag att återspegla inte bara själva benämningen på forskningen, utan även ämnet och de fält den skulle komma att omfatta. *Extatiska tekniker* är den inledande idén till denna forskning, men även dess kanske mest centrala byggsten.

Extatiska tekniker är inget mer än en titel, men de ämnen som titeln gav upphov till blev till stora delar det fält där utforskandet tog plats. I en vidare mening blev titeln även den poetiska strof genom vilken hela omfattningen av denna avhandling måste förstås. Titeln utstakade gränserna för denna forskning, även med sin till synes öppna och övergripande fråga om vad *extatiska tekniker* är.

Ett av huvudsyftena med denna avhandlings förhållningssätt till konstnärlig forskning är att finna en form för att artikulera den konstnärliga erfarenheten. Jag eftersträvar inte att reducera eller överanalysera den till en teoretisk, logisk och sammanhängande modell.

Min önskan har hela tiden varit att formulera en text som i sin form harmonierar med de specifika musikaliska verk som utgör dess konstnärliga resultat. Inledningsvis ett kalejdoskopiskt perspektiv, samtidigt som text och musik får flöda fram ur alla sina eventuella återvändsgränder och infall. Därför speglar den reflekterande texten försöket att beskriva en faktisk konstnärliga praktik. Den vill skapa en dialog i ett mångsidigt universum av konst, antropologi, musikvetenskap och filosofi samt, naturligtvis, arbetet med musik och ljud.

Alla teoretiska och filosofiska överväganden åsido, den viktiga delen av denna avhandling äger rum i det faktiska utforskandet av ljud. Inuti praktiken, i musiken. Avhandlingen beskriver inte bara några års ambitioner och arbete. Nästan ett decennium av en kontinuerlig tankegång är här innesluten och finner genom dessa sidor finner ett bredare sammanhang och ett tydligt fokus. I synnerhet den strategi som beskrivs i kapitel 5 kan spåras redan här, i efterhand. Det rör sig om ett antal musikaliska verk som

huvudsakligen komponerades före doktorandperioden (som kommer att diskuteras i kapitel 3 och 4) och under avhandlingens inledande fas.

Detta innebär att denna avhandling utforskar en praktik, som kanske inte var inriktad på begreppet *Extatiska tekniker* till en början, men som ändå upplevde ett slags händelser i både sinne och kropp (och öra) som i denna avhandling sluter en cirkel. För att fullt ut förstå (och följa) hur det filosofiska innehållet i kapitel 1–4, och praktiken i kapitel 5 är relaterade och genom kapitel 6 görs till en konstnärs (min) poetik, måste läsaren ha öra för hur mitt tänkande är knutet till enskilda musikaliska stycken och inkludering av olika estetiska och filosofiska idéer. Några av dessa verk diskuteras i kapitel 2–4, men de tillhör även avhandlingen i form av partitur och inspelningar. Dessa verk har placerats i avsnitt som kallas ”intermissions” (mellanspel).

De verk som diskuteras i kapitel 2–4 är exempel på en växande *kompositionsstrategi* som omfattar en större mängd verk. Kompositionerna i kapitel 2–4 är dock de kompositioner som har haft sitt första framförande eller sin slutliga revidering under mina doktorandstudier. De fungerar som exemplifierande fallstudier och pekar tillsammans mot strategin i kapitel 5. Det är viktigt att påpeka att kronologin för styckena inte återspeglar tidpunkten för deras tillkomst. Kronologin gäller snarare de olika filosofiska avsnitten i kapitlen. Varje fallstudie använder en undertext som hänvisar till vad som diskuteras och formuleras som en allmän strategi i kapitel 5. Genom att vissa hur *strategin* i kapitel 5 genomförs i kapitel 6 så illustreras även hur det som diskuteras och skrivs fram i kapitel 1–4 är de *villkor* ur vilka kapitel 5 och 6, och sedermera 7, över huvud taget är möjliga att föreställa sig.

För att redan i kapitel 2–4 synliggöra så mycket som möjligt av de strategier som utvecklas i kapitel 5, och för att upprätthålla de musikaliska och estetiska övervägandena i kapitel 1–4, kommer sättet på vilket fallstudierna diskuteras att skilja sig åt. Stundom står skissarbetet i fokus, stundom det grundläggande arbetet med att koppla praktiken till en framväxande *ontopoetisk* ljudkonception. Avsikten är att leda läsaren mot kapitel 5–7, för att ge plats för en förståelse av det slutliga konstnärliga arbete som denna avhandling resulterar i: ’songs for Simone’, ’Fragment av en bruten ordning’, ’rumori ii’ och ’Arché’. Det handlar om en förståelse som inte är beroende av rent kompositionstekniska aspekter, utan som försöker skildra ett mer allmänt och konstnärligt-filosofiskt förhållningssätt. I grund och botten är det de *extatiska teknikerna* men framskrivna inom ramen för det som författaren kallar *ontopoetik*. Sammantaget återkommer fem ontopoetiska avsnitt och tre partier om extatiska tekniker likt orienteringspunkter som för avhandlingens *berättelse* framåt.

Med kapitel 5 blir denna avhandling också beskrivningen av en *praktik*, men dess vidd och förverkligande kan enbart bli helt förstådd i mötet med partituren framför allt dock genom mötet med musiken i en konsertsal, eller (i något mindre grad) genom återuppspelning av dess dokumentation.

Struktur

Avhandlingen inleds med fyra kapitel, där en exposé av reflekterande, inte nödvändigtvis musikrelaterade, avsnitt och faktiska fallstudier bildar ett nätverk av sammanlänkande avsnitt: de kretsar alla kring frågan och utforskandet av *extatiska tekniker* och dess koppling till en framväxande idé om *ontopoetik*. De första kapitlen följer på sätt och vis mestadels varandra i olika separata och ibland disparata avsnitt, men inkluderingen av de specifika musikverken antyder ett spel med olika röster, med olika känsla av närhet och avstånd till avhandlingens kärna.

Avsnitten om *ontopoetik* och *extatiska tekniker* skapar ett ramverk. Även om detta ramverk inte ska ses som bildandet av en teori, så är det ändå ett filosofiskt tillägg som möjliggör en mer allmän diskussion om både ljud och lyssnande. I mångt och mycket anspelar *ontopoetiken* också på Heideggers sena texter, där han efterlyser ett nytt tänkande. På samma sätt uppmanar författaren i denna avhandling till en ny uppfattning om ljud, inte genom att radera det förflutna, utan genom omtolkning.

Understrykas måste, att det femte kapitlet är av en mer esoterisk karaktär. Kapitlet kommer vid vissa tillfällen (taget för sig) att framstå som delvis gåtfullt. Det är dock avhandlingens centrum, när det gäller författarens praktik som tonsättare. Där beskrivs vad författaren strävar efter, där sätts det konstnärliga arbetet (musiken) i perspektiv. *Kompositionsstrategin* presenteras som en process, och läsaren kan följa hur reglerna och gränserna för ett musikaliskt verk *blir* till. Även om framställningssättet är linjärt är de olika avsnitten i sig en spiral av referenspunkter, som kan läsas kalejdoskopiskt.

I det sjätte kapitlet utforskas den konstnärliga praktiken genom en kombination av text, grafiska anteckningar och en växande insikt om det som förts fram i kapitel 5. Även om kapitel 6 likaså är gåtfullt, så bildar dessa två kapitel den fond mot vilken tillkomsten av avhandlingens sista fyra verk kan *spåras* ('Songs for Simone', 'fragment av en bruten ordning', 'Rumori ii' och 'Arche').

Kapitel 6 är avsett att vara den mest läsbara formen av den poetik som kapitel 1–5 har strävat efter att konkretisera. Det som förblir olöst eller dolt

i kapitel 6 är antingen författarens egna tillkortakommanden eller är representativt för vad (så vill jag tro) den konstnärliga processen misslyckas med att kommunicera, när den tar form inom vårt språks (och akademiska institutioners) inskränkta gränser.

Det bör framhållas att den mest uppenbara aspekten av kapitel 6 är Lotta Lotass roman, *Den svarta solen*. Den svenska författaren Lotta Lotass är den centrala dialogpartner från vilken min musik under dessa år hämtat sin inspiration och sina kanske grundläggande kvaliteter från. De uppenbara litterära och poetiska kvaliteterna i det sjätte kapitlet har en dubbel funktion. Först och främst spårar de utvecklingen av avhandlingsförfattarens strategi i en både grafisk och textlig mening genom namnlösa (men långsamt blir de angivna) utsnitt (av såväl ljud som reflektion), och visar därmed både hur strategin växer fram genom praktik, men ger också en mer verklig bild av hur praktiken faktiskt utvecklas; genom ett prisma av reflektioner och försök. För det andra visar kapitel 6 på de metodiska hörnstenar som silas fram och som i kapitel 5s *ljudstrategi* formuleras i mer ljudfilosofiska termer. Det sjätte kapitlet är inte en analys av ett eller flera musikaliska verk, utan visar den faktiska musikaliska praktiken i aktion, tillgängliggjord med visuella och litterära kommentarer. Att spåra dialogen med Lotta Lotass text är lika mycket att uppfatta framväxten av denna avhandlings musik som att förverkliga reflektionen och implementeringen av de föregående kapitlens intellektuella och poetiska koncept.

Avhandlingen avslutas med ett sjunde kapitel, där de tidigare kapitlens ontopoetiska avsnitt, det femte kapitlets strategi samt musik och praktik förs till en reflekterande slutnot. Min slutnot har ambitionen att peka på ytterligare forskningsområden samtidigt som den erbjuder ett avslutande segment av vad forskningen har visat.

I denna avhandling kommer alla delar (detta är den utopiska ambitionen) att fungera som konstellationer av reflektioner som långsamt börjar tala med varandra. Gravitationscentra skapas, som långsamt sätter allt i rörelse och slutligen antar en bestämd form i det imaginära rum-tid-kontinuumet i mitt musikaliska arbete. Min ambition är därför inte tydlig, pragmatisk uppdelning av materialet, utan snarare att avhandlingen till sist sammanfogar ljud, bild och text på ett mer genomarbetat sätt. Texten i denna enskilda skrift ska kommunicera de viktigaste anspråken på en möjlig konstnärlig kunskap.

Någon avgränsad slutsats når inte mitt projekt fram till. Dess beroende av potentialitet, uppkomst/tillblivelse, som inbäddats i begreppet *ontopoetik* och *extatiska tekniker*, är för starkt. Besattheten av att vara konstnär (eller kanske snarare, människa) är i sista hand att ständigt drömma om

det ännu ej skapade. Som Pasolini (i en cameoroll) uttrycker det i filmen Decamerone:

"Varför skapa ett konstverk när det är så vackert att bara drömma om ett?"

Avhandlingen har genom sin tillblivelse varit en del av denna dröm.

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