

The Noise of Mind:

A Feminist Practice in Composition

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A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2017

Abstract

This thesis presents a portfolio of compositions and an auto-epistemology documenting a ‘personalised discipline’ that I termed a ‘feminist practice’ in composition. ‘Composing-as-listening’ is how I approach the artistic potential of perception and composing alike from a feminist position. Centring on the voice, my practice is postdramatic and political. My scores locate the voice-body-mind nexus in scenic space and reframe the notational hierarchies by foregrounding space and disrupting teleological temporality. Listening is a creative practice directed towards my human and non-human environments, into their invisible substructures as well as inside my personal space, the mind. Drawing on introspection, cognitive sciences, phenomenology, and contemplative practices, I hear mind as a polyphony of vocal thoughts. A concept of noise as a mental borderline negotiating emotionality provides interdisciplinary material for my work and offers a compositional link between the public sonosphere and the personal vocality of mind.

Driven by wrath as a pulse generator, my compositional process develops along procedures of biological growth, with the ‘third space’ (extending Donald D. Winnicott’s theory of an intermediary) as a key phase of transit during which a work is processed from imagination towards realisation. A conception of vocality as ‘mind-body voicing’ allows me to integrate physicality, emotionality, spatial, and cultural aspects into a discipline of composing the personal as political. In my works and composed spaces, the exposition of the performer correlates with Baroque art and postdramatic theatre; feminist theory informs my practice of using field recordings, transcriptions, multimedia arrangements, and writing texts. Along with Byung-Chul Han, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Judith Butler, I contrast the precarious presence of the performer with the impact of digital media on human interaction; I propose to reformulate live performance against the background of virtual disembodiment.

Bringing ideas of cartography into score writing, I clarify the notation of (inner and outer) spatial information and issues of control in performance. ‘Decoding’ becomes the performer’s and listener’s individual process of taking possession of my work. Contributions from Homer, Éliane Radigue, Pauline Oliveros, Jennifer Walshe, Trinh Minh-ha, and Chaya Czernowin contextualise my portfolio.

Key words:

Personalised discipline, feminist, composing-as-listening, postdramatic, noise, mind-body voicing, third space, cartography

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	8
LIST OF WORKS – Portfolio submitted as part of the thesis	9
GLOSSARY OF PERSONALISED TERMS	14
AD INITIUM	16
1. LISTENING – Fundamental research	19
1.1 A rage for listening	20
1.2 The voice-mind embodiment	27
1.3 The voice-body in mind	33
1.4 Audio scores: An exposition of listening	36
1.5 Noise	40
1.6 Summary: Composing-as-listening is a feminist practice	46
2. COMPOSING – A personalised discipline as feminist practice	53
2.1 VOCALITY	53
<i>On composing politically</i>	
2.1.1 A subversive dramaturgy	53
2.1.2 Composing (with) text	55
2.1.3 The clatter of dishes becoming composition	60
2.1.4 Baroque techniques in postdramatic texturing	62
2.2 IN TRANSITU	73
<i>A song</i>	
2.2.1 Performing the intermediary as writing (an experiment)	73
2.2.2 The third space	75
2.2.3 Patterning and punctuation	77
2.2.4 Improvisation	81

2.3. BEYOND VOCALITY	89
<i>Composing scenic space</i>	
2.3.1 Biological progression as a principle in my practice	90
2.3.2 Scenic spaces	91
2.3.3 Analogue and digital instrumentality	94
2.3.4 A self-organised ensemble in an audiovisual arrangement	99
 3. CARTOGRAPHY – A register of political reflection and notation	111
3.1 Cartography, projection, and decoding	111
3.2 Charting the voice-mind in motion	116
3.3 Voicing a cartography of inner terrains	118
 4. CONCLUSIO	121
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	125
 APPENDIX USB – Portfolio documentation.....	138

Word count: 37.057

TABLE OF DIAGRAMS

(all photos and images by Pia Palme, if not stated otherwise)

1 Video still ‘View of Vienna towards northwest’	
– <i>VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av</i>	16
2 Video still ‘View of Vienna towards east’	
– <i>VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av</i>	18
3 Juliet Fraser performing via audio score, from <i>CANTU FOLIATO</i>	
(photo by Aaron Cassidy)	47
4 Singers of the Wiener JugendChor performing via audio score,	
from <i>BARE BRANCHES</i> (photo by Franz Reiterer)	48
5 Listening station in <i>BOUNDARY LAYER LISTENING</i>	49
6 Walkable installation for <i>Performing the Noise of Mind</i>	50
7 Score excerpt – <i>MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST</i>, bars 63 – 70	51
8 Score excerpt – <i>MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST</i>, bars 104 – 115	52
9 A potato as an intermediary object for <i>Under elephantine skin</i>	65
10 Score excerpt – <i>Under elephantine skin, Part I</i>, bars 49 – 53	67
11 Score excerpt – <i>Under elephantine skin, Part III</i>, bars 16 – 28	68
12 Punchcard score and punch tool for <i>Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness</i>	69
13 Ute Wassermann performing <i>Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness</i>	71
14 Rhodri Davies performing with prepared harp,	
from <i>GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance II</i>	72
15 Transduction for <i>GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance I</i>	85
16 Spatial arrangement for <i>BIRDSONG CRANNIES</i>,	
the ensemble getting ready for performance	86
17 Spatial arrangement for a performance of <i>KEMPELEN’S RING</i>	87
18 Spatial arrangement for <i>Under elephantine skin</i> during final soundcheck	87
19 Spatial arrangement and Ivan Fantini’s organic installation	
for <i>ABSTRIAL</i> (photo by Markus Gradwohl)	88
20 Scene from <i>ABSTRIAL</i> showing the installation, singers,	
and artist Paola Bianchi (photo by Markus Gradwohl)	89

21	Score excerpt – <i>Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness</i>, bars 84 – 91	104
22	Score excerpt – <i>Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness</i>, bars 92 – 103	105
23	Video still – <i>VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av</i>	106
24	Preliminary setup with ensemble Schallfeld	
	rehearsing for <i>VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av</i>	107
25	Detail from the performance of <i>SETZUNG 1.1</i>	108
26	Detail from the performance of <i>SETZUNG 1.1</i>	109
27	Video still – <i>Patterns to punctuate speech, with darkness</i>	110

Acknowledgements

This research and portfolio have been realised with support from the following individuals, artists, ensembles, and organisations:

First I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. Liza Lim for her persevering effort and dedication which has guided me through this work. Her expertise, tenacity, and passion have led and inspired this study. I further wish to warmly thank Prof. Monty Adkins, my co-supervisor, and the music staff of the University of Huddersfield at CeReNeM for providing an open space for rigorous experimentation and a thorough theoretical discourse in composition and performance.

I would also like to thank the mentors I have met during this research in composition, most of all Éliane Radigue, also Laurence Crane, and David Toop. I wish to acknowledge the singers and voice performers whose experience and artistic skill, in consultation and performance, has proven invaluable: Claudia Cervenka, Johanna von der Deken, Juliet Fraser, Annette Giesriegl, Lori van Gremberghe, Veronika Griebblehner, Anna Clare Hauf, Jakob Huppmann, Stephen Jeffes, Salome Kammer, Eva-Maria Kumpfmüller, Loré Lixenberg, Bartolo Musil, Michaela Schausberger, Annette Schönmüller, Paik Sehyun, Johanna Seitingner, Rannveig Sif Sigurdardottir, Alice Theyssier, Svitlana Varava, Ute Wassermann, Simon Whitley, and Tom Williams.

There are many performers, artists, authors, and interdisciplinary collaborators I have been very lucky to work with during this research, including: Ryoko Akama, David Bergmüller, Paola Bianchi, Rhodri Davies, Electric Indigo, Ivan Fantini, Jonathan Hepfer, Garth Knox, Margret Kreidl, Sylvie Lacroix, Sonja Leipold, Molly McDolan, Margarethe Mayerhofer-Lischka, Gabriela Mossyrsch, Eva Neunhäuserer, Guliano Obici, Mona Smale, Berndt Thurner, TE-r (Thomas Wagensommerer & Luise Linsenbolz), Michael Vorfeld, and Anne Waldman. Further, I wish to warmly thank the following sound designers for their support and knowledge: Christina Bauer, Peter Böhm, Davide Gagliardi, David Pirró, Alfred Reiter, and Christoph Amann Studios.

I want to thank these individuals, ensembles, and organisations who have supported and performed my work: ensemble EXAUDI and James Weeks, ensemble Kontrapunkte, ensemble Phace, ensemble Reconsil, ensemble Schallfeld, the Wiener Kammerchor, Wiener JugendChor der Musikschule Wien; the festivals e_may and Gina Mattiello, Musikprotokoll, Raflost, Salzburg Biennale, Steirischer Herbst, tgnm Graz, V:NM Graz, Wien Modern; further I thank the Alte Schmiede Wien, Werner Korn and Echoraum Wien, Barbara Klein and Kosmos Theater Wien, Reihe Cercle Wien, off-Theater Wien, and the KUG Kunstuniversität Graz; also I thank the Austrian radio Österreichischer Rundfunk for recording and featuring my work.

My research has been financially supported through monies by the University Huddersfield's Conference Presentation Fund, Research Networking Fund, Research Impact Fund; further funding of composition includes Sound and Music UK, the Austrian Ministry of Art, the BKA Austrian Federal Chancellery, the Kulturamt of the City of Vienna, and SKE Fonds Austria.

Finally, I want to thank my families and friends in Austria, for their warmhearted support and love, and, especially, Johannes.

LIST OF WORKS – Portfolio submitted as part of the thesis

All portfolio works are documented in the Appendix USB.

Additional information about these works can be found at my website www.piapalme.at

LIP OF THE REAL version I (2012)

for mezzo soprano with throat microphone, percussion,
and live electronics (4-channel) – *app. 30'*

libretto by Pia Palme from texts by Margret Kreidl, Anne Waldman, and Pia Palme

premiere with Loré Lixenberg – mezzo-soprano with throat microphone,
Berndt Thurner – percussion, Pia Palme – live electronics,
Alfred Reiter – sound design
[Vienna, Alte Schmiede, March 9, 2012]

CANTU FOLIATO (2012)

score and audio scores for variable vocal ensemble SATB *flexible > 7'30"*
text by Anne Waldman (ed. Pia Palme)

[Workshopped by ensemble EXAUDI, University of Huddersfield, May 2, 2012]

BARE BRANCHES (2012)

Secular Requiem – 25''

written score with instructions and audio scores

for soprano, mezzo soprano, percussion, a youthful female speaker,
mixed choir I SATB and youth choir II (male and female voices)
text by Anne Waldman (English) and Pia Palme (German)

premiere with Salome Kammer – soprano,
Annette Schön Müller – mezzo,
Choir I: Wiener Kammerchor (direction: Michael Grohotolsky),
Choir II and a young solo voice: Wiener JugendChor der Musikschule Wien
(direction: Andrea Kreuziger),
Berndt Thurner (Ensemble PHACE) – percussion,
Alfred Reiter, Christina Bauer, Pia Palme – sound design
[Vienna, Palais Kabelwerk, *Wien Modern* and *e_may*, October 25, 2012]

KEMPELEN'S RING

– **Cyborg/Minuten/Oper für ein Mobiltelefon als Multitasking-Hauptdarsteller** (2012)

ringtone for a mobile phone – 1'

available for download at <https://soundcloud.com/wienmodern/kempelens-ring>

words by Anne Waldman

[Website *Wien Modern*, October 2012]

LIP OF THE REAL version II (2013)

for flutist/soprano with throat microphone, percussion,

and live electronics (6-channel) – *app.* 15'

libretto by Pia Palme from texts by Margret Kreidl, Anne Waldman, and Pia Palme

premiere with Alice Theyssier – soprano and flute, Jonathan Hepfer – percussion,

Pia Palme – live electronics, sound design

[University of Huddersfield, St. Paul's Hall, February 14, 2013]

ABSTRIAL a radical opera (2013)

collaborative music theatre – 60'

with an organic installation by Ivan Fantini,

concept by Paola Bianchi, Electric Indigo, Ivan Fantini, Pia Palme, Anne Waldman

music composed by Pia Palme and Electric Indigo:

score for four voices (soprano, mezzo soprano, alto, baritone), contrabass recorder,

and an audio score for baritone, composed by Pia Palme;

electronics composed by Electric Indigo;

libretto by Pia Palme compiled from texts by Anne Waldman, Ivan Fantini, Pia Palme

premiere with Bartolo Musil – baritone,

Eva-Maria Kumpfmüller – soprano,

Johanna von der Deken – soprano,

Anna Clare Hauf – mezzo-soprano,

Pia Palme – contrabass recorder,

Electric Indigo – computer & spatialisation,

Paola Bianchi – performance, Christina Bauer – sound design

[Vienna, Kosmos Theater, April 24-27, 2013]

Boundary Layer Listening (2013)

text and installation

[realised in the atrium of the CAB Building, University of Huddersfield]

Performing the noise of mind (2013)

text score and installation for an instrumental performer

performed at premiere for a duration of 5 hours

[University of Huddersfield, CAB Building, *Noise In and As Music Symposium*,
October 5, 2013]

GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance I (2014)

score and audio score for viola d'amore,

contrabass recorder, electronics, text,

and an installation – *app. 16'*

text by Pia Palme

premiere with Garth Knox – viola d'amore,

Pia Palme – contrabass recorder & electronics

[University of Huddersfield, St. Paul's Hall, March 14, 2014]

GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance II (2014)

for harp and electronics (playback via transducers) – *12'*

text by Pia Palme

premiere with Rhodri Davies – harp, Pia Palme – sound design

[University of Huddersfield, Phipps Hall, *Beyond Pythagoras Conference*, March 21, 2014]

SETZUNG 1.1 (2014)

for a female vocal performer,

with a semitransparent membrane score installation – *app. 14'*

premiere with Michaela Schausberger – voice and acting

[Wien, Off-Theater, *cercle – konzertreihe für neue musik*, September 24, 2014]

Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness (2015)

for mezzo-soprano voice and throat microphone, electronics (playback),

and punchcard visual – *app. 14'*

text by Pia Palme, remix after Ute Wassermann

premiere with Ute Wassermann – mezzo-soprano voice and throat microphone,

Pia Palme – electronics, Michael Vorfeld – visual projection

[Salzburg, Kavernen 1595, *Salzburg Biennale*, March 7, 2015]

BIRDSONG CRANNIES (2015)

score with movement instructions for vocal ensemble
(four female voices, one male voice) – 20-25' (*flexible*)
text by Pia Palme including a remix of Virginia Woolf

premiere with Lori van Gremberghe,
Veronika Griebblehner, Svitlana Varava,
Johanna Seitingner – female voices, Paik Sehyun – male voice
[Graz, downtown area near ESC medien kunst labor,
V:NM Festival für Neue, Improvisierte und Experimentelle Musik, May 21, 2015]

Patterns to punctuate speech, with darkness (2015)

video, lecture, electronics, and performance with contrabass recorder – 20'18''
[held live at the 2015 RMA *Music and/as Process* conference,
Goldsmiths University, London, June 6, 2015]

MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST (2015)

for vocal ensemble SCtTB – 12'
text by Pia Palme

premiere with ensemble EXAUDI
Juliet Fraser – soprano, Tom Williams – countertenor,
Stephen Jeffes – tenor, Simon Whiteley – bass,
James Weeks – director
[London, *EXAUDI EXPOSURE2015* and *Sound and Music*, The Warehouse,
October 17, 2015]

Under elephantine skin (to be sung against a continuum of ignorance) (2015)

for countertenor, theorbo, Baroque oboe,
recorders (alto and contrabass), and electronics – *app.* 25'
text by Pia Palme

premiere with Jakob Huppmann – countertenor,
David Bergmüller – theorbo,
Molly McDolan – Baroque oboe,
Pia Palme – recorders (Baroque alto, contrabass recorder) and electronics (analogue
feedback and digital processing),
Christina Bauer – sound design
[Vienna, Konzerthaus Berio-Saal, *Wien Modern*, November 26, 2015]

MUSTERBUCH (2016)

for mezzo-soprano voice and throat microphone,
electronic playback, live processing, and video – 14'
text by Pia Palme (remix from Ute Wassermann)

premiere with Anna Clare Hauf – mezzo-soprano voice and throat microphone,
Pia Palme – media performance
[Graz, Florentinersaal, KUG Kunst Universität Graz, January 18, 2016]

VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av (2016)

for ensemble (flute [bass flute and piccolo], bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, violin,
violoncello, double bass), electronics (6-channel), text, and video – 16'
text by Pia Palme

premiere with Ensemble Schallfeld: Elisa Azzarà – flutes,
Szilárd Benes – bass clarinet, Matej Bunderla – saxophone, Lorenzo Derinni – violin,
Myriam García Fidalgo – violoncello, Margarethe Maierhofer-Lischka – double bass,
David Pirró, Davide Gagliardi – electronics, sound design
[Graz, *tage neuer musik graz*, Kulturzentrum Minoriten, Mai 20, 2016]

VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM III (2016)

for ensemble (flute [piccolo & bass flute], bass clarinet, baritone saxophone,
tenor trombone, accordion,
violin I & II, viola, violoncello I & II, double bass I & II, wind machine) – 15'30"
text by Pia Palme

premiere with Ensemble Kontrapunkte
[Vienna, Musikerverein Gläserner Saal, *Wien Modern*, November 7, 2016]

GLOSSARY OF PERSONALIZED TERMS

Audio score

Score information or performance instructions that are aurally transmitted to the performer, through head-phones, in-ear plugs, loudspeakers, or via another singer. In parallel to the aural score a written score may further modify the aural information.

Cartography

Notation of three-dimensional spatial performance situations via projection onto (two-dimensional musical) scores. Cartographic notation centres on spatial representation of inner and outer (performative and compositional) dimensions in music and performance, with the factor time ranking below space in notational hierarchy. The linearity of time is thus disrupted, while the user (i.e. performer or listener) is asked to decode the score according to his or her individual perspective.

Composing-as-listening

Process of congealing a fuzzy aural proto-appearance in mind into a well defined sonic object that can be externalised and communicated. I use the equation to underline the individuality and complexity of a twinned creative procedure that involves the entire body-mind nexus of an individual within the given environment and culture.

Exposition

An open and clear presentation in public; sound, text, vocality, and performance are treated as exhibited objects in relationship to the audience. Jean-Luc Nancy (2015) uses the term to define the mutual relationship between a singular being as an individual and the given community, in a shared time-space.

Feminism

Feminism is a multidisciplinary approach to issues of equality and equity based on the formation of gender, sexuality, and identity. While recognising that human beings differ as individuals, feminism signals emancipatory measures on behalf of women and calls for the elimination of predefined gender roles. Feminism is understood through a wide range of social, economic, political, and cultural activities and theories, as it seeks to change the relationship between men and women.

Feminist practice in composition

A compositional practice that is grounded in feminism, meaning that feminism underpins how and what kind of decisions are made during the compositional process and around it.

This practice does not seek to produce ‘feminist’ works. The feminist practice in composition is essentially personal and individual, as explored in this thesis.

Personalised discipline/practice

The personalised discipline/practice builds on the individual composer’s experience to contribute to an epistemology of composing. It voices individual themes and narratives for the purpose of extending compositional understanding. The term ‘discipline’ underlines the continuity and perseverance required in the individual process, which can extend over a lifetime.

Political

Motivated by, or interested in, influencing and actively participating in the process of making decisions in a given community. This applies to both public and private situations, and includes the distribution of power and resources in cultural affairs and artistic practices in the given community.

Postdramatic

Postdramatic composition offers performers and audiences (musical) experiences that seek to investigate broader issues connected with listening and the aural domain. It integrates the audience into the meaning-making process by working through a distinctive set of conventions, such as: disrupting a time-structure that relies on building up tension between a beginning, middle, and end; (extreme) use of performed and interdisciplinary material; deconstructing the performer’s role to push towards a mutual exposition of audience and performers.

Originally, the term was introduced to cover a wide range of contemporary practices in theatre, and has gained importance since Hans-Thies Lehmann’s book *Postdramatic Theatre* was published (in German 1999; the English translation appeared in 2006). I shift the focus from theatrical performance, acting, and text towards musical performance, composition, and listening.

Third space

A psychological space surrounding an individual marking an intermediary zone of reference and territory apart from that which is perceived as one’s clearly defined inner world and the outer reality. It is a potential area of creativity, experimentation, and cultural interaction. In my practice, the third space marks the period and zone of creative processing during a work’s transition from my imagination towards its realisation.



Fig. 1: Video still ‘View of Vienna towards northwest’
– *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av*

AD INITIUM

Listening lies at the heart of my practice. I perceive my environment as an auditory space, encompassing me on all sides. My childhood home was situated on Vienna’s northwestern fringe, where the urban bustle gives way to the more natural soundscapes of gardens, forest and vineyards. Traditional small family wineries surrounded my parent’s home. On weekends in summer, people flocked to the gardens to escape from the city, crowding around wooden tables set under trees, and enjoyed a glass of wine (or more) and simple local food. Later in the evening, music and singing would start. The crescendo of uninhibited voices performing traditional Viennese music accompanied by accordion, zither, guitar, and violin used to continue far into the night.¹

I would then lie awake in my bed under the roof with the window open, compelled to listen to a polyphony of sounds. What caught my ears was the unpremeditated dramaturgy caused by the wind foregrounding different musics and voices as it changed its direction. These shifting

¹ Anton Karas, the famous zither virtuoso and composer/performer of the film score of *The Third Man*, had built his elegant, modernistic winery (named *Der Dritte Mann* after the film) around the corner from my parent’s home. On occasions, I watched Anton Karas perform for his guests, seated in the middle of his garden with his instrument on a small resonant table.

sonorities were set against a more stable background layer of nature's unceasing rustles, and punctuated by the noise of tramways and an occasional car passing on the main road down the hill. My imagination arranged the synchronous musics, noises, and voices into a complex performance to whom I was the only witness, an opera staged in the fictional yet familiar landscape of my neighbourhood. In an imaginary process of map-making, I positioned these sounds into an ephemeral cartography, a score.

At some point later in the night, the operatic script would – inevitably – include some wartime songs. At that time, in the early sixties, Austria was a recovering post-war republic, and Vienna a bland city with a number of houses still bearing the marks of warfare. The impact of the Second World War and Austria's Nazi history cast a long shadow. Rough male voices singing in unison would call up a submerged, threatening undertone, hushing the surrounding laughter and conversations. I had long learned to direct my listening inwards, towards the hidden layers of human interaction, and into silence. My paternal grandmother was of Jewish decent; certain questions of mine about the past were met with silence, even within my family. Mansions in our area stood imposingly silent, abandoned by the (Jewish) families who had once lived there. With their parks turning into wildernesses, the noises of nature thrived around their stillness. Listening into these silences, these void places reverberated with concealed voices, permeated by a dark basso continuo. Yet another score then formed in my mind, of an aural substructure underlying the real sonosphere.

As a child, my curiosity and keen interest in what I perceived around me surpassed my fear; I decided to become an explorer navigating unknown terrains. To this day, my lust to travel visible and invisible dimensions through listening is unbroken. The video stills (figures 1 and 2) included here are excerpted from the composition *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av* (Palme, 2016), a work which embeds the audience into an audiovisual arrangement. In performing the personal as political, my video invites the audience to join me on a journey through Vienna. Both video stills were filmed from exactly the same position, on the balcony of my former parents' home in Vienna.



Fig. 2: Video still 'View of Vienna towards east'
– *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av*

1. LISTENING – Fundamental research

This thesis begins with a fundamental study of listening with ‘feminist ears’, that is, from a feminist listening position. I look into rage as a strong footing of my works for the voice, and look into the mechanics of perception. I explain how listening mirrors composing and introduce the term *composing-as-listening* as a code for my discipline. From a feminist angle, I reframe the the interdependent activities, decisions, and components that together make up my practice. These activities and components are labelled as feminist by definition. Drawing on political film-making and postdramatic theory, I explain my understanding of *vocality* and investigate its exposition in my works. The phrasing ‘my work’ used throughout this thesis signals the personal and individual process of composition ultimately leading to the performance, rather than a definition of personal territory. I explore my inner space, my mind, and discuss the importance of an inner vocality for my practice and conception of the voice. A commentary on composing with audio scores is followed by a discourse on *noise* as a core conception and material of my work. The chapter ends with a summary of my fundamental research into the multiple aspects of my personal discipline that I term a *feminist practice* in composition.

In my discourse I use a method of radically redefining important terms or concepts: I first look into the history of the term I want to explore, tracing its original conception. Then, from its very *root* (Latin: ‘radix’) I work towards a novel understanding – a divergence into a feminist direction. For this reason, I find it important to investigate older sources, references, and definitions. For example, for my research into rage I go back to Homer and Ancient Greek literature. In fact, with Homer I find important ideas that correspond with my way of thinking as a feminist and contemporary artist. For the discourse on mind, I look into ancient Buddhist philosophy. In a similar way, I explore the term noise by first going back to older and historical definitions and working from there towards a contemporary feminist understanding of noise in composition.

1.1 A rage for listening

Rage underlies my work and serves as a point of departure for my compositional practice. I find it extraordinary that ‘rage’ opens the *Iliad*, one of the oldest extant epics (texted vocal works) in Europe. Being a composer of vocal music and a feminist raised in Vienna, I am connected to this long tradition. A female voice, that of an inspirational goddess, is summoned to ‘sing rage’ – rather than sing *about* rage. In regard to content, form, and sonority, the word *Mḗninv*² (with an accent-bearing first syllable) is a strikingly composed beginning of a narrative which is sung to a listening audience. The epic vocalises a tale of wrath, warfare, and their human toll. Its opening sentence (in my favourite English translation by Stanley Lombardo) runs as follows (Homer, 1997, p. 1):

Mḗninv ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε’ ἔθηκε,
πολλὰς δ’ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἴωνοισί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή,
ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.

RAGE:

Sing, Goddess, Achilles’ rage,
Black and murderous, that costs the Greeks
Incalculable pain, pitched countless souls
Of heroes into Hades’ dark,
And left their bodies to rot as feasts
For dogs and birds, as Zeus’ will was done.

Begin with the clash between Agamemnon –
The Greek warlord – and godlike Achilles.

In my practice I understand rage as potential action, in contrast to the freezing, paralysing quality of anger. Akin to the *Iliad*’s epic fury, the irate state of mind I work with differs from the flame wars raging today in the digital dimension. While compulsive viral inebriation comes and goes in quick succession, epic wrath can set off lasting change. For me as a composer, epic rage is a medium of action and has the power to build futures (Han, 2014, p. 17). I perceive a singular facet in the raging of wrath, in that it seeks to establish a connection to the outside (my environment). The *Iliad* illustrates how in a compositional practice raging

² *Mḗninv*, *mēnin*, accusative of *μῆνις*, *mēnis*, ‘wrath, rage, fury’.

fury is rendered *epic*, that is, it is rendered singable. I understand this artistic transformation as a subversive practice, that is, a practice that has the potential to overturn and change specific mechanisms, configurations, qualities, or content. The process of a work's composition and performance deconstructs, reframes, and de-territorialises the emotion. At the same time, the artistic process infuses empathy into the affect, transforming the emotion into aural material. As a result, the affect becomes pliable and is domesticated. Its intensity and destructiveness become composabilities, that is, potential material for composing, without losing their depth or fervour. In composing, I appreciate wrathfulness as a potential material and as powerful agent which stimulates my practice. Tapping into the emotion allows me to draw on its impulsive intensity and unpredictable strength for my work, and to utilise the actionability and driving force that goes along with it as a pulse generator for my discipline.

I notice that in world politics wrath has become a keyword in public discussions. It is used by politicians, rebellious citizens, fundamentalists, and terrorists alike. As a composer and feminist, it is imperative to raise my voice in this debate. It is imperative to recapture the term rage for the work as an artist. It is important for me to compose politically, meaning to perform the activity of composing in a political way rather than to compose political works. I find it useful to transform and extend Jean-Luc Godard's statement about film-making (Hans, 2009, p. 9) to apply to composition: he is interested in making films politically, not in making political films. As a composer, I perceive myself as being part of a given human community; as a feminist and composer, I have an awareness of (historical) role models attached to the work of a composer in this society, as they affect the distribution of power and resources in my profession and further have an impact on my process. With this thesis and portfolio, I want to participate in forming a contemporaneous and emancipated understanding of the practice in composition by contributing this feminist auto-epistemology of composing.

In my practice of political composing the focus is on the voice: it is the principal means of human interaction and communication, and a primary means of creating musical sound. As human beings, we all use our voices; beyond music, all vocal productions have an essential sonorous and emotional quality which can be directly experienced. I recognise in the human

voice a presence which is composed of sonic, physical, mental, emotional, and cultural elements. To my ear, the human voice embodies the precarious human existence and is an utterly political material to compose with. Composing with text, I locate the voice within its environment of culture, language, and knowledge. All of my portfolio works feature vocal production in some form. Composed vocality spans a wide range: from vocal solos to spoken text woven into an instrumental ensemble piece, to be recited by musicians; from electronic pieces with voice recordings to compositions for vocal ensembles; instrumental pieces featuring electronic tracks with vocal content, mixed choirs, a secular Requiem, a collaborative opera or installative works with vocal content.

The role of listening from a ‘feminist position’ is central in my practice of composing. I will explain and establish this position as my discourse continues. The feminist position of listening is a compound of many shifts and particular approaches I take in my practice. It can only be defined as I proceed through my explorations, step by step. It is the intention of this thesis that the manifold remarks signalling a ‘feminist’ position or approach will in the end assemble into a mosaic that clarifies the range of my practice. I began to practice and study feminism in 1990, primarily as a (non-academic) social and cultural practice in my everyday life, which later extended into my professional practice as a composer, performer, curator, teacher, and into the academic context. In German speaking areas, the construction of gender through language is an essential issue that literally permeates all fields of social and cultural exchange. German language and grammar prioritise the masculine gender (Pusch, 1990). Feminists have therefore suggested innovative ways to disclose the feminine side or express equity in the German language, drawing for example on the writings of Luise F. Pusch (Pusch, 1990) about the key position of the German language in the construction of gender roles. As a direct consequence, feminist practice in Austria draws on research into linguistics; this accounts for my strong interest in texted music as a composer.

In any given aspect of my practice, the general direction of the paradigmatic shifts caused by the feminist attitude is towards more openness and fluidity, towards an inclusion of what is concealed or closed off, towards a balance of visible and invisible dimensions. For these subtle transformations ample time must be allowed; therefore, time is often flexible and less

determined in my work. Space, on the other hand, is foregrounded in my practice as well as in how I listen. In my work, listening must penetrate beyond external surfaces into interior spaces: into objects, into phenomena, into the body of the listener; further, into and beyond human interaction and communication – in short, into one’s human and non-human environment. I experience the sonosphere as a multidimensional expanse surrounding me on all sides and extending into my interior space, my mind-body. This is in stark contrast to visual perception, which covers a limited spatial range in front of the perceiver and stops at any surface, such as one’s skin. Hearing borders on touch; the physicality of hearing is vital for me. At approximately 20 hertz, the lower frequencies of audible sound become tactile vibrations (Schafer, 1994, p. 11). Sound physically penetrates into one’s body. This feature of listening perception can easily be experienced in clubs playing electronic dance music.

My work is grounded in listening as a perception that defines aurality-as-space. In my compositional process sound is intrinsically linked to space, as I consider the spatial position of the sound source or performer and the direction into which the respective sound-waves are dispersed. At the same time, there is an inner stance and a more subtle understructure of what ‘direction’ and ‘position’ could mean. In my works I pose the questions: ‘Where does the sound/the voice come from? Where is sound/the voice heard? Where does it go to?’ and investigate them as a composer-listener.

I find a corresponding line of thought in the field of rhetoric. The researcher into rhetorics, feminist theory, and critical race studies Krista Ratcliffe establishes *listening and silence* as productive processes and essential practices in rhetorical arts (Glenn & Ratcliffe, 2011). Following her ideas, listening is redefined as “vital and creative” and empowered as a rhetorical practice in itself (Stenberg, 2013; Letherby, 2007). In her exploration of feminist rhetorics, Shari J. Stenberg notes that in popular culture, as well as scientific contexts, listening is regarded as an activity that naturally happens without further practice. While writing, reading, and speaking are cultivated as a means of scholarly competition, listening is devalued as the passive counterpart to speech. Stenberg suggests listening as a tool to underscore “reflection, responsibility, and understanding of difference” instead of “individual success” in a dialogue – including academic as well as non-academic contexts (Stenberg,

2013, p. 95). Along this line of thinking, feminist scholars such as Ratcliffe and Sternberg challenge the idea of an objective, logical, and rational model in science and academia, which they refute as masculinist (Stenberg, 2013; Glenn & Ratcliffe, 2011), and offer methods to open up the academic discourse by means of their practice of rhetorical listening. Regarding the rhetoric composition, Stenberg reclaims the “subjectivity of the writer and reader, arguing for experience as a vital form of knowledge” (Stenberg, 2013, p. 16).

The element of silence is a recurring theme in my academic practice; in my own experience, a substantial amount of silence is necessary to bring forth thoughts and ideas that are hidden deep inside (myself) and have never been verbalised before. Looking at my own development as a composer and scholar during this thesis research, I took up a major challenge in integrating my practical and non-academic knowledge into an academic discourse. Presenting a practical writing experiment together with the psychological concept of a *third space*, I designed the chapter *IN TRANSITU* (chapter 2.2) as a method to work with this challenge. The *third space* introduces an intermediary zone between subjectivity and objectivity, bridging the personal and public dimensions of an individual as a zone of creative exchange.

It is the more hidden and veiled areas that spark my interest – with the element of surprise being a stimulant to the creative process (Eisner, 2002). For my compositions, I observe the silent substructures of human interaction, taking note of background noises that cannot be perceived ostensibly. The inner sonorities become my compositional material. I extend listening inside myself and perceive the thinking mind as an inner sonosphere. The term sonosphere is understood by Pauline Oliveros (2011) as the “sonorous or sonic envelope of the earth”. I use it here to indicate my inner sonic dimension: I listen to the mind as a sonorous space. Following the phenomenologist and researcher into listening Don Ihde (2007), I see mental phenomena and cognition in conjunction with voice and language. This notion feeds into my artistic concepts, into how I compose for the voice, and into how I work with texted music.

Returning to Homer’s artistic process, I find that the power of the epic poem stems from the fact that listening and composing are extended beyond the self-evident, towards inner worlds.

Words and phrasing are carefully chosen and composed for their meaning together with their musical qualities. They resonate with an inner, emotional, and cognitive content – they transport insight.

Listening is a performative activity (Helbich, 2016); it is a political activity. In my practice, listening perception is performed as passionate and pervasive. My mode of listening into phenomena is subversive and creative; it defines a feminist practice. Activating the feminist ear, I listen to contextual sonorities: sound is located within its aural environment. Listening to the background noises of human interaction brings them to the foreground of my perception and awareness. In this way, feminist listening spans the external and internal spatial expanses, integrating human and non-human sonorities. From a close and comprehensive self-observation of my practice, I have found that the process of composing mirrors (either directly or inversely) the mechanics of listening perception. Here, I refer to the cognitive procedure, to the mental mechanisms of composing and listening. I have explored in depth how an auditory figure emerges first internally, developing further, eventually manifesting ‘outside’ (as a notated score or text instruction), until it reaches an audience in performance. In listening, an auditory figure emerges from the ‘outside’ and is then fleshed out mentally in the perceptual process. This is a counter-progression, a reversed unfolding of listening and composing: composing mirrors listening.

My observations on active listening and the compositional process are substantiated by recent findings in the field of cognitive sciences. Here, perception is discussed as an enactive process, meaning as a complex, productive operation which actively creates the perceived environment. Listening as a process requires mental phenomena beyond information processing, such as imagination, consciousness, and attentiveness. It is accepted that perceptual processes are tied to cultural training (Depraz, Varela, & Vermersch, 2003, pp. 222-232). Neuro-materiality (Schmitz & Höppner, 2014) “has to be discussed in terms of culture, society, cognition, and behaviour, which all give meaning to each other in this process of enacting and intra-acting.” It is imperative that the socio-cultural context of perception is acknowledged. Neuroscience has established the term ‘brainbody-in-culture’ for this perceptual phenomenon (Schmitz & Höppner, 2014, p. 17). Two areas of cognitive

psychology and neuroscience seem important in the context of my work: a current feminist and queer perspective on brain discourse (Schmitz & Höppner, 2014), and Eric Kandel's singular research about corresponding aspects of creating and perceiving (visual) art (Kandel, 2012). An international network of scholars working in different disciplines in the fields of gender and brain research strongly argue that feminist science studies as well as gender and queer studies must be integrated to evaluate and improve the current state of neuroscientific methods, evidence, and interpretations. The nexus 'brainbody-in-culture' helps to stimulate the feminist neuro-discourse, as it addresses aspects of gender construction. From this outlook, I label my practice of listening as feminist. On the other hand, according to Eric Kandel the reception of a work of art is not a passive act of taking in and reacting to stimuli, but it is the intrinsically creative "modelling of physical and psychic reality". The artistic process corresponds to the process of perception. Both processes operate according to similar structures of brain activity to (re-)create a mental imagination of 'reality' (Kandel, 2012, p. 205). In more complex environments, human beings rely on what is defined as 'Theory of Mind', an expression coined to define the complex cognitive network of information that enables us as individuals to understand (mentally, emotionally, and bodily) the thoughts and feelings of other human beings (Kandel, 2012). Drawing on Kandel's research on the reception of visual art, I propose that from the viewpoint of neuroscience the brain's mechanics of listening and composing could be the same.³

From this perspective, I put forward the term *composing-as-listening* as an essential code for my discipline. The above discourse shows how I look at the very roots and foundations of listening in order to re-think the perceptual process. What I understand as the *feminist* stance defines a shift in perspective, i.e. a widening of the perceptual field towards a contextual and cultural approach. It is a deeper and more inclusive mode of exploration that penetrates *into* phenomena. I experience it as both intimate and political. I find it interesting that the terms 'perspective', 'outlook', or 'view' all denote visual perception. I prefer a terminology that relies on aural investigation instead and therefore describe my process as 'feminist listening', to denote an active process of exploration by ear.

³ To this date, there is no neuroscientific exploration of the parallel connection between listening and composing. To this effect, I am in correspondence with Eric Kandel, who has expressed a desire to extend research in this area.

1.2 The voice-mind embodiment

The voice holds a focal position in my practice and in my portfolio compositions. In the context of my practice, the auditory quality of the voice represents the widest possible range of sonorities that can be produced vocally, including both refined techniques of singing and everyday modes of verbal and non-verbal (vocal) communication. In my compositional practice, I understand the voice as a nexus of the voice, the body, and the mind, with its elements inseparably interacting with each other. Composing for the voice, I have the triangular spectrum of a performer in mind – which is different from how I treat instrumental composition. The interacting elements can in turn be described as the *voice-mind embodiment*, the *mind-body voicing*, or the *voice-body in mind*, with the focus slightly shifting between these denominations. Writing about my vocal compositions in my thesis, I shall alternate between these denominations when addressing the nexus of voice, mind, and body.

The notion of the mind-body voicing informs my entire practice, in that all aspects of the triad become composabilities (i.e. material or options that can be treated in a composition). Rather than decoupling the elements and treating vocality, cognition, and the body as separate, I aim at composing systematically with the entirety of a voice-mind embodiment. I use the triad as a compositional shortcut: I aim to reframe the entire voice-mind embodiment by selectively specifying or modifying individual elements. Analogously, in modern theatre a performer is seen as a presence on stage connecting body, voice, and imagination; that comprehensive whole is the figure a director works with when shaping a performance (Zinder, 2009, p. xiii). In my scores, I access the embodied voice-mind by specifying mental states, fictional situations, as well as emotional and/or bodily performance instructions in addition to indications for vocal production.

I view composition as an activity intended for a public which has the effect of generating community in a performance situation. In this context, I use the term *exposition* of the voice-mind embodiment on stage, resonating with the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy's understanding that a singular, individual existence is being shared in an exposition to the

community. In the words of Nancy (2015, p. xxxvii), “ ‘To be exposed’ means to be ‘posed’ in exteriority”, as the intimacy of an ‘inside’ is confronted to, and with, an ‘outside’. Nancy reminds us of the political as the “place of community – in other words, the place of a specific existence, the existence of being-in-common”. Nancy clarifies that even before the notion of power comes into play in the political, there must be a sense of a community of human beings where this can happen. He suggests that in human communication, what takes place is an exposition: “finite existence exposed to finite existence, co-appearing before and with it” (Nancy, 2015, p. xi). It is the idea of building a community that interests me in my compositional practice. A musical performance can be understood as an event, a political place, which creates a being-in-common of audience, performers, and myself as a composer: a mutual exposition.

The exposition is also an element in the theory and practice of postdramatic theatre, where it was introduced by the theatre researcher Hans-Thies Lehmann to reconsider the traditional terminologies of interpretation and representation in theatre (Lehmann, 2015). For my practice, I transform Lehmann’s theory of postdramatic theatre into a theory of postdramatic composition. It must be clear that my main direction as an artist is the composition of works that will be realised in public. This implies that there will be a specific performance situation. From my experience, a discussion of the theatrical term ‘drama’ is necessary in the context of vocal compositions; a vocalist is a strong incarnate presence in any performance. I treat the performance situation from a postdramatic perspective. Quoting Lehmann, in my work’s performances my objective is to focus on the “intensified presence of banal existence” instead of aiming at a perfect interpretation (Lehmann, 2006, p. 163). More generally, I suggest that any aural experience can become a postdramatic composition, as long as there is a devised setting that involves some form of composed sound production and listening.

The transformation of postdramatic thinking from theatre into composition involves further aspects. Borrowing from Lehmann’s essay, I reinterpret his ideas from a composer’s outlook (Lehmann, 2015): instead of addressing an actor or performer, I insert the term ‘vocalist’; instead of a ‘theatre performance’, I shift to ‘composition’ or ‘work’. To sum up: The vocalist is not an interpreter, as the vocalist is not an instrument. In my compositions, I ask for a

process that occurs *with, on, or to* the vocalist. I work using the principle of exposition rather than representation or interpretation. The vocalist offers a presence of themselves as a mind-body voicing, rather than an interpretation of a work. Developing Lehmann's ideas further, I suggest that the postdramatic exposition includes myself, as a composer: I find that the act of composing is an exposition of myself, of my own precarious existence as a human being, of my own voice-body in mind, towards a community. Composition occurs with, on, or to myself as a composer.

I argue that composing for the voice today calls for a radical outlook – I talk about compositions which are performed in the physical presence of an audience. The reason is the sheer mass of digital technologies used in human interaction in nearly every facet of everyday life; I suggest that it influences the perception of music in society. It is understood that digital media “shape the context of the home, the school, the neighbourhood, and the culture” (Jordan & Romer, 2014). For example, in a study about drivers' interactions with the environments when using in-car GPS navigation (Leshed, Velden, Rieger, Kot, & Senger, 2008) found “empirical evidence that disengagement is an issue”, as people become “immersed more in the virtual- technological environment and this affects their interaction with the physical environment.” Interestingly, the authors stated that the use of mobile devices creates “a private space within a public space, isolating their users from the surrounding social environment”. Altogether, the common perspective of the human body and the physicality of human existence is altered in a complex manner; its future direction is unclear and much debated (Jordan & Romer, 2014).

It is important to further investigate the consequences for my compositional work. The contrast between a live performance and its recorded or filmed counterpart has long been an issue for debate, given the rise of electronic mass media over the twentieth century. Marshall McLuhan has already foreseen such a diverging development in his *Gutenberg Galaxy* (2011/1962). An increase of immateriality (in contrast to physicality) in new media was addressed by Lehmann as a factor that influences live-performance in theatre (Lehmann, 2015, p. 12). The cultural theorist Byung-Chul Han (2014) suggests that music in the virtual dimension lacks physical gravity due to the conspicuous lack of human interaction. In my

observation, the disconnection from the physical dimension appears to have reached a tipping stage. From long-term experience in working and collaborating with children, adolescents, and young people in artistic projects at music schools, it seems to me that music's loss of physicality has rapidly accelerated over the last decade.

Judith Butler's essay *Precarious Life* points to the excessive use of images representing human suffering in mass media. Butler relevantly addresses non-violent ethics grounded in understanding of the vulnerability of human life, asserting that in order to restore humanity one would "need to hear the face as it speaks in something other than language to know the precariousness of life that is at stake" (Butler, 2006, p. 152). Butler wrote about human desensitisation in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 2001, arguing that mass media's psychological impact creates distance and emptiness rather than empathy and understanding. Her observations bring me to look at the presence of a performer/vocalist speaking in "something other than language" on stage as a means to evoke the vulnerability of human existence in musical live performance.

Here I propose that, paradoxically, the shift towards the digital appears to have renovated the live performance of contemporary (vocal) music. It becomes emancipated from its media image, and can be re-installed as a genuine experience of shared humanity – in the physical sense. Consequently, the emphasis on physicality, voice, and the body in performance is not a reactionary, but a revolutionary development. In a series of lecture performances begun in 2015, I have consistently stated my decision to compose politically.⁴ In doing so, I use the voice-mind-body nexus to manifest the physical and very human presence of the body on stage. The fragility and finiteness of human existence become performative factors providing a reflective contrast to the representation of the human in global mass media. The digital image deceptively pretends immortality, whereas live-performance in itself is a singular and transitory event. A focus on the embodied voice-mind that I have termed a feminist position in composing lays a groundwork for a novel understanding of live performance. The directness of this approach allows me to work with pure mortality, precariousness as such,

⁴ Performances took place in 2015 at Goldsmiths' University of London, Vienna's festival *Wien Modern*, and continued in early 2016 at Harvard University and KUG Kunst Universität Graz.

reduced to the essence beyond any framing or veiling by social construction (e.g. religion, social or economic status, history, culture, nationality, class or racial distinction, gender).

Along a corresponding argumentation, the composer and performer Jennifer Walshe resonates the postdramatic formula “the actor is no instrument” (Lehmann, 2006, p. 163) in her 2016 editorial statement *Ein Körper ist kein Klavier (A Body is no Piano)*, a text about her ideas for a *New Discipline*. Walshe introduced this term to position her artistic practice beyond aesthetic discussions, as a form of working. To stimulate awareness and reflection in her community of like-minded composers and performers, Walshe questions conventional terminology (Walshe, 2016):

The genre designations used for work I might term New Discipline are highly confusing and highly contested. The different designations trace the rich tradition of composers working with theatrical elements. No-one can quite agree – is it music? music theatre? composed theatre? performance? music with visual elements? visual music? opera? musical? instrumental theatre? live art? performance art? performative actions? physical actions?

Coming from the Austrian experimental scene (*Freie Szene*) myself, I have wondered on many occasions about these designations and have experimented with different terms during recent years to define my role and my work (i.e. experimentalist, composer/performer, radical opera, performance, setting, installative composition, political composition). I find Walshe’s discussion highly relevant from a practical point of view and choose to define my works as ‘composition’ and ‘music’, rather than ‘theatre’ or ‘performance’. For me, a precise perception and positioning of aurality is central; all other disciplines I use in my work are framed by, and positioned into, a composed sonic space: listening is the primary sense perception I relate to.

My postdramatic works are primarily not geared towards standard forms of ‘production’ or a musical ‘genre’. Their staging often asks for innovative, postdramatic performance situations and may require entrepreneurial skill to bring them to realisation. I aim at locating the voice-mind embodiment within a composed scenery. My portfolio works feature composed instrumental and electronic music as well as interdisciplinary means, such as texts, movement, media, and elements of visual art. I compose a ‘shared time-space of mortality’ in my performances, meaning that multiple interdisciplinary strands can contribute independent

perspectives of looking at, or listening into, a specific theme. This often results in an increased complexity of the performance. The vulnerability and mortality of human beings is a recurrent theme in my work; it is also an essential ingredient in postdramatic theatre (Lehmann, 2015). My compositional thinking is often motivated by a notion of fragility and precariousness as tied to my own experience of life. Many of my texts reflect on the preciousness and transient nature of life, on death, and biological decay (exemplary discussions of how I handle these themes in my works can be found in chapters 1.5 or 2).

I return to the discussion of listening by looking into the audience's reception of the work. My works do not suggest a hierarchy of perception from a composer's point of view. In composing multiple layers of texts and (vocal, instrumental, or electronic) sound, by disrupting uniform space and temporality, or by adding a visual component to a composition I encourage the listener to find a personal selection of what is presented, i.e. an appropriation through her/his individual perception. The complex compositional structure puts the members of the audience in the position of decoding the performance individually through their own perceptual process. Consequently, the listener's personal approach must lead to a distortion of my work, which is encouraged as an act of perceptual creativity. In a very similar way, in postdramatic theory individual perspectivity replaces the pre-constructed traditional uniformity of the scenic prospect (the traditional theatre's *central perspective*). Using Jean-Luc Nancy's terminology, I suggest that every member of the audience as the shared 'in-common' is individually exposed to my work. Their listening/decoding as individuals mirrors the intimacy of my compositional process.

In light of my aim to establish a feminist practice in composition, I understand the disruption of the central perspective as important. A 'feminist position of listening' must be directed towards opening up the perceptual process to emancipate the individual. In the third chapter, I will further explicate the term 'decoding' in the context of map making, in a discussion about how and why I integrate ideas of cartography into my practice.

1.3 The voice-body in mind

Departing from the idea of the mind-body voicing I turn to a discussion of the mind, which I also explore by using listening as a tool. As a practice in itself, listening stimulates self-observation. Its reflection into one's mental processes can induce a state of calmness and a clarity of mind (Oliveros, 2005, p. xxiv). I myself have long been a student of Buddhist philosophy and a practitioner of mindfulness and awareness meditation. The ensuing discussion aims at answering these questions: From the perspective of my practice, what is the mind? What do I hear when listening inside?

In my practice of listening inside myself I take note of the fields of consciousnesses layered upon each other at particular varying depths. I recognise ongoing mental activity, its vividly changing texture and fluctuations, as the focus of my attention oscillates between layers. At the very centre there is a silent core, an isolated nucleus quietly at rest. This space of silence may be characterised by a wish not to be found, as stated by psychoanalyst and researcher into cognition Donald W. Winnicott (Winnicott, 1972). Don Ihde's phenomenology of *Listening and Voice* (Ihde, 2007) addresses the quiet centre as an inner horizon of silence into which all sounds fade – the sonic horizon has a function in parallel to the visual horizon. During my compositional process, I note a 'first thought', an initial glimpse arising from this silent core, in conjunction with a longing, a desire to communicate. The emotion incites action – in this case, to transfer the imagined sound to notation. Imagined sonorities form and move towards the external, passing through and being in turn influenced by several mental layers.

Layered models of cognition have been an enduring aspect of cognitive sciences and psychology, from Sigmund Freud's investigations of the conscious and unconscious to the multi-layered top-down/bottom-up process model used in recent brain-behaviour research (Kandel, 2012). Much more ancient research, Buddhist philosophy, based on precise self-observation, likewise details the process of the mind bringing forth phenomena as arising in layers. The bottom-most layer is the *alaya-vijnana*, a storehouse of all impressions, mostly unconscious; further layers contain what is defined as the 'fields of sense-perceptions' and

their illusionary objects (Fischer-Schreiber, Erhard & Diener, 1991, pp. 253-254). Here, layered mind is regarded as having no shape of its own, devoid of any substance. All phenomena, however, are considered to be “dreamlike and transitory creations of mind” (Suzuki, 1985, p. 96). My concept of the mind is influenced by my contemplative practice; following Buddhist philosophy, for me mind denotes the totality of inner processes and manifestations, e.g. thinking and discriminating mind, emotions, and perceptions – including dreams (Fischer-Schreiber et al., 1991, p. 47). Formless mind brings forth unceasing formless appearances (Namgyal, 1986, p. 7):

All things appear as perfect reality to the mind.
Apart from the mind no reality as such exists.

This precise yet poetic description of mental processes by the scholar, philosopher, and meditator Tashi Namgyal (1512-1587) continues to inspire my research on perception. His lines are remarkably compatible with the before mentioned up-to-date theories of cognitive science in describing the brain’s re-creation of an ‘outer reality’ (Depraz et al., 2003).

I find it interesting that leading artistic researchers in the field of listening refer to contemplative traditions to locate their experiences. Pauline Oliveros, for example, worked with Buddhist meditation (Oliveros, 2005 p. xxiv) and R. Murray Schafer discusses listening in Christian contemplative traditions (Schafer, 1994 [1977], p. 258). Composer Éliane Radigue’s lifelong practice of Tibetan Buddhism and Pauline Oliveros’ writings on Buddhist meditation (Oliveros, 2005, p. xxiv) have been especially inspiring to me. Oliveros’ practice of *Deep Listening* was an integral part of her compositional work (Oliveros, 2005), and has influenced me in turn. In her writings, Oliveros was able to consolidate her vast experience as a composer, performer, improviser, listener, and author, while including a view of current research into the field of cognition; her interdisciplinary approach to reflective listening and active production provided me with an invaluable model. In a collaborative performance project at the Wiener Konzerthaus in 2004, I had the opportunity to witness her profound improvising and listening skills firsthand.⁵ In the context of my own observations, I am

⁵ The project was initiated by the Austrian artist and performer Mia Zabelka as part of the former *Generator* concert series.

interested in Oliveros' description of the multi-dimensionality of listening in her *Deep Listening* practice (Oliveros, 2005, p. 15):

The depth of listening is related to the expansion of consciousness brought about by inclusive listening. Inclusive listening is impartial, open and receiving and employs global attention. Deep Listening has limitless dimensions. Attention narrows for exclusive listening. Exclusive listening gathers detail and employs focal attention. Focal attention is necessarily limited and specific. The depth of exclusive listening is clarity.

Inspired by Oliveros' work and writings, my short 2013 text composition and installation *Boundary Layer* is based directly on one's awareness of the listening perception. In the context of a sound walk, I transformed an entire glass wall stretching over three floors in the Creative Arts Building at the University of Huddersfield into a listening station. The instruction "Put right ear to glass and listen" was written directly on the glass. Thus one ear, plus the head of the listener, perceived any impact and structure-borne vibrations, while the other ear was a receptor of the airborne sounds of the public space (see fig. 5). I utilised both a focal and a global orientation as well as the fact that listening occurs at the border of touch (Oliveros, 2005; Schafer, 1994[1977]). In performing the instruction, the listener is able to perceive a stereo mix of two contrasting soundtracks, one of them diffuse and distant, the other tangibly close and focussed.

Regarding my vocal works, it is interesting to look into the connection between cognition, language, and voice. Using language, one performs the mind-body speaking. Both language and voice are perceived prenatally. Voice is therefore the principal influence on cognition, with hearing being the primal means of perception linked to the functions of consciousness (Ihde, 2007, p. 116). Echoing Don Ihde, I assert that mind is a sonosphere, with the thinking process, its inner speech and vocality, inextricably tied to language. Mind is sonic – mind is vocality. The vocal quality of thoughts is easily overlooked because of its constant presence as a non-intrusive background sonority. However, the importance of this sonic background noise of the mind cannot be overstated when exploring the role of voice in listening perception: thinking, in itself, becomes a composability. A thought, an emotion, an insight, like any other sonic object, has a chronological beginning, middle, and end in time; further it is characterised by its rhythm, dynamic, tempo, timbre, etc.

I perceive and treat the polyphony of cognitive layers as I would approach polyphonic vocal music. Listening inside myself means to listen to the polyphony of inner manifestations: to thoughts, to emotions, to insights, to perceptions, to dreams, to imaginary creations. More precisely, I hear my mind's vocalisation of these occurrences. I hear the voice-body in mind. Everything I perceive (i.e. re-create in mind) becomes sonority. The sheer richness of vocal and language-related material, of singabilities, advances my practice as a vocal composer. Instead of composing music *about* emotions, thoughts, or insight, I approach and consider emotions, thoughts, or insight as aural and vocal phenomena in themselves. I would like to recall the Ancient Greek beginning of the *Iliad*, which also indicates a direct vocal performance of rage. From this stance, no objectification is needed to vocally perform the emotion, as rage is exposed rather than interpreted in performance.

1.4 Audio scores: an exposition of listening

My compositions using audio scores illustrate methods of working with listening and the postdramatic exposition of the performer. An audio score, i.e. any score information transmitted to a performer via listening (directly or with headphones/earbuds) can be a tool to disrupt the routine of conventional musical performance. When listening intently to an audio score, the performer's physical bearing expresses their inner state of concentration. Often they close their eyes in the process and adopt an inward-oriented body posture. They cannot prepare for upcoming tasks and thus appear to give up control (Palme, 2012). They are exposed as images of themselves. I had arrived at experimenting with aural score information in 2006 realising an idea of my own and without any prior research into the field, and began composing with audio scores in 2009.⁶ During my thesis-research I discovered new aspects of working with aural score-information, and refined my methods in a series of compositions and performances. Additionally, I led a number of discussions with singers⁷ concerning the use of audio scores. Here it became evident that while some performers dislike the loss of

⁶ In the choral performance *VARIETIES* involving two soloists, two lead singers and 100 choir-volunteers, performed at the MAK Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna.

⁷ with members of the ensembles EXAUDI, Stuttgarter Vocalsolisten, and Wiener Kammerchor, further with baritone Bartolo Musil

self-command, as it compromises their understanding of a professional attitude to their own performance, others appreciate the challenge to explore into listening. Some singers argued, that they must be able to know what lies ahead (by looking into a score) to be able to perform professionally. Others felt confident that singing from an audio score is a professional performance in itself. Further, I found that the performer's state of body/emotion/mind communicates to the audience, who feel with them empathically. The reaction of the audience can vary, as their ordinary relationship to professional performers is intentionally and artificially broken, thus necessitating the inner negotiation of a new receptive paradigm.

When using aural score-information for vocal ensembles, my foremost compositional interest was to 'biologically' reproduce effects I had come to know in electronic music: with audio scores, erosion and delay occur through the inherent impossibility to reproduce exactly what one hears. Sonic fuzziness infiltrates performance; in spite of the instruction and intention to perform accurately from listening, a minimal, uncontrollable delay in vocal output is to be expected. I found that these effects can be magnified with a group of singers, in a combination of direct listening and listening to in-ear information: lead singers perform from an in-ear audio score, while other performers of the same voice group perform from listening to their lead vocalist or to each other. I imagine these 'biological' effects while I work on the composition in the same way as I would imagine electronic processing. From the stance of subversive political composing, audio scores can serve the purpose of 'removing' the central authority of a conductor on stage. Instead, the audio score becomes a hidden mechanical control device. I favour performance structures which enable ensembles to self-organise. Through experimentation I found audio scores can facilitate microtonal performance, specifically very slow developments of minimal pitch changes in multiple parts. Further, I use them to infuse aural material to modulate an improvisation (as described in chapter 2.3.3). In all cases, performance from audio scores is to be practiced and rehearsed. The effect of surprise may then be smaller for the performer, but the ability to perform directly while listening does improve significantly.

Audio scores were introduced by the film and recording industry in the 1920s to manage synchronisation issues and found their way into use in performance, music, and dance. The

Forsythe Company (Forsythe, 2012) used audio scores in their dance-performance *SIDER* to direct the polyphonic movements of disparate groups of performers. The composer Tim Parkinson in his opera *TIME WITH PEOPLE* (Parkinson, 2014) used audio scores to supply a group of performers with material to be re-performed. In 2015, the composer Luke Nickel worked with audio scores in his piece *The Strange Eating Habits of Erik Satie* (Nickel, 2015) to convey aural information to singers beforehand, which is then to be re-performed from memory. He aims at processing material through the twin actions of individual memorisation and forgetting.

To produce an audio score, in some cases I first notate a precise vocal score. All parts are then pre-recorded with professional performers, one by one; recorded material can be electronically processed further. This technique was used for the 2012 work-sketch *CANTU FOLIATO*⁸ (Palme, 2012); the British vocal ensemble EXAUDI readily embraced performing from the audio score for four voices during a workshop at Huddersfield University. Playback parts were transmitted to the singers individually via headphones (see fig. 3). The experiment showed unexpected, striking results: the highly trained professional singers picked up the sung parts precisely and instantly, and performed almost without perceptible delay. The singers further stated that they could gather a lot of side-information from what they heard. The length of the in-breath they could hear on the playback was a clear indication of how long the following sung note would be, plus the *colour* of the in-breath already gave an indication of the pitch (!) of the following sound. An obstacle to this specific method of working with audio scores is the high amount of work that goes into the production of the pre-performance recordings of the scores.

In my secular Requiem *BARE BRANCHES* (Palme, 2012) for two female soloists, two choirs, and percussion, extended choir passages (eight people SATB and a mixed choir of youthful performers) have to be performed from part-by-part pre-recorded audio scores.⁹ In this case, only one lead singer of each voice part wore headphones; the others had to listen to their lead

⁸ Latin for ‘with folded song’

⁹ In 2015, the work was awarded the Outstanding Artist Award in composition of the Austrian Republic, for its experimental compositional approach.

singer. Michael Grohotolsky, director of the Viennese Chamber Choir (Wiener Kammerchor), who performed in *BARE BRANCHES*, described in an interview after the performance that they noticed the “spontaneous *controlled* echoes” and were struck by the experience of not knowing what lay ahead when singing.¹⁰ The novelty of the practice was much appreciated. From the audience’s perspective, the aural effects of erosion and delay of material were clearly perceptible. Towards the middle section of the work, the exposition of the singers noticeably unsettled the audience. The singers *exposed* (in contrast to *performed*) despair, uncertainty, and loss. While this was exactly what I had intended in my compositional plan, I had not anticipated the reaction of the audience. The young people’s choir radiated presence and confidence in their acting and singing. Apparently, for the adolescents there was no ‘professional’ standard at stake; instead, they visibly enjoyed the performance and were genuinely curious about the new singing experience. In this way, they naturally gave in to the “banality of mere existence” (Lehmann, 2015) of simply being young people (see also fig. 4). Altogether the performance evoked strong but controversial reactions from the audience.

In the work *GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary to resonance II* (Palme, 2014) the viola d’amore performer Garth Knox was asked to listen to an audio score via headphones, directing his performance in combination with a written score and text instructions. Garth Knox much enjoyed performing via ‘remote control’ and, with eyes shut, turned concentrated listening into a performance of its own. The audience, in this case, was ‘listening to listening’.

To sum up my research with audio scores, I found that they are a singular method to achieve states of intense, performative listening; they are also a method to ‘biologise’ effects of erosion, distortion, and delay in (ensemble) performance. I would use audio scores for my works only if conceptually relevant. As a composer, I have to be aware that only a few professional ensembles or performers are willing to work with audio scores, and that the results of using audio scores in performance are not entirely predictable.

¹⁰ Retrieved from <http://www.terz.cc/magazin.php?z=2&id=349>

1.5 Noise

Noise is central to my work, both as a guiding theme and a source of compositional material. Mainly, I'm interested in the idea of noise as something that is irregular, unwanted, rejected, painful, and at the same time utterly natural. More specifically, I suggest that the conception of noise involves a mental borderline to negotiate emotionality. Here, my intention is to radically re-define noise from a feminist position. In order to do so, I trace the meaning of the term *noise* back to its historical roots¹¹ in art and culture. I look into what I perceive as the fundamental aspects of the idea of noise and develop them further towards a personal and feminist conception.

In the English language,¹² noise denotes unwanted sound, unmusical sound, any loud sound, or more generally, a disturbance in a signalling system (Schafer, 1994[1977], p. 182). Noise is either blocked out mentally, ignored if possible, or it induces the urge to distance oneself from it physically. The Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer argues that penetrating noise was associated with the sacred (Schafer, 1994[1977], p.51). On the other hand, noise of human and non-human origin in the more rural landscapes of pre-modern history was precisely observed and verbally defined.¹³

Notably, any concept of noise is foremost based on emotionality – including scientific usage of the term – because, as the engineering expert, mathematician, noise-researcher, and

¹¹ The English term *radical* relates to the Latin word 'radix' – *root*.

¹² In German, noise translates as either 'Lärm' or 'Rauschen'. The first one defines any loud sound, which can include musical sound, and has a slightly brute and unpleasant connotation. 'Rauschen' is unprejudiced, but denotes an unmusical occurrence of a mostly broadband noise in any dynamic; it is also used with soft and pleasant sounds of nature, such as from wind, waves or water. In a scientific context, 'Rauschen' is an unwanted signal, such as the noise of a false radio signal.

¹³ In the Ancient Greek 'to produce noise' can be translated into literally dozens of expressions. Each expression defines a specific sound: noises of battle, of wooden cartwheels on roads, of the waves of the sea under various weather conditions, different kinds of winds, small rivers, big rivers, noises made by animals or people etc. Among these words, one can find the neutral expression κλαγγεῖν (*klangein*) – 'to produce noise, or sound' (retrieved from http://www.koeblergerhard.de/wikiling_1/node/714274). This ancient Greek term is the root of the German word *klingen* – 'to sound' (retrieved from Grimms Wörterbuch: <http://woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB/?sigle=DWB&mode=Vernetzung&hitlist=&patternlist=&lemid=GK07518> under *klingen*, *klang*, *geklungen*). Another remarkable expression is δίκροτος (*dikrotos*), an adverb used with ancient Greek ships of a special construction, which translates to 'producing a double noise with two rows of oars'.

attorney Bart Kosko argues, any concept of noise must involve a clear separation of what is wanted from what is not wanted: “Noise is a signal we don’t like” (Kosko, 2006, p. 3). In parallel, Kandel (2012, pp. 355-357) clarifies that there is no succession from a simply perceived sound (object) to an emotionally felt sound (object) in the perceptual process. At all times, sound is simultaneously perceived *and* felt.¹⁴ When sound becomes too intimate, too close, it turns into noise. As sound artist and theorist Salomé Voegelin articulates, the term noise magnifies the fact that there is no distance between sound and the listener (Voegelin, 2010, p. 176). Noise is the space between intentional sound. Noise is the voice of nature. It is an integral facet of listening. The very conception of noise is something I learned to question, challenge, and invert quite early in my life. Rather than seeing noise purely from an aural or musical point of view, I take it to be an intensely personal and cultural phenomenon: noise is the terrain of the unwanted and blocked. As an indicator of the hidden and unconscious domains, noise is a useful instrument in feminist practice: noise helps to detect and uncover the veil of gender construction.

I concur with Voegelin’s observation that the term noise refers to the penetrability of sound, which relays affect and pain into cognition. Since one cannot shut off one’s perception of hearing, mental activity filters sonic phenomena through a complex and individual process modulating emotionality, intellect, and cultural habits. I find it interesting that in the conception of noise cultural and social aspects come into play, while the intimate and personal side of the listener is exposed at the same time. The conception of noise thus links the intimacy of one’s inside to the public sphere. This binary characteristic of noise is what I work with in my compositions. One of the earliest statements about noise as an artistic material, Luigi Russolo’s 1913 futurist manifesto¹⁵ *The Art of Noises*, points to that characteristic:

The noise, therefore, is familiar to our ear, and has the power to conjure up life itself.

¹⁴ In terms of neurobiology, perceived stimuli are transported to and processed in the brain along two pathways simultaneously, one of them faster, direct and less conscious, while another pathway is slower but more flexible, connecting with more different areas of the brain. The latter pathway contributes to conscious information processing and allows for a delayed, more complex emotional reaction (Kandel, 2012).

¹⁵ Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Art_of_Noises

Noise is supreme artistic potential. An important recent contribution to the discourse about noise in music is the extensive book *Noise in and as Music* (Cassidy & Einbond, 2013). Edited by the composers and researchers Aaron Cassidy and Aaron Einbond, the publication also documents the *Noise In And As Music Symposium* held at the Centre for Research in New Music (CeReNeM), University of Huddersfield. Their comprehensive collection of discussions and artist's statements covers a wide range of aspects, beginning with Russolo's definition and exploring the many ways in which musicians and composers make use of noise(s) in music. Diverging from their position, I seek to investigate the very concept of noise as such, particularly as a borderline that is drawn in one's own mind when listening or composing, as a cognitive partition separating accepted inner states or perceptions from those that one rejects. I find the mental, emotional, and cultural implications of this concept interesting to work with, as a composer. This connects to feminist activism: as a political minded person seeking emancipation from gender constructions, I also investigate and question mental, emotional, and cultural boundaries that are habitually imposed on one's thinking. Both as a composer and as a feminist, I creatively and playfully experiment with deconstructing, shifting, and re-composing the boundaries between signal and noise in mind.

In my practice, I meticulously investigate noise's binary characteristic and use it as a method to compose from a feminist position. The concept of noise becomes a tool to compose the personal as the political. The term noise denotes everything that is not a signal – i.e. that is unwanted. More specifically, aural noise indicates that a mental borderline is drawn to regulate emotionality. From this wider reflection on noise, I create compositional material using various media. I not only compose with noise as an *aural* material but as an *interdisciplinary* element, investigating noise from various angles: in generating text, building compositional structures, and collecting sound material. Noise is also transformed into installations or video. Examples are the text in *BARE BRANCHES* (Palme, 2012) as commented below; the text and pitch material in *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST* (Palme, 2015); the video in *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av* (Palme, 2016) as commented in chapter 2; and the stage setting of *SETZUNG I.1* (Palme, 2014) as described in chapter 3.

With a feminist ear, I listen to the operating noise of social systems, the noisy ambience emitted by social structures. Here, I talk about perceivable sound as well as the more subtle understructures of ambiguity and hidden implications in community systems. These noises again affect one's individual identity, life and work (Barbezat & Bush, 2013, p. 148). I perceive these sensations on a bodily level – an ability which, in my case as a woman in a patriarchal society, has been honed by the need to read between the lines to pick up on the unspoken meanings (Connor, 2014, p. 1). I also trace a special connection to my parent's Austrian-Jewish heritage of having to listen to substructures in human interaction. The experience of noise occurs at the intersection of the public and the private; noise thus takes on a core role in my works. I see the proclamation "The Personal is Political" – published in Carol Hanisch's 1969 essay (Hanisch, 2009) on second-wave feminism – as a key formula guiding my practice. Hanisch (2009) coined her slogan in writing about the political importance to talk about one's own personal life as a woman: "to say what I really believe about my life instead of what I've always been told to say." Hanisch locates the relevant essence of the political in individuals' lives and private situations, rather than in major events. The subtle line between signal and noise demarcates this boundary: beyond signal/sound, I move into the personal and intimate terrain of noise/disturbance.

Listening inside myself, I observe disturbing mind activity as 'inner noise'. It occurs because the mind, much like my ears, cannot be shut off. My thinking processes constantly refresh themselves by orchestrating a wide array of occurrences that can range from emotionality, restless activity, and sleepy fogs of ignorance to a more subtle background chatter. As an ongoing presence, I detect a permanent, almost imperceptible inner commentary. By definition, any mental activity not directly connected with an intended action would be noise. I find an example of this in my musical practice: ever since my childhood, I have been observing my thinking activity while practising and performing music. Many musicians hold 'extraneous' thinking activity during performance responsible for distortions, blockages or stage-fright during performance (Gordon, 2005, p. 15). However, I found that additional layer of awareness remarkable, even interesting to watch, and have discovered that it helps to expand concentration to include this mental noise, while keeping a focus on the central activity at hand.

The strategy of including disruptive mind activity eventually brought me to writing text. In 2012, when I composed my Requiem, a feeling of sadness intensified, beginning to seriously disturb the artistic process.¹⁶ I had planned *BARE BRANCHES* to be an experimental, secular ritual to foster peace; instead, during the compositional process, I found myself becoming deeply affected, identifying with the pain of others. In order to regain distance, I wrote down whatever emerged without judgement. Further along, I used a re-edited version of these texts in parts of the composition. I had initially commissioned the American poet Anne Waldman to compose a libretto for the work; with her permission, I interlaced my text with hers. As a composer's personal commentary within the composition, these integrated notes give voice to my struggle as an artist, recording the feelings of wrath and compassion which accompanied my working process. Since this experience, I have made it part of my artistic practice to assemble text in parallel to the action of composing, while the collection of these texts serves as a storehouse of ideas and impulses.

When noise becomes a compositional element, it achieves functionality. This paradoxical role has been investigated by the Brazilian composer and researcher Lilian Campesato; developing Freud's theory of the death drive as an effective creative force to break inertia, she deduces that noise as an artistic element has the power to break the cycle of stagnation. Campesato (2011) discovers in noise

an uncontrollable life force that establishes a separation or disruption of a known or rather commonly proposed context. Noise can take a role that disrupts a common shared context, moving towards singularity, difference.

My artistic quest for hidden terrains also reconnects with the artistic tradition and culture of Vienna, which I see as my heritage, having been born and raised here. Around 1900, contemporaneously with Freud's publications about the unconscious, there was a fruitful

¹⁶ This composition is dedicated to the over 100 million women 'missing' due to the massive male overpopulation in India and Asia, caused by female infanticide or selective abortion. 'Bare branches' is the Chinese term for young men who cannot establish a family because there are no women for them to marry and who are thus excluded from a position of respect in China's patriarchally structured society. The large number of these socially displaced men contributes to growing social unrest and violence in the region (Hudson & den Boer, 2005). I felt the urge to compose a vocal work, a Requiem, to voice the suffering and violence caused by this situation. The original meaning of the Latin words *requiem dare* is to relax, to give peace; it is important for me that in the context of my work, the term *requiem* is not connected to any religious belief nor confession, but understood from a point of view of composing politically.

interaction between artists and scientists that stimulated extraordinary cultural, scientific and artistic innovations. The *Wiener Moderne* movement in literature and visual art, for example, investigated inner dimensions; a similar stance can be found in contemporary Austrian film, such as in Michael Haneke's body of work.¹⁷ In Austria, the artistic exploration of inner worlds continues to this day, with repercussions of two World Wars and the Nazi regime, which have not yet been fully addressed, adding another twist.

My text score, performance concept, and electronic installation *Performing the noise of mind* (Palme, 2013) directly builds on my understanding of noise. As a contribution to a collaborative installation *RADIAT* with sound artist and composer Ryoko Akama at the University of Huddersfield, I performed the score continuously over a duration of five hours. The text score directs an instrumental performer to scan, categorise, translate, and perform his/her thinking activity. The performer takes her/his position at a platform, with four equally sized speakers on stands arranged into a walkable sound installation in front (see fig. 6). The score divides thinking activity into four categories; every category has to be translated into a specific instrumental texture. The four sonic strands are recorded with specific microphones, separately processed, and amplified via the associated speaker. Certain aspects of my arrangement recall Alvin Lucier's work *Music for Solo Performer. For enormously amplified brain waves and percussion* (Lucier, 1965). Lucier transmitted an array of his brain's alpha waves via electrodes into loudspeakers and onto percussion instruments distributed in a room.¹⁸ Lucier's work can be characterised by three main aspects (Rusche & Harder, 2013): "the physicality of sound, non-intentionality and the use of non-musical instruments (preferably test equipment) in the performance." Our processes differ most in the element of intentionality: my score asks for decision making and intentional (instrumental) performance

¹⁷ Haneke's film *Amour* from 2012 investigates the private situation of an octogenarian couple in their final phase of life. The film was staged entirely inside a private apartment, with a single, exceptional scene staged during a piano concert. Here, a long held total panorama of the full auditorium is shown: the audience appears to listen, with the pianist in the foreground. The view reverts the common concert perspective and directs the focus on the personal process of listening. For information about the film, see <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1602620/>

¹⁸ A video excerpt of Lucier's 1965 live performance can be watched under <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIPU2ynqy2Y>. Information can also be found at the website of Hauke Harder and Viola Rusche, who in their documentary of Lucier filmed a more recent performance of this work by the composer himself (http://alvin-lucier-film.com/solo_performer.html).

based on awareness of one's own thinking process and perception. Reflecting on this difference brought me to identify facets of gender-construction as a possible cause. From my perspective as a feminist, it is imperative to assert the explicitly *personal* as the public. I concur with Hanisch (2009) that the only way to explore the personal is to consciously examine and verbalise one's situation. However, I appreciate uncontrollable occurrences when using non-musical machines – for example radio transmitters in *MUSTERBUCH* (Palme, 2015) – as opposed to their precise and accurate functioning in Lucier's work.

1.6 Summary: Composing-as-listening is a feminist practice

My investigations acknowledge a wrathful core deep within myself, which acts as a pulse generator for my practice. I approach the practice of composing from what I have termed a 'position of feminist listening'. Feminist listening is a creative discipline and a political practice; it is multidirectional, extends towards an outside as well as an inside, includes aural investigation of systemic substructures found in cultural and social contexts, and listens towards that most personal of spaces, one's mind. The code *composing-as-listening* defines my process. This equation outlines a compositional practice that links the personal, intimate core to the environment: the personal becomes the political, in listening as well as in composing. Further, I identify sound within (contextual) space: sonic information/perception is (contextual) spatial information/perception. This is an acoustic as well as a political statement. I understand the vocal performer as a physical presence, which I term the *voice-mind embodiment*, *body-mind voicing* or *voice-body in mind*. This triad of terms specifies subtle shifts in perspective which allow me to compositionally approach vocality from different angles. For my research and feminist practice, it is noteworthy that the mind frames an *inner vocality*. My conception of noise takes into account that emotionality is necessarily part of cognition and extends into the (human and non-human) background noises of a given environment, including the noise in one's mind. Fundamental research from the above position provides me with a treasure trove of composabilities and leads to methodological shifts, which in their entirety define my compositional discipline as a *feminist practice*.



Fig. 3: Juliet Fraser performing via audio score, from *CANTU FOLIATO*
(photo by Aaron Cassidy)



Fig. 4: Singers of the Wiener JugendChor performing via audio score, from *BARE BRANCHES* (photo by Franz Reiterer)



Fig. 5: Listening station in *BOUNDARY LAYER LISTENING*



Fig. 6: Walkable installation for *Performing the Noise of Mind*

63

hissing *sharply whispered*

ppp *mf* *ppp* *ffff*

p *mp* *f* *mp*

3 5:4 7:8

seht to

S

S2

s (i → u → i) sticht

CT

mus-t be, permit, waits-s be be

T

written, become, s-trive, fails-, is-s sur - vived be

B

see s-aid, are, communicate, make, is-s be

67

ppp *mp* *ppp* *mp* *mf* *ppp*

delicate *playful and light*

5 6:4 7:4 5 5 7:4

nach Lie - be seht seht sich

CT

mf *p*

told, make, **hunt**, deliver, **had** thought, do, attack, **can** has

T

mf *p*

wrote, **was**, thought, **got**, shines, **has** yielded have

B

mf *p*

imagine, helped, **has**, said, **said**, spent, enjoys, **hosts**

Fig. 7: Score excerpt – *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST*, bars 63 – 70

104

S

CT

T

B

*) p $ffff$ low coloured, extended croaking murmur mp scornful

u (u - o - u) ist Wort

*) p $ffff$ mp whispered high energy whisper $ffff$ 3 extended croaking, high coloured noise ppp scornful mp

u (u - o - u) ist Schön-heit ist Wort

*) p $ffff$ low frequency croaking noise, changing colour p mp

- ub u (u - o - u) œ (o → u → o → a)

*) gradual transition
from singing to low coloured noisy breath

111

S

CT

T

B

p mf p $ffff$ mp

ist A - sche unvoiced noise f (u → i) ist

mp p

A - sche ist

mp mf p

A - sche ist i -

p mf p $ffff$ mp

ist A - sche unvoiced noise f (œ - o → u → œ) ist

Fig. 8: Score excerpt – *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST*, bars 104 – 115

2. COMPOSING – A personalised discipline as feminist practice

2.1 VOCALITY

On composing politically

To approach my understanding of the terms ‘political’ and ‘feminist’ and how they inform my personalised practice, I will discuss the ways in which I practically implemented these ideas in my compositional workflow. In this chapter, my focus is on how I compose the mind-body voicing. In my explorations of the tools and techniques I use in a texted vocal composition, I allow myself to be guided by questions: How do I compose the mind-body voicing? What are the themes to which I give voice? What are the methods of political composing? In addressing these questions, I will navigate through a commentary on my composition *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST* (Palme, 2015), a work for vocal ensemble (SCtTB) commissioned for the British ensemble EXAUDI.¹⁹ Further examples I mention include my compositions *Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness* (Palme, 2015), *Under elephantine skin* (Palme, 2015) and *BARE BRANCHES* (Palme, 2012).

2.1.1 A subversive dramaturgy

MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST is structured in two parts. In *Part 1*, the soprano takes a focal role as a virtuosic soloist, contrasting with the male trio, which moves together as a slowly shifting, polyphonic, and supporting ground texture; *Part 2* is an extended *coda* featuring the quartet in a contemporary ‘part song’. I drew my inspiration for the compositional framing of the two parts from the performers’ individual artistic personalities. From the onset, the flexible, brilliant top range of pitch-perfect soprano (and outstanding solo performer) Juliet Fraser, as well as her facility for noise production and emotional acting,

¹⁹ The work and its text were written as part of the Sound and Music Portfolio Programme 2014/2015. In 2016, the composition was awarded two prizes, Sound and Music’s George-Butterworth-Prize and the City of Vienna’s biennial Ernst-Krenek-Preis.

invited compositional foregrounding. I immediately heard the three male performers in a background role, yet busy with a composed agenda of their own. In the second part, however, I wanted to work with the uniquely balanced spectrum of *EXAUDI*'s ensemble sound. Minimal yet essential scenic performance indications direct the soprano to stand slightly apart from the male trio in the first part, directly facing the audience, with the men facing the conductor. Between the sections the soprano turns the top of her music-stand towards the male trio, takes one sideward step and joins them in facing the ensemble director for the second part. At the London premiere, the soprano's small movement proved to be extremely effective in changing the ensemble's aural and visual appearance from a soloist plus background to a vocal quartet.

The compositional design of the first part recalls Susan McClary's analysis of gender construction in Monteverdi's brilliant laments and seductive arias for female operatic characters in *Feminine Endings : Music, Gender, and Sexuality*, as well as her research into composed madness as a projection of patriarchal mechanisms onto compositional thinking (McClary, 2002). Moving into new territory, *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST* opens up another dimension by featuring the soprano in an exceptional role, yet not one defined by the act of 'leading'. In the opening part the soprano is asked to perform independently as a soloist, while the conductor directs the male trio correspondingly. The composed background and foreground simultaneously juxtapose and necessitate each other. I composed the male trio to fulfill a supporting role, insofar as sound and pitching are concerned, yet to be unreliable in their individual movement: each part is composed with its own individual timing, microtonal changes, and text (see score excerpt, fig. 7). Together, the male voices blend into a polyphonic, shifting ambience. At the end of *Part 1* the loose structure of male voices collapse into a softly murmuring noise-field and comes to a rest with the soprano. She then anticipates *Part 2* with a single sustained note, later to be joined by the male voices, who then all proceed together towards the end (see score excerpt, fig. 8).

My decision for this structural design was informed by my appreciation of virtuosity: I genuinely enjoy listening to, and composing for, a singer's well-trained voice. From my own musical background as a performer of Baroque music, I value a Baroque aesthetic of a

conceptually-informed vocal performance and composition. I understand the 18th century's apparatus of the *Affektenlehre* as an expression of confidence in a social contract and as a demonstration of the possible domestication of emotionality (McClary, 2002, p. xvii). Their concept of singability relates to how I compose emotionality in my work. I draw inspiration from composers such as Henry Purcell and Claudio Monteverdi, whose arias and ensemble works provide a model for how I treat solo voices or vocal ensembles, as well as from the solo sonatas of Georg Philipp Telemann and Johann Sebastian Bach in terms of their textural rendering of virtuosic solo parts.

In a postscript to my score, I mention that the irate female voice (soprano) pays homage to the beginning of Homer's *Iliad*. The adjective 'mordacious' in the title addresses the Baroque ornament mordent, which is repeatedly used in the soprano part. The ornament's quick accents momentarily interrupt the sonic flow. Here I aim at an aural twinkle that might subtly cut or sting through the mechanisms of listening. The text for the soprano summons the thorns of a rose, shards of glass, love and madness to punctuate one's skin or 'reality', to unveil what lies underneath – in this sense, her part subverts the order of perception.

2.1.2 Composing (with) text

It was the writings of film-maker, composer and feminist theorist Trinh T. Minh-Ha which inspired and encouraged me to begin writing texts myself. In her exploration about writing text as a woman, she notes the importance of becoming "a holder of speech", that is to occupy a position of power and leadership through writing and the transformation of language (Minh-Ha, 2010, p. 33). For her, writing is a process which distances the writer from her own text, and thus fosters empathic listening: first to one's own work, and further to the position of others (Minh-Ha, 2010, p. 75).

My texted works are characterised by an intentional conflict between composed vocality and text. Language's representative function is disrupted, while the (composed) emotional urgency and intensity of the vocal exchange remain intact. Language is 'exposed': the text of

a work neither communicates a narrative nor a story, nor does it need to be understood – in spite of the fact that the texts I use have been carefully researched, written, or selected for the respective composition. In my postdramatic works, a performing vocalist communicates to an audience by means of “language as such”, by the fact that typical sonic patterns of human speech are recognisable in listening; however, vocalised text and speech “remain foreign objects” (Lehmann 2006, p. 145).

For *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST*, I composed both German and English texts over a longer period in 2014/2015. I find the mix of languages interesting because it reflects my everyday-life situation. Regarding concept and content, the German text is a storybook self-analysis of a feminist and artist, written in a poetic and abstract way. She sings about a surface of beauty, which she feels ruptured and cracked, and mentions that her song is perforated, that in the end everything, including beauty, falls to dust. The entire piece is inspired by personal history, with a view of the current (social) situation in Austria, Central Europe.²⁰ Here, I vocalise a fictional personal position, filtering and consolidating a composite public and political situation. The personalisation of my discipline is imperative and expresses the feminist position.

The text for the male voices in *Part I* is a collage composed of English verbs only, taken from the ‘The New York Times International Weekly’ during the period of composition. I extracted verbs from articles, leaving their grammatical function unchanged. My goal was the vocalisation of a fictional nonstop agitation, with every male part having his own agenda of collected verbs to perform. In the beginning, recitation must be barely audible, but rushed and agitated; later verbs are extended over long notes, as if the action would freeze in time.

²⁰ In Austria, I perceive an environment that boasts of beautiful nature and a comfortable life, but is accompanied by strong underground noises: practical politics procrastinate clarification of historic issues, pending urgent political decisions, the refugee-problem, the overall male-dominated social structures in Austria, right-wing populist tendencies, a widening income gap, to name just a few. All these factors have an impact on my personal situation as a citizen and composer and feed into my texts.

A text excerpt is provided here:

(Text *Part 1*, soprano)

Ich denke also bist
du
bin ich
hier
bricht
gedacht
bin ich gedacht
du gedacht

Scherben
Licht
scharfkantig reisst Raum
 ich dort
 und ihr
 drinnen
 draussen
 zwischen
 ein Fühlen
innen halten

Halt!

aussen sehnt sich

sticht

sehnt sich nach Liebe
Rose mit Dornen
trifft die Fingerspitzen
sehnt

Rose reisst Raum
in die Wirklichkeit
 mit Scherben
 mit Dornen
 mit Zerstörung
 mit Liebe
 mit Wahnsinn
Löcher in mein Lied
lockt Blut in den Schnee
barfuss auf einer Wiese

meine Schönheit
 ist Wort

(Text *Part 2*, all voices)

ist Lied
ist Staub
ist Asche

am Ende
unser aller
Ende

ist Staub

Text is indispensable in my work. For me, text is the direct connection to the mind-aspect of the voice-mind embodiment. I can only compose with libretti/texts by other authors when their potential attracts me as a composer. I have for example worked with texts by Virginia Woolf, with both commissioned or existing texts by the American author Anne Waldman, with poems by the Austrian writers Oswald Egger and Margret Kreidl, with poems by the singer and performer Ute Wassermann, or have used other sources such as news items, historical books, etc. In my latest works, I have preferred to compose my own texts, or to arrange, excerpt, and remix the texts of others to fit my purpose. During the compositional process, these texts undergo a procedure of deconstruction: I listen into sentences, words, syllables, and phonemes while pursuing the aural core of a text. I expose myself to their tangible and emotional essence, to their meaning as I hear it, with text as a material sonic body. From there I process, distort, knead what I hear internally into a composed vocal shape. This self-exposure is intimate on an almost physical scale, as if I would take a listening position touching sound from inside. At times I fragment text into particles beyond recognition, into shards, single sounds or phonemes. The final form of the text emerges as I compose, and may then appear as a severe violation of the original.²¹

In my discussion about text as a means to access the voice-body in mind, I recall Chaya Czernowin's work *Pnima ...Ins Innere*, her music theatre piece about the Holocaust from the perspective of the second generation of survivors. Similar to the experiences I had in Vienna, Czernowin mentions the impact of the loaded silence she encountered as a child, in her case

²¹ If I use texts by a living author such as Anne Waldman in the case of my Requiem, it is necessary to explain this method of working, and arrange permission from the author beforehand.

in Israel, when asking members of the older generation about the Holocaust (Czernowin, 2006). In her programme notes for *Pnima*, Czernowin (2006) states that to communicate the unknown and uncommunicable is a strong motivation for her as a composer; she further finds that in a stage of raw and unfiltered emotionality, anger and love are almost the same, as their unfolding needs time. Our processes differ in our approach towards text: Czernowin (2006) chose not to verbalize the themes she composed; instead, she works with “non-verbal non-narrative experience”. In my own case, I need to verbalise and write text first, circling around the core theme and approaching it as closely as possible. Only then it is possible for me to compose the hidden and unheard voices/noises, into the cracks and crannies that open up between, or even within the very words I wrote before.

Rather than suggesting an ideology or propose solutions, texts uphold the balance of the mind-body-voice nexus in my music, as they give weight to the link between mind and voice. I feel that this link is equally important as the voice-body nexus. As a woman, I want to be recognised for having a mind as well as a body and voice. Therefore, the voice personalities in my works must be endowed with text. To continue with an explicitly feminist commentary on the impact of writing or using text for composing I refer to Susan McClary’s (2002, p. 55) debate on texted music. What she points out as the *fictionality* of texted music is an important factor in my work as it contributes to the construction of gender (McClary, 2002, p. 53). Texted music opens up a potential space for me to experiment with writing, to raise my voice, and to cultivate and practice another form of artistic expression as a composer. By doing so, I actively contribute as a woman and feminist to how texts can be used in the compositional practice; I actively shape how texted music appears in a performance. On stage, the texts contribute to how fictional gender is constructed, i.e. to how a (male or female) performer appears to or before an audience.

On the other hand, I find that as a composer who writes text I expose myself (and my music) to latent controversy; text makes my music vulnerable. For this reason, I want to handle text with great care. In the writings of Susan McClary and Sally Macarthur I find encouragement to take the risk and experiment with texted music: both authors express trust in the creative process. Along McClary’s argumentation, the compositional plan in its potentiality links the

virtual power of thought with the real world in the sense of Deleuze's *becoming*. Sally Macarthur asserts that in the creative process, there is a fluidity that enables a transgression from the norm without fixation on a predetermined political idea (Macarthur, 2010, p. 85). Their statements remind me that the very intention that stimulates the practice of writing textured music has the power to bring about change and innovation. The compositional process can be trusted. It is not necessary to aim towards a predefined idea in writing; neither do I have to be afraid of becoming entangled in a political belief, as long as the process of writing/composing is upheld. In chapter 2.2 will write more specifically about how the compositional process can be actively cultivated, centring on the idea of the *third space*.

2.1.3 The clatter of dishes becoming composition

I acquired the work's pitch material through a process of field recording and transcription. I took samples at the passage from the kitchen to the seating area at Cafe Prückl, a well-frequented Viennese coffeehouse on a workday afternoon, a common-place, ordinary-life locale. In this position contrasting sonospheres merge. The private, crowded kitchen workspace brings discontinuous rumble and quick, functional vocal exchange; the sonosphere of the large public seating area is characterised by an ambience of small talk and the muffled clatter of cups and dishes. The two spaces differ in their acoustic properties, their sonorities, and the intensity and rhythms of their sonic characters. A workflow of analysis, selection, processing, and manual transcription of sample excerpts yielded progressions of microtonal material.²² To compose the four vocal parts, this material served as a quarry, an inspirational reservoir. I allowed myself to edit and alter the material according to my needs in the process of composing. In the work's performance, the original material is not recognisable for the listening audience, as my practice exposes rather than presents the material.

The use of field recordings helps to *locate* my emerging composition in a particular environment. Locating is an act of deliberately taking a position, a mode of occupying a place

²² I use Michael Klingbeil's open-source spectral analysis program SPEAR, available from Michael Klingbeil at <http://www.klingbeil.com/spear/>.

and mapping my imagination onto physicality. Working with field recordings, I bring together listening with my inner, compositional ear and ‘real-world’ listening. I like the idea that a composition sonifies the kitchen and clatter of one of my favourite coffeehouses. Observing the political principle of personalisation, I take field recordings in unspectacular, ordinary sites which have a connection to my life; the noises surrounding me every day are transformed into compositional material. Through a political and aesthetic decision, listening/recording becomes a political activity, even an act of empowerment. The decision to use the sounds of a kitchen was inspired by feminist artists such as film-maker Chantal Akerman, who turned a kitchen into a stage in her 1975 film *Jeanne Dielman, 23, Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*.²³ Here, I concur with composer Helmut Lachenmann, who marked out perception as the intrinsically subversive and political element in composing, rather than a political intention of the composer (Heathcote, 2013, p. 340). In my case, the noise I encounter in the coffee house is not only the noise of ‘life itself’ (as with Russolo in the manifesto), but the noise belonging to my own life, to my personal terrain, as a woman and composer. A corresponding approach towards composing with field recordings can be found in the works of the sound artist AGF Antje Greye Ripatti, who gathers sonic material in natural and human habitats and understands her work as grounded in feminism.²⁴ Another reference is the composer Hildegard Westerkamp, known for her soundscape compositions, who states that for her work she must take time to listen deeply into specific locations in order to catch their resonance. Westerkamp (2015) is aware of her own position as a recordist and composer, and in her process explores the link between her activity of listening to specific locations in the real world to her aural imagination. Notably, her work is perceived as a contribution to a feminist epistemology in art (McCartney, 1999).

As another example of locating a work, I refer to a series of field recordings that I collected from countries all over the world for the Requiem *BARE BRANCHES*. My intention was to record vocal material from (mostly younger) people of different cultural backgrounds and beliefs, who share a confident and peaceful attitude towards the future. One of these recordings was taken in a Buddhist nunnery in India: during a ritual invocation, a multi-

²³ See under <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0073198/>

²⁴ See under <http://poemproducer.com/info.php>

voiced chorus of nuns supplicating for peace was documented by one of the nuns with her mobile phone. In Shiraz, Iran, I myself recorded an Iranian woman and a young man, each reciting a poetic incantation for love and peace by poet Hafez (1325-1389), directly next to Hafez' tomb, a much visited pilgrim shrine. In Vienna, I collected voices of men and women reciting texts invoking peace. The recordings were transformed into composed material for the Requiem – again, I used the material as a source of inspiration and extracted pitch material without aiming at a recognisable transcription. I also take field recordings as elements for electronic processing along the same conceptual principles; this procedure will be described in chapter 2.3.

2.1.4 Baroque techniques in postdramatic texturing

In the opening section of *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST* postdramatic virtuosity underscores the composition of the soprano part. On the one hand, I want to preserve and stage the vocal potential of a well-trained singer. On the other hand, driven by feminist critique of traditional roles for women on stage, I seek to subvert the traditional idea of female soloist and vocal part. Emotional texturing through implied polyphony is a method I have developed which allows me to pursue both objectives: exposing the performer's outstanding vocal skills, while simultaneously disrupting conventional assumptions of virtuosity. This technique relies on my experiences with Baroque composition, their performance and the *Affektenlehre*. I adapt the Baroque concept of implied polyphony to navigate fractured emotional states in a vocal part. In my method of texturing I split the soprano into two voice personalities: *soprano* and *soprano 2*. The strands diverge in their vocal register and embodied presence, yet both are to be performed by the same singer. I use a divided system of staves to locate, compose, and notate the voice personalities. Like separate fictional characters, they each have their own basic affect and intensity, vocal range and sonority, and a text of their own. They only overlap if technically possible for the singer. The 'division' is inspired by my observations of layered mind and staged as a duet of fictional inner voices. The top line *soprano* is characterised by the overall affect of *gentle and with longing* and calls for a virtuosic singing voice tailored to Juliet Fraser's range. *Soprano*

2 is an irate yet self-contained presence. Described as *wrathful and menacing*, this voice personality features a vocabulary of modulated noise production and recitations. *Soprano 2* taps into the sonic potential of a wider range of noises and extreme emotionality. The composed physical and mental distance between the two personalities is illustrated in their individual stave design.

I composed the soprano part by separately sketching the *soprano* and *soprano 2* voices. Along a grid, the individual lines were spliced, fragmented, and interlaced into a composite vocal part. I prepared the roughly outlined vocal sketches and grids by hand on large sheets of paper. These sketches had a decisively visual component; the constructed geometric patterns map sonorities. The technique of implied polyphony reminds me of cutting film; it involves rhythmic imagination. I also recall the concept of layered mind when observing how awareness shifts in between layers of consciousness, just as the composed soprano does between her fictional divisions. Even when multitasking, I find my mind's focal attention actually oscillates between layers of activities. I can focus on only one thing at a time. Texturing through implied polyphony allows me to transform the mechanisms of my inner world into shifts between vocal states. The performer is meant to consciously transpose her entire body/mind/emotion spectrum when moving between personalities, which may involve a time lag. As in film editing, the cuts constitute a rhythmic layer overlaying the voice part: the pacing of the breaks from one voice personality to the other form a coherent rhythmic pattern.

Patterning is an important mechanism in the practice of subversion. In making patterns, one works with a foreground and a background. The background material, providing space, is not primarily noticed. It is the material making up the foreground patterns which attracts attention. Patterns are formed from perceptual singularities; perception works by grasping and grouping singularities into coherent patterns (Kandel, 2012), in a creative process which I find interesting to observe from the perspective of composing. In *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST* the technique of 'division' allows me to pattern the vocal noise of the voice personality *soprano 2* onto a flow of virtuosic singing. Here I employ an intrinsic structural subversion. This process foregrounds noise as a composed singularity while pushing the more

conventional singing voice into the back. With this process, I also refer to a link between patterning and female handcrafting, corresponding to my feminist stance. In *Part 2* the quartet collectively moves through intermeshed patterns of (microtonal) singing and short noisy ‘breaks’. Noise takes over the function of pauses in historical partsong: between the ‘verses’ of my ‘song’, singing disintegrates into noise rather than silence.

I was brought to work with emotional texturing through my experience in Baroque music and its historically informed performance practice. Following their *Affektenlehre*, the performer has to adjust fictional emotional states in conjunction with timbral colouring and the style of performing, to fit a composed part (Quantz, 1789, p. 106). This performance adjustment requires mental, physical, emotional, and technical flexibility; personally, I have experienced it as a bodily process. In certain parts, the composed affections change in rapid succession, even between single notes. I have further looked into Baroque composition; here, implied polyphony was used to create an illusion of counterpoint in a monophonic instrumental part²⁵ (Clarke & Cook, 2004, p. 104). The Baroque inspires me as an interdisciplinary artist, because its outlook is ‘pre-dramatic’. I discover in the Baroque a uniquely subversive, playful, and experimental approach towards music and art. The prolific Mexican author and diplomat Octavio Paz pointed out that in Baroque performance practice the Baroque society presented a mirror of itself: the Baroque audience and the performers (as well as those who worked behind the scenes) were aware of their participation in a community ritual as a kind of ‘social theatre’ performance – much in the sense of Nancy’s ‘in-common’, there was a notion of respect of everybody’s role in the interaction. Together, the audience and the performing artists established a social choreography; in their ritual, the Baroque community empowered themselves and unified their social contract (Paz, 1994, p. 220). For my political practice, I learn from Baroque art’s exemplary and playful handling of the physical and scenic. Here, I would like to mention the fact that in Baroque music composers often were improvisers/performers/producers as well, with successful women among them. Further, I find in Baroque operas a unique and flexible handling of vocality and gender roles, concerning male/female alto or soprano parts.

²⁵ For example Johann Sebastian Bach (BWV 1001–1006) and Georg Philipp Telemann (Twelve Fantasias TWV 40/2–13).

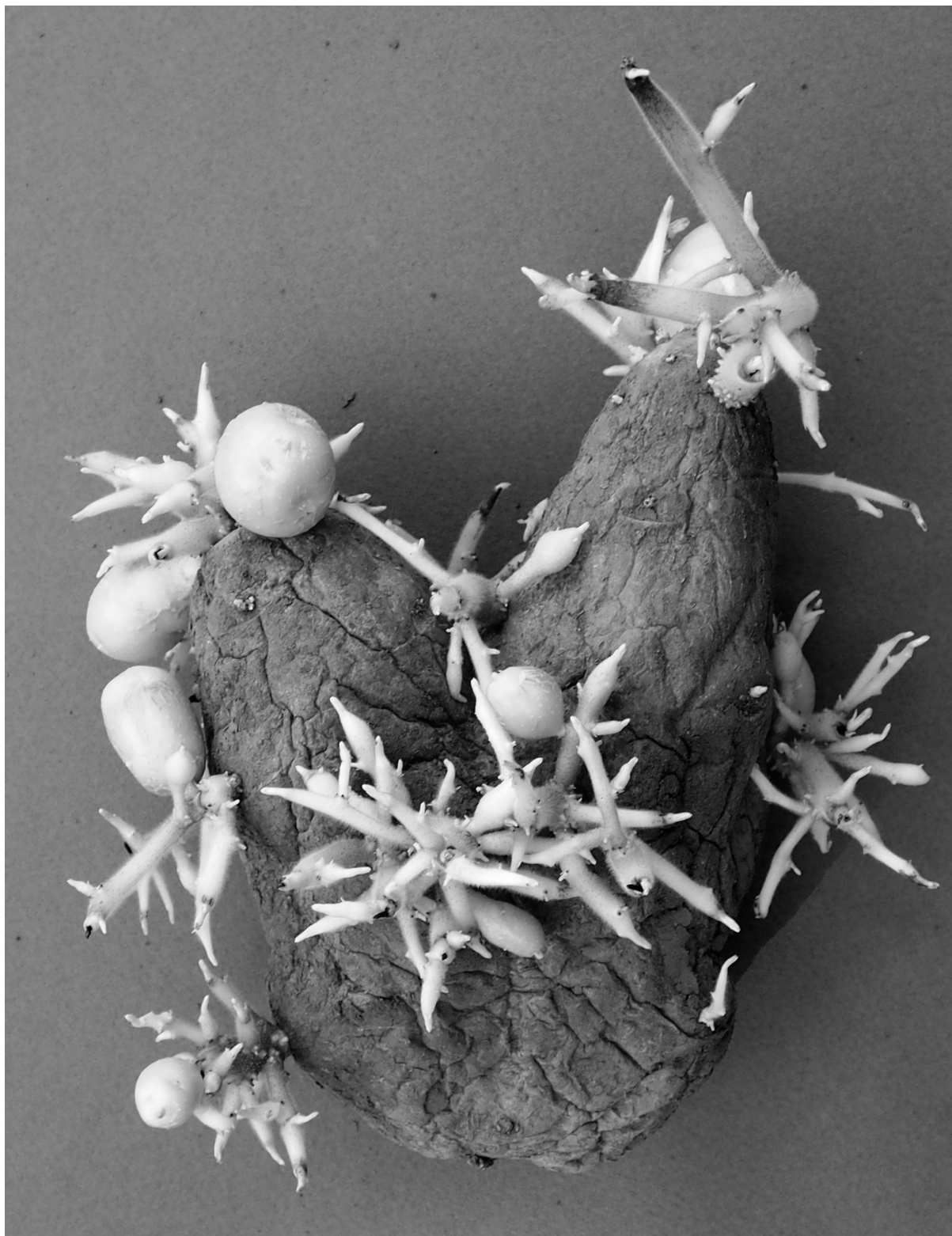


Fig. 9: A potato as an intermediary object for *Under elephantine skin*

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Fig. 10: Score excerpt – *Under elephantine skin Part I*, bars 49 – 53

Fig. 11: Score excerpt – *Under elephantine skin Part III*, bars 16 – 28

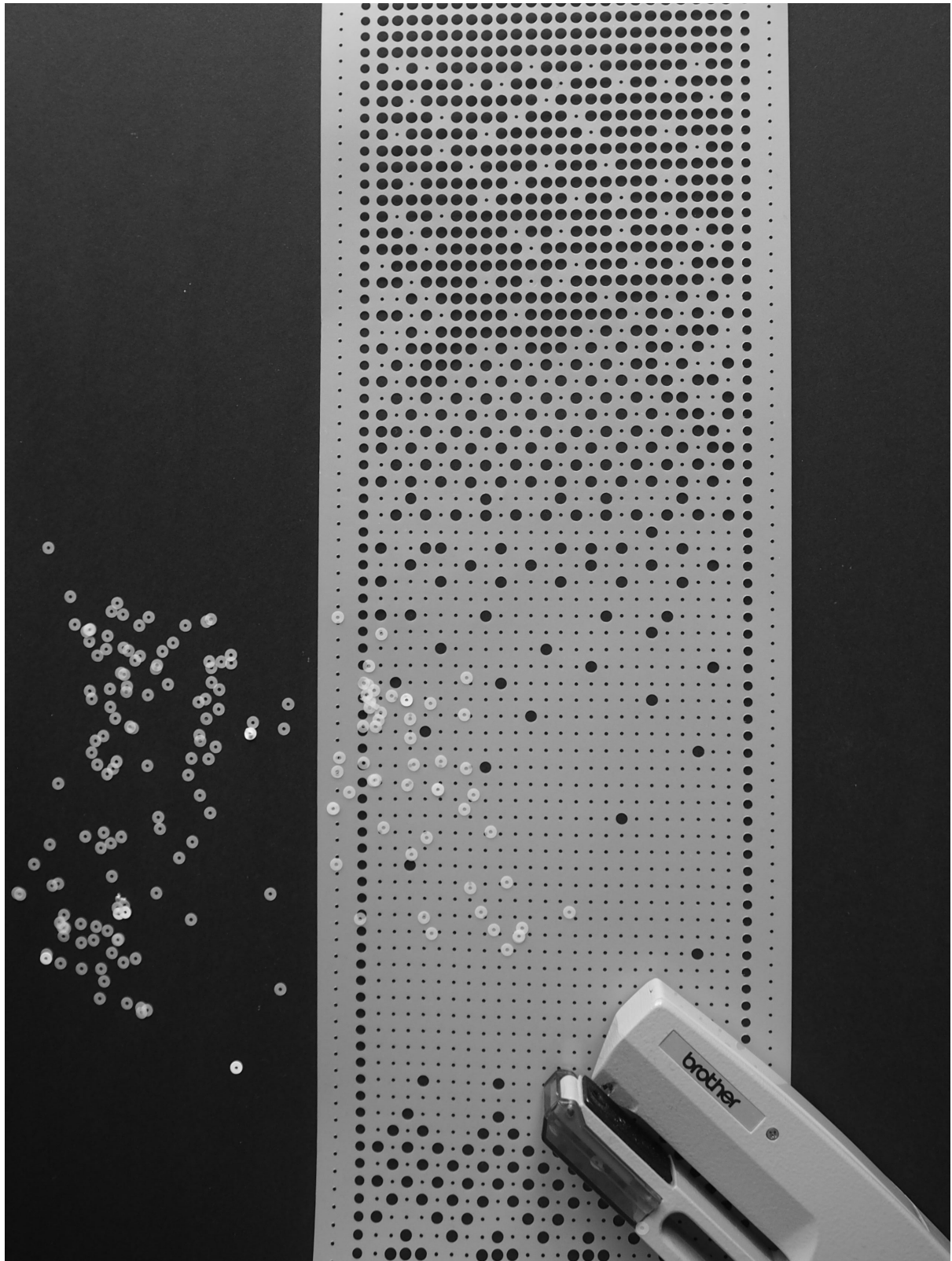


Fig. 12: Punchcard score and punch tool for *Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness*

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Fig. 13: Ute Wassermann performing *Patterns to punctuate song*, with darkness



Fig. 14: Rhodri Davies performing with prepared harp,
from *GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance II*

2.2 IN TRANSITU

A song

A crucial stage in my artistic process is the transitional phase or *third space*. The term third space in the psychological sense was first used in a publication in 1953 by the psychoanalyst Donald W. Winnicott.²⁶ This usage of the term preceedes, and is to be distinguished from, the later application of the term third space (or third place) in the context of urban sociology and community building. In my research I have come to adopt Winnicott's terminology to define a distinctive period in my working process. It is the timespan or space it takes to physically manifest a composition outside – meaning as a phenomenon within the real world as opposed to my imagination, and in a form or manifestation that can be perceived by an audience. This phase commences with the first sketches or practical plans I make for a composition, matures into the period of experimentation, notation, and rehearsal, and then fades out into the work's performance and reception. All actions necessary to transfer and locate an imagined work into the real world make up the third space. This phase is marked by a conjunction of mental, physical and social creativity. Before discussing the transitional phase in relation to a commentary on my vocal composition *Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness* (Palme 2015), and in relation to improvisation as part of my practice, I will first demonstrate a creative experiment, in which I will perform the third space as writing.

2.2.1 Performing the intermediary as writing (an experiment)

I will here compose a poem, making up (improvising) the German words as I write. Simultaneously, I will observe the creative process and describe my observations in English. I initiate the process touching the fingertips of my right hand to my left arm, as a performative gesture. With this physical movement, I enter into the third space. (Before the actual movement, there had been a 'plan' to do so. This plan had emerged as a spontaneous idea in

²⁶ Winnicott, D.W. (1953). *Transitional objects and transitional phenomena – a study of the first not-me possession*. International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 34, 89-97. Retrieved from <http://psycnet.apa.org/psycinfo/1954-02354-001>

an imaginary process prior to the transitional phase.) In this experiment, the transitional phase ends when I finish typing the final sentence “I see and hear what is written.” The creative act has at this point come to an end. The product of this act, the following text in italics, performs the third space and can be read by others:

With the fingertips of my right hand, I very softly touch the skin of my left arm. The skin links my inside and outside. I feel the warmth of my own fingertips touching my own arm. I slowly sweep my fingertips across my arm. Inner and outer territories merge. I write these lines:

berühren

Haut

Fingerkuppen

kennt ihre Zwischenheit

lebenslang fühlungsgleich

mag den Wind

der anderen Fühlung

Spiegelsein

im Zwischen

bei sich

and I observe:

My artistic process begins with an impulse. In the space of mind. A pink cloud condensing in the sky. A longing. An urge. Consolidates deep inside my silent, solitary core. A thought. Emerges. Gains shape and contour. Takes on bones and blood and body. Branches out. A word. In mind.

I touch the keys of my computer, I feel them. Warm and flat. I feel my fingertips initiating motion, then slightly pressing down. Words putting on flesh. Imagination contacting physicality. I feel my skin connecting to the keyboard, sensation extends. As words appear, I read. The words. Linger in my vision. I recognise. The word. Looks at its reflection. Some corrections as I write, but a steady flow – moving forward in time. Very slowly. One word after another. Emerges. Takes shape. Appears on the screen. A song. I see and hear what is written.

My writing experiment illustrates the transitional phase in my artistic practice. It also demonstrates how the third space builds a bridge from the preceding imaginative process to the final stage of a ‘composed work’ in the ‘real world’. In this example, I only allowed myself to minimally edit the spelling of the poem’s German words (or their arrangement) as I typed them. Once the poem was finished, I preserved its appearance. It documents the process of writing-as-improvisation/composition in transit across the third space. It is worthy to mention that in my experiment improvisation borders on composition. The entire text in italics was ‘improvised’. However, the English text was subtly edited afterwards, and at the end of the process a ‘composed product’ has manifested, a text that can be re-performed as reading.

2.2.2 The third space

In the *third space*, physicality informs composition. The transitional phase is initiated at the moment when I begin to manually sketch, to experiment, and to notate. At a specific moment in my process, I grab a pencil, paper, or touch a computer, or an instrument. I draw and write, or I may initiate negotiations for the future performance. This stage marks a paradigmatic shift towards the ‘real world’. I notice a change in perception and emotionality as soon as physicality becomes part of the workflow. Feedback comes in from the physical dimension, which in turn influences the compositional process. From here, my compositional activity moves on, widening and reaching out, to work with objects and instruments, to exchange with performers, and to further expand into space towards an audience at the other end. The intermediary space is my composer’s workbench, laboratory, and playground. I conduct hands-on trial-and-error research here. During the course of the process, the transitional phase may come to a halt, or even take a step backwards at times. In the intermediary, I allow myself to experiment freely and playfully, without constraint or the pressure to be successful.

The term *third space* was established by the British psychoanalyst and researcher into cognitive processes Donald W. Winnicott. In his book *Playing and Reality* Winnicott explains the third space as an extension of one’s creative imagination into the real world. The

intermediary widens one's psychological (internal) space into a zone between the individual and the outside world. This third space is accessible from both sides; here, exchange with an environment is possible. The third space as a cognitive and social phenomenon was first defined in child behaviour. Winnicott (2005[1971], p.139) later extended his theory to cultural behaviour, asserting the importance of:

a third area, that of play, which expands into creative living and into the whole cultural life of man. This third area has been contrasted with inner or personal psychic reality and with the actual world in which the individual lives, which can be objectively perceived. I have located this important area of *experience* in the potential space between the individual and the environment... Attention is drawn to the fact that this potential space is a highly variable factor (from individual to individual), whereas the two other locations – personal or psychic reality and the actual world – are relatively constant, one being biologically determined and the other being common property.

Winnicott's theories are currently discussed by artists who reflect on the role of personal perception in their work, such as for example by the graphic artist and author Alison Bechdel (2013) in her thought-provoking graphic memoir *Are you my mother*. During artistic collaborations with an ensemble led by musician, performer and writer David Toop in 2015, a debate of Winnicott's concepts led to our agreement over defining both our instruments and electronic setups, and in a more extended sense the performance venue we acted in, as intermediary zone – a space we occupied and created together, by mutual consent, and into which all of us extended their imagination via their instruments.

The action of writing texts for my compositions (as described in chapter 2.1) can be an example of a third area activity. Aside from using musical instruments, writing tools, and electronic media, I have used a wide range of materials as tools of the intermediary, such as: paper, cardboard, wood, stones, bones, glass, feathers (see fig. 14), fabrics, household objects, metal, and plant material (see fig. 9). It goes without saying that here I include work with the human voice and body (my own or that of a performer). In my observation, it is the sensory dimension of touch which brings my imagination forward, particularly inviting playfulness into notation. Not every object I work with in the transitional phase of a project becomes part of the completed composition; some objects serve only as a haptic transitory stimulant. For example, in the process of making *Under elephantine skin (to be sung against a continuum of ignorance)* a potato in a fascinating stage of decay-regrowth played an

important role (see fig. 9). The plant object brought me to contemplate the potential of the organic versus the digital and thus informed my understanding and criticism of the impact of digital culture on human interaction. My intense reflection then inspired the ‘lyrics’ of the above work (see more under chapter 2.3), led me to research into Neil Young’s and Leopold Silviuss Weiss’ works, and framed the key compositional layout of the work.

2.2.3 Patterning and punctuation

The composition *Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness* (Palme, 2015) relies heavily on experiments in the transitional phase. As an intermediary tool, I worked with punchcard rolls, which are normally used to control the mechanics of home knitting-machines. Using a punch tool, holes are manually punched into the roll to create patterns. I will describe how and to which extent these experiments influenced and contributed to the aural and scenic arrangement of the work, thereby underscoring the importance of the third space in my compositional process. The work for mezzo-soprano voice with throat microphone, electronics, text, and punchcard visuals was commissioned by the vocal performer and experimental artist Ute Wassermann for her program *Voicextensions* (with lighting performer Michael Vorfeld) for the 2015 Salzburg Biennale. The theme of this work is patterning. For the composition and its title, I was inspired by the great American writer and poet Anne Waldman, who in her *poem X – Revenge* (Waldman, 2011, p. 150) writes these lines:

You punctuate your speech with nails, with glass, with mirrors, with chrome. With sharpness and always some danger of a stab or a jagged edge. You punctuate your speech with darkness.

This poem belongs to the first book of Waldman’s epic work *The Iovis Trilogy: Colors in the Mechanism of Concealment*.²⁷

As part of my preparation, I explored the processes of analogue machine programming and came across the technique of punchcard rolls. Punchcards used to be an industry standard and a method of data processing until the 1980s. I practised improvising patterns with a punch

²⁷ I feel fortunate and grateful for having been given personal permission by Anne Waldman to work with her texts, due to our long-time artistic collaboration.

tool (i.e. not following any prior sketches) and thereby studied the mechanisms of spontaneous visual patterning. I found it interesting that a hole on the roll represents a perceptual singularity. The hole is an outstanding occurrence punctuating the background layer. If additional such singularities re-occur, patterns and rhythms become visible. Of particular interest for me as a composer was the transition from three to four singular elements (or in this case, holes in the punchcard roll). The appearance of the fourth element seemed to initiate the (perceived) unfolding of a pattern. Further investigations brought me to reflect on punctuation in the mechanics of writing. The computer scientist Gerard Salton has asserted that “punctuation is an art rather than a part of the mechanics of writing” (Salton, 1958). I remixed Ute Wassermann’s poem *Sitz der Stimme* (Wassermann, 1995) in a procedure of cutting, punctuation and fragmentation based on emotional and sonic filtering, to become the lyrics of the work:

Wirf zurück
den Pferderücken
den Schweinskopf
in die Bäume
zurück
ins Eiswasser

sternförmig
dicke schwarze Vögel
im dichten Wald
singen
verlaufend

kurz scharf seltsam
sie sich
verfremdet Regenwetter
mit derselben Gestik
verstärken
mitten in Kopf

schläfriger Seufzer
hallend
Stimmen versterben
klirrend
schwarzverbrannt
der Kuchen kreischt.

Weich ein
die Form

das Gefäß
ins Wasser
auf die Rückbank
wild
knurrt
der riesige Hund

immer auf dem Rückweg
ein Lied und beiße
wie von selbst
kräftig
die Ohren zu

kehlige Laute
sprachähnlich
unter der Kuppel
auf Grund
Irrtum und Angst
umringt
die Saite entlang.

Ruf zurück
das Gerücht
den Jungen
die ganze Welt
aus allen Richtungen
leicht gläubig
Gezänk

starker Abstand
in den Wind
nur noch
Klappen klappten
Wirbel
Säule

Winseln und Stöhnen
bahnen sich ihren Weg
durch das Reiben
Laute sitzen schwarzgekleidet
verflochten.

Sing zurück
die Ohnmacht
die Haltung
gegen mein Brustbein
trillert hinten

flimmert grau
im Hochgebirge
vervielfältigt

das große und kleine Rauschen.

The mezzo-soprano part is divided into two voice personalities (according to the model described in chapter 2.1). ‘The female voice’ and ‘the wrathful voice of darkness’ are composed to underscore Ute Wassermann’s faculties of microtonal singing, her lush repertoire of vocal noises, her register of birdlike calls, and a top range of extremely high piercing sounds. The compositional cartography follows the principle of texturing through implied polyphony. The singing ‘female voice’ moves along a contemporary monody, which is spliced and fragmented by outbreaks of ‘the wrathful voice of darkness’. Here, my punchcard experiences in patterning informed the pacing of the composed cuts (see figures 21 and 22). I further worked with a switchable throat microphone²⁸ to manipulate vocal performance. The vocalist wears and triggers this microphone throughout the piece, according to modes of texturing which are specified in the score. In addition to selective amplification, the throat-microphone also induces an effect of ‘lo-fi’ distortion. The result is an overriding rhythmic layer of noise patterned onto vocal action.

As I continued experimenting with punchcards, these experiments led me to produce a 5 meter long graphic ‘punchcard score’. This patterned roll visually illustrates the modes of triggering the throat-microphone throughout the work (see fig. 12). I planned this graphic score as a visual scenic element for the performance: given suitable lighting, it is possible to project the score’s pixelated graphics, which become visible as patterned dots of light. Lighting artist Michael Vorfeld transformed these projections into an analogue slide-show for Ute Wassermann’s performances (see fig. 13). I also recorded the distinct, repetitive punching clicks of my experiments, whose samples feature as an overlay in the accompanying stereo-

²⁸ The throat microphone is worn around the neck. Electret membranes touch the skin near the larynx, picking up sound from inside the body, making it possible to speak softly or even with a closed mouth. This device was originally developed for military use in the 1930s, to communicate in loud surroundings, such as during combat or inside a tank, or while riding motorcycles. Commercial throat microphones are also used by gaming experts or paintball players for a realistic experience during game sessions (see also: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Throat_microphone). There are individual technical solutions for throat microphone use: Ute Wassermann often uses a DIY-built throat microphone with a piezo element, triggered by a pedal.

track. The track's overall dramaturgy is supportive, giving the soloist space to unfold her vocality and to allow her to take liberties with passages asking for extreme ranges. The click-sequences begin the piece and consequently return on three occasions as a recognisable rhythmic signal in the track. The clicks are modelled to be aurally distinct against the background ambience, which is composed from noisy broadband-textures – i.e. sounds with a high noise content, recorded inside my contrabass recorder, and drone-like noise passages performed with an analogue ring-modulator.

Altogether, the experimental research into patterning during the transitional phase contributed significantly to the composition of *Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness*. Moreover, this process led to the development of further works. In the lecture-performance *Patterns to punctuate speech, with darkness* (Palme, 2015) I presented my research findings in an audiovisual format during the 2015 *RMA Music and/as Process* conference at Goldsmiths University, London, with a video of me punching patterns playing while I improvised on contrabass recorder between or simultaneous with my lecture (for a video still see fig. 27). I patterned instrumental sound onto my own vocal productions. The academic format of presentation was thus intertwined with artistic performance, creating a space of interaction between the two modi of reception – a sort of academic/artistic third space. To sum up, the investigations into punchcards illustrate the third area as vitally important. My preliminary experiments are governed by perception, not production. In the transitional stage, I enjoy experimenting without restraint and purpose, yet persistently and in exchange with the environment, playfully immersed in a process which can always lead to new terrain.

2.2.4 Improvisation

I return to the initial writing experiment to discuss improvisation and its relation to composition, from the perspective of the third space in my practice. Musical improvisation is a practice and a state of mind that I see as connected to listening and composing. Drawing on my personal experience of improvisation and composition, I argue that both artistic processes develop along the same model, moving through the stages that can be identified in my

writing experiment: an imaginary stage is followed by the intermediary and ends in an objectified form. In improvisation and in composition, I practise decision-making and have learned to trust my ‘first impulse’. In all artistic disciplines, my process departs from the firm ground of these primary impulses into the open space and the physicality of the third area. In the intermediary, I freely experiment, communicate with my environment, and interact with (other) performers. In transit across the third area, the ‘work’ (i.e. composed or improvised sonorities, texts, or materials) is putting on flesh and contours until it emerges in its objectified form – I notate, perform, or otherwise assemble the ‘work’ as precisely as necessary. The act of composing asks for notation, while in musical improvisation I handle instruments or objects; in my practice of electronic music, I might at this stage document programming, sketch instrumental settings, and record tracks. During the final stage of the intermediary, the work emerges in its finite appearance. The ‘work’ (i.e. composition, improvisation, poem, or installation) leaves the third space as it is being received by an audience. Scaled models of all these stages can be observed in the initial writing experiment.

In musical improvisation, I value the simple joy of experimentation and the luxury of immersing myself in a process without restraint or ‘purpose’. I began improvising already as a child with my soprano recorder. However, the classical music training of my later years pushed that skill to the background, until much later I was able to break free from what I then perceived as the fetters of convention, rediscovering the practice of improvisation. In 1988, I got a thorough introduction and grounding in free improvisation from the percussionist and experimental performer Jerry Granelli, in a four-week intensive course during the former ‘Naropa Institute Summer’ in Boulder, Colorado. Since then, improvising (music) is a practice which I cultivate by myself and by regularly performing, either as part of an ensemble or as soloist. Free or structured improvisation is incorporated as an essential part of a number of my works, such as in the pieces: *ABSTRIAL* (Palme, Kirchmayr, Bianchi, Fantini, & Waldman, 2013), in *GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance II* (see chapter 2.3), in *Performing the noise of mind* (see chapter 1.5), and in *Under elephantine skin* (in the third part of the work, I improvise in a trio with a lutenist and oboist, using the contrabass recorder plus a microphone placed inside the instrument’s tube for feedback-playing).

Even as I move further into my practice of composition, improvisation continues to be a valuable and familiar musical space for me. It is both a practice to reconnect with myself and a form of creating music that can be shared with others. In his comprehensive book on the history of free improvisation *Into the maelstrom: music, improvisation and the dream of freedom*, David Toop (2016, p. 17) argues that musical improvisation, as an end in itself

is also an experimental public struggle with the limits of the self, profoundly fulfilling and yet painful for what is revealed about the abjection of being human and embodied, as autonomous individual, social being, political animal.

Following this perspective, improvisation is a postdramatic practice exposing the performer. Corresponding to the above-mentioned discussion about Winnicott's theories of the intermediary, David Toop writes about how improvisation lingers in the space between the inside and outside of the performer, in the third space where the instrument is located (Toop, 2016, p. 91). In improvising, I experience an organic sensation of my instrument being part of myself; my body grows into the contrabass recorder as my breath flows through the wooden tube. I cannot tell anymore where my fingers end and the instrument begins – the border between the wood and the keys seems to dissolve. As fingers and keys move in synchronisation, I feel the underside of the keys as my cyborg-fingertips. In a similar way, during my writing experiment the keys of my computer keyboard seemed to 'extend' from my fingertips as I typed the poem. My experience is the same when I improvise using the computer as an electronic musician.

It is worth mentioning that the fact that improvisation can occur as a group practice is not necessarily a contrast to composition. For the collaborative opera *ABSTRUAL* (Palme, Kirchmayr, et al. 2013) I initiated and co-organised a collaborative process among a group of five artists (myself, electronic composer Electric Indigo, food artist Ivan Fantini, performer and director Paola Bianchi, and poet Anne Waldman), which led to the inception, production, and performance of a work for four singers, three performers, contrabass recorder and multi-channel electronics, assembled around a moving and sounding installation made from bread dough and glasses (see figures 19 and 20). In *ABSTRUAL*, Electric Indigo, Paola Bianchi, and myself performed on stage together with the four singers. Here, the compositional process was shared between the two composers Susanne Kirchmayr aka Electric Indigo and myself.

Since 2007, we have collaborated with each other performing as experimental improvisers and co-composing on a number of occasions.²⁹ For *ABSTRIAL*, I composed several ‘modules’ for the lead baritone (including an audio score) and for three female voices, with Anne Waldman’s libretto. Further, I defined structures for improvisation with the contrabass recorder, to be performed by myself on stage. Electric Indigo contributed electronic compositions distributed onto a unique spatial setup of ten speakers. The performance was created in an extended intermediary, a collaborative process of experimentation and rehearsing; during this period we worked both by ourselves and together as a group. At that time, Electric Indigo and I edited our modular material into a coherent composition. Discussing the complex collaborative process of *ABSTRIAL* exceeds the scope of my thesis and deserves to be separately researched; however, from insight gained during this experience, I propose that the cognitive structure of our collaborative artistic process can be paralleled with that of a – tremendously slowed down – interdisciplinary group improvisation. In the words of David Toop (2016, p. 3), what could be observed was that if

I work at instruments, at materials, then I find something within myself that is otherwise dormant and that quality has a social component. It is communicable and has the strength to move outward to others who may wish to engage with it in their own way.

²⁹ Another example of our collaborative work is *Relatively Scary* (Electric Indigo & Pia Palme, 2014), a composition for the ECAS ‘sonic carousel’ commissioned for the 2014 festival *musikprotokoll* in Graz.



Fig. 15: Transduction for *GIB SIE WIEDER* a warning commentary on resonance I



Fig. 16: Spatial arrangement for *BIRDSONG CRANNIES*, the ensemble getting ready for performance



Fig. 17: Spatial arrangement for a performance of *KEMPELEN'S RING*



Fig. 18: Spatial arrangement for *Under elephantine skin* during final soundcheck

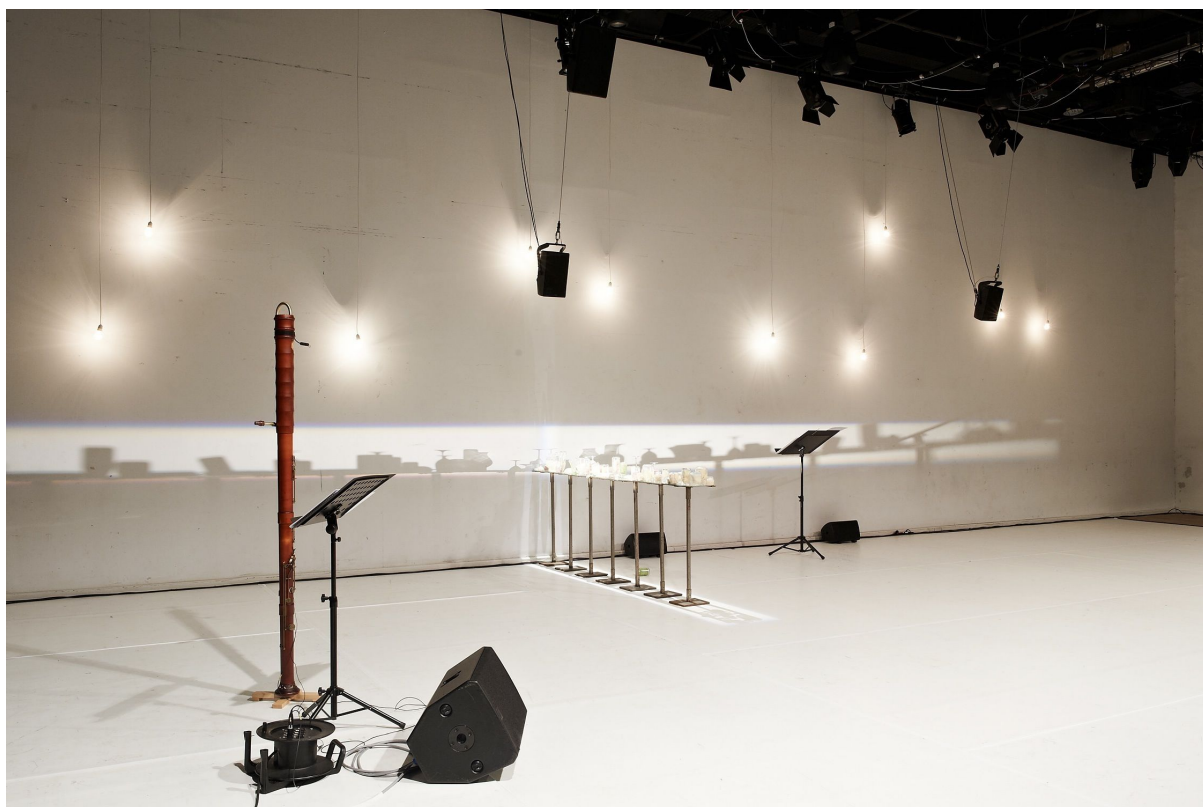


Fig. 19: Spatial arrangement and Ivan Fantini's organic installation for *ABSTRIAL* (photo by Markus Gradwohl)



Fig. 20: Scene from *ABSTRIAL* showing the installation, singers, and artist Paola Bianchi (photo by Markus Gradwohl)

2.3 BEYOND VOCALITY

Composing scenic space

In this chapter I focus on composing beyond the voice. I explore how I organise auditory, visual, and scenic components into spatial arrangements. These categories of components can include both the performers' and the audience's positioning. As examples, I will refer to compositions selected on the basis of their spatial arrangements and their more complex physicality. My discussion explores instrumental parts, electronic parts, and interdisciplinary elements such as media and visual art. Text is briefly mentioned in relation to aspects of performance. The questions of why, how, and what I compose with instruments and electronics in the context of vocality will be addressed in this chapter.

The works I have selected for examination include:

KEMPELEN'S RING (Palme 2012), *Cyborg-Minute-Opera* for a mobile phone commissioned by the festival *Wien Modern* in 2012 as their official ringtone

Under elephantine skin (to be sung against a continuum of ignorance), for countertenor, theorbo, Baroque oboe, recorder (alto and contrabass), electronics, and text (Palme, 2015) commissioned by the festival *Wien Modern* in 2015

BIRDSONG CRANNIES (Palme 2015), a score and movement instructions for five singers, with texts by Pia Palme and Virginia Woolf, composed for the opening of the *V:NM Festival für Neue, Improvisierte und Experimentelle Musik*, Graz 2015

GIB SIE WIEDER (Palme 2014), a series consisting of:

a warning commentary on resonance I for viola d'amore, contrabass recorder, electronics, text, and an installation;

a warning commentary on resonance II for harp, electronics, and text

VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av (Palme, 2016) a composition for ensemble, 4-channel electronics, with text and video, composed for the ensemble Schallfeld and the festival *tage neuer musik graz* in 2016

2.3.1 Biological progression as a principle in my practice

The following discussion will look at complex arrangements from an external perspective. The above-listed categories of the auditory, visual and scenic refer to the work's final staging and performance, from the audience's point of view. Although it may appear that I proceed from a preconceived image with a functional plan in realising a composition, I do not have an image of a completed product in mind while I work. Roughly envisioning a direction, I trust in a model of decision-making by listening inwardly, which I experience as accurate and precise. I perceive my process as biological, much like a seed maturing into a tree: perceived from the outside, a tree appears as a well-defined form. The 'product' of my process is not formless; as a composer, I want my works to be precisely formed. There is a strong notion of a form which is inherent within the process, as in biology. In my practice of composing-as-listening there is no 'finished' sonic figure as long as the process is still unfolding. My listening-based practice thus displays a non-traditional precision, biological definition, and efficient stringency of procedure.

In this chapter, I will provide commentaries on (the above listed) finished works, thereby re-tracing significant decisions made at different stages of my process. This will not explain the personal mode of decision-making and the complexity of my procedure. In notating this chapter, I experience a longing for a language and a style of writing that would allow me to cover the biological nature of my process, in respect of its innate precision, and the profound, accurate emotionality involved in my mode of decision-making. In analysing finished works from an outside perspective, and in an academic context, I have to impose production-oriented structural thinking onto a non-production-oriented process. On the other hand, my work is not 'process-oriented' art: there is a final appearance, a score, a form, or a performance. My spatial arrangements are guided by the efficiency and precision of biological growth – which I can best describe as a postdramatic, personal, and feminist practice.

2.3.2 Scenic spaces

In my portfolio compositions, I work with a spatial arrangement of auditory, visual, and scenic elements. This practice allows me to compose a postdramatic environment, to create a potential scenic space for subversion and the exposition of the voice, to facilitate an ‘in-common’ (a shared space as a community) of performers and their audience, and to respect the physicality of a performance. The three categories I have isolated, the auditory, the visual and the scenic, overlap in many aspects. The *auditory* elements are: composed instrumental and electronic parts, composition using electronic components, and sound art; further sound design, microphoning, and methods of amplification; finally the spatialisation of instrumental and electronic sound, that is the positioning of instrumental performers and speakers. Composing with electronic sound includes working with its physical representation in space. In my portfolio works I use a variety of amplification techniques, ranging from a mobile phone as a miniature performance-robot, amplification via transducers into instruments or objects, irregular installations of speakers, to more standard (mono, stereo, or multichannel) speaker setups. The category of the *visual* components considers visual art (objects and installations) and visual media, as well as interdisciplinary elements such as movement and performance art. Visual aspects of musical performance are also included here. The *scenic* aspects I work with concern questions of positioning, distance and closeness, directional instructions, lighting, and the overall configuration of the performance stage or space. Scenic space encompasses the entire performance environment, including the position of the audience. If possible, I have the seating spaces arranged according to my instructions.

Working in each of these categories allows me to approach a work’s theme from independent artistic angles. Articulated as a coherent environment, the separate parts compose a ‘shared time-space of mortality’. Postdramatic arrangements check traditional mechanisms and curb pre-existing expectations of musical performance – both on the side of the performer and the audience. Most importantly, they allow me the opportunity to change listening perspective away from the conventional and towards a more personal mode of listening and reception. The complexity of my compositions encourage selective listening and stimulate the individual process of decoding.

The miniature *KEMPELEN'S RING* (Palme, 2012) is an extreme example of a scenic configuration. My *Cyborg-Minute-Opera for a multi-tasking main character* was commissioned by Vienna's contemporary music festival *Wien Modern* as their official ringtone. It comments on the impact of the digital on contemporary culture. The performance instruction is to download the ringtone, place the mobile phone into a glass or cup for better amplification, press play, and listen/watch (see fig. 17). The visual component of the work is the phone as the miniature-robot performer; its built-in player plus amplification physically represent the aural element. The operatic stage is set by the instruction to place the phone inside a glass (wherever that may be) during the minute-long operatic performance of *KEMPELEN'S RING*. The eponym of the title, Wolfgang von Kempelen (1734 – 1804), lived as a successful inventor, author, architect, state official, and composer in the Austro-Hungarian empire. He invented and constructed a functioning 'speaking machine'.³⁰ For my ringtone opera track I recorded samples of this 'speaking' using a replica of the apparatus loaned from the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. The recordings sounded surprisingly similar to a human moan or a baby's cry. In addition, I layered scratching, pink noises, and ring-modulator drones. Towards the end, a male voice whispers: "Version of absent world. Locked. Trapped." (This is a snippet taken from Waldman's libretto of *BARE BRANCHES*). Von Kempelen is most famous for his construction of an 'automated' chess-player, the so-called 'mechanical Turk', whose intricate mechanism was in fact operated by a person hidden inside (as a side note, Amazon.com has adopted the term Mechanical Turk Workers for invisible human workers operating behind their websites, performing tasks that computers are currently unable to do). This brings me back to my composition, which transfers samples from the Baroque speaking machine into a modern speaking apparatus in order to perform a short commentary (a feminist side note) on the dramatic history of traditional opera and its celebrated composers.

The 25-minute ensemble work *Under elephantine skin (to be sung against a continuum of ignorance)* (Palme 2015) was staged in a contemporary concert hall; any scenic components had to conform to the situation in the Wiener Konzerthaus. As a reaction to the 2015 festival's

³⁰ See: <https://www.kulturtechnik.hu-berlin.de/de/content/speaking-without-lips-thinking-without-brain-schachautomat-und-sprechmaschine-des-wolfgang-von-kempelen-1734-1804/>

theme *Pop.Song.Voice*.³¹ I decided to write for a duo of countertenor plus bass-theorbo, supported by Baroque woodwind instruments (oboe and alto-recorder), with electronics and experimental contrabass recorder (using feedback techniques) contributing incidental contrasts. The text I wrote expresses themes focussing on a wish to pop shiny surfaces and to look beyond their glitter, as well as a longing for gentleness and love in the face of death and decay.

Here, my main idea for the scenic arrangement was to invite the audience into an urban living room, to enjoy an evening together with the performers. I wanted to play with a mixture of historical style periods – as I had done when selecting the work’s instrumentation. Three threadbare 1950s-style armchairs were brought onto the stage, right out of our rehearsal studio (see fig. 18). The performers had already taken their comfortable seats, as the audience began to file in. The countertenor was leisurely reading a book onstage, while the theorbo performer unhurriedly unfolded a subtle ambient improvisation, bowing his instrument with a violin bow in a standing position; the Baroque oboist and electronics joined in only later. The audience’s friendly chatter gradually faded into silence once the theorbo performer reseated himself, while the countertenor put down his book and stood up. The line between a formal and informal beginning was further blurred by planning only a minimal change in lighting. The Austrian video artists TE-R (Thomas Wagensommerer and Luise Linsenbolz) accompanied the work with a reduced, monochrome visual of subtly changing graphic patterns, generated from the processed libretto (the words became unreadable). The function of this video backdrop was to locate the performance in a tapestry of light. An outstanding visual element was the performance of theorbist David Bergmüller with his beautifully crafted instrument at centre stage. In my arrangement, the instrument’s exotic appearance was an echo of pop culture’s delight in the flamboyantly visual.

In contrast to the spatially limited situation of a concert stage, the outdoor performance arrangement of *BIRDSONG CRANNIES* (Palme, 2015) allowed for the movement and unconventional positioning of both performers and audience. This 20-minute score instructs

³¹ The work’s performance was part of a production conceived as *Nr° 1 – A Phenomenology of Pop* in collaboration with composers Electric Indigo and Jorge Sánchez-Chiong.

an ensemble of five singers (four female voices and a male voice) to move in parallel to their vocal performance. The work was performed by voice students of the KUG Kunstuniversität Graz at the late afternoon opening of the 2015 *V:NM* biennial festival in the pedestrian zone of downtown Graz, in a modern concrete architecture passage (see fig. 16). I chose this location due to its scenic potential (space for motion and contained configuration with dim sunlight) and for its acoustics, which specifically amplified the range of subtle vocal noises. In this spatial arrangement, the (intentional or coincidental) audience was encouraged to move around, into, or through the scenically-shifting performers.

2.3.3 Analogue and digital instrumentality

A number of my portfolio compositions involve instrumental performance. For every one of these works, I selected the instruments or ensembles for conceptual reasons. I have tremendous appreciation for instrumental performers and their instruments, for their instruments' history, development, and construction. My background as an oboist and recorder player has provided me with an insight into Early Music and historically informed performance practice, both of which influence my work. When selecting an instrument for a composition, I equally consider the instrument's sonic potential, its historical and social context, and its performance practice. I write for both modern and historical instruments, and their combination, and mix both with electronics if appropriate.

In composing for historical (Baroque) instruments, I appreciate their rich timbral shades, and their technical limitations, which (paradoxically) open up new possibilities. In fact, their 'limitations' become a potential source of innovative sound production. For example, the Baroque woodwinds (oboe, recorder, traverso) have almost no keys: this allows for unique playing techniques such as microtonality, flexible microtonal finger vibrato (as the Baroque *flattement*), and seamless glissandi. I also appreciate the novelty and challenge of writing for an instrument without standard modes of contemporary performance.

In *Under elephantine skin*, the theorbo inspired my composition with its acoustic design and potential, its history, social context, and most of all through my research into both historical and new performance techniques. The central countertenor-theorbo duo presents a Baroque version (and historic source) of the contemporary singer-plus-guitar pop duo. It struck me that several well-known male pop artists (for example, Prince or Neil Young) perform in a high vocal range, resembling Baroque-style countertenors and castrati. The Baroque oboe and recorder were selected for their close relationship to the countertenor's voice, both in timbral colour and range. I used their 'vocal' characteristics to interweave these instruments with the voice (it should be noted that in the Baroque period, these instruments were used with the same intentionality). The theorbo, subtly amplified, proved to be a fitting and flexible partner for a contemporary countertenor. I laid out a rich microtonal scordatura for its multiple strings, as its extraordinary range allowed for bass and mid-range textures to accompany the virtuosic vocal part (see figures 10 and 11). The historical context of the theorbo provided me with pitch material for my composition as well; I took special interest in the lutenist Silvius Leopold Weiss, a 'pop star' of the seventeenth-century scene, and the chord progressions in his Prelude in F Major (the first movement of his Suite in F). Simpler but similar chord progressions appear in Neil Young's songs.³² In my work, I drew on both of these sources, distorting them into a microtonal progression which provided the framework for my composition. In terms of compositional dramaturgy, the composition's four parts feature different instruments and different performance techniques.

The series *GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance I and II* (Palme, 2014) provides two distinct examples of how I arrange a configuration of instruments and their performers, electronics, and visual elements. The conception of the series aims to subvert a connection between gender roles and resonance in traditional classical music. In both works I use playback tracks which include voice recordings, featuring the Austrian vocalist and experimental artist Claudia Cervenca performing the work's text. The two compositions present the viola d'amore and the harp respectively, and were written for the performers Garth Knox and Rhodri Davies. A common characteristic of both the viola d'amore and the harp is their capacity for resonance. It was this feature which inspired me to combine them

³² e.g. in his work Heart of Gold, his 1972 #1 Billboard hit.

with transducer technology: exciters function without a resonant medium of their own, exciting instead the resonant quality of an external material or object.³³ In the compositions and their scenic arrangements, I give voice to the historic link between resonance and the traditional construction of gender roles for women³⁴ and subvert this connection by means of exciter technology: transduction turns a scenic installation into a sounding object in the first work, and the harp into a self-performing automaton in the second work.

My aim was to make resonance visible, rather than projecting it as an invisible environment, one that surrounds and supports a central agent in the concert space. Both the notion of acoustic resonance, as well as the understanding of social resonance, imply that a *sonant* factor – an active agent or an impulse – must occur before *resonance* can follow and respond. Social resonance, on the other hand, is built on the generation of emotion, openness, and availability (Kopp, 2010, p. 587). These qualities are traditionally connected with women in many societies; women's resonance is connected to their public silence (Beard, 2014). The spatial arrangements in both works of the *GIB SIE WIEDER* series demonstrate political composing. In the first configuration for viola d'amore, an installation is placed on stage: a wooden box rests on a table, with paper, a human vertebra, and feathers also present (see fig. 15). An exciter turns the wooden box into a lo-fi speaker-plus-effects unit, amplifying the playback track. The track sounds from within the box; varying the size of the lid's opening changes the resonant frequencies of the wooden object. The resonant strings of the viola d'amore are processed and transduced into the box as well (using a pick-up device fixed underneath the strings). After the 2014 premiere in St. Paul's (Huddersfield), I received the feedback that the entire installation appeared to vibrate and, indeed, to resonate. In the work's compositional pacing, the playback-track serves various purposes. In the beginning it contains processed contrabass recorder music and functions as an audio score. It is only audible via headphones for the viola d'amore performer, who is thus 'remotely controlled'.

³³ See: *Basic principles of exciter-technology*. Retrieved from http://www.visaton.de/downloads/pdf/visaton_exciter_principles.pdf

³⁴ In the European conservatories of the nineteenth century, women were only permitted to study the harp, the piano and the voice (Bennett, 2008, p. 59). As a result, harpists were among the first female musicians to be hired in professional exclusively male orchestras, such as the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in 1997 (Bennett, 2008, p. 53). Instrument makers had a preference to decorate the harp with female figurines or heads.

Later the playback-track becomes audible for performers and audience alike, through transduction: now the vocalist's voice begins to be heard from inside the box. At this point, the playback still functions as a catalyst of musical action – in this case, improvisation.

In the second work for harp, two exciters are directly attached to the harp's soundboard. The playback here is composed of pre-recorded harp samples, electronic sounds, and voice samples. This piece begins with playback while the harpist sits immobile, creating the illusion of a self-performing harp. The harp's lowest strings are loosened and prepared with goose feathers (see fig. 14). When the performer starts playing, he or she plucks these prepared strings, producing a subtle flurrying noise – similar to the sound of wings beating against a cage. One of the main compositional guidelines of this series is that selected parts are developed in counter-movement; they progress crosswise in opposite directions. This compositional tool allows certain parts to emerge, while others (previously dominant forms and patterns) recede. I thus paired off the instrumental parts and the electronic playback-tracks. At the very end of both compositions, only the female voice remains audible – or rather, a vocal fry emanates from inside the box, or harp, respectively.

Goose feathers form an aural and visual element in the series *GIB SIE WIEDER*: they are used as tools to excite noise from the strings of both instruments. It was the image of the goose with its white plumage – borrowed from the German folk song *Fuchs, du hast die Gans gestohlen*, which inspired the title³⁵ – which drew me towards using feathers as tools of performance. Harpist Rhodri Davies brought up the idea of rotating feathers with a milk frother, which not only yields rich sonic results, but is also visually effective on stage. The white feathers rotate like wings of a humming bird. For their abundant symbolic imagery, speaking of freedom and artistic expression, feathers make a powerful scenic element to illustrate the composed subversion of resonance and gender roles.

Electronics – that is, electronic composition or composition using (analogue and digital) electronic components – are an integral component of my portfolio works and my creative

³⁵ The complete beginning line of the song translates as 'Fox, you have stolen the goose, give her back again!' – with determination, this command orders a fox to return a stolen goose. The German song (Anschütz, p. 38) was first published in 1824 with the subtitle *Eine Warnung* ('A warning').

vocabulary as a whole. I often experience compositional decisions concerning electronics as political. Factors like the choice of sound material in a composition with field recording, the implementation of DIY components as a subversive statement, microphone use, or the design of an amplification set-up as in the above series can all underline a feminist position. DIY technologies are promoted and used by feminist activists and initiatives worldwide; for example, I refer to *Mz Baltazar's Laboratory* in Vienna, an artistic collective founded by (among others) the media artists Stefanie Wuschitz and Lale Rodgarkia-Dara. As stated on their website³⁶ workshops on open source technologies and artistic projects are organised to encourage and advance feminist exchange and knowledge transfer, as a means of resistance and political activism.

I discovered analogue electronic instruments in a phase of my artistic career when I was beginning to perform as an experimental artist and improviser. At that time, I experienced the ability to produce sounds and noises beyond conventional musical categorisations as a tremendous relief: I began to enjoy creating music from sound and noise without following a score, by ear alone. This eventually branched into composition. As an autodidactic learner, I have gained much of my knowledge of electronics through experimenting and hands-on-learning. Many of these early performances were staged in underground locations or alternative spaces, necessitating hands-on engagement with technical set-up, sound design, and stage arrangement. Due to this personal background, I experience my process as different from that of an institutionally trained composer of electronic music. In the alternative scene one has to work efficiently, creatively, and productively, using as little money as possible. The lack of (institutional) support on the one hand taught me to implement and trust my own technical solutions and electronic set-ups; on the other hand I enjoyed the freedom to experiment, as long as my constructions would function.

In working with the electronic and instrumental composer Éliane Radigue, I came to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the physical aspects of sound design as extensions of compositional thinking. One of the pioneers of electronic music, Radigue has never been part of an academic tradition. In performances of her works, Éliane Radigue used to personally

³⁶ Their website is <http://www.mzbaltazarslaboratory.org>

supervise the installation of multiple speakers, such as for the 2009 performance of *Jetsun Mila* (Radigue, 1987) at the Festival *e_may* at the Wiener Konzerthaus, which I co-produced. She worked meticulously on a non-standard, specific three-dimensional positioning of multiple amplifiers. Radigue aimed at a precisely balanced mixture of direct and indirect sound propagation from speakers and reflecting walls. Here, listening to sound in space was her main tool to determine the best position of the speakers (Radigue, 2009). For current performances of her electronic works Radigue consistently demands that the spatialisation of speakers be tailored to a specific acoustic situation, and personally entrusts sound designers with their realisation. Witnessing the 2014 performance of Radigue's work *Omnht* at Kunst-Station Sankt Peter in Cologne, an asymmetric multi-storied Romanesque church nave, I was impressed with the unique speaker setting the French electronic artist Lionel Marchetti prepared for the concert (Radigue, 2014).

Furthermore, I learned from Radigue's use of instruments in her recent works, such as in her compilations *Occam* and *Occam River*. Being familiar with her earlier electronic works, I am interested in how she transformed her compositional ideas from electronic music (subtly changing layers of sound and slow modulation of upper and lower partials) into instrumental composing. For my work as a composer, Éliane Radigue has become a direct role model.

2.3.4 A self-organised ensemble in an audiovisual arrangement

As an immersive environment, *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av* (Palme 2016) arranges an instrumental ensemble into an audiovisual space, using multichannel audio and video playback (see figures 1, 2, 23, and 24). Researching for the work, I looked into swarming and swarm behaviour both as a real-world and digital phenomenon. I was especially interested in the sense of intoxication and systemic noise in a swarm, and how swarm interactions begin and end. The German word *Rausch* in the title denotes both noise and intoxication. My observations informed my scenic arrangement, the conception of the video, the compositional structure of the ensemble parts, and the work's text. The theme 'noise and intoxication in a swarm' is thus exposed in multiple ways.

The instrumental score in *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av* transforms the ensemble into a self-organised organic body. The instrumentalists are guided by a timeline, monitoring their timing individually with stopwatches. Except for the very beginning, their parts are not necessarily precisely coordinated; they present a simultaneity of occurrences in a postdramatic sense. The parts move along an underlying composed set of pitch materials. The performance mode demands interactive awareness and coordination from the ensemble. The sonorous entity of the instrumentalists is supported by its media-environment: the audiovisual playback begins on cue with the timeline for the instrumental parts. From here, the media part continues until the end of the piece, never precisely coordinated with the ensemble performance. Both the audiovisual playback and the instrumental parts in themselves are informed by a clear and concise dramaturgy. Individual performers must negotiate a compositionally calculated and well-defined degree of freedom. In the final minutes of the work, the musicians are instructed to perform texts vocally, while their instrumental sounds shorten and fade out simultaneous with the film's ending. In this section, a recorded version of my own voice joins the performance via multi-channel playback. For the handling of vocality in the recitation part, I drew on inspiration from performances of text such as in James Saunders' work *all voices are heard* (Saunders, 2015) and Tim Parkinson's *An Opera: TIME WITH PEOPLE* (Parkinson, 2014). In both works, I appreciate the functional and unpretentious mode of ensemble recitation (which takes into account musicians who are not trained singers), and how the performers had to interact with each other in order to organise themselves within the scores.

I composed the electronic track and video as an 'enhanced audiovisual field recording': the material was filmed and recorded at the same time, in the same locations. I started filming near my home and from there moved through Vienna in a familiar environment, along routes I often travel in the city: on foot, by car, or on public transport. These pathways represented my current work/life situation as a socially-engaged citizen and composer, and led me into diverse urban areas including distant suburbs, areas with abundant social housing, as well Vienna's historic city centre. I edited the black-and-white video material to reflect aspects of personal exposition in the urban community I encounter on a daily basis (see figures 1, 2, and 23). In motion, I became part of a flock of swarming, moving, driving human beings. Filming

and recording, I exposed both myself in (and to) an urban continuum – the central theme of the work. It was an interesting experience, moving through public areas with a camera and recording device. Recording audio could be done secretly, without significant privacy concerns. Filming was different; one had to be careful to hold the camera pointed downwards, so as to avoid filming faces. Filming from inside my car, using the power of anonymity, felt more secure. When editing, I aimed at making few cuts, allowing longer passages to underscore the sense of personal continuous movement in the swarm. A few video stills halt the flow at selected positions, highlighting a particular tree (my text abstractly writes about leaves rustling, falling, rotting together, forming an organic swarm) or certain people I pass by. The majority of people I filmed, by chance, were handling mobile phones, and communicating digitally rather than in person. The video was edited to appear slightly grainy, in order not to reveal identifying information.

By projecting the visual's private perspective of the urban swarm into a concert hall, I performed the personal as the political. The video exposed my personal everyday movements to another public: the swarm of the festival audience. As a woman and composer, I invited the audience to walk by my side, to look at one of my favourite trees from my perspective, to ride the bus with me, to stand in the underground by my side and listen to the female voice announcing the stations in the loudspeaker. While the ensemble performed my music and text in front of the video, their process of self-organisation exposed the performers as individual musicians. Their personal and intimate position was revealed, mirroring my own inner situation as a member of the urban swarm. As for scenic considerations, the screen for the video projection was positioned off-centre behind the ensemble. Stage lights were slightly but not entirely dimmed. This configuration allowed the film to become a significant part of the scene without dominating it. I do not write film music. In my postdramatic arrangement, both the ensemble (in a warmer stage light and closer to the audience) and the video (a more distant black-and-white visual appearance) were equally important visual components on stage (see figure 24).³⁷

³⁷ The performance of *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av* in the Großer Minoritensaal in Graz was influenced by the architecture of the venue. The Baroque hall is loaded with subtexts; it is impossible to ignore the contextual noise here. The concert hall provides a good example of visual, acoustic, cultural, and social 'background noise' that can colour a performance.

The multichannel audio track was composed from the above-mentioned recorded audio material. My compositional and scenic intention was to create two different sonic spaces in the concert hall: in front a more direct and lively sound-space around the instrumentalists and the video, with a distant and darker sonic horizon behind the audience. Two speakers were placed on stage with the ensemble in close proximity and four speakers were assigned to the other segment surrounding the audience from behind and on the sides. According to this dramaturgy, I composed four tracks (two stereo pairs). Insofar as possible, I took care to keep any audio and video recorded in specific locations together on the media tracks. As far as balancing the ensemble sound and the multichannel track was concerned, I aimed at an equal hierarchy of perception between the two. The work for an experienced sound designer is substantial – for the premiere by the ensemble Schallfeld, I entrusted the performance of the audiovisual part into the experienced hands of the ensemble’s sound designers, David Pirró and Davide Gagliardi.

In a panel discussion following the work’s premiere in Graz, I was asked whether *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av* is a media-composition. I denied this, but had no better designation for it; the questions raised in chapter 1.2 remain unanswered. The term ‘media-composition’ places too much emphasis on the media used in the work and does not take the instrumentalists into account. Again, I draw inspiration from Trinh T. Minh-ha (2012) who asserts that

The spaces between image, sound and text remain spaces of generative multiplicity, in which the function of each is not to serve nor to rule over the other, but to expose, in their tight interactions, each other’s limit.

My interest is in exploring the possibilities offered by the co-presence and interaction of instrumentality, electronics, performers, and media. Or, one could say that the hierarchy between the auditory, visual, and scenic components is deliberately kept flat in my practice – a postdramatic viewpoint which leads directly to a discussion of cartography as a form of notation, which I will examine in the next chapter.

I would also like to mention another version of this work, numbered *III*, which is without media playback and uses a simple (analogue) wind machine instead. In *VOM RAUSCH IM*

SCHWARM III (Palme, 2016) the ensemble is considerably bigger (flute, bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, tenor trombone, accordion, violin I & II, viola, violoncello I & II, double bass I & II, and wind machine), creating a greater density of independently occurring instrumental and vocal events. The idea of a swarming body of performers is audibly underscored. I very much like the theatre wind machine, a plain Baroque apparatus to generate the *sound* of wind only. The notion of wind-like noise coming from the machine on stage, without any tangible experience of wind blowing, is a compositional reference to the meaningless storms raging in the digital world.

84

Senza misura
♩ = 72

the female voice

the wrathful voice of darkness

3rd

bite upper lip

ejecting

3rd

sub. fppp

spoken, man's voice quickly & awfully + distorted

pp

mf

Starker Abstand in den Grund

disgorged man's voice, accel. and quickly increasing rate

pp

mf

und Stöhnen bahnen sich ihren Weg

4th

new high sound, razorlike extremely sharp + cutting stable pitch

mp

85

the female voice

the wrathful voice of darkness

4

♩ = 60

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♩ = 72

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♩ = 108

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♩ = 120

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♩ = 6144

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♩ = 6876

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♩ = 6888

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♩ = 6900

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♩ = 6912

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♩ = 6936

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♩ = 6972

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♩ = 6984

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♩ = 6996

4

♩ = 70



Fig. 23: Video still – *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av*



Fig. 24: Preliminary setup with ensemble Schallfeld rehearsing for *VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av*

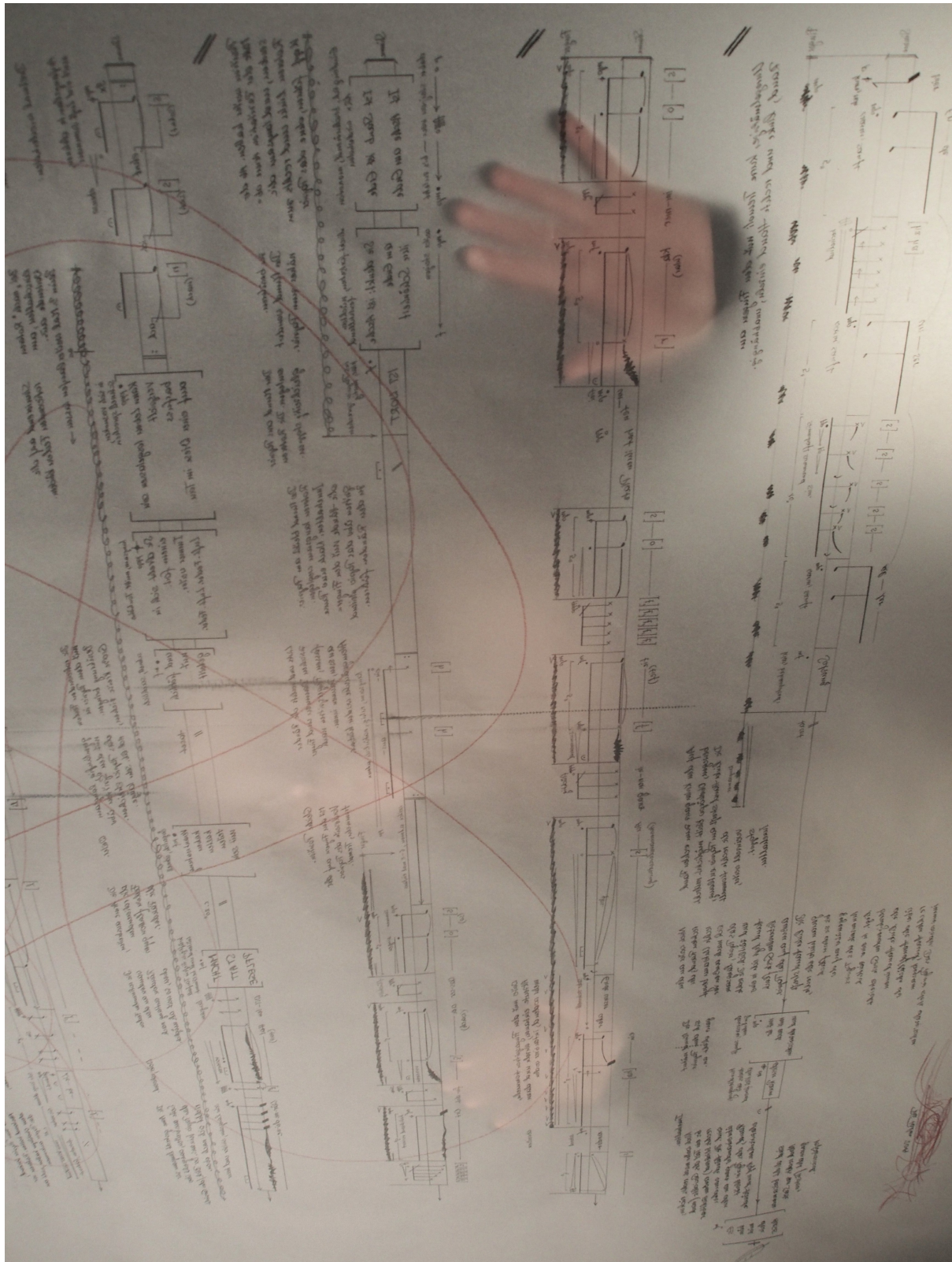


Fig. 25: Detail from the performance of *SETZUNG 1.1*

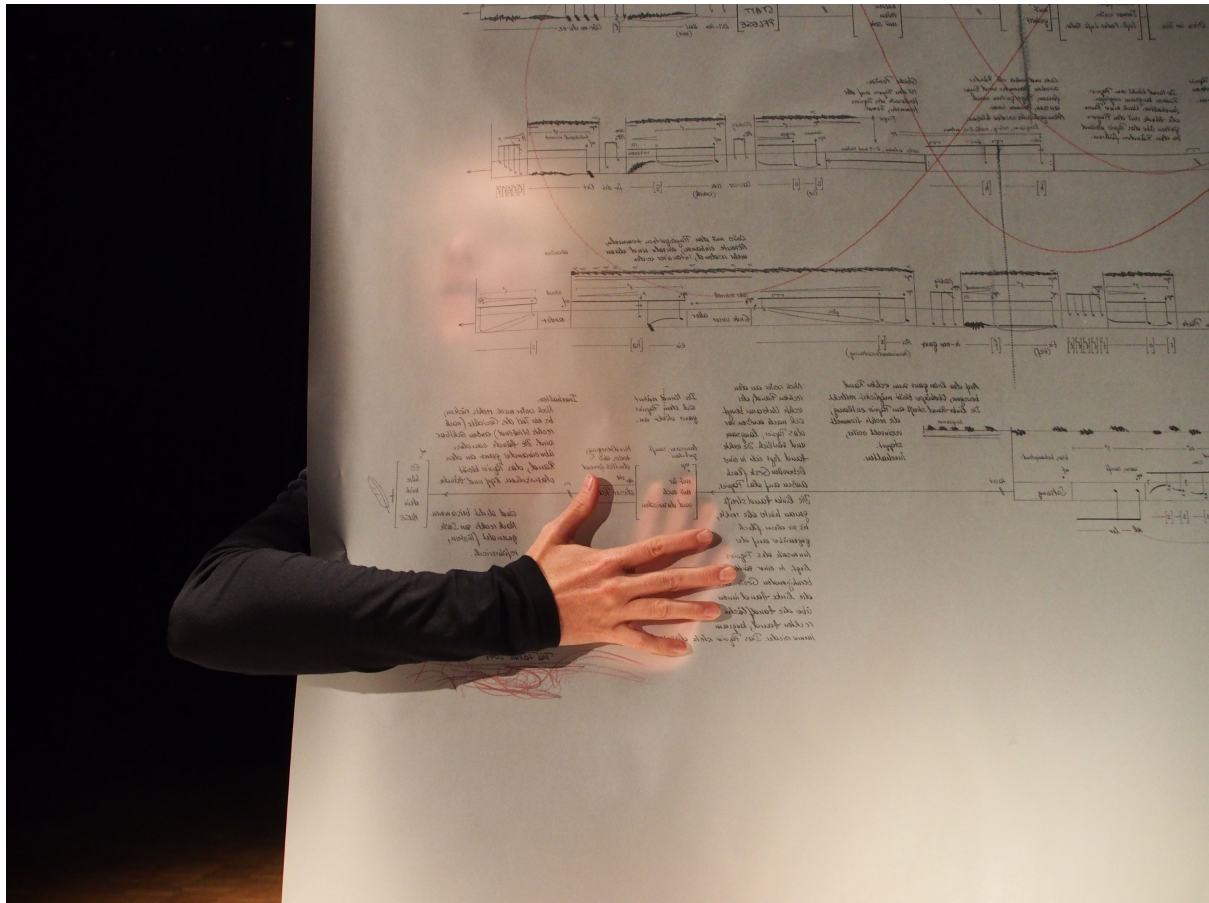


Fig. 26: Detail from the performance of *SETZUNG 1.1*



Fig. 27: Video still – *Patterns to punctuate speech, with darkness*

3. CARTOGRAPHY – A register of political reflection and notation

In this chapter I introduce ideas from cartography as a method of re-defining notation, reflection, and decoding from a position of feminist listening. In cartography, spatial information is located and visually represented. In my personalised discipline and practice, I turn to cartography to represent a political shift in paradigms, as physicality-in-space is the primary factor in my concept of musical sound. In my work, time as a factor in composition and notation ranks lower than space. In the following discussion I shall look into this paradigmatic shift in more detail, explain how cartographic thinking allows me to notate compositions for embodied voice, and how this shift reflects a political practice. This will include a discussion of decoding as a process that empowers an audience. I will further explore my work *SETZUNG 1.1* (Palme 2014) for a vocalist as an example of a cartographic score, and thereby discuss the compositional layout of the score-map and its installation as a postdramatic scenic arrangement.

3.1 Cartography, projection, and decoding

During the process of notating, I see myself as a cartographer of sound in space, locating and mapping sonorities onto terrains in my scores. Cartography is defined as “the art, skill, and the science of making maps” (Hanks, 2011, p. 47). In his encyclopaedia on cartography, the American geographer Reuel R. Hanks (2011, p. 53) further points to a wider meaning of cartography as the “reflection of the world’s spatial complexity and how humans represent it.” Reuel makes it clear that people of various backgrounds employ a variety of technologies to make use of cartography, thus becoming cartographers themselves. Extending these ideas in terms of my discipline, I reflect on spatial complexity and its human representation (i.e. the performers, and myself) in my work.

I argue that, conventionally, the concept of musical notation as the “visual record of heard or imagined musical sound, or a set of visual instructions for performance of music” (Bent, 2016) reveals an underlying idea of (musical) sound happening within a given timespan. By default, a measurement of time is implied in musical notation – by default, space is a key category in cartography.

Composers have implemented cartographic terms in their scores or texts as a means of (poetic) orientation, illustration, or verbal description. For example, a number of compositions carry the term ‘imaginary landscape’ or ‘landscape’ in their title, such as with Harrison Birtwistle, or John Cage. In both Cage’s *Imaginary Landscape No.5* and Sylvano Bussotti’s *Siciliano* (with text in the graphic score mentioning ‘il mare’, ‘fiumi’), the score is graphic without resembling a map, and indicates sound production in time (Karkoschka, 2004). An interesting example of a two-coloured graphic representation is the score *Odysee* by Anestis Logothetis: the composer indicates a red path to be followed while moving through terrains in a graphic score (in black). Again, the path defines a fixed timeline to follow (Karkoschka, 2004, pp. 128-129). Another approach to consider in the context of cartography is Peter Ablinger’s *Landschaftsoper Ulrichsberg*³⁸ (2009); in this work, the composer distributes operatic scenes and sonic/visual productions in a real-world landscape in rural Austria. The countryside functions as an operatic stage; the composer maps scenes onto the landscape here.

A distinctly graphic form of sound visualisation termed ‘PhishMaps’ is found in the *Graphic listening journal*³⁹ by the American music critic Mike Hamad; listening to the rock-band Phish, he charts ‘Setlist Schematics’. An interesting example of content arranged along the idea of a map is the website *Cello Map*⁴⁰ about contemporary cello techniques by Ellen Fallowfield and Thomas Resch. Although not a score, the website *Cello Map* is worth mentioning in this context because of the underlying concept of organising (musical) information along a non-linear framework. In the accompanying paper, Fallowfield (2011)

³⁸ documentary material can be retrieved from <http://ablinger.mur.at/landscapeopera.html>

³⁹ see under <http://setlistschematics.tumblr.com>

⁴⁰ see under <http://www.cellomap.com>

states that their idea was to structure content in an innovative mode, in order to facilitate mapping cellists' actions to sound

in the mathematical sense: relating two sets (in this case the theoretically complete spaces: «actions possible on the cello» and «sound that a cello can produce») by linking the objects (actions and sounds) within them.

The concept of mapping provided a more flexible approach of positioning content in (virtual) space, for a reader/user to choose from.

In the context of my thesis, score maps are neither poetic enhancements, descriptions, nor visualisations of work. Nor are the compositions in my portfolio staged in landscapes. I turn to cartography as a means to rethink notation, because the feminist perspective has brought me to shift my focus in composing towards space rather than time. Cartography allows me to solve issues of spatial representation. I see both space and time as inherent aspects of (musical) sound, which need to be precisely defined in my compositions. However, I foreground the physicality of sound and sound production; the factor space ranks above the factor time in my compositional hierarchy. On the other side, my interest is in an inner, more personal perspective towards time, rather than in externally measured, objectified, and linear time. Musical notation traditionally defines a linear progression in a given timespan, thereby necessitating the performer to follow along its predefined course. A map can be used (simultaneously) in different ways and allows individual users to make their own choices. Thus, rethinking my scores as cartographies provides a register and theory to shift paradigms and to reorder the hierarchy of my notations according to my compositional ideas.

I have before explained in my discourse that my notion of the mind-body voicing shifts the focus of composing towards the physical as the precariously human – and thus farther away from a more abstract perspective on music as sound happening in time. This is a deliberate and political compositional statement. Following these reflections in my practice, cartographic notation becomes the art, practice, and theory of notating score-maps, with conventional or non-conventional musical notation as a single facet of this broader category. I work with cartography as a model to measure out and chart the spatial complexity – in particular, the layering of internal and external composed terrains of my works. Here, my

focus is to chart the compositional terrains, rather than prescribe terrains for the performance. I trust that a concise map of composed spaces will emacipate the performer to find her/his path through the given terrain. My score-maps invite performers and their audience to retrace (personal yet fictional) explorations into the plains and hinterlands of listening.

The notational layout of the divided soprano part in my work *MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST* (Palme, 2015) illustrates this approach (see figures 7 and 8). Its voice personalities map out a dual system of emotional terrains. They are displayed on two individually formatted staves, which are classified as the main contour lines of an emotional cartography. Their individual noteheads represent the general affect defined. The foreword to my score gives an overview of the terrain from which I composed, explains the purpose of my score design, and provides a map legend to explain its symbolism. In writing the score, I draw on extended and customised forms of musical notation, as well as graphic representation of sound, and written commentaries defining affectation, voice personalities, and directional indications. All together, these details make up the work's cartography, with musical notation as an equal element. In their entirety, these notations specify and clarify the multi-dimensional terrain from which my composition emerged; the score is the terrain's two-dimensional visual projection. In my experience (which I gathered in the rehearsals and performances of my portfolio works), singers much appreciate this type of a cartographic score layout and perform from it with great precision and depth.

Cartographic thinking allows me to take a vantage point in the discussions of control (in performance) and precision (in notation and performance). As a composer, I am precise in my notation; in terms of a work's performance, I fully expect the performer to become familiar with the landscape of my work in order to be able to move freely in performance. According to a cartographic model, the compositional arrangement of my work is spelled out concisely, provides supplementary information, or is itself artwork. I draw on ideas in map-making to represent a terrain in its entirety as accurately as possible, thereby inviting exploration. As a passionate hiker myself, I refer to mountaineering as an example here: a trail map for hiking represents an entire mountain range in equal precision and accuracy, rather than simply describing what lies adjacent to the hiking trails. The user reads (decodes) the map and

selects the information which applies to their journey. Similarly, cartographic precision and detail encourage exploration in my works. I intend my scores to open up well-defined ranges of potentiality for the individual user (in this case, the professional performer, and in a wider sense the audience): to select from, to look sideways, to enjoy a scenic view, or listen to an echo from a cliff.

Seen through the prism of cartography, my works are subject to *distortion* and *decoding*. Here, I welcome distortion and decoding: they underscore the postdramatic stance of my works. Distortion occurs as I map the multidimensional sonospheres from inside my imagination onto a two-dimensional score. This process is akin to map projection; some degree of uncertainty, error, and fuzziness cannot be avoided (Hanks, 2011, p. 50). I am able to manage and direct distortion as part of, indeed as a feature of, my workflow, by choosing the appropriate standpoint for the projection (from the personal perspective of a politically-minded individual); by defining its direction (towards dedicated performers and/or their audiences); and by selecting the projection surface (a postdramatic score-map). Decoding is the performer's individual process of taking possession of the score, customising the mapped material to suit their needs – or, in a singer's case, their individual voice. This holds especially true for vocal scores, as individual voices are unique in their characteristics and capabilities. It is imperative that performers receive ample time for their process of decoding my scores. Upon a composition's performance, the audience also enters into their process of reception as decoding. Their perceptual process is as personal and creative as mine; their listening perception re-composes the work. In this sense, my 'ownership' of a work ends at this point; the composition is handed over to the performers and the audience.

I want to conclude my study of cartographic notation by addressing its political aspects. I want to actively re-shape understructures I notice in my environment; I seek to re-compose contextual elements of composition and performance. A concept of cartography allows me to formally chart layers of terrains as composabilities; cartography becomes a register of feminist composing-as-listening. In a still wider sense, considering cartography as a reflection of spatial complexity, my body of works, their various performances, and my research taken together represent a personal cartography of composing.

3.2 Charting the voice-mind in motion

The solo vocalist performing in *SETZUNG I.1* (Palme, 2014) is directed by a cartographic score, which is hung as a banner on stage. This work is an example of how I map body motion into a vocal score, to access the voice-mind embodiment. The (2.5 by 1.2 meter) semi-translucent score charts voice production, text, and movement; it is installed centrally on stage as a dominant visual element. The performer takes her position behind it and reads from the score – the audience can also see the markings on the score, although inverted. The original score-map *SETZUNG I.1* is handwritten: I used black and red pencils on a large, single sheet of paper, and merged drawing and handwriting into one extended process of mapping.⁴¹ For the performance a 1:1 print is suspended as a banner. In this arrangement, the membrane becomes a tool to compose the performer's visibility: touching the material, parts of the performer's body temporarily come into clear focus, creating a kind of 'zoom' effect, while otherwise the score allows only a dim view of the performer's shape (see figures 25 and 26).

The conception and text of *SETZUNG I.1* are linked to the Baroque artist, poet, and nun Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Mexico 1648-1695), whose life story and work continue to inspire me. From the age of 21 years onward, the highly successful author lived and worked confined in a Mexican convent, hidden from public view. For her, seclusion was a political decision to escape the bondage of traditional gender roles for women, and to work instead as an artist and scholar. The membrane score re-enacts Sor Juana's retreat behind convent walls, while simultaneously exposing handwritten notation as an intermediary. The original performer of the work, the Austrian actress Michaela Schausberger, has some training in music, although she is not a professional singer. The challenging part was to transform Schausberger's professional acting skills into elements of musical performance.⁴² The design and overall layout of the score was established in a test phase in dialogue with her, during which the

⁴¹ In the face of increasing mechanisation and uniformity in music software design, crafting a large-scale score by hand on paper was an act of personal defiance against commercially set standards.

⁴² Actors are trained to work from a sense of gestalt and an internalised bodily image, and are not used to separating the parameters of performance. My task was to address emotional states themselves rather than only defining musical expression in order to regulate dynamics, vocal timbre, or tempo.

breadth of her emotional and physical acting range became apparent. The inclusion of body motion provided a framework for the work's composition and notation.

As a score map, *SETZUNG 1.1* charts a system of instructions around a central vocal part (notated onto a range between a two-line grid). An incidental percussion part is notated on a flexible stave above the voice, defining audible movements, which are produced with hands, body parts or with goose feathers on the paper-score. I use proportional spacing in variable timespans, with durations given in seconds or by written instructions. Text is notated below the vocal part or put into text blocks, which interrupt the vocal grid for specific modes of recitation. All directional instructions are notated above the stave: instructions governing vocal performance are next to the vocal grid, instructions for expressive affects and intensity farther above, and on top of the system there are instructions related to physical motion. A separate, graphic mode charts movements of fingers, hands, and arms as red lines at a 1:1 scale; I traced these positions and movements directly onto the score. The red lines are layered as a second chart level across the black handwriting. Intentionally, my design principle recalls 'female' handcrafting: cartographic patterns for sewing show an overlay of differently textured line systems plotted onto a single surface.

At the beginning of the performance, the performer is standing; in the middle section, while repeatedly singing the word 'love' she slowly rotates, touching her face, hands, and body to the score, finally going down on her knees – a position she keeps until the end of the piece. This action has a dual purpose: it not only facilitates readability – as the notation is spaced out vertically on the paper – but also carries scenic content. At the final stage of her life, Sor Juana had to bend to the authorities and was forced to forgo any artistic activity. A dynamic point of culmination is expressed in a kneeling position, with the actress holding her arms outstretched to the sides, as if crucified, with feathers rotating on milk whisks in her hands. Here, the performer is instructed to boldly recite the German words "MACHT STATT PFLEGE" ('power instead of care'). To conclude the piece, I turn to a German translation of a line from Sor Juana's *Poem XXI*: "Óyeme con los ojos" – "Hear me with eyes alone" (Cruz, 1988, p.71).⁴³ Sor Juana's paradox illustrates the dispute about the influence of the visual on

⁴³ The German translation I used in the score is "Es höre mich dein Auge" (Cruz, 1996, p. 75).

the aural and vice versa in musical performance. Only at this moment is part of the performer's face and her right arm visible, near the final bars inscribed at the lowest system of the score. The actress is directed to turn sideways, on her knees, and to seductively whisper the text. Her hands are then positioned with palms 'touched' with the score in between.

3.3 Voicing a cartography of inner terrains

The score map *SETZUNG 1.1* allowed me to compose a subversive scenic space as an installation. It exposes the terrains of my personal practice as a composer while spotlighting the veil obscuring the female vocalist. With these scenic choices, I disrupt the role of a female soloist, whose visual appearance is often featured prominently. Whereas sheet music on music stands is hidden from the audience's view, such an installation makes a composer's work a visual stage element. The configuration maps Sor Juana Inés la Cruz' personal situation onto the performer: the artist was personally hidden behind walls, yet her voice was heard in public, worldwide. The libretto of the work is a reflection charting various fictional terrains: poetic text, reports on artistic practice from Sor Juana's perspective, and feminist statements. This verbal cartography begins with a personal observation of the writing process. Here, the vocalist – holding a white goose feather in her hand – voices how 'her' writing motion evolves from an idea in 'her' mind. At a specific moment during the recitation, the performer touches the feather to a designated red spot on the score. From there, the performer's 'writing' movements retrace the red lines as they are charted. This passage of the composition recalls the transition into the third area of my own artistic process (as discussed in chapter 2.2).

The work's performance is marked by an inner and an outer cartography: a visible map (the score) merges with an invisible aural map (Sor Juana's private worlds as voiced by the performer). The libretto is included below, in its entirety, as written onto the score map; passages printed in strikethrough are to be recited with a closed mouth.

Text *SETZUNG 1.1*

~~Gedanken steigen auf. Entstehen in meinem Denkraum. Verdichten sich. Drängen nach außen.
Ich spüre die Feder. An meinen Finger, Fingerspitzen: der Kiel. Sie ist so leicht, die Feder.
Gedanken nehmen Form an, Struktur im Raum. Ich schreibe.~~

hier
und
dort
ich und

HA

~~Ich spüre den weichen Flaum an den Fingern. Haut und Haare in köstlicher Berührung. Will
nicht aufhören.~~

Liebe

ich denke also bist du hier
bin ich gedacht

nicht dort
ich und

IHR

drinnen draußen
zwischen

ein Fühlen in mir
in dem
was begrenzt ist als

INNEN

halten
da

Liebe
sehnt sich nach

kann Leben losgelassen sein
verspielt
barfuss
auf einer Wiese im Tau

~~Sie dreht sich in einem fort. Immer weiter. Luft. Feder. Luft. Feder.~~

und fröhlich
mit
geteilt

Verantwortung
haben halten teilen
mit sein

MACHT STATT PFLEGE

Willen

HALT

Wärme
deine

ist Staub ist Erde ist Asche am Ende
Sie denkt: ist Asche am Ende
ihre Schönheit
ist Wort

und ist dabei
innen ganz tief

so wach
so klar

WASSER

findet immer
Ort tief unten

hat ihren Platz
hier

aus-
einander Setzung

Ende
unser aller

mit ihr
mit euch
und dazwischen
dieser Raum

‘es höre mich dein AUGE’

CONCLUSIO

As my thesis comes to a close, I will here give a brief evaluation of my process, looking back to where I began my research and then, from the position of my present state, imagining future perspectives.

The five years invested in research and composition for my thesis has been a defining period in my development as a composer. My position as a part-time researcher has allowed me to continue working as a (freelance) composer and, when necessary, as producer for performances of my work. The body of works composed and performed during this period was driven by my research, and vice versa. The diversity of my portfolio selected from these works represents the broad landscape of my research. Exchanges with singers, instrumentalists, and interdisciplinary artists have been a tremendous source of inspiration and insight. I owe my understanding of the mind-body voicing to the singers and vocalists I have met and worked with during this period, most of all to those who have performed my compositions. Academic research has opened up new fields of exploration and exchange for me, especially as I had not previously been part of an academic tradition of composing. Writing publications and lecturing have advanced both my theoretical understanding and my practice. On a personal level, theoretical reflection has brought me the clarity to chart my inner worlds. Listening inward, in increasingly profound levels of detail, has brought me unexpectedly close to the silent horizon – it is here worth mentioning that this process was accompanied and supported by investigation into my family history. In this context, I recall Lehmann's comment on the voice as a "sonoanalysis of the theatrical unconscious" in postdramatic theatre (Lehmann, 2006, p. 146). In my thesis research, vocality has proved to be a 'sonoanalysis of the compositional unconscious'.

The body of my work performs the personal cartography of my feminist practice. I began my thesis by establishing rage as the point of departure for my practice and as a tool to connect to my environment. I have further located the importance of emotionality in my practice and

work, and explained how the emotional dimension is part of my concept of embodied vocality. I argue that emotionality brings precision into the process of cognition, and is inextricably linked to the listening perception. I established *composing-as-listening* as a personal and political practice that involves my own emotional, mental, and bodily spectrum as well as the cultural and social context I inhabit. The various aspects of my process as explored in my research and portfolio define a personal practice in composition that by definition is established as a feminist practice through this thesis.

Being a composer based in Vienna, Austria, in central Europe, confronts me with a historic and cultural heritage. In this context, it is imperative for me to define a clear position for my work and political practice, while at the same time establishing a border towards certain aspects of the traditional framework. It has been asserted that “much contemporary music in Austria and Germany seems constricted in emotional range” (Ross, 2007, p. 575). While I respect, enjoy, and study the work of my historical (male) predecessors, I pursue a personal innovative practice as an Austrian composer who is not restricted by a school of composition. In my thesis, the explicit focus on the personal as the political is a (feminist) contribution to the development of composing. I have taken a personal stance by reconnecting my practice to Baroque compositional concepts – Austria, and Vienna in particular, is saturated with Baroque architecture and art. My portfolio works give voice to a culture of affects from a feminist outlook, re-interpreting the pre-dramatic, light-hearted Baroque model of the *Affektenlehre* from a postdramatic and political perspective. In this way, the subversively abstract and the emotional work together in my compositions, in complement rather than competition.

As for the future, from my position as a feminist composer, I will move forward into uncharted waters, which I wish to explore alongside like-minded artists. The balancing of the mind-body-voice nexus appears to be an important theme in the discussion about communication in the internet and in media platforms. I want to actively contribute to this discussion as a composer, performer, and theorist. The lecture performance, i.e. a performance mode using various media, academic lecture, vocal performance, and instrumentality, is a fascinating scenic format for me to perform my compositional and

scientific self. Both within academia and outside it, I shall continue to develop this format in the future. It allows me to weave my practice as a composer, theorist, and instrumental performer into a coherent body, an exposition of my work, and of myself. Building on my experiences, I envision a combined format of operatic lecture performance further evolving my practice as composing-as-listening. Every exploration of new terrains bears its own risks. My use of audio scores (described in chapter 1.4) is an example of how experimental works and their unexpected results can bring about some level of (temporary) irritation for the composer and/or audience. In my pursuit of the postdramatic, however, I welcome the “aesthetics of risk” (Lehmann, 2006) into my future practice.

As to my future research, I am fascinated by the impact of listening on cognition. My thesis research suggests that cognitive structures and brain behaviour deserve to be scientifically explored from the perspective of listening. In particular, composing-as-listening could be a theme of neuroscientific research. It should be considered that in the prenatal phase, hearing (including its extension into touch) connects the foetus’ brain to the world outside the mother, thus establishing listening as a primary cognitive process in the human brain and body. I argue that hearing could then act as a bridge for the further development of brain behaviour after birth. This suggests to me that the mechanisms of cognition are primarily geared to be a listening tool – or, more specifically: the human brain is primarily a creative machine for composing. Currently, cognitive sciences focus on visual perception. A shift towards the listening perception, in particular research into the creative potential of listening as a perceptual and cognitive activity that (re)composes the aural environment (or more specifically, musical content one listens to) – as represented in my work – would signify an innovative turn for scientists and artists alike.

At last, I return to the *Iliad*, to re-read its final chapter from the perspective of my future work. Towards the epic’s end, Homer tells of the encounter between the aged Trojan leader Priam and the young Greek hero Achilles, who had slain Priam’s son Hector in combat. Achilles kept Hector’s remains for days, mutilating the corpse as he was driven by insatiable rage, still demanding vengeance for the prior killing of his friend Patroclus by Hector’s hands. In his grief, feeble old Priam walks across enemy lines to personally request the

release of his son's corpse from Achilles. Facing Achilles, the old man gives voice to his longing for his lost son; he goes on, asking Achilles about his own father. As the dialogue unfolds, Achilles' rage begins to melt away. With tears in his eyes, he finally extends his hands towards his enemy's father. Together, Achilles and Priam mourn their dead, and share a meal. The *Iliad* ends with the festive funeral rites for Hector's burial in Troy. By positioning this scene at the very end of his epic narrative, Homer makes it clear that rage cannot be ended by further violence and killing. Rage can only be conquered by the voice. Homer underscores the potential of the voice and of listening, bringing sensitivity, respect, and empathy into human exchange. As with Homer, I see the power of composed vocality to domesticate, humanise, and re-direct emotionality.

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APPENDIX USB – Portfolio documentation

LIP OF THE REAL version I (2012)

Audio recording attached

for mezzo soprano with throat microphone, percussion, and live electronics (4-channel)

libretto by Pia Palme from texts by Margret Kreidl, Anne Waldman, and Pia Palme – *app. 30'*

premiere with Loré Lixenberg – mezzo-soprano with throat microphone, Berndt Thurner – percussion, Pia Palme – live electronics, Alfred Reiter – sound design
(recorded by Alfred Reiter)

[Vienna, Alte Schmiede, March 9, 2012]

CANTU FOLIATO (2012)

Audio score and score attached (Folder CANTU FOLIATO)

Duration flexible > 7'30''

score and audio scores for variable vocal ensemble SATB

text by Anne Waldman (ed. Pia Palme)

[Workshopped by ensemble EXAUDI at the University of Huddersfield, May 2, 2012]

KEMPELEN'S RING

– **Cyborg/Minuten/Oper für ein Mobiltelefon als Multitasking-Hauptdarsteller (2012)**

Video recording of performance attached

Ringtone – 1' available for download at <https://soundcloud.com/wienmodern/kempelens-ring>
ringtone for a mobile phone

words by Anne Waldman

Video of mobile phone performance recorded at Café Anzengruber, Vienna by Pia Palme

[Website *Wien Modern*, October 2012]

BARE BRANCHES (2012)

Video recording attached (Folder BARE BRANCHES)

Score and audio score attached (Folder BARE BRANCHES) – 25''

Secular Requiem written score with instructions and audio scores,

for soprano, mezzo soprano, percussion, a youthful female speaker, mixed choir I SATB and youth choir II (male and female voices)

text by Anne Waldman (English) and Pia Palme (German)

Video recording of premiere with Salome Kammer – soprano, Annette Schön Müller – mezzo,
Choir I: Wiener Kammerchor (direction: Michael Grohotolsky),
Choir II and a young solo voice: Wiener JugendChor der Musikschule Wien (direction:
Andrea Kreuziger),
Berndt Thurner (Ensemble PHACE) – percussion,
Alfred Reiter, Christina Bauer, Pia Palme – sound design
[Vienna, Palais Kabelwerk, *Wien Modern* and *e_may*, October 25, 2012]

Performing the noise of mind (2013)

Score attached

text score and installation for an instrumental performer

[University of Huddersfield, CAB Building, *Noise In and As Music Symposium*, October 5,
2013]

GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance I (2014)

Video recording excerpt attached

score and audio score for viola d'amore, contrabass recorder, electronics, text,
and an installation – *app. 16'*

text by Pia Palme

Video live recording of premiere with Garth Knox – viola d'amore,

Pia Palme – contrabass recorder, electronics

[University of Huddersfield, St. Paul's Hall, March 14, 2014]

GIB SIE WIEDER a warning commentary on resonance II (2014)

Video recording attached

Score with audio file attached (CD GIB SIE WIEDER II/playback) – 12'

for harp and electronics (playback via transducers)

text by Pia Palme

Video recording of premiere by Pia Palme with Rhodri Davies – harp,

Pia Palme – sound design

[University of Huddersfield, Phipps Hall, *Beyond Pythagoras Conference*, March 21, 2014]

SETZUNG 1.1 (2014)

Video recording (by Amir Safari) attached

Score including scaled membrane score replica and comments attached – app. 14'

for a female vocal performer, with a semitransparent membrane score installation

Video live recording of premiere (filmed by Amir Safari) with
Michaela Schausberger – voice and acting
[Wien, Off-Theater, *cercle – konzertreihe für neue musik*, September 24, 2014]

Patterns to punctuate song, with darkness (2015)

Audio recording attached

Score with media files attached (CD stereo-playback & DVD video-playback) – app. 14'
for mezzo-soprano voice and throat microphone, electronics (playback),
and punchcard visual
text by Pia Palme, remix after Ute Wassermann

Recording with Ute Wassermann – mezzo-soprano voice and throat microphone,
Pia Palme – electronics; recording and mastering by Manuel Doerr
[Berlin, Studio Doerr, 2016]

BIRDSONG CRANNIES (2015)

Video recording attached

Score attached – 20-25' (flexible)

score with movement instructions for vocal ensemble (four female voices, one male voice)
text by Pia Palme including a remix of Virginia Woolf

Video live recording of premiere by Pia Palme with
Lori van Gremberghe, Veronika Griebblehner, Svitlana Varava, Johanna Seitingner – female
voices, Paik Sehyun – male voice
[Graz, downtown area near ESC medien kunst labor,
V:NM Festival für Neue, Improvisierte und Experimentelle Musik, May 21, 2015]

Patterns to punctuate speech, with darkness (2015)

Video attached) – 20'18"

video, lecture, electronics, and performance with contrabass recorder
[held live at the 2015 RMA *Music and/as Process* conference, Goldsmiths University,
London, June 6, 2015]

MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST (2015)

Audio recording attached

Score attached – 12'

for vocal ensemble SCtTB

text by Pia Palme

Live recording of premiere with ensemble EXAUDI

Juliet Fraser – soprano, Tom Williams – countertenor, Stephen Jeffes – tenor,
Simon Whiteley – bass, James Weeks – director
[London, *EXAUDI EXPOSURE2015* and *Sound and Music*, The Warehouse, October 17,
2015]

Under elephantine skin (to be sung against a continuum of ignorance) (2015)

Audio recording attached

Score attached – app. 25'

for countertenor, theorbo, Baroque oboe, recorders (alto and contrabass), and electronics
text by Pia Palme

Live recording of premiere with

Jakob Huppmann – countertenor, David Bergmüller – theorbo, Molly McDolan – Baroque
oboe, Pia Palme – recorders (Baroque alto, Kueng contrabass recorder) and electronics
(analogue feedback and digital processing), Christina Bauer – sound design
(recorded by Christina Bauer, mastering Pia Palme and Christoph Amann)
[Vienna, Konzerthaus Berio-Saal, *Wien Modern*, November 26, 2015]

MUSTERBUCH (2016)

Score with media files attached – 14'

Recording attached

for mezzo-soprano voice and throat microphone, electronic playback, live processing, and
video

text by Pia Palme (remix from Ute Wassermann)

recorded by Martin Murauer with Anna Clare Hauf – mezzo-soprano voice and throat
microphone, Pia Palme – media performance

[Vienna, Rauthaus Wien, 2016]

VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM II.av (2016)

Audio recording attached

*Score with media files (CD VOM RAUSCH II.av/audio-playback &
DVD VOM RAUSCH II.av/video-playback) attached – 16'*

for ensemble (flute [bass flute and piccolo], bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, violin,
violoncello, double bass), electronics (6-channel), text, and video

text by Pia Palme

Live recording by radio ORF Steiermark of premiere with Ensemble Schallfeld

Elisa Azzarà – flutes, Szilárd Benes – bass clarinet,

Matej Bunderla – saxophone, Lorenzo Derinni – violin,
Myriam García Fidalgo – violoncello,
Margarethe Maierhofer-Lischka – double bass,
David Pirró, Davide Gagliardi – electronics, sound design
[Graz, *tage neuer musik graz*, Kulturzentrum Minoriten, Mai 20, 2016]

VOM RAUSCH IM SCHWARM III (2016)

Score attached – 15'30"

for ensemble (flute [piccolo & bass flute], bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, tenor trombone,
accordion, violin I & II, viola, violoncello I & II, double bass I & II, wind machine)
text by Pia Palme

premiere with Ensemble Kontrapunkte

[Vienna, Musikerverein Gläserner Saal, *Wien Modern*, November 7, 2016]