

IMPROVISATION AND EVERYDAY LIFE AS CREATIVE TOOLS FOR  
COMPOSING MUSIC FOR PERFORMERS, LIVE ELECTRONICS AND VIDEO

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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## **Abstract**

The driving idea behind this work is to compose a cycle of pieces by following a composition process in which the personal, individual and everyday life elements of each performer in the process become a fundamental part of the material from which the audio, visual and theatrical elements in each piece are composed. In order to create the pieces in this PhD portfolio, I developed a distributed creative strategy for the composition process, involving western trained musicians and improvisers working in close collaboration with me. The work additionally develops two compositional strategies: (1) to explore the use of live electronics sound transformation as a tool to generate sound material from the interaction between the collaborators and to emphasize the unique sound possibilities of each performance; (2) to experience collaboration with diverse artists and non-artists, in order to open more avenues to think about and analyse the results of the collaborative process.

### List of submitted works

Name	Year	Formation	Group / Collaborators	Presented:	Dur:
Abirú	2016	8ch acousmatic piece	Igor Pavezi	20/08/2017 Curitiba	10'
Distractfold piece	2017	for Distractfold, 8ch surround sound electronic music and video	Distractfold Ensemble	10/05/2017 London	10'
Portrait in four	2018	for Platypus, 4ch surround sound electronic music and video	Platypus Ensemble	16/06/2018 Vienna	18'
Portrait in three	2018	for Trio Sur Plus, 8ch surround sound electronic music and video	Trio Sur Plus	03/07/2018 Freiburg	31'
HADT_SPAZIO (4 electronic pieces)	2018	with Christoph Ogiermann, 8ch surround sound electronic music and video.	Christoph Ogiermann	13+14/12/2018 Berlin	Circa. 20'
Tra Due	2019	with Johannes von Buttler, 8ch surround sound electronic music, improvisation and live electronics	Johannes von Buttler	27/09/2019 Bremen 23/10/2019 Berlin	Circa. 31'

**Distractfold Ensemble:** Rocío Bolaños, Linda Jankowska, Alice Purton and Emma Richards

**Platypus Ensemble:** Kaoko Amano, Marianna Oczkowska, Theresia Schmidinger and Frederik Neyrinck

**Trio SurPlus:** Christian Kemper, Daniel Lorenzo and Olaf Tzschoppe

*with audiovisual examples:*

[www.viniciusgiusti.wixsite.com/phdworkexamples](http://www.viniciusgiusti.wixsite.com/phdworkexamples)

password: 313131(On the website, audio examples are available in binaural versions.

Please use headphones to listen the eight-channel spatialisation binaural simulation.

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## Introduction

When is being a composer no longer worthwhile, or when does it no longer make sense? What is the role of the composer nowadays? What do composers, with this social function, think about their responsibilities? Can a composer be replaced by an improviser or by software using artificial intelligence? Is it more than a hierarchical function, in which someone is needed to sign the score, with its transcriptions of the ideas of expert instrumentalists' long, individual repertoires of sounds? These are the provocative questions that passed through my mind during the last years of this research. These are intriguing questions for someone who has dedicated the last 20 years to composing music pieces in different countries and different composition schools. They are enormous doors that could lead a researcher to dedicate long stretches of time to trying to find a precise answer. Due to their breadth, these questions surround my work, but do not become the main questions to be answered in this research. I have concentrated my work on composing a portfolio, examining ways to compose pieces for specific musicians, with video and live electronics diffused by multiple loudspeakers surrounding the audience. My works propose a period of interaction with each musician and explore how to compose pieces that are dedicated to portraying those involved in the composition process, presenting a performance that offers a unique sound experience to the audience, and taking the opposite path to the ideal of a reproducible artwork.

The concerns presented above, which surround my composition and research work, question or propose a reconsideration of the values of the established musical

system and their functions in the “New Music” production field. Composers endeavour to expand the boundaries of how we understand the ramifications of these values on the acts of creating, performing, distributing and perceiving art sound artworks. This can be defined similarly to conceptual art, in which the concepts and ideas that surround the act of making art are also essentials of the artwork. For example, this occurs when the composer explores these concepts in virtuoso mode, pushing the limits of the way we see or comprehend these conceptual objects and their functions in our music making.

Marko Ciciliani in his paper “Music in the Expanded Field” considers a common practice in music composition, which increasingly includes non-sonic elements in order to expand artistic expression and musical ideas. “They are working from the understanding that sound alone is no longer sufficient to express their musical ideas.” (Ciciliani, 2016, p.24)

The fact that these composers are confronted with a diversity of other disciplines and discourses means that they do not build their work within the confined and agreed discursive field of *New Music*. (Ciciliani, 2016, p. 28).

In his observations, Ciciliani examines two concepts, or musical parameters, that composers use frequently nowadays: indexicality and intertextuality<sup>1</sup>. These concepts have recently gained special relevance in the expansion of the *New Music* field. They have a close connection to the concept of *person-sound bonding* that I define below in Chapter 2 as being part of the composition process approach that was used to develop the

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<sup>1</sup> “The difference between the terms is that indexicality is an element that merely points to something outside of the work itself, something that can be either musical or non-musical. Intertextuality additionally refers to the content of the destination being invoked. [...] attempt to evoke the particular time, culture, or context ...” (Ciciliani, 2016, p. 29)



pieces in this portfolio. The compositional game created by the audio-visual indexing of the everyday life of the artists and the intertextual and parallel references at the performance, definitely achieve the characteristic of directly linking the performers with the pieces.

I investigate a composition process which, embodied through media documentation and other methods, incorporates the surrounding environment and everyday life elements of specific persons into essentials of an audio-visual artwork. The ideal proposal was to compose and perform music in which the presence and the rare, unique, inimitable sound life of those specific persons and their self-identities are the motif of the artworks composed. The pieces attempt to capture the essentiality of the performer interpreting, improvising and reacting to their own sound world, re-elaborated in real-time by the live-electronics and contrasting their own visual identities on the visual projections with their live performance. I dedicated my research in this period to the development of audio-visual artwork compositions that are ephemeral, impermanent and volatile.

In the field of “New Music”, this thesis is an alternative proposal for the composition process. It includes and enriches aspects of musicking and discusses aesthetic concepts that deal with perspectives on de-humanisation or humanisation in the art music production chain.

The outcomes of this research comprise the performance of the pieces for the audience, the close collaborative work with the artists involved in this project, the practical experience acquired in these years of research, the documentation of the performances, and the theoretical reflexion catalysed by the work on the written thesis.

## Chapter 1 - Composing in two phases: creative/improvisation sessions and the composition/montage phase

In recent years<sup>2</sup>, my compositional process has been divided into two phases: creative/improvisation sessions followed by a composition/montage phase. In the first phase, the work is carried out in collaboration with each musician, in order to create a source of audiovisual material that I later use to compose the piece. In the second phase, I compose the general form of the piece, structuring all the layers involved in the piece in time: the video montage, the composition of the fixed-electronic part, the instrumental part and the live electronics.

In general, the creative/improvisation sessions consist of interactive meetings between the musicians and me, in which we improvise together using their instrumental contribution and my live audio processing setup, developing sound and video materials that are recorded in different formats. Fundamentally, the activities involved in this first phase aim to document and explore the possibilities of the personal sound palette of each musician, interacting with my live audio processing setup. The recordings and the meeting experience are the base material for the second phase of the composition of the piece.

In these first sessions, I'm not interested in discovering what each specific musician can play on his/her instrument in a practical situation (for example, if I were

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<sup>2</sup> To be more precise, from 2014. I started to follow a composition process divided into these two phases, when composing the piece *(Des)encontros* at HFK-Bremen.

exploring how to produce certain multiphonics, and afterwards wanted to find a way to notate them in a score). Rather, in these sessions the main objective is to develop musical content that is related to that specific musician and the social and personal interactions that were experienced in that space of collaboration. Through an extended period of interaction at the pre-composition phase, the creative/improvisatory sessions, I focus on including our particular encounter and the everyday elements surrounding the meeting in the compositional material source.

During the composition of the pieces in this research process, there were two distinct cases when I needed to re-organize and adapt the improvisation/creative sessions to the time the collaborators had available to work. One case was when the musicians had time to meet with me over several days, in which I could create an immersive sound situation using a multichannel diffusion system to interact with their sounds. The second case was when the ensemble or musician had a busy agenda, compromised by another project, and could not meet individually with me before the concert. In this latter case, I needed to find another strategy to interact with the musicians of the ensemble and generate/record the audiovisual material related to their everyday life, in order to compose the piece. The solution applied in these cases was to send them text scores with instructions for the video and audio recordings, which they could perform on their own during several everyday situations. In addition, I arranged Skype meetings in order to clarify the work processes and to answer any questions the musicians had about the audiovisual material production needed to compose the pieces. I was required to work in this way for the compositions with Distractfold and Platypus Ensemble. In both cases, I

had the opportunity to develop a different approach to interacting with them, using the score instructions to guide them in development of the sound material.

Jennie Gottschalk, in her book, *Experimental Music Since 1970* (2016), writes about three composers, Éliane Radigue, Luke Nickel and Meredith Monk, who have a composition process similar to my first composition phase. Their composition also have strong relationship between the content of the piece and the musicians who take part in the creative process.

"What is remarkable about the working processes of Meredith Monk, Éliane Radigue, and Luke Nickel is that they draw the specific personhood of each collaborator into the content of the work. From the very inception of the process, long before any performance, a meaningful interaction shapes the foundational content of the material. It cannot exist without the context and the content of that interaction. Specific attributes of the musician – character, life experience, values, associations, memory – are undivorceable from the piece." (Gottschalk, 2016, p. 213).

For example, the series of pieces *Occam Ocean* by Radigue is a collection of 22 compositions, in which Radigue worked in a close collaboration with specific musicians, "... using a solely oral and aural transmission.<sup>3</sup> Focusing on the details of this 'scoreless' working method ..." (Nickel, 2015, p. 22), she invited the musicians to her home in Paris for several days and developed solo instrumental pieces together with them. She asked the performers to forget the traditional instrumental techniques they had learned and explore "new techniques based on controlling the natural properties of the instruments,

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<sup>3</sup> Musicians who took part in this project include: harpist Rhodri Daves, violist Julia Eckhardt, clarinetist Carol Robinson, trumpeter Nate Wooley, double bassist Dominic Lash, tubist Robin Hayward, cellist Charles Curtis, among others. The pieces are also not exclusively solo pieces, for instance, Quatuor Bozzini premiered *Occam Delta XV* at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival in November 2018.

such as resonance and vibration” (ibid., p. 26). Moreover, for these pieces there is no score and the music depends on the performer’s memory. “Radigue considers *Occam Ocean* solo pieces to belong to the performers and advises them that they can transmit ‘their’ work to another performer, should they choose to do so” (ibid., p. 26).

Memory is also an important work theme for the composer Luke Nickel. He composes pieces that explore memory “in three interlinked ways: 1) Memory at the point of access or transmission. 2) The use of old or borrowed music as source material. 3) Memory represented by transformations enacted on the musical material itself.” (Nickel, 2017a, p. 59). According to Radigue’s definition, both work with the concept of ‘living score’. Nickel’s pieces *factory* (2013–14), *the strange eating habits of Erik Satie* (2014–15) and *Who’s exploiting who* (2016) are proposals to the musicians to read the score or listen to the recorded audio instructions only once, and then delete them and trust to their memory to preserve the music that was instructed via these media.

Therefore, [Nickel uses] the term living scores to mean contexts in which all compositional instructions are transmitted, rather than fixed. Living scores are essentially participatory – they foreground collaboration and encourage the formation of micro-communities. Because they eschew written notation, living scores allow the act of forgetting to become a vital part of the creative process. (Nickel, 2017b, p. 29)

It is possible to observe independence in Nickel’s composition process, or lack of intention to produce a score for his music. In this way, he prioritizes the composition process and the live performance, and not the production of a score that could be

reproducible by other performers (at least, not without his guidance or the presence of the same performer he was working with).<sup>4</sup>

Radigue's work in the *Occam Ocean* cycle is a valuable example of collaborative and distributed creativity.<sup>5</sup> *Occam Ocean* pieces share the responsibility for decisions with the collaborators, in an attempt to create a horizontal relationship between the standard roles. It shares the responsibility of choosing and planning the directions of a piece, which is normally attributed only to the composer role. The memory of each musician becomes the container for the musical instructions to perform the musical piece.

Meredith Monk is a performer, composer, dancer and choreographer, exploring and motivating the interpreter's interaction in an extended way during her composition process. The composition of a specific score that delimitates the artistic work is not the main objective of her composition work. Her musical performances explore the human and instrumental material that were present at the specific moment in the rehearsals.<sup>6</sup> Her music is structured in a cyclic modular approach, condensing or expanding the musical events and gestural activities. For instance, *On behalf of Nature* (2013) and *Songs of Ascension* (2018).

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<sup>4</sup> Not focusing on the production of a documentation in a score maintaining the musical ideas in a fixed media are a strong connection between the portfolio pieces and Nickel's composition ideas.

<sup>5</sup> Distributed creativity is the main theme of Eric F. Clarke and Mark Doffman's book: *Distributed Creativity: Collaboration and Improvisation in Contemporary Music* (2017). The book brings perspectives from different authors talking about collaborative creativity and the distributed character of music's creative processes.

<sup>6</sup> Monk's approach is similar to Marcela Lucatelli's composition process. In a later chapter, I discuss Lucatelli's work.

Monk approaches the creation of music for her vocal ensemble much like a choreographer does dancers, devising pieces by testing out small modules directly with performers. (Nickel, 2017b, p. 36)

My composition process has similarities with Nickel's, Radigue's and Monk's processes, in that the work is exclusively dedicated to specific performers or related to specific people, re-configuring the standard hierarchy of the roles. In my case, the resultant work cannot be transmitted to other musicians, because of the integration between the sound identity and the images of the collaborators in the pieces. These elements are essential to creating a dialectic perspective of the performers, between the live performance and the fixed video and audio parts related directly to them. Another important aspect of my work is to present the live presence of the performers in parallel with the video of their images in deferred time or space situations, creating a contrast that cannot be constructed without the specific performers on the stage. In conclusion, with the exception of the acousmatic piece *Abirú*, all the pieces I have composed in this PhD research are dependent on the presence of the specific musicians.

### **Re-questioning current standard music production**

One of the objectives of this research is to propose and develop an alternative practice in contemporary music composition, reflecting on the hierarchical standardized and alienated circuit of music production, and raising awareness of the essentiality of the performers and their individual presence on the stage and during the composition process.

This thesis does not intend to concentrate on a philosophical or political debate about musicians' training in musical schools. However, some of the following observations are presented in order to illustrate why this research took this direction. Moreover, they help to understand how the composition process of the pieces was focused on finding possible methods and new perspectives on how to compose music connected directly with the specific performers.

In general, Western classical musicians<sup>7</sup> are trained to position themselves behind the instruments, producing sounds and interpreting the composer's plan of sounds.<sup>8</sup> In these situations, they are exercising a function and making up part of the music production chain. This is an effective way to organize and divide work responsibilities, making it possible to realize magnificent art works, as music history confirms.<sup>9</sup> However, this effective process could also result in artists being reduced to a *means for technological procedures*.<sup>10</sup> The way music production is organized, the conservatories and the music production chain are also technological developments, which have positive and negative aspects.

In the paper *Understanding Heidegger on Technology*, by Mark Blitz (2014), the author discusses Heidegger's ideas about the *essence of technology*. The idea of *no nearness* presented in this text is a theoretical perspective that can also apply to music

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<sup>7</sup> This is a terminology also coined by Hargreaves, Miell and MacDonald in their book *Musical Identities* (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

<sup>8</sup> It is necessary to consider that the score can travel from one group of developers to another interpreter, being a source of musical realisation or transmission of musical ideas.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Gustav Mahler: *Symphony no. 8*, Karlheinz Stockhausen: *Gruppen for 3 Orchestras*, Philippe Manoury: *In Situ*, for orchestra and ensemble, etc.

<sup>10</sup> (Blitz, 2014, p. 68) – This definition is contextualized in the next quote.



training and “professionalisation”. We can use a radical example to explain the idea of no nearness: when a student is induced to follow an aesthetic standard, already established by some well-known interpreter in the professional scene, there is the probable consequence of overlooking the individual potential of this individual musician, by aiming toward the reproduction of a specific, consolidated sound result. Presenting this concept in parallel with my observations is an attempt to clarify the motivations that encouraged this research to develop pieces that are dedicated to and exclusively composed for specific artists: Emphasizing the presence of the specific performers on the stage. Contrary to that, the idea of *no nearness* is the deviation created by technology that transforms and obliterates the understanding of the involved parts in the chain system.

As we shall see, we have become almost incapable of experiencing this nearness, let alone understanding it, because all things increasingly present themselves to us as technological: we see them and treat them as what Heidegger calls a “standing reserve”, supplies in a storeroom, as it were, pieces of inventory to be ordered and conscripted, assembled and disassembled, set up and set aside. Everything approaches us merely as a source of energy or as something we must organize. We treat even human capabilities as though they were only means for technological procedures, as when a worker becomes nothing but an instrument for production. Leaders and planners, along with the rest of us, are mere human resources to be arranged, rearranged, and disposed of. Each and everything that presents itself technologically thereby loses its distinctive independence and form. We push aside, obscure, or simply cannot see, other possibilities. (Blitz, 2014, p. 68).<sup>11</sup>

Dehumanisation in production systems is not an exclusive concern of Heidegger’s theory. The concept of commodity fetishism, *Warenfetischismus*, developed by Karl Marx, is also an important theoretical basis for understanding the reductionism of the

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<sup>11</sup> Talking about Heidegger’s ideas and not mentioning in any way his declaration of public support to the Nazis would not sufficiently deal with the historical facts. Because of the uncertainty that his ideas and his political positions are completely separate, Blitz suggests being cautious when using his ideas.

human's relationship to objectifying elements or functional relations in the production chain. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht gives a condensed summary of what Marx defines as *fetishism* which helps to draw a parallel with Heidegger's theory.

Under fetishism, he criticizes an attachment to the "physical" aspects of commodities, a fixation that makes us unable to understand these commodities as the symptom and expression of social relations, more specifically conditions of economic production. (Gumbrecht, 2004, p. 144)

To critique our dehumanised technological procedures, I could cite many other authors in parallel with my observations in order to illustrate the starting points of this research. However, it is more valuable to consider some other authors whose work attempts to re-invent relationships in art or tries to re-think the concept of *presence*. These authors' works positively inspired this practical research, to develop methodologies in the composition processes of the pieces in which collaborations with artists are not based on their functions.

In his book *Relational Aesthetics*, Nicolas Bourriaud cited a similar aesthetic approach to the one I have aimed to develop in these pieces. He considers relational art as follows:

Relational aesthetics is part of a materialistic tradition. [...] The philosophical tradition that underpins this *relational aesthetics* was defined in a noteworthy way by Louis Althusser, in one of his last writings, as a "materialism of encounter", or random materialism. This particular materialism takes as its point of departure the world contingency, which has no pre-existing origin or sense, nor Reason, which might allot it a purpose. So the essence of humankind is purely trans-individual, made up of bonds that link individuals together in social forms which are invariably historical (Marx: the human essence is the set of social relations). (Bourriaud, 2010, p. 18)

Bourriaud's book is full of references about possible relations to understand and re-invent the bonds between the participants in an artwork.<sup>12</sup> Another part of his text that is related to the composition process proposed:

A work may operate like a relational device containing a certain degree of randomness, or a machine provoking and managing individual and group encounters. (Bourriaud, 2010, p. 30)

Considering the core principles of relational aesthetics in the field of new music, I would relate aspects of my process to the collaborative work between Daniel Gloger, Troels Primdahl and Kaj Duncan David, *Up close and Personal*, an operetta-solo, which premiered in Stuttgart in the SPOR Festival (Aarhus).<sup>13</sup>

... the audience is invited inside the chic atelier of singer, performer and *Kunstliebhaber*, Daniel Gloger, to an intimate and behind-the-scenes evening with a singular artistic voice. With welcome drink in hand, we meet a confident and successful individual, clearly living a comfortable life in style. (David, 2018)

The first phase of my composition process is similar to the idea of a relational device proposed by Bourriaud, when it acts as a space or time to create encounters. This is not limited to encounters between the musicians with a new plan of sounds already conceived by the composer, but also encompasses the possibility of an encounter in which the creation of audiovisual materials related to that particular performer can start to be defined in a collaborative process. This encounter happens in a first phase of work

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<sup>12</sup> Artists quoted in Bourriaud's book as examples of relational aesthetics: Rirkrit Tiravanija, Philippe Parreno, Vanessa Beecroft, Maurizio Cattelan, Jes Brinch, Henrik Plenge Jacobsen, Christine Hill, Carten Höller, Noritoshi Hirakawa and Pierre Huyghe.

<sup>13</sup> Following this link, it is possible to watch the trailer of the piece:  
<https://vimeo.com/311247658>

between composer and performer, and the composition is oriented toward the creation of a possible encounter between the performer and the audience in multiple facets.

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and his book *Productions of Presence* was also an important resource to help me re-interpret and evaluate the concept of *presence*, during the composition of the pieces. Almost at the end of the book, in the fifth chapter, he declares his personal idea of “what the fascinations of presence might possibly ‘yield’”. (Gumbrecht, 2004, p. 20)

... I am really not interested in a radical repression of the dimension of the meaning – to which an understanding of the conditions of production would belong. On a more general level, I should probably add that the desire for presence and thingness that I want to promote is not at all synonymous with a desire to “possess” or only to “hold on” to these things. Rather, I want to insist on what might be recuperated by simply (and ever so lightly) reconnecting with the things of the world – and being sensitive to the ways in which my body relates to a landscape (while I am hiking, for example) or to the presence of other bodies (while I am dancing) is certainly not equivalent to the desire of possessing real estate or to daydreams of sexual dominance. (Gumbrecht, 2004, p. 144)

Additionally, reflecting on neo-liberal thinking, we see how accelerating production processes, reducing costs and work conditions is also extremely influential in how music production operates nowadays.<sup>14</sup> The neo-liberal approach, together with the way musicians are being taught and music is being produced in most music schools, is what motivated this work to find ways to increasingly embed more methods and strategies to develop works that essentially invert the logic that performers are

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<sup>14</sup> It is beyond of the objective of this research to discuss politically the difficulties and consequences of neo-liberalism.

exchangeable pieces in the music machinery. I attempt to do this by re-elaborating and questioning the ways in which the relationship between composer and interpreters takes place, de-constructing them and, in some cases, constructing other collaborative methods in these interactions.

The main intention behind the idea to compose pieces strongly related with specific people is to develop compositions that are not based on each musician's functions. Instead, the pieces depend on those specific people with their own personal history, particular life, and their particular sound repertoire. The performers in these pieces cannot be substituted by others with the same instrumental functions or specialties. We can find a similar approach, in which the composition work is directly related to specific persons, in Annea Lockwood's

*Spirit Songs Unfolding* (1977), which features recordings of five women over the age of eighty sharing their life stories. This initial work eventually evolved into an installation, *Conversations with the Ancestors* (1981), where the recorded interviews of the women were accompanied by 'stations' for two of the women containing objects precious to them, photographs, and silk-screened banners with quotations from them. Audience members sat at the stations and listened through headphones to the interviews. (Hinkle-Turner, 2003, p. 41)

Dehumanisation in production chains motivated this research to question many musical aspects during the composition process. For example, it questions concepts such as interpretation, improvisation, live performance, authorship and reproducibility, which will be highlighted later in connection with the pieces. Moreover, I have described the musicians in a highly generalized way, in order to clarify the idea of the tendency of production systems to dehumanise the people involved. I do not include in this first idea

the differentiations between the production scenarios in classical music, new music and improvisation scenes, which would lead to a complex discussion too early on in this chapter. In conclusion, it is almost certainly true that music offers people the chance to express their individuality in a much more expansive way than working in a repetitive function in any manufacturing distribution centre. However, the question is, are we really sure about that? Is it possible to dehumanise music? Is it possible to rehumanise music?

Concern for humanisation leads at once to the recognition of dehumanisation, not only as an ontological possibility but as an historical reality. And as an individual perceives the extent of dehumanisation, he or she may ask if humanisation is a viable possibility. Within history, in concrete, objective contexts, both humanisation and dehumanisation are possibilities for a person as an incomplete being conscious of their incompleteness (Freire, 1970, p. 17)

## **Chapter 2 - Close collaboration with composers, improvisers, Western classical trained musicians, and non-artists**

### **Identities in music in collaborative composition processes**

In the final years of this research, understanding identities in music became a central focus of the work. This came about by virtue of the composition of pieces in which the enlargement of the role of each participant and their social perspective was crucial to the composition process. Identities in music (IIM), are

...defined by social and cultural roles within music, and might be categorized in a number of different ways. They might be derived from broad, generic distinctions within musical activities: we could speculate that the culturally defined roles of the composer, the performer, the improviser or the teacher are central to the self-definitions of professional or skilled musicians. (Hargreaves, Miell, and Macdonald, 2002, p. 12)

In the first chapter of the book *Musical Identities*, written by Hargreaves, Miell, and Macdonald, some basic questions and answers are proposed from a social-psychological perspective: what are musical identities, who has them and how do they form and develop? Understanding these concepts of musical identity can also help us to situate most of the compositional ideas in this research and understand why I decided to work in a close collaborative way with specific musicians and individuals, and to

emphasize their identity until it becomes part of the compositional material of the pieces.<sup>15</sup>

First, it is important to understand in practice how differently the *self-identities* of the musicians influenced the collaborative compositional process of each piece. In the first phase of the compositional work, in which I organized improvisation sessions to develop the sound material for the composition, the composition process was adapted to the *self-identity* of each collaborator. In each situation, I took a different approach to the development of the pieces, depending on whether the performers defined their self-image as an improviser, composer or a classical trained musician.

We also compare our behaviour with what we expect ourselves to do on the basis of our self-image, which is built up from past experience, and with what we would like to do, i.e. with our ideal self-image. ... An accomplished musician with classical western training may be disturbed to be asked to improvise in informal situations, for example. Equally, someone whose ideal self is built on their ability to improvise may feel embarrassed about their ignorance of musical theory, or their inability to read a score. (Hargreaves, Miell, and Macdonald, 2002, p. 8)

For example, I asked to the musicians to describe if they felt comfortable or uncomfortable with the personal exposure in the piece or during the composition process. In the response quoted below, we can see how important it is for the composers to make sure that we carefully plan any requests to perform activities that are not part of the artist's *self-identities*.

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<sup>15</sup> In this case, the word identity encompasses two important, different types of identities, their musical identities and their sound identities.



When preparing for the piece I have to admit that I was not always very happy. That's because I normally don't film myself and I am really no "digital enthusiast". But over time I had many nice moments with this daily filming, and I liked the result very much when all pieces were put together.<sup>16</sup>

The thing that always feels awkward to most people is hearing one's own voice. Every time I give an interview on the radio or TV or hear and see myself in any video, I find my voice horrible, my face making stupid movements etc. In 'Portrait in four' I felt the same but when time passes, it doesn't feel as bad as before. It is always much stronger when the memory is very new. Watching the video of our performance after almost two years lets me see and enjoy other things. The composition is partly my diary of those days on tour in China, my comments about the days there etc. This is why I find it a very nice way of keeping the memories alive and I feel comfortable with the recordings. While working on the piece, I really enjoyed making the short videos and sound recordings. In the performance video you can see exactly how different our lives are, what each of us experienced and saw. Even if it was an exposure of myself, I find it a very enjoyable exposure that became a nice memory.<sup>17</sup>

While there are intersections between these divisions, it was important to understand how to build an approach that would always leave all participants feeling comfortable during the development of the audio and visual material. For example, in the composition process for the piece *Portrait in three*, composed for Trio SurPlus, I needed to understand the past improvisation experiences of each musician involved in the project, in order to plan a situation in which performer felt comfortable.

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<sup>16</sup> From private conversations between myself and Theresia Schmidinger (quoted with permission).

<sup>17</sup> From private conversations between myself and Marianna Oczkowska (quoted with permission).

These multiple self-images form a self-system, as outlined in Hargreaves, Miell and Macdonald:

We might say that the self-system is made up of a number of **self-concepts**, or self-images, which are the different ways in which we see ourselves. These self-concepts can be context- or situation-specific (e.g. how I see myself as being able to cope under stress, or in an emergency), or domain-related (e.g. how I see myself as a linguist, or a musician). **Self-identity** is the overall view that we have of ourselves in which these different **self-concepts** are integrated, although the ways in which individuals accomplish this remain a central and unresolved theoretical question. Self-esteem is the evaluative component of the self, and has both cognitive and emotional aspects: how worthy we think, and feel, we are. (Hargreaves, Miell, and Macdonald, 2002, p. 8)

Second, one of the aesthetic objectives of the composition process was to include the self-identities of the performers as a compositional material of the pieces. As mentioned, in the conservatories, the western-trained musicians had to learn to hide their personal and common everyday life behind their instrument.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, they present a certain professional neutrality to the audience, interpreting the sound ideas conceived by the composer, and this is a culturally learned self-concept about how to act in an orchestra situation or improvising on the stage.<sup>19</sup> In general, a strong division between professional life and personal life is also usual to many others professions.

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<sup>18</sup> It is necessary to add that my impressions about the musician's training at the conservatories are highly impacted by my experience: in my composition studies practice in Germany and my involvement in the German contemporary music community.

<sup>19</sup> It is also important to mention that in conservatory training, there is also the construction of the *virtuosi identity* and the *genius identity*, which can be developed over the course of one's entire training or professional life of a performer. However, this was not the kind of identity that I decided to emphasize as a composition material in these pieces.

However, in these pieces the intention was to mix all these different worlds or self-concepts in the performance, with the sound and personal identities of each performer involved in the composition process. In other words, I aimed for the compositional material to include the presentation of each performer's self-concepts in multiple dimensions. For example, the pieces composed for Trio SurPlus and Platypus Ensemble are a kind of portrait of the musicians, juxtaposing the multiple identities in work situations or in everyday life situations of each performer on the stage.

Focusing on the self-identities of each collaborator in the composition of the pieces was mostly motivated by the intention that was stated in Chapter 1: raising awareness of the essentiality of the performers and their individual presence on the stage and during the composition process.

### **Realism influences on the composition process**

And so what in fact has emerged in modern philosophy is a new kind of contact theory, not dependent on the old teleology. This type of theory reached a high degree of self-clarity and articulation during the early twentieth century. Prominent among its frames were, for instance, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Wittgenstein. A basic move which gives rise to this theory is a reembedding of thought and knowledge in the bodily and social-cultural contexts in which it takes place. The attempt is to articulate the framework or context within which our explicit depictions of reality make sense, and to show how this is inseparable from our activity as the kind of embodied, social, and cultural beings we are. The contact here is not achieved on the level of Ideas, but is rather something primordial, something we never escape. It is the contact of living, active beings, whose life form involves acting in and on a world which also acts on them. These beings are the grips with a world and each other; this original contact provides the sense-making context for all their knowledge constructions, which, however much they are based on mediating

depictions, rely for their meaning on this primordial and indissoluble involvement in the surrounding reality. (Dreyfus and Taylor, 2015, p. 18)

Much of the contact theory described by Dreyfus and Taylor in their book *Retrieving Realism* is compatible with the aesthetic perspective I assumed in the composition process of the pieces in this portfolio. For example, defining the parameters for the composition of each piece started when the collaboration was set up with the ensembles or the improvisers. From this point, those involved in the project started to influence the composition process directly.<sup>20</sup> In sequence, I focused on creating the conditions to collect and document slices and impressions of their everyday life in video and audio recordings. This included the largest possible number of different self-concepts of the same person. Furthermore, I tried not to make judgements about what would be more appropriate or less appropriate material for the composition. Every sound or image, depicting moments of everyday and professional self-conception, could potentially become part of the sound or image material of the piece. The only restriction was if the collaborators decided that some collection of material was too personal, and they would feel uncomfortable with that exposure.

Following this, the second stage of the composition began. In this stage, these frames of collaboratively produced sound and video were re-edited, re-organized,

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<sup>20</sup> Not because they would define the instrumentation to be used in the composition of the piece, but because their own self-concept and musical identity affects the collaborative composition process.

juxtaposed and composed into a timeline that became part of the piece in the performance. All these fixed parts were re-presented to the musicians, and the fixed-electronic parts became a sound layer basis for the improvisation part. The same musician, whose everyday life was part of the generation of the electronic and video part, added an extra layer of sound and presence on the stage during the performance of the piece.

### **Live electronics transforming sound identities<sup>21</sup>**

In order to explore the ideas of sound identity in this work, I need to briefly discuss sound transformations by live electronics. Live electronics were a tool in all the pieces in this portfolio. They were used in different moments during the composition process, for example, to compose the sound material for the fixed parts in improvisation sessions and/or during the performances, transforming the live sound performed by the musicians on the stage.

Live electronics also refers to transforming sounds using real-time digital processing; pre-programmed sound transformations that are applied in each specific

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<sup>21</sup> The proximity of the chapters and the different terms using the same word identity as part of the term can easily create misunderstandings. In order to clarify these terms, I will accentuate the difference in their definitions here: **Identities in music** (IIM) are defined by social and cultural roles within music. (p.14). **Self-identity** is the overall view that we have of ourselves in which different **self-concepts** are integrated (p. 16), and **sound identities** are the real or imaginative sources or causes associated with the sounds.

situation in collaboration with the musicians. For Denis Smalley, transformations signify a central concern in contemporary electroacoustic music. In his article ‘Defining transformations’, he proposes a classification for categories of sound transformations. It is worth citing one part of his text here, in order to illustrate how live electronic sound transformations can require a diverse approach when used with improvisers or with western classical trained musicians.

The term “transformation” is much flaunted these days. It is commonly used to denote some kind of change of identity. [...] It becomes a type of “development”; it can be associated with “process”; it possesses some traits of “transition” and “progression” between states; it displays characteristics of “variation”; in electroacoustic music it can take on an technological guise in “treatment” and “signal processing” of sound materials; more poetically it is “mutation”, “transmutation”, and “metamorphosis”. (Smalley, 1993, p. 279)

Moreover, already in the abstract of the paper, we have a summary of his thoughts on transformations: “Transformation concerns changes in the state of a sonic identity. Identities (and therefore transformations of them) may be defined in terms of their source-cause and/or in terms of their spectromorphological attributes.” (ibid, p. 279)

In live electronic configurations, we normally have a pre-conceived audio transformation system to re-elaborate the input signals, which could be audio or controlling information extracted from the performers’ actions. It is a sound system ready to output a transformative reaction to the inputs, resulting in another layer of sounds or images in the musical piece. In this way the live electronics technical transformations are modifying in real time the sound elements constituent of the piece that will be perceived by the audience.

The composition process of all the pieces in my work followed the same three phases: developing audio-visual material, transforming these materials into more elaborate sound objects using live electronics tools according to the possible needs for the composition of the piece, and concluding the composition process by structuring the form of the performance, overlapping or interweaving different layers of sounds and images in a musical form to be presented to the audience together with the presence of the musicians on the stage.

In conclusion, the live electronic setup I was using does not generate any sound without an audio input coming from the performers. Another way to explain it is that the performers feed a machine with their sounds. The machines analyse and transform their sound identities and feedback into the sound space, where the audience and the performers are. The performer can choose to react or not to this second layer of sounds produced by the machine. This is the live electronic game as played between the performers and the sound transformations of their own sound identities.

### **Working with improvisers' sound identities and Western classical trained musicians' sound identities**

During this research, I worked with fifteen musicians, and with one non-artist in *Abirú*. All of them have different musical experience and backgrounds, and the collaborative work was adapted to each performer. However, here I would like to classify them into two groups, in order to demonstrate a hypothesis that there are some

differences in how to work with the sound identities of improvisers and WCT<sup>22</sup> musicians.

The performance presented with Ogiermann, the project I started with Adachi, and the last piece with von Buttlar, I would characterise as deriving from close collaborative work with improvisers. Ogiermann and Adachi are also well-known composers and von Buttlar performs as a WCT percussionist in a variety ensemble in Germany. However, all three have formed a strong improvisational sound experience in their artistic curriculum.

I would classify the works with Distractfold, Platypus and Trio SurPlus as a collaboration with musicians with a strong Western classical trained background. They also have impressive improvisation experience, but nonetheless, the self-identities of the groups were more connected with the WCT musician self-image.

The sound identities in Smalley's works mentioned above are concentrated in the sound per se. His work also emphasises the importance of the real or imagined source of sounds in electroacoustic and instrumental music. Many definitions also take into consideration the social and psychological connotations of sounds and their sources (real or imagined). However, the bonding between source and sound, in the spectromorphology, does not consider the junction between the sound and the person that produced it. This is one aspect, combining or coupling the sounds to the person who performs them, that I have tried to include in the composition process of the pieces in this thesis work.

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<sup>22</sup> From here on, I abbreviate Western classical trained musician to WCT musician.



Traditional electroacoustic music concentrates on the examination of the sound object produced by a source. In this way, the direct observation of a sound object can be analysed, apprehended and reproduced. This is valuable if you are manipulating instruments, sounds in tapes or synthesizers. However, if we start to consider the sound repertoire of an individual improviser, a different approach should be considered for live electronic works. The alienation of the person, the source of the sound repertoire, is an act of de-humanisation and a usurpation of their sound identity. There is a multicolour palette of sound possibilities exclusive to the sound identity of that specific person that should be respected in the composition process of the pieces.

I do not deny that the neutrality of spectromorphological analysis can be an excellent tool to think about sound in music. Moreover, Smalley's theory captures the idea of sound identity, which can be transformed by the composer's mind/handwork into further sound identity material. From my point of view, this was one of my functions as a composer, to carefully transform the sound identities that were developed together with the musicians. In other words, re-composing, with the personal identity sounds and images of each performer, which were captured during the improvisation sessions.

Smalley invented the term *source bonding*, defined as: "the *natural* tendency to relate sound to supposed sources and causes, and to relate sounds to each other because they appear to have shared or associated origins" (Smalley, 1997, p. 110)

For the pieces composed in this portfolio, I would like to propose the *person-sound bonding* as a sound concept to describe the correlation that exists between the person who produces the sound and the environment and psychological social aspects that surround the production and the sound per se. In some way, we could also say that

the sound does not carry all the information about its production. However, it is possible to maintain a more holistic approach to the sound, by also using the multimedia features that are increasingly found in the new music repertoire nowadays. For example, in my case, the simple video recording of specific musicians producing sounds with their instruments, or the presence of them on stage playing their own and exclusive sound repertoires.<sup>23</sup> There is an undeniable humanistic aspect behind this conceptual approach, and particularly in my composition work, there is a political intention to humanise all the involved parts the composition process of the pieces, as mentioned in the first chapter.

I can already share some impressions here that result from this research. The collaborative work with the artists required a different compositional approach, depending on whether they had strongly committed sound identities as improvisers or as WCT musicians. This included following my proposal of the composition process and the interaction with the live electronics.

The improvisers have constructed an exclusive sound identity throughout their entire professional experience, which makes their sound unique on the stage. These sounds can only be found by the listeners in the presence of that unique person, not just because each person is unique, but because there was deliberate work conducted to construct and develop an exclusive sound identity. Their sound identity is bound to them as a specific person.

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<sup>23</sup> The video parts using images from the musicians producing or recording sounds allowed me also to re-compose the relationships between the images and sounds, playing with the real or imaginary sources as constituent elements of the pieces. In chapter 4, in the sub-section on audio-vision, this topic is discussed in more detail.

It is a delicate moment when you apply live electronics tools to transforming a sound identity, so particular and specific to a single person, because you risk creating an extremely uncomfortable situation for the improvisers, which can then be fruitless for the composition process. In my opinion, the awkward sensation depends on the degree of interference in the sound identity of the improvisers, in the use of randomness parameters controlling the sound manipulation, transforming their sounds until a certain point at which they feel they have lost control of their own sounds.

However, when you demonstrate your effort and concern to avoid these uncomfortable situations to the improvisers who are collaborating with you, the workflow of the creative process takes another direction, and moments that produce excellent sound situations outweigh the awkward ones. Another factor that the improvisation/creative sessions added to the composition process was a dedicated time to experiment with the improvisers and with the WCT musicians<sup>24</sup> and an expansive way to listen to their own sound being transformed by the live electronics in an immersive sound situation.

On the other hand, working with the WCT musicians elicited what is probably an obvious observation, but one still important to mention here: they are trained to precisely deliver the sounds that are requested in the score, of course with some degree of interpretation, but not normally with a strong personal involvement with the sounds

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<sup>24</sup> It is important to mention that with WCT musicians, I was able to have prior contact and develop improvisation/creative sessions with Trio SurPlus. With Platypus and Distractfold, unfortunately it was not possible to develop the audiovisual material in individual and face-to-face meetings with each musician. They followed a different approach, receiving instructions in online meetings and following a text score to produce the audiovisual material by themselves.

delivered. In other words, there is not a strong relationship between the sounds and their sound-identity. In instrumental traditional music, the sound-identity is conceived by the composer, following embodied “outmoded and hierarchical value systems which derive from 19<sup>th</sup> century European classical music” (Hargreaves, Miell, and Macdonald, 2002, p. 12) positioning the composer as the architect and the musicians as the transformation tools of the composer’s ideas into sounds.

Derek Bailey also describes the strong separation in standard Western instrumental training between the roles of creating music and playing an instrument:

Learning how to create music is a separate study totally divorced from playing an instrument. Music for the instrumentalist is a set of written symbols which he interprets as best he can. They, the symbols, are the music, and the man who wrote them, the composer, is the music-maker. The instrument is the medium through which the composer finally transmits his ideas. The instrumentalist is not required to make music. (Bailey, 1993, p. 98)

Connecting the improvisation/creative sessions with the cultural role that WCT musicians normally have in the musical culture production was clearly a change in the modus operandi of the compositional process. As in the work with the improvisers, I needed to understand how to work with WCT musicians and propose a way to generate audio-visual material from their self-identities. Culturally, they are not prepared for this personal exposure and they are not trained to be actors. In the beginning, the most difficult task was to explain the ideas behind the entire project, partly because the ideas were only then becoming clear to me as well. In my opinion, as composers know from experience, in the musical contemporary production chain, interpreters do not like unclear objectives or vague instructions, and the worst thing is wasting time solving

technical problems in the live electronics<sup>25</sup>. This last point was of particular concern for me. I improved the explanations of the objectives and the formulation of the instructions during the collaborative work with all the groups, identifying the needs of each participant, and creating a pleasant and creative situation.

### **Working with Adachi, Ogiermann and Buttlar**

**Tomomi Adachi** and I worked two days in Berlin, on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017, in a room at the ZK/U<sup>26</sup> - Berlin, performing video and audio recordings of our improvisation sessions. However, we did not progress to the second phase of work because we did not find the funding support to do so. It was the first time in the project that I was working with a person with a dynamic improvisation experience and with a robust sound character. From my point of view, it was a productive meeting and my impression of his feelings was also that we recorded and had great sound results. At the end, he asked me when we would meet again and I answered “Probably soon, however I will do my best to find the financial support to develop our work together”<sup>27</sup>. One important aspect to mention here is that I was able to experiment a great aperture of possibilities with Adachi, because improvisers are open to trying crazy ideas any time, under any weather, in different and uncommon social situations, without objective

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<sup>25</sup> I should add that no collaborator, whether improviser or WCT musician, likes to waste time in any situation for adjustments in live electronic setups.

<sup>26</sup> Zentrum für Kunst und Urbanistik - <https://www.zku-berlin.org/de/>

<sup>27</sup> After three applications for funding I reached a point where I did not find the time to continue applying for other applications and finish the Ph.D.

explanations. It is probably already inherent in their modus operandi to put ideas into practice without any predisposed plan, and afterwards to analyse the results, and learn from this spontaneous experience. In my opinion, it is an excellent opportunity to compose pieces that rely on the live presence of the participants, the possibility to try sounds *in loco* combined with a live electronic system, in which the control of the sound transformations are also influenced by real time analyses of the input sounds.

In addition, in the creative sessions, we concentrated on developing sounds that combined his instrumental acoustic and electronic sound repertoire with my live electronic setup. Tomomi's sound repertoire is clearly a strong part of his sound-identity as an improviser, constructed over many years of work in the improvisation field. I could attempt to define one characteristic of his sonic repertoire, which is its extreme dynamic and material variation that creates a constellation of dissimilar sounds.

**Christopher Ogiermann**, has a similar identity, or role (improviser and composer), in music as Adachi, but nonetheless has a totally different sound identity and self-identities. Together we developed a performance that was presented on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018 in Berlin, at the *Acker Stadt Palast*, founded by *INM – Initiative Neue Musik Berlin*.

One question that we raised and discussed constantly during the composition process was how much the live electronic setup was dependent on the sound source: in our case Ogiermann's live sounds. How would we manage to deal with the pros and cons of this characteristic imposed by the way the live electronic setup was programmed? This was basically because, as we will see in the detailed explanation of the max/msp programming, the sound inputs are the main source for the control and sound

transformations. This means that the live electronic layer can only respond or output sounds if there are some input sounds.

It was a relevant question, because it meant that our interaction in producing layers of sounds was not a parallel system, and instead, my live electronic setup was totally depended on Ogiermann's sounds. This kind of setup is not the same as the traditional interaction between two improvisers on stage, in which each one has an individual setup with their own sound repertoire, ready to react independently, creating the possibility of a dialogue between two improvisers with two particular sound-identities. Metaphorically, I would say that this was more a dialogue between two or more self-concepts of the same person.

In our case, during the preparation for the concert, the linear live electronic chain had to be trained and learned by us, in order to improvise freely and avoid creating uneasy situations on stage. In summary, in the performance in Berlin, my live electronic setup and sound response was connected to and dependent on Ogiermann's sound-identity improvisations, which increased his responsibility to maintain the sound flow of the performance. On the other hand, the live electronics affected and transformed his sound-identity in real time during the performance, and that was my responsibility, controlling the degree of sound transformation so that Ogiermann wouldn't feel lost or uncomfortable with the lack of control over his own sounds.

When I questioned him about what he thought of the results of the live electronics, he wrote:

Sometimes I felt a kind of too-obvious spatialisation or maybe too much spatialisation. This is an effect that could be great, but (without any rule I

could say) not all the time. I liked it when some independent layers were presented. Sometimes I forgot to lean on the results of the live electronics. This I have to practice.<sup>28</sup>

Ogiermann has extensive practical experience as an improviser and composer, which brought an extra layer of responsibility to the proposition to transform and work with his sound repertoire. At the same time, he brought an extensive range of sound options, in which my role in the collaboration was sometimes a creator of slight variations on his sound identity. In an answer to another question, he attempted to define his personal ideas about his part of the work:

I was the deliverer of raw material. And like it is with such deliverers, they are very important...so it is more that I would say I am the material, the subject, the theme...more than the author.<sup>29</sup>

**Johannes von Buttlar** is an active percussionist in the field of new music and improvisation, participating in different ensembles in Germany. We had previously worked together on various other projects and consequently had established a working and communication style between us. This was a positive foundation for us to develop a close collaboration to compose *Tra due*. Buttlar has two academic degrees, as WCT percussionist at the *Hochschule für Kunst Bremen* and free improvisation in Basel, an exciting mixture of self-identities to work with. However, in the piece *Tra due*, I would to

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<sup>28</sup> From private conversations between myself and Christoph Ogiermann (quoted with permission).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.



define his role more as an improviser than someone interpreting the instructions or a score, and his sounds and composition ideas were even an important part of the work.

At the same time, Buttlar is also an experienced improviser like Tomomi and Ogiermann, with the difference that he does not have a musical identity as a composer. Therefore, in *Tra Due* I found that there was a more significant demand for me to define and propose sound and structure solutions than to negotiate these decisions with him. However, this piece was the last composition of the series, which gave me the chance to draw on the experience I had achieved during the research process and try to encourage a further deconstruction of our modus operandi as improviser/interpreter and composer.

A parallel that I would like to propose here is that when you take into consideration the sound identities and the musical identities of each collaborator and observe them closely, you can find the individual potential and motivation of each person composing the musical work with you. This is similar to the work of a theatre director who is dedicated to improvisation pieces, who does not have a definitive narrative until he comes to know the cast's capacities or experience to act on the stage. In theatre, this creation process is defined as devised theatre or collaborative creation.

Often cited as companies [who pioneered modes of devising generated by, and drawn from, a concern with acting and the performer] at the cutting edge of the American theatrical avant-garde, groups like the San Francisco Dancers' Workshop, the San Francisco Mime Troupe, Open Theatre, The Living Theatre and The Performance Group, as well as groups within the European tradition under the leadership of directors such as Joan Littlewood, Jerzy Grotowski and Ariane Mnouchkine began their explorations into devised work through an interest in the possibilities of acting, actor training, and the performer's relationship with the audience. (Heddon, Deirdre, and Jane Milling, 2015, p. 29)

When I asked Johannes if he identifies himself as being part of the piece, he answered:

“... There is a lot [that’s] personal of myself in there, in the improvisation but also in the choice of instrumentation inside the setups. Finding the sounds was a mutual search and testing, therefore the result is a musical mixture of Vini and me.<sup>30</sup>

Despite his humble opinion, we discussed and included a lot of constituent elements from his sound identities in the piece. For example, the piece is divided into different moments that follow diverse ways to listen to Johannes playing his instrumental setups, ranging from him improvising alone in an acoustic standard drum set to an improvisation with a sink plunger in a suspended gong and exploring other kinds of sonorous combinations with the live electronics. It is possible to see these various moments by following the listening score of the piece.

For this purpose, I shall now consider the term *person-sound bonding*, which clarifies my intentions to compose pieces while maintaining these connections with the inner sound identities of each performer. The composition process fully depended on the time we had to develop the improvisation/creative sessions, to find and strengthen the details of these analyses to include the sound identities of Johannes into constituent elements of the musical piece. Fortunately for the first improvisation/creative phase of work to compose *Tra Due*, we had plenty of days in his house in Leipzig.

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<sup>30</sup> From private conversations between myself and Johannes von Buttler (quoted with permission).

## Working with Distractfold, Platypus and Trio SurPlus

I will begin by saying that all the three ensembles, Distractfold, Platypus and Trio SurPlus, are made up of musicians with an extensive experience of new music repertoire. They all have expertise in conceptual music proposals that require exploration of new sound territories and expansion of the classical modes of performance. Most of the musicians also had considerable improvisation experience.

During a workshop in 2017 at Brunel University London, I composed a piece with Linda Jankowska, Rocío Bolaños, Emma Richards, and Alice Purton. They are part of the **Distractfold Ensemble**. The constellation of these musicians was one of the characteristics that I tried to emphasize as a constituent element of the piece. During the workshop, we were unable to organise the improvisation/creative sessions in individual face-to-face meetings as intended in the ideal plan of the composition process. Therefore, I decided to develop a different approach. I wrote text scores with instructions, in order to guide them in performing activities at home, using their own computers as video recorders. I asked them to document their social media identity, their daily musical practice and individual concerns with their careers.<sup>31</sup> This documentation would be the raw material to compose the fixed electronic and video parts of the final video version.

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<sup>31</sup> An example of a piece that explores social media identity, the same theme I use in *Distractfold Piece*, is *Custom #1* for voice, percussion and video, written by Óscar Escudero, premiered by Sarah Sun (voice) and Johannes Fischer (percussion). The piece is also interesting to mention here because there is a direct relationship between the video material and the performer, which means that in each interpretation of the piece with a different performer, the images and videos must be re-made for the new performer. It is

With the lack of the time to meet personally, the virtual and displaced interaction also become a constituent element of the piece. In some activities that I proposed to the musicians, we explored and video-recorded the musician's engagement of the musicians in their social media and in their online everyday life. In a certain way, we used the algorithmic individuation, in particular with Google and Facebook, which track our behaviour online and configure a dedicated and personalized platform for each user. In essence, we each receive a dedicated service that has been moulded by our previous online behaviour and in the "preferences" with which each of us are represented in their big data catalogue. So, in some parts of the video in the piece, we see the duality of self-concepts, one coming from the musician's theoretical algorithmically programmed identity on video and one represented by their professional presence on the stage.<sup>32</sup>

The musicians were extremely open to experimenting with the proposal to share their personal everyday life in these recordings, while their personal involvement with the piece followed a professional hierarchical *modus operandi*. Undoubtedly, most of our interactions were defined by the workshop format and the time available to develop the piece. Therefore, in this case, my role as composer saw me taking responsibility for the concept and structuring of the piece, in order to ensure it could take place within a short rehearsal time that would be followed by the first performance. However, the

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possible to access the video documentation and more information in the following link: [https://oscar-escudero.com/portfolio\\_page/custom1/](https://oscar-escudero.com/portfolio_page/custom1/)

<sup>32</sup> Algorithmic personalization, identity and everyday life is the main topic of book *Making it personal*, (2020) written by Tanya Kant, in which she deeply discusses the self-identity and the composition of a digital identity on social media platforms, influenced by the targeted advertisement algorithms, forming an excellent reference on the subject.

practicalities of the situation did not suppress my intentions to underline the individual identities of each musician in the piece.

In this situation, the group members were more inclined to behave as WCT musicians, in which a workshop would be more focused on delivering and interpreting the scores that the composers had already prepared. I wished to invert the tendency of professional trained neutrality that this method of working imposes. In my case, the piece written for them was based on instructions to send me video materials with substantial personal identity in the first composition phase. In addition, I composed a theatrical improvisation activity to be played in the performance alongside the fixed electronic and video part.

Nevertheless, the original audio-visual material was created collaboratively, and the performance occurred with a high degree of openness. The transformation of the sounds, the video editing, and structuring of the piece was left as my responsibility as the composer. The hierarchical aspect was also an element in the other collaborations, with the improvisers' projects and the ensembles, probably because I was the proponent of the conceptual idea. However, with the ensembles, there was a clear division according to our self-identities in music, which was more evident than in the improvisers' collaborations.<sup>33</sup>

Consequently, in order to avoid any situation that might be uncomfortable for the musicians, or lead to an unlikely personal image exposition, I took care to frequently ask

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<sup>33</sup> Certainly, working and developing a collaborative piece with one person and composing a collaborative piece with different individuals influenced this expectation and interaction as well.

if they all agreed with the exhibition of the video montage in the performance. This could be seen as a common-sense practice, however in some previous experiences I saw how participants opinions and points of view about the project could change over the course of the composition process. Moreover, one of my first priorities was to avoid any undesired exposition of any collaborator in the compositions in this Ph.D. research.

Asking the ensemble if they felt uncomfortable at any moment during the composition process, I received the following two answers:

I was neither uncomfortable nor comfortable. It didn't matter. I relinquished control over my visual representation while producing materials for the piece. I guess I trusted it wouldn't be abused.<sup>34</sup>

Yes [uncomfortable] at the beginning when I read the tasks – especially ones in which I had a free choice to search things or comment on things. But then in the piece I liked the way it was put together and it didn't feel embarrassing at all.<sup>35</sup>

In the beginning of 2018, I had an opportunity to engage with another ensemble. After talking with the members of **Platypus Ensemble** and proposing to compose a dedicated piece for them, we agreed on a performance date of 16<sup>th</sup> of June, at the Echoraum in Wien.

The process was similar to that used with Distractfold. We could not conduct the face-to-face phase for the improvisation/creative sessions, due to the musicians' busy international travel schedules in the months before the concert. As a result, I also asked

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<sup>34</sup> From private conversations between myself and Linda Jankowska (quoted with permission).

<sup>35</sup> From private conversations between myself and Emma Richards (quoted with permission).

them to follow some instructions for recording sound and video materials, in order to compose the video and fixed electronic parts of the piece. This time, we focused on documenting sounds and videos in their homes and in their everyday work life in different cities and ensembles. Images and sounds from the surrounding work situations of these musicians were captured on video, which became a present audio-visual material at the concert in Wien.

Taking a step back, I believe that the reflection about how we conceive ourselves in the production of an artistic work should be taken into consideration in the composition process to a greater degree than we normally think. Self-concepts can become automated, directly influencing our creative capacities, reducing the range and possibilities of our creativity. Often those involved in the compositional process fall into a safe and familiar *modus operandi* that is influenced by many external factors and mostly by the ideal of productivity: qualitative and quantitative results in less time, and subsequently lower costs.

Frederik Neyrinck, composer and Platypus's pianist, commented on his experience of the composition process of the piece, with some reflections on music production nowadays:

This piece was a very interesting experience for me as a performer, but also for me as part of the ensemble. As the concept of the piece focuses on creation of own material (even if you want to discuss if this material is my own material; I don't think so personally), it also requires another way to collaborate between your colleagues-musicians and it also requires another collaboration with the composer. This way of rethinking the 'positions' in the chain of 'composer-performer-public' is extremely interesting and also very 'healthy' for a performer. You ask yourself more questions about

your precise position and start to develop another way of thinking as a musician/performer/composer.<sup>36</sup>

On the rare occasions that I was able to observe another group of professionals, I saw new music specialized musicians engaging their full energies to materialize sound ideas. This dedication to completing the conceptual and sound tasks makes up part of the conceptual framework of the responsibility that a WCT musician specialized in new music normally assumes nowadays.

I recognise that it is not entirely accurate to categorise the members of the three groups in question as typical WCT musicians. Distractfold, Platypus and Trio SurPlus are experienced groups with the aptitude to deal with all the complex and diverse projects that come to them from different composers, which we could consider a characteristic of improviser musicians. They are able to adapt themselves to the most inconvenient proposals and situations. Additionally, most groups dedicated to new music are interested in and constantly conduct research.

Consequently, I propose dividing WCT musicians into two groups. Firstly, the ones that are dedicated to the interpretation of universal pieces from a baroque, classical, romantic and post-romantic repertoire for example, which requires a solid interpretative perspective, in order to add an interpretation identity to the performance of these pieces.<sup>37</sup> This includes personal interpretation of an artwork, following the score. Secondly, the

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<sup>36</sup> From private conversations between myself and Frederick Neyrinck (quoted with permission).

<sup>37</sup> An obvious example here would be Glenn Gould interpreting Bach's Goldberg Variations.



WCT musicians with a classical educational formation but who are specialized in new music interpretation, which is the case of the three ensembles I worked with here.

Coming back to the discussion of the piece, *Portrait in four*, for Platypus, we had a similar situation, as I mentioned previously. The objective was to arrive at the date of the concert with a composed piece, proposed by the composer in whatever way. We managed to do this, even with restricted time to work together individually.

Fortunately, in this project we had a lot of time to rehearse at the concert site and we profited from it to experience how we could improvise together with the electronics, listening and reacting to the fixed sound part that had already been structured. I suggested that the musicians should listen and play only if they would like to do so, and if they believed that it was crucial to produce any sound in a particular moment. We already had a fixed electronic tape and a video that predisposed a fixed form for the piece. Therefore, anything we added over this layer should be essential and reactive to what it was already there. I decided to divide the piece and defined two general moments to guide the improvisation part: in the first, every musician could decide on their own whether to produce sound or not, escaping the fear or conventional feeling of being required to produce sound while on the stage, exploring the possibility to be silent, if they would like. In the second, there should be the construction of a crescendo in sound activity and dynamic, coincidentally following the electronic fixed part and concluding with a free improvisation session.

In other words, in the first part of the piece I proposed an improvisation moment in which listening was a more important task for the musicians than playing any sound, and in the second, the musicians would come together to assemble an ensemble sound in

a texture accompanying the electronic fixed part. A more detailed description will be presented in a further chapter dedicated to analysing the piece.

I conclude this chapter by mentioning the work with **Trio SurPlus**, emphasising some aspects that related them to WCT characteristics.

Trio SurPlus was the first group with whom I started practising the approach of using improvisation sessions to develop the raw material for the pieces. In 2016, the conceptual intention to work considering their sound identities, or self-concepts, was not yet a clear part of the theoretical framework of this research. However, my previous experience of composing *Abirú* inspired me to also investigate the sounds that surrounded the musicians' homes or places in their everyday life. In this moment, I had the idea to invite the musicians to practise some field-recordings as an improvisation act in our creative sessions.

The dynamic time available for the composition process with Trio SurPlus was the inverse experience to Platypus ensemble. In 2016, with Trio SurPlus, we had a week of work in Freiburg, Karlsruhe and Frankfurt to perform the improvisation sessions in an immersive sound configuration, but for the field recordings, by contrast, only one afternoon to rehearse the definitive piece before the concert.

In this week working with them, and having the experience to practise the creative sessions, I understood that it would be necessary to adapt my approach to their expectations in order to create a suitable workflow. At first, I thought it would be possible not to interfere in the sonic interaction, in the moment we put together my live-electronics setup and their instruments, to perform the creation of the sound material for

the piece. However, my premeditated absence in guiding the choices and not having a defined clear end result for the project led to an uneasy situation for the musicians. Reflecting on this experience, I also understood that if it was my intention to share the responsibility for decisions about the raw sound material to a spontaneous interaction between our instruments, then this needed to be clear from the start of the project. After realising this, I tried to fix it in my other interactions with them in the following days of work.

David Borgo, in two passages of his book *Sync and Swarm*, explicitly talks about uncertainty in music. He expresses two different points of view that were involved in this composition experience with Trio SurPlus.

Musicians are frequently trained to avoid uncertainties. To execute a musical passage, we are told, requires precise timing, intonation, phrasing, and a whole host of expressive qualities under express control of the performer ... While uncertainties often provoke concern, they also provide hope, surprise, and anticipation. For instance, we can look forward to the uncertainties of visiting new places or meeting new people, or to an unexpected twist or surprise ending in a movie or novel. (Borgo, 2007, p. 13)

In the first part of the quote, we have a correspondence between uncertainty and a common view of WCT musicians' identity in music. In the second, we have a clear declaration of an interest similar to mine in creating and exploring this unexpected dimension and in "discomposing" sound moments that could emerge from the interaction between the live electronics and their sound identities.

Another strong characteristic of my work with these ensembles is that they did not present a strong personal attachment to the sounds that they were producing with their

instruments. But when working with the improvisers, this attachment seemed to be stronger. I believe that this did not create any difficulties in composing the pieces for them, as the pieces were adapted to them. However, it was a conclusion at the end of this practical experience, which may reflect a common characteristic of WCT musicians.

Christian Kemper, in his experience in the composition process of the piece, stated that he did not feel a strong identification with the sounds he produced or those transformed by the live electronics. In this case:

The live-electronic transformations of the collected recordings, as well as of my instrumental sounds, yield nuanced and complex results, which I appreciate. When listening to the piece again after two years I tend to regard both - collected and performed sounds - as a sort of raw material without a specific identity - I am well aware that the original idea was to create such an identity, but due to the situation described above and also to a certain 'uneasiness' with improvising on stage (which I am not really used to) this did not really work out in my case.<sup>38</sup>

Another conclusion that I would draw here is that there was a considerable difference between composing a collaborative project with a small group of musicians, an ensemble, and an individual person. The time needed to understand and work with the individual sound identities and self-concepts of each collaborator is almost the same. Therefore, this composition process, for the ensembles and with the improvers, followed the same logic of a conventional composition production of a new music piece. For an ensemble with a great number of musicians, this means you have less time to dedicate to each musician than if you are working individually with a single person. In contrast, in

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<sup>38</sup> From private conversations between myself and Christian Kemper (quoted with permission).

the work with the ensembles, I enthusiastically promoted an encounter between their individual sound identities and their self-concepts in sort of a multiple portrait.

I'm glad that this idea was not interesting exclusively to me, as we can see in Daniel Lorenzo's comments about his experience in the composition process:

... premiering any piece is always a challenge, 'Portrait in three' was not an exception. The piece is kind of a 'collage' of very heterogenic elements and we got to hear the final result with the live electronics only shortly before the concert. Suddenly the hall was filled with sound, moving in various directions. This stayed in my memory. [...] To some extent, I identify myself as being part of the piece. It is not a 'ready' piece in the sense that the performer just gets a finished score and performs it. The piece feels like a suit that has been tailored and fitted upon my 'measures'. It's a piece about three musicians and about a trio.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> From private conversations between myself and Daniel Lorenzo (quoted with permission).

## Distributed copyrights

Composers normally own the copyright of their scores. This includes conceptual and open scores with parts that ask the performers to act creatively in the moment, or to make most of the compositional choices as part of their interpretation of the work. John Cage's indeterminate or experimental music is a classic example of this. Lochhead also emphasized the relationship between the composer, interpreter and listener in such indeterminate works:

In such indeterminate works, the performer does much of what is done by the composer in the chance piece [...] creating a situation in which the composer will not know in advance what the piece will sound like - composition is an act whose sounding result is 'unknown'. While the relation between composer and work is indeterminate in such pieces, the relation between performer and work or listener and work remains much the same as in pieces employing chance procedures: indeterminacy occurs as an ontological relation between composer and piece in such experimental works, while between performer/listener and piece, unpredictability is a cognitive function born of habit and structure. (Lochhead, 2001, p. 233-234)<sup>41</sup>

We can take Cage's *Etudes Australes* as an example in which the interpreter decides the execution time and proper dynamic for each note. Should the interpreter be included as part of the authorship of any version presented in a medium with a large number of views, which pays decent royalties to the author? Or should the royalties go to the authors of the maps of the southern night sky ("Atlas Australis") that were the basis

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<sup>41</sup> Some examples of indeterminate works mentioned in Lochhead's text: "Such works as *Fontana Mix* (1958), *Variations I* (1958), *Variations II* (1961), *Variations III* (1962-63), *Variations IV* (1964), and *Cartridge Music* (1960) require the performer to determine sounds by a procedure involving both choice and chance." (Lochhead, 2001, p. 233)

of Cage's transcriptions? Cage's entire compositional work still invites more questions than it answers.

Realizing Cage's conceptual work grants Cage the right to receive the royalties of his work. Moreover, we should not forget that while there are also other interpretations of royalties, the idea of copyright is not so restricted to the author when we talk about recordings. This raises another question about copyright in collaborative works: how should the copyright be ascribed in cases in which the creative authorship is distributed and involves improvisations as constituent elements in the composition?<sup>42</sup>

I believe that musicians with WCT identities in music understand authorship of improvisation parts in collaborative artworks differently compared to more experienced improvisers in the free scene (improviser identities in music). How we have learned and how we construct our identities in music also influence our understanding of the distribution of the copyrights. David Borgo expands on the question of copyright in relation to improvisation parts and musicians:

In the current era, royalties are still dispensed almost exclusively to composers (or to the record labels that maintain copyright over the recorded sound), to the detriment of improvising artists. Improvisation also challenges us to rethink ingrained notions of musical value and conventional approaches to musical analysis and discourse. [...] Yet their (Improvisers) approach confounds many established legal and cultural

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<sup>42</sup> As an example of management of copyrights in collaborative composition work: *Time Time Time* (2019) by Jennifer Walshe premiered at *Maerz Musik*, Berlin. The piece was developed in collaboration with Áine O'Dwyer – voice, harp, and electronic; Lee Patterson – electronic; M.C. Schmidt – voice and electronic; Eivind Lønning – trumpet; Espen Reinertsen – saxophone; Inga Aas – contrabass and Vilde Alnæs – violin. In a private conversation between Walshe and myself, she explained that the division of the copyright of the piece was proportionally split between all the collaborators.

norms of music ownership and the standard practices of music copyrighting and royalty compensation. (Borgo, 2007, p. 31)

From the start of this research, one of the stated intentions of the composition process I was developing was to create an equal position in relation to authorship and copyrights. While this approach seems crucial, it nonetheless challenges established structures and *modus operandi* that can seem normal and conventional to the production chain. This is precarious territory when you intend to collaborate by involving people's personal lives and identities in the composition process.

At the end of this process I received some feedback from the musicians who collaborated on composing the pieces. In the next chapters, dedicated to each piece, I will share some of their answers to the question "If the piece were presented on television/radio involving copyright distribution, how would you define your part of the work? How you would classify your authorship in the composition?"

My own answer to this question, in the case of these musical and visual works, follows Linda's proposition of the composition as a collective endeavour. In all the compositions in this portfolio, I invited the musicians to share not only their professional sound qualities as musicians but to engage and share their sound identities, self-concepts and personal images in this work. Therefore, I conclude that the sonic artworks I promoted during this research cannot exist without their presence. The reproducibility of the concept of the pieces depends integrally on their live presence on the stage. I could also say I'm the owner of the conceptual idea to create these artworks, however this still seems strange to me. I would prefer to think that I create the situations in which skilled



musicians interact and form a constellation of sounds based on their sound identities, integrating it with my personal live-electronics setup, so that they can listen to themselves through it and react to this performance situation. It is more about coordinating an encounter and raising questions about it than about composing an artwork to be delivered to the audience.

My take on authorship within composer-performer dynamic is that it is a collective endeavour. Someone has a concept that is dependent on its execution, without which it cannot be. It remains abstract and has no traction. Therefore, the copyrights should be equal for everyone involved – a cake sliced into five parts. I do not see another way out of the current structural inequalities that underpin the new music field besides acknowledging the utmost co-dependent and collective relationship in music production.

Nobody matters less or more. Performance is as creative as composition. I would be quite upset if I wasn't notified about any work featuring my face or sounds, and also if someone took sole credit, including monetary for the work.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> From private conversations between myself and Linda Jankowska (quoted with permission). Linda answering the question mentioned above.

## Chapter 3 - Authorship

### Examples of person-work bonding in new music repertoire

In this chapter I consider four examples of pieces that maintain a strong relation to the interpreters who were part of their compositional process. By exploring these, we can further reflect on the bonding between these compositions and the performers who took part in the production of the constituent sound elements of the pieces.

The well-known cycle *Sequenze*, by Luciano Berio, is made up of solo pieces each featuring a different instrument and dedicated to a specific soloist. All the pieces are composed to explore the virtuosity of the soloist and to extend the techniques available on the instruments. *Sequenza III*, for female voice, composed in 1965, was written for Cathy Berberian and premiered in 1966 in Bremen. It is a remarkable work, which also expanded the vocal techniques of the second half of the twentieth century. As Istvan Anhalt described in his book, there was a tendency to explore the inclusion of extra-musical sounds in this period.

"Spoken, whispered, murmured, and hummed delivery is combined in these works with normal singing and with such marginal sounds as coughing, sighing, audible breathing. While some pieces use a syntactically correct text, others employ language in different kinds of construction." (Anhalt, 1984, p. 3)

The *Sequenze* pieces are a result of collaborative work by Berio with prominent soloists. It should be noted that it is probably not possible to correctly determine the

balance and degree of influence that each party had in the composition of the sound material of the pieces. However, in the end, the roles of each was clearly specified: one person to record the sounds and write them down in a score, and another to take the score and go on stage, interpreting and delivering this new repertoire of virtuosi sounds to the audience.<sup>44</sup> The success of this cycle of works, which aimed to expand instrumental techniques, most likely lies in the previous and close interaction of these two separate music identities.

In his book about the cycle, Anhalt notes: “Cathy Berberian, the close collaborator (one is tempted to say co-creator) with Berio, said that “*Sequenza III* is like an X-ray of a woman's inner life.” (Anhalt, 1984, p. 40). He goes on:

Berberian's interpretation of this and other works of Berio is of great importance. 'We almost composed together,' she was quoted as having said recently (Soria, 1970, p. 5), in reference to their collaboration. This remarkable artist, indeed, created a new dimension for vocal technique. But beyond this, what makes her interpretation of *Sequenza III* so powerful is her controlled, even cool, virtuosity, with which she conveys both the gripping message of the piece and a sense of aesthetic distance. (Anhalt, 1984, p. 271)

In his analysis of *Sequenza III*, Istvan Anhalt recognizes Cathy Berberian's interpretative importance and her collaboration in the composition of the piece. After looking at this extra-musical information, we can also see that the piece is strongly related to the person of Cathy Berberian. In contrast, the professional roles, or identities

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<sup>44</sup> It is not my intention to minimize the valuable significance of the work from Berio and his collaborators, but rather to provide a simplified way to see the composition process.

in music, create a significant distance between the parties who collaborate in this work and try to separate each one into a specific acting functional role.

In *Sequenza III*, the collaboration with Cathy Berberian, with whom Berio was also emotionally close, it is impossible to know to what extent the sonic ideas are composed by Berio or come from Berberian's highly developed repertoire of sounds, in order to delimitate the boundary between the specific functions of composer and interpreter.<sup>45</sup> In my opinion, it was a distributed creative collaboration situation, in which both used their knowledge to achieve the aesthetic ideal they had in mind. Afterwards, the common definition of their prominent roles followed the conventional classification of their positions in the work. This is certainly not a hypothesis that I intend to precisely address in this research. However, I believe that this piece provides a good example of close collaboration and exemplifies one kind of strong bond between the interpreter and piece in the mid-twentieth-century new music repertoire.

Anhalt additionally describes the piece as a portrait of an undefined woman, which leaves open a lot of gossipy interpretations:

“Berio has created a vocal portrait of a woman, probably North American, who goes through a series of puzzling and disturbing vocal behaviors, making us wonder why she expresses herself in this manner and what she wants to convey to us.” (Anhalt, 1984, p. 25)

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<sup>45</sup> Luciano Berio and Cathy Berberian were married from 1950 until 1964.

However, *Sequenza III* is still a universal piece, in which the score is the main medium and carries the musical ideas and the performance instructions to be performed by any other female voice.<sup>46 47</sup>

In contrast, the second example, *Zig gesetzte angewendet auf Rei Nakamura* with symphonic helper and electronic surroundings (2009), a piece by Christoph Ogiemann, is not a universal piece.<sup>48</sup> The piece can be played exclusively by Rei Nakamura. The composition process also took her personal social context into consideration in the sounds and image recordings captured of her and the conceptual material present in the piece. Having another pianist interpret the piece renders it nonsensical. Many of the contrasting ideas within the conceptual structure of the piece are based on the presence of that specific person on the stage. Taking advantage of knowing the composer, I asked him if some other pianist could perform the piece. He responded:

I think it is a kind of senseless to have another pianist than Rei. Both the shape of her body and her voice would have to be replicated on the *Zuspiel*. Also, and especially, a great part of the texts she recites came from the stress of her situation as a ‘foreigner’, to keep up with the demands of German state and the demands of the ‘new music scene.’ (You will know what I mean with that ‘stress’. Even better than me!).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The original version of the piece is intended for female voice; however, the piece can also be interpreted by a male voice, as we can see in the case of Mikhail Karikis, who performed the piece at the Whitechapel Gallery in London.

<sup>47</sup> In my interpretation of the term “universal piece”, the word universal means common to all members of a group or class. Consequently, a universal piece means a music composition created to be interpreted by any person in a group of specialized instrumentalists or performers interested in doing so.

<sup>48</sup> “Many laws applied to Rei Nakamura” is the translation of *Zig gesetzte angewendet auf Rei Nakamura*.

<sup>49</sup> From private conversations between myself and Christoph Ogiemann (quoted with permission).

Reading her impressions of the composition and interpretation process of this piece, it is possible to see how her self-concepts are also part of the piece:

His compositions for smaller instrumentation are both an intimate and non-transferable ‘portrait’ of the performer; only the specific performer can play the piece that ensues.<sup>50</sup>

Before composing the piece, Ogiermann interviewed Nakamura, inquiring about her perspectives on life and collecting sounds, impressions, opinions, and images from her. With this information, he composed the piece, recreating and transposing it into a musical performance, mixing his perspectives and asking her to re-interpret herself through the piece.<sup>51</sup> Nakamura also express her views about the piece and the composer’s desire to make her personal life part of the piece: “He was also interested to know how I felt in Germany as a foreigner, who had come to study and who now lives and works as a concert pianist.”

She discusses how the input became a piece “in which the themes addressed relate to how an individual becomes quickly overloaded with information, and how one almost needs to ‘multiply’ oneself in order to survive in society today.”

In order to express this feeling of ‘being overwhelmed,’ Ogiermann created a visual and theatrical piece which is many layered in itself, and that features its own spatialisation. The audience is placed in the middle of the concert space around which are four small stations each with their own mixture of instruments.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> From private conversations between myself and Rei Nakamura (quoted with permission).

<sup>51</sup> The piece was presented in Karlsruhe, ZKM, and it is possible to listen the audio recording of the concert following this link: <https://soundcloud.com/ogiermann/zig-gesetze-angewendet-auf-rei-nakamura>

<sup>52</sup> From private conversations between myself and Rei Nakamura (quoted with permission).

The piece is bonded with her in a several ways. First, in a conceptual and narrative way, whereby her social and everyday life context is transposed into the structure of the performance. For example, the piece has four stations surrounding the audience, and she needs to run fast as possible from one station to another in order to execute the piece on time, dealing with the stress demanded by the piece and the physical distance between the stations. Second, her recorded voice and screams are the base of the electroacoustic fixed part of the performance. Voices reveal

... information about what someone is saying (speech), how someone is feeling (affect), and of course who someone is (identity). Furthermore, like faces, the starting assumption has been that voices are such an important cue to identity that their processing should be strong. (Stevenage, et al. 2020, p. 519)

It is important to mention here that in the mixing of her live recitation a text and the fixed tape using her voice, both are identified as belonging to the same person and being a variation of the same constituent element. If the piece were to be interpreted by another pianist, this connection would be lost and this compositional aspect would make no sense. Third, during the performance, a one-minute video is projected onto the main screen showing the composer and the interpreter. Nakamura explains, “The film features Ogiermann pouring red paint and water on the top of my head”<sup>53</sup>. In this element, we see again how a compositional relation is based on the parallel created by the presence on the stage and the actors in the video, identified as the same people. In conclusion, Rei

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<sup>53</sup> From private conversations between myself and Rei Nakamura (quoted with permission).

Nakamura's live performance is an unquestionably essential element of performing the theatrical piece composed by Ogiermann.

The third is the conceptual work *Acceptance* (2018) by Alexander Schubert. This another example of a piece composed in an intensive interaction with a specific person, the clarinetist and performer Carola Schaal. The final version of the premiere is a documentary piece. In a 26-minute video you can see Carola at a lake in the Austrian Alps dealing with a task to construct six sculptures with her own hands, a big wooden, upside-down cross, alone, without speaking to anybody for five days.<sup>54</sup> During the video she demonstrates and narrates her feelings in order to complete the long commitment the piece proposes and also shares particular situations of her life evoked by this harsh experience.<sup>55</sup>

The second person in the video is Alexander Schubert. The composer also narrates some parts of the video, describing his personal thoughts and his impressions about the compositional ideas of the piece, dealing with the endurance situation he proposes to the interpreter and with the personal connections that arose during the conception of the piece related to the acceptance of events in his own personal life. The piece became a challenge of commitment for all the involved parties, the performer, the composer and the audience that must deal with the portrait of intense human emotional experiences.

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<sup>54</sup> The *Acceptance*'s main task was to stay in nature for five days, speaking to nobody and building something by hand. The idea to build the wooden cross was decided on by A. Schubert and C. Schaal, for this first version of the conceptual piece.

<sup>55</sup> The trailer of the piece can be watched via the following link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fj5bWMb1Ctw>



However, the piece still exists as a universal piece that can be interpreted by any performer interested in executing it. Furthermore, the fixed result of the piece is not limited to video documentation. The interpreters were able to decide on the resulting format of the piece.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the participation of the composer in the final result of the pieces is not an obligatory part of the piece.

Decidedly, we should mention Carola Schaal's engagement. She took part in the conception and participation of the creative development of the piece and was responsible for executing the premiere of the work, which could result in any different format at the end of the composition and execution process. This is a significant personal commitment for any performer, and clearly her intention was oriented more toward experience and expanding her personal performance by experimenting with an untried composition process, more than any other external motivation.

The documentary piece resulting from this can be considered as an artistic expression of the compositional intention of the concept. It is a significant personal exposition of each person involved in the process, as both performer and composer are involved in different ways, but experience a parallel, intensely personal commitment to realizing the final work.

The last and fourth example, are the unique and substantial works of **Marcela Lucatelli**, a Brazilian vocalist based in Denmark. She is a composer and improviser. In some of her pieces she performs her own work, which is a particular aspect of composers

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<sup>56</sup> The text score of the piece is also available on the composer's website <http://www.alexanderschubert.net/works/Acceptance.php>

who also have a large improvisational background. In these cases, it does not mean that there is a reduction or compromise of responsibility in any role. She shared with me a personal thought on when she composes for herself:

One Marcela talks to the other Marcela, saying ‘In this case that only you can do what I have in mind, it is extremely necessary that you do it.’ However, if another person could perform that part, she would designate it to another performer in a collaborative work. [...] It’s relevant to point out here that in a collaborative work the parts’ semantic component rarely come to me from an abstract, material perspective, but more with the collaborator’s skills and potentialities in mind. Nevertheless, it’s exactly my punctual, conjectural foreign choices on this material that shape its new signified character, working as resistance to the signifier so that the collaborator’s abilities can aesthetically unfold within the compositional scope desired.<sup>57</sup>

Consequently, she brings her singular sound identity to the stage in these pieces, where it can make up part of a structured compositional work. Moreover, when interpreting a piece composed by her, there is a direct connection between the phases of planning and interpreting the work (or the part she interprets). In these cases, the work is characterized by, and automatically dependent on, her persona.

In the article *A new look at improvisation*, Ed Sarath proposes two temporal directionalities in improvisation and composition processes, “outlining similarities and differences between improvisation and composition” (Sarath, 1996, p. 2)

By ‘composition,’ I am referring to the discontinuous process of creation and iteration (usually through notation) of musical ideas. In other words, the composer generates materials in one time frame and encodes them in a work in another. [...] By ‘improvisation’ I mean the spontaneous creation and performance of musical materials in a real-time format, where the reworking of ideas is not possible. (ibid., p. 2-3)

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<sup>57</sup> From private conversations between myself and Marcela Lucatelli (quoted with permission).

These two temporal directionalities become part of the same process when the composer also plays the part of the performer of the piece, adding a particular and specific repertoire of sounds as a constituent element of the piece, which will be presented impromptu to the audience. Therefore, the composer has time to outline a conjunction of sound structured on time, and one of these defined parts is based on open parameters, which could be their own sound identity that will comprise a defined but widespread constellation of sounds on the stage.

A second impressive extract from my conversations with Lucatelli adds a better understanding of the collaborative work she uses to compose some performances, in which she can interact with different performers. Lucatelli told me:

“...depending on the possibilities I find to work with different people, I try to interact with them as if I was interacting with myself. I had a western classical training as an opera singer in my conservatoire formation and when I started my studies in composition, I decided that I would like not only to sing but to be sung by myself ... the collaborative work is sensible and vital for me ... I’m a sponge, absorbing their interest in expanding their existential life as performers, like how I was learning with my fascination in exploring my personal development...”<sup>58</sup>

The work of Lucatelli is very relevant here, because the border between composer and performer is extremely diminished. She worked on creating experiences for the artists present in her collective performances, based on their expandable artistic possibilities and their questions about life and existence. These are questions she

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<sup>58</sup> From private conversations between myself and Marcela Lucatelli (quoted with permission).

proposes to participating performers during the preparatory moments before starting the composition. They probably arise as a result of putting herself on both sides, as composer and interpreter of her own ideas.

Another detail in our correspondence caught my attention. In talking about her collaborative work, she described how it needs subtlety and finesse to encourage the partners to be open. One of the enjoyable challenges for her is to compose something that will be attractive and provocative for the composer, interpreter and for the audience. This is similar for her in a solo performance, where she would reflect about herself and propose a reconnaissance of her inner potential, investigating being a mutable and expandable individual.

Lucatelli is a clear example of the direct connection between the planner and the performer, even when they are the same person. For her, she is in control and can assume any role, as composer or performer, proposing to herself any unlimited experience without fear, but at the same time respectful and kind with herself and with others. This creatively beneficial combination delivers a particular and aesthetically singular sound.

Her collaborative work with the Mocrepe ensemble in Darmstadt and Chicago resulted in two pieces. The first was *this is a piece not a WHOLE* (2016), composed for Darmstadt's International Summer Course for New Music. It involved three participants from the group, attached by rubber bands and cords, with contact microphones that amplified the sounds made for the audience. The performance continues as a fight

between the musicians within the constraints delimited by the bands and cords and the intervention of the composer, who adds more limiting constraints to the musicians.<sup>59</sup>

In a Chicago-based workshop with the ensemble, she had the opportunity to expand this work, including more interpreters and of course, more interactive ideas, in the development of the piece. The result was *#off-human* (2017), composed for Bethany Younge, Lia Kohl, Nick Meryhew, Ryan Zerna, Zach Moore, Marcela Lucatelli, video, cello, fake fruit, sex toys, tiny rubber hands, and bigger rubber hands. In commentary in *Cacophony Magazine*, Jen Hill notes

*#off-human* makes no explicit rejection of [this] reality but still lands far outside of its realm, presupposing nonsense and bullshit as order. Marcela Lucatelli and Mocrepe are at the frontline of this destabilization by asserting their validity as humans, particularly if it may be slightly off-colour. (Lucatelli, 2020)

In their discussions in the composition process, they also explored embodiment, the body as media and the development of collaboration projects, and engaged with political ways to develop pieces.

Lucatelli also worked with the ensemble Bastard Assignments, based in London. This ensemble conducted an experimental collaborative production in music that is substantially relevant to this research. Lucatelli worked with them on a cycle of pieces called *Impossible Penetrations* in 2018.

The standout is *Impossible Penetrations*, a collaboration with vocalist and composer Marcela Lucatelli. It's polymorphously perverse, a little scary, tender and very gross, involving fiddling with beads on sticks, jumping through hula hoops, and genderfuck costumes. Lucatelli's breathless chorus of 'Happy, happy, happy Bad Things!' reaches a frenzy of helium

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<sup>59</sup> The Darmstadt performance can be watched here: <https://vimeo.com/192673169>

menace as the four Bastard Assignments performers dance, uncomfortably linked within the hoops. The music is punctuated by one sided mobile phone calls and a scene resembling a cuddle puddle. At the end, the four performers fill their mouths with condiments – mustard, ketchup, Gatorade and squeezy mayonnaise – and I feel the urge to puke. Job well done. (Lucatelli, 2020)<sup>60</sup>

In the opening of the chapter *La poetica dell'opera aperta*, by Umberto Eco we can see that openness of compositional processes was already a trend some decades ago (most likely extensively inspired by Cage's explorations at this time):

Among the recent productions of instrumental music, we can note some compositions distinguished by a common characteristic: the particular executive autonomy granted to the interpreter, who is not only free to interpret the composer's instructions according to their own sensibilities (as occurs in traditional music), but must even intervene on the form of the composition, often determining the duration of the notes or the succession of sounds in an act of creative improvisation. (Eco 2000, p. 31)<sup>61</sup>

Almost 60 years on from Eco's words, the identities in new music as composer and interpreter still mostly follow the same hierarchical organization. As argued above, this may be because it suits our need to meet the fast demand of production and precarity proposed by neo-liberal governances. Retrieving individuality in musical works and re-humanizing the composition process could be seen as a movement against the

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<sup>60</sup> <https://www.marcelalucatelli.co/reviews> - (Emily Bick on SPOR Festival 2019)

<sup>61</sup> Tra le recenti produzioni di musica strumentale possiamo notare alcune composizioni contrassegnate da una caratteristica comune: la particolare autonomia esecutiva concessa all'interprete, il quale non è soltanto libero di intendere secondo la propria sensibilità le indicazioni del compositore (come avviene per la musica tradizionale), ma deve addirittura intervenire sulla forma della composizione, spesso determinando la durata delle note o la successione dei suoni in un atto di improvvisazione creativa.

marketisation of the artwork. This is attempted by developing personal and individual approaches with those involved in the processes, including intimate audiovisual experiences for the audience.

I chose these four pieces as they exemplify the strong relationship between self-concepts and personal life in some artworks in the new music field. The last three examples have aspects and characteristics in common with the pieces I composed during the present research. Ogiermann's compositional process utilized an interview to collect information about Nakamura's life and recorded personal sounds and images of her, in order to gather material to compose the piece. Alexander Schubert's concepts and instructions proposed an acute life challenge to Carola that was documented by video.

Lastly, Lucatelli's composition works demonstrate care and sensibility when working with her collaborators and pushing them to reflect and challenge the limits imposed by their identities in music. These are features I also explore in the pieces I composed in this portfolio.

## Chapter 4 – Composition work commentary

### Abirú

The sound material of this piece is based on the stereo field recording made by Igor Pavezi in his ranch (*sítio*) called *Abirú*. It was his first experience carrying a portable recorder with two microphones and listening closely to the sounds that were there at the creek that crosses his property. My impression observing him was that he was living the same experience as when a child discovers a new world within their own room with their new microscope. Listen to his recording, the result of his new listening experience, we perceive how Igor was walking around, trying to catch different sounds at the creek, playing with the stereo image, moving the microphones into a variety of positions and mixing particular water sonorities. It is an improvised and spontaneous field recording, motivated by his curiosity to explore the possibilities of the magnifying sonic glasses, which were the two microphones.

For Andra McCartney, a soundwalk artist and theorist about the listening process, the discovery moment is also creatively important in her work:

When I am out doing individual listening and recording work for a sound project, the moments of discovery teach me the most, engage me most strongly. These moments of discovery introduce new ideas and new ways of hearing the space through listening intensively to the sound; to hear how it is being shaped by the space, weather conditions, and the sounds that are heard there at that moment; and by thinking about relationships between sonic moments. (McCartney, 2016, p. 41)



The result of Igor's experience of discovery was a seven-minute audio file.<sup>62</sup> He also recorded a large number of other soundscapes at different times and in different places. In this case, my work as composer was to listen to and analyze Igor's recordings, transposing and re-elaborating this discovery experience in an artistic way, in order to present it in an electronic music concert format. These recordings are the base sound material used to compose the acousmatic piece for the eight-channel surround system, which we called *Abirú*. The name comes from the *Guarani* culture, the original people of this region, and it means abundance.

The form of the piece follows the narrative of the soundscape recorded by Igor when he was walking by the creek. In particular, I used the audio file as a grid for the structure of the piece. First, I divided the file into eleven different scenes. During the piece, some of the scenes are repeated, however the sequence in which they are presented follows the sequence of the original recording. The structure of these scenes follows the criterion of emphasizing the natural sound spatialisation of the water created by the improvised movements made by Igor, in the hunt for new sound combinations by the creek. In addition, the structure and spatialisation of the scenes are an attempt to translate or transpose Igor's sound experience to the audience. For example, it is possible to listen to long moments in the piece in which only Igor's original recording is presented on the side speakers, composing an immersive soundscape situation for the audience. This is contrasted with other moments, in which the total potential of the multi-channel sound

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<sup>62</sup> The recording, the seven-minute audio file is available in the [attached](#) material: *Walking-Water.wav*

diffusion system is used, immersing the audience in a waterfall of water recordings and electronic sounds.

What follows is a commentary on some aspects of the composition of each part of the piece.

Part 1: Scene A repeats three times with a slight change in the position of the recordings in the sound spatialisation. It concludes the first part with an electronic re-elaborated constellation of sound events.

Part 2: Scene B is repeated two times, and the stereo field recording flow is cut/contrasted by a stronger electronic re-elaborated sound event.

Part 3: Sound recordings mix cricket sounds with water sounds from scene C, introducing this constituent element sound that is later developed between 4'40" and 6'12".

Part 4: A lengthy part of the piece, presenting scene D and focusing on transposing to the listeners the movements created by Igor with the use of portable microphones. From 3'00", there is a transition between the stereo field recording to an immersive sound situation in which all the speakers play Igor's scene D, along with a filtered granular sound texture that dynamically increases during this part. It will be presented again in Part 8. Part 4 also shows one of the main compositional ideas in this piece, which is the mixture between two sound worlds. One is made by the soundscape captured by Igor in his sound walking first experience, and the second is an electronically re-elaborated sound world, closely correlated to Igor's recordings, exploring the rhythmic gestural sound possibilities of a multi-channel sound diffusion system. The intention

behind that is to create an imaginary situation in which the listener is being transported in seconds from one possible real sound world to another musical electronic one.

Concluding Part 4, the sound texture is disrupted by a rhythmic electronic sound event that carries the piece to the next session.

Part 5: The constituent sound elements in this part are based on other sound sources that were also captured in the surroundings of Abirú. The sounds of the logs crackling and popping and the crickets are placed to sound all over the room, surrounding the audience. The electronic sounds are composed of frenetic gestures that contrast the calm and relaxing atmosphere created by the drops in the field recording.

Part 5.1: This session only features cracks and the sounds of the crickets.

For a moment, it returns to the pure field recordings.

Part 5.2: The crickets' sounds are translated using pitch analysers, by a patch in Max, in frequency values that control eight different oscillators generating sinusoidal sounds distributed over the room.

Part 5.3: The session is concluded by similar sound gestures as those presented in the initial Part 5.

Part 6: Presenting Scene G, in which Igor is walking inside the creek and recording the sounds of his feet passing calmly into the water.

Part 7: The preparation for the last session of the piece. A granular electronic sound distributed in all the channels in a soft crescendo. It is similar to the calm character of Part 5.1, but with a re-elaborated electronic sound.

Part 8: Two groups of gestural electronic sounds are presented at the beginning, which occur with the texture made by flowing water sounds. Part 8 has a crescendo form that is disrupted by a short strong percussive session and decreases to the end of the piece. Together with the water texture created by the juxtaposition of field recordings (Scenes **I**, **J** and **K**), another synthetic texture sound reinforces particular frequencies. This filtered granular sound, the base of this texture, was already presented in Part 4. It is a result of a real-time sound analysis process of the same field-recordings, transposing these values to control the sound filtering of the synthetic sonic texture. The composition of electronic sounds is based on the morphologies of the field-recordings, seeking to create connections between the two sonic worlds presented in this piece.

Part 8.1: The rhythmic and strong gestural sound element that intersected the crescendo with a last strong “colpo”, releases the energy with water sounds decreasing in a slow exponential fade-out, concluding the piece.

## **Distractfold Piece**

At Brunel University London, a workshop with the Distractfold ensemble offered an outstanding opportunity to experience in practice a vast combination of musical ideas. On this occasion, the musicians playing in the workshop were: Linda Jankowska – violin, Rocío Bolaños – clarinet/bass clarinet, Emma Richards – viola, and Alice Purton – violoncello. Working with Distractfold, I had the chance to explore diverse activities that became an important step in the development of my Ph.D. research.

I had to find a solution for the following question: how could I interact with the musicians and create the sound material needed to compose the piece, without meeting them personally? The answer to this question was to develop the sound material by working individually from different places, in their free time. I took into account that all communication and data exchange should happen via the Internet and all the technical needs should be within reach for them, in order to perform these creative/improvisation sessions. With these ideas in mind, I planned a first score, based on five activities that guided the musicians to perform five kinds of video recording, recording themselves in different situations using their home computers.

### *The activities*

At the same time, I searched for practical possibilities to create the sound material with them remotely. I was interested in integrating images into the piece that originated from their desktop computer during daily navigation on the Internet, as well as images from their webcam perspective during daily musical practice. Indeed, I wanted to use their personal images as source elements for composing the visual part of the piece,

presenting this element in diverse levels of contrast with their real personal image identity playing the piece on the stage.

For instance, specifically in this piece, the audiovisual content of the video-recording activities were based on the images of the musician's Internet possible personality, using nowadays-mainstream social media web tools<sup>63</sup>. In addition, the video content portrays their regular practice, personal concerns with their careers, playing only with gestures, making silence and improvising freely. All these activities were conceived to capture a more personal and particular perspective of each musician on video, which normally does not make up part of, and is not shown during, musical performances.

Another valuable element in this piece that should be mentioned is the Internet and its current influence on human interactions. Certainly, the Internet has changed how we live in our world. So, the post-internet, a term coined by artist Marisa Olson, defines everything that has changed and was influenced by this historical event, including the new configuration of human relationships and their environment. In other words, the relationships between humans, the world, our work, our art, our sounds, and our expectations, have changed dramatically and in many diverse directions.

Gene McHugh, in his blog, which later become a book and a referential work about the post-internet, written from December 2009 to September 2010, states:

On some general level, the rise of social networking and the professionalisation of web design reduced the technical nature of network

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<sup>63</sup> The images of the musicians using some of the platforms on the internet are used to represent the idea of a construction of a virtual persona, in which algorithmics are being applied to have a map of the choice behaviour in dislikes/likes of each internet user, in order to define our virtual persona.

computing, shifting the Internet from a specialised world for nerds and the technologically-minded, to a mainstream world for nerds, the technologically-minded and grandmas and sports fans and business people and painters and everyone else. Here comes everybody. (McHugh, 2011, p. 2)

In this first score, for the activities, one of my first concerns was to give accurate instructions to all the musicians on how to manage the video recorder software, in order to guarantee that the recordings could be used as material for the composition of the piece. After that I explained the activities in step by step detail. John Lely and James Saunders, in the book *Word Events*, describe it as a Material Process.

Material clauses represent processes of doing-and-happening, which bring about changes in the physical world. ... There is always an outcome to a material process, and texts that describe material procedures are typically concerned with expressing how that outcome is achieved. (Lely and Saunders, 2012, p. 10).

To summarise, the video-recording activities were:

**Activity no. 10** - The musicians are instructed to use Facebook and record their screen desktop and their face (via webcam) simultaneously. Additionally, they were encouraged to comment verbally on their likes and dislikes. If a musician didn't have Facebook, she or he should ask Google (or their favorite search engine) "Why am I not using Facebook?". After that, the musicians should search "How to play...? How do I...?" and read the instructions aloud if they found interesting situations or to watch the videos for at least 4 minutes.

**Activity no. 11** - A YouTube search, searching firstly for [your name + Distractfold] and then for another topic/idea that interested them. Musicians should open diverse videos in

different windows, making them all play at the same time, before shutting them off suddenly. (while simultaneously video recording their face via webcam and screen desktop.)

**Activity no. 12** – Record a video with the webcam of a small section of their daily instrumental practice. Musicians should add verbal comments as they study any piece of their repertoire. At some point, musicians should leave the instrument and play the piece with only physical gestures in the air.

**Activity no. 13** – Musicians should act or simulate an imagined Skype conversation with their future selves, asking their “future self” if they are doing well, have worked hard enough, and made the right decisions about their life.

**Activity no. 14** – Musicians should sit in silence and listen to the environment with eyes closed for at least three minutes without checking the time and then improvising freely with their instrument, voice and breathing, pausing regularly.

The instructions, describing how to use the software for the video recordings and the activities proposed to them in the first score, was sent to the musicians earlier.

Because of our lack of time we decided to perform only two activities per musician, plus the free improvisation. The following table demonstrates how the activities were assigned:



	Activity 10	Activity 11	Activity 12	Activity 13	Activity 14
Rocío Bolaños	X		X		X
Linda Jankowska		X		X	X
Alice Purton			X	X	X
Emma Richards	X	X			X

Table 02: Assigned activities per musician.

The videos of these activities can be viewed on YouTube, following the links below. The videos are published in their entirety, without cuts. Both musicians doing the activity can be watched in parallel and are synchronized by coinciding moments between them. The parallel video montage was used as the main material to compose the video projection behind the musicians during the final version of the piece. Moreover, the sounds from the video recordings are the source sound for all the electronic parts of the piece.

Act no.10: <https://youtu.be/dB7CWd06PmE>

Act no. 11: <https://youtu.be/HA2NFTLDWnA>

Act no. 12: <https://youtu.be/F6xSyyfg3z8>

Act no. 13: <https://youtu.be/f0nuf843jfs>

Act no. 14: <https://youtu.be/owF6t6xfmJk>

### *Second phase of the composition process*

In this part, my compositional work was more concentrated on organising the formal component of the piece, distributing the events on the timeline. My main concern here was how best to construct the structure of the three main layers of the piece: the electronic layer, the video projection behind the musicians, and the live performance.

I concentrated most on the sound work from activity no. 14, in which all the musicians improvised freely. I separated all the sound events played by the musicians into small files, transforming, modifying, and multiplying these sounds and composing more complex and gestural sound events in the space. These selected sounds were being played by the multiple sound player patch. That went directly into the inputs of the live electronic patch and the sound results were recorded. The composition of the electronic layer is the composition of these multi-channel layers that resulted from the combination of the selected sounds.

After concluding the montage of the activity videos (no. 10, no. 11, no. 12, no. 13, no. 14), in which I had arranged the musicians performing the correspondent activities side by side, I started to assemble the electronic events, transformed in Max, in another audio montage software. In this software, with some parts of the activity videos, I begin to compose a more complex gestural and textural electronic layer and to build the form of the piece.

*The piece in context with others' Audiovisual works*

For example, the piece *exit to enter* – Michael Beil (2013) for Nadar Ensemble is a technically virtuoso audiovisual montage, mixing live-video recordings, live performances and ensemble. Stefan Prins with his work *Generation Kill* (2012) composed an incredible playable PlayStation-controlled video projection from musicians over the same musicians performing the piece, in a strongly socio-politic critical context. Jennifer Walshe, in *The Total Mountain* (2014) also developed an excellent discourse between her unique performance on stage and the video with a great montage of diverse Internet identity perspectives. Franziszka Kloos describes the piece in this form in her book:

*The Total Mountain* could be referred to as post-internet opera, the term post-internet art - means the attempt to articulate the social effects of the Internet artistically and to find contemporary forms of work. (Kloos, 2017, p. 39)<sup>64</sup>.

All three works mentioned above have a characteristic in common with the work composed for Distractfold, namely the contrasting displacement of the performer in the video and in the live performance. It happens slightly differently in each composition, with diverse purposes, but they maintain the contrast between what is happening on the screen and what is being presented on the stage.

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<sup>64</sup> “The Total Mountain” könnte man als “Post-Internet-Oper” bezeichnen; den Begriff “post-Internet-Art” meint den Versuch, soziale Auswirkungen des Internets künstlerisch zu bearbeiten und dazu zeitgemäße arbeitsformen zu finden.

### *The improvisation/performance score*

The performance score was the last thing to be composed in this piece. Nevertheless, composing it was an important development in my compositional research. Principally, because of the use of verbal notation, which was used to provide instructions for the improvisations during the piece. In the performance the musicians were mainly instructed to improvise with their instruments, but many of these instructions had a strong theatrical character. For example, in improvisation number 2 (see the score) the instruction was: listen to the conversation in the video and make comments, talk with the others in a low voice. In number 3, for Rocío Bolaños – bass clarinet and Alice Purton - violoncello, the instructions were to freeze and for Emma Richards and Linda Jankowska - violin, they were instructed to play a piece of their repertoire with only gestures without sounds. These theatrical elements were intended to be a game of contrast and similarity between the video projection and the live performance. Moreover, the theatrical elements in this piece were an effective tool to bring in Rocío, Alice, Linda and Emma, not as only excellent musicians producing beautiful sonorities with their instrumental experience, but as unique people with their essential presence on the stage.

Furthermore, the chance to re-work the notation with the musicians, receiving feedback from them, and the opportunity to direct the performance during the workshop, was a constructive step for me. In this work, I understood in a practical scenario how verbal notation can be extremely efficient and how much care should be taken to guarantee precise indications of a musical concept through written language.

## *Corporeality*

In the *Distractfold piece*, the theatrical element was crucial for the performance. It aimed to rekindle the idea that the corporeal presence of the performances is very important in acting and improvising on the stage. This idea was also transposed to further composition processes in other pieces.

*Corporeality* as an experience has a holistic nature and is linked to, but not reducible to, an objective physical body that can be mapped in a composition. The music-making body can be revealed through a compositional or theatrical gesture, but any attempt to zoom in more closely on its presence leads to the appearance of *aspects* of the body that allow that revealed figure of the body as a whole, once again, to elude our attention. (Craenen, 2014, p. 97)

Craenen, as we can see above, defines corporeality and reinforces the idea that the music-making body, if seen from a close perspective, can emerge in the first plane of our attention in a music performance. In my case, I was not afraid of lack of balance between corporeality and sound; on the contrary, one of my main concerns was to give a name and identity to the corpus present on the stage, centering them as the source of all constituent elements in the piece. Corporeality, presence and improvisation are composition parameters that work against the reproducibility of a piece, in which the individual identity of a specific person cannot be substituted by another performer.

*Some conclusions from working on the Distractfold piece*

John Lely and James Saunders's book was a useful reference to achieve a clear control of the use of verbal notation. *Distractfold piece* was the piece with the most developed theatrical elements in details, from among the pieces composed in this portfolio. In summary, I can conclude that the work with the ensemble Distractfold was significant for my research. I was able to implement and experience with them some more structured ideas in my collaborative composition process, which I have been able to develop with other artists over the last year. The piece is already finished and can be presented on other occasions, but only in a performance with Distractfold. Moreover, the material created in the video activity recordings and the sound events played by them in the improvisation activity are a fruitful source that could be used to compose other pieces for the ensemble. The link below leads to a video of the performance of the piece in the workshop on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Performance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cwy8BcVRKs>

## **Platypus Ensemble, *Portrait in Four***

The work with Platypus started with an invitation to write a piece to be premiered in Brazil, at the *Biennale Music Today*. However, the ensemble and I agreed to postpone the project to another possible event. Our project could be accomplished and performed in June 2018 at the Echoraum in Vienna.

As mentioned, we did not get the chance for individual meetings, so I tried to convert the disadvantage into an advantage and formulated instructions to guide the musicians in making video recordings, exploring their travels and work experiences and documenting it in some way, which we could contextualise afterwards in the piece. For the concert in Vienna, four musicians took part in the composition process and they received the recording instructions in order to produce the audiovisual material for the composition of the piece. I organised additional regular online meetings with them, in order to give some further instructions to closely coordinate the production of this material, which was essential for the composition of the piece.

Moreover, we documented their individual professional lives with other groups and in other musical professional situations, such as traveling, rehearsing, and playing. These video representations of their professional self-concepts were eventually brought to our performance at Echoraum.

### *The rehearsals with Platypus*

During this time, we created an understanding of the possibilities of developing and recording audiovisual constituent elements for the piece, despite being in separate places. We had a great time in online conversations, discussing the instructions to construct these audiovisual materials.

The recordings were sent back to me and I started to compose, cleaning, cutting, and editing the audiovisual material. After this first edit, I selected a group of sounds that was used as a base to generate more complex sound structures using the multiple sound player patch. Finally, after the montage of the timeline of the piece, we had a video and a four-channel fixed audio part, which was used to guide the form of the entire piece, as well as the improvisation actions of the musicians.

Three days in which to rehearse the piece seemed an ample amount of time to finish the composition while interacting with the musicians. I tried to use this rehearsal time as best I could, to delineate the improvisation part and to ensure the musicians felt comfortable with the idea of learning and following the fixed electronic audio and video parts that guided their improvisation actions to perform the piece. It is possible to watch the video part with only the electronic fixed part, following this link:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nne6GxO\\_Vhk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nne6GxO_Vhk)



### *Improvisation performance score*

I did not need to write an improvisation score for the performance because by the end of the rehearsals, with this amount of time invested in the preparation for the concert, the musicians already understood the two simple requests I had in mind to define the direction of the improvisation. The first one was requesting the musicians to resist the impulse or tendency to produce sounds simply because they are exposed in a traditional situation, on the stage, in which it is expected that they play. In this way, during rehearsals, we got the time to develop the proposal even further, with time to listen to the fixed electronic part, to the live electronics, to the other musicians, and playing if they would like to do so. This first part of the piece, with these instructions, starts around the first minute mark and goes until around twelve minutes. After this point, the second request to the musicians was to increase their improvisation in activity and intensity, correlating their crescendo with the crescendo on the fixed electronic part. The end of the piece is marked by a free improvisation, decreasing the playing activity and fading out, after the culmination of the crescendo.

Notation is an established practise to register the sounds or conceptual ideas of an artwork, so that it can be easily be copied, analysed, and become a marketable product.

Pedro Rebelo additionally proposes:

Notation is intrinsically linked to practices of production across disciplines such as performance, composition, design, choreography, gastronomy and architecture. ... Due to its 'fixed' character, notation tends to be at the core of analysis, historiography and interpretation. Notation often constitutes the document that is archived and disseminated more easily than its object, be it a performance, a culinary dish, or a building. (Rebelo, 2010, p. 17)

In order to reproduce an artwork, we should possibly save some records of the idea in some medium. As I already mentioned in the first chapter, Blitz's concept of *no nearness* is the deviation created by technology, the medium, which can transform and obliterate the understanding of the involved individuals in the music production system.

Features of music which are notable are explored and expanded via the medium of notation — features which are not remain in the background, their use implicit in the conventions of musical practice, or the subject of musical 'intuition' in performance, never raised to the level of conscious visualisable development and extension. (Wishart, 1985, p. 318)

For Wishart the music elements that cannot be notated are at risk of being obscured in the medium and can consequently be all too easily substituted by a similar element or can lose significance.

The fundamental thesis of this system is that music is ultimately reducible to a small finite number of elementary constituents with a finite number of 'parameters', out of which all sounds possibly required in musical practice can be notated by the combination of these constituents. (Wishart, 1985, p. 315)

Following Wishart's thinking about the divorce between sound reality and scores as medium, I also understand that in my case, using improvisation and live electronics with random parameters and real-time analyses controlling the sound transformations, the score is not an adequate medium to represent the sound result of the pieces. Moreover, I was not interested in allowing reproducibility at the expense of downgrading the sound possibilities and the close collaborative composition process with the specific musicians.

With this in mind, I decided to focus on the opposite direction and develop pieces that would depend on the specific musicians and would probably only be played one

time. This is not so different to the normal frequency of the presentation of a universal new music piece, which makes the performance moment a unique moment for the audience and musicians alike. The main objective of this proposition was to value the live presence of agents involved in making the pieces happens.

The video documentation of the concert in Vienna can be watched at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkH5McsTIks&t>

### *Comments about authorship*

In the next quote, I would like to share the comments from Theresia and Marianna about the authorship of the work answering the following question: “If the piece were presented on television/radio involving copyright distribution, how would you define your part of the work? How you would classify your authorship in the composition?”<sup>65</sup>

Theresia from Platypus:

Although my contribution to ‘Portrait in four’ was unusual and quite personal during preparation, I don’t consider myself as an author of the piece – I offered my interpretation as a musician, in this case also in the field of documentary filming, which of course was chosen and somehow ‘set in scene’ by myself. But the shape of the whole piece was conceived and formed by the composer.

Marianna from Platypus:

I am very happy and proud to be a part of the piece and much more than a player or an interpret. If it came to questions about copyrights distribution, I would always be happy to see my name on the list, but I am totally convinced that the authorship of the composition belongs to Vinicius Giusti. Without the main idea and lots of work of the composer none of us players would come to exactly this sound result. I love cooperating with

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<sup>65</sup> All comments here are quoted with permission.

composers and enjoy co-creating things because it makes me feel free and fulfilled. Nevertheless, I would not call myself the co-author of the piece that is as important as Vinicius Giusti.

### *Conclusion*

To conclude this commentary on the piece for Platypus Ensemble, I would like to simply quote Marianna's answer when I asked about the first thing that came to her mind when she thought about the piece and the performance:

I watched our performance video after almost two years and I must say it was a nice experience to see and remember things again that were partly buried in my memories. When I think about *Portrait in four*, joy and a nice feeling of creativity come to my mind. It took quite a long time to finish the piece; there were many things that each of us had to prepare. As the first step, I recorded some sounds from my flat and surroundings, my washing machine, my mixer which has a nice part in the last version of the piece :) and many more. It felt really nice to stay at home and react to the sounds coming out of my kitchen 'helpers' and to have a small musical chat with my washing machine. Sitting and reading in the balcony while it was raining or preparing a cup of tea were the typical things I always enjoy doing at home. This is why I feel joy and freedom when I think about *Portrait in four*. It shows many things from my life that probably don't mean anything to the others but show and describe me very well. I found our performance really enjoyable because it was a mix of showing my me-at-home, me-on-the-stage, me-at-work (on tour in China) and letting me improvise and react to the others and to the things and sounds happening in this moment.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> From private conversations between myself and Marianna Oczkowska (quoted with permission).

### **Trio SurPlus, *Portrait in Three***

This was my first attempt to put the improvisation sessions into practice, working individually with each musician. I had prepared the first version of the patch in Max, and created a strict agenda for our meetings in Freiburg, a graphic circle score with some sonic ideas and a list of sounds related to their personal lives, the last two preparations needed to guide our activities in these improvisations sessions. In order to create an immersive sound situation for the musicians in our improvisation sessions, I brought four speakers to create a quadriphonic sound system to surround the musicians with their own sounds, transformed by the patch in Max.

Usually, musicians have contact with live electronic pieces where the composer has already conceived the sound design and the structure of the piece. From the beginning of the composition process of these pieces, I proposed a space and time in which we could work collaboratively to develop a calm situation for the musicians to reinvent their instrument in an immersive sound situation. In this way, we could compose sound material together that could be recorded and be further transformed to compose the fixed electronic parts or have a first try at the live electronic programming that would be needed for the improvisation parts during the concerts.

I divided the first work phase in Freiburg into three main activities: developing the expansion of their instruments with live electronic tools in an immersive sound situation, performing field recordings in some places outside Olaf Tzschoppe's studio related to their everyday lives, and conducting short interviews with the musicians to gain

impressions about the compositional work in collaboration. The sound and visual material used to compose the piece was based on these activities.

The development of audiovisual material for the composition of the pieces was also directly related to their self-concepts, which could be situation-specific or domain-related. Therefore, appropriate care was always taken to be attentive to the exposition of the personal life of each participant, always checking if they were all in agreement with their image use in the visual part of the pieces, for example.

### *Field recordings*

While conducting field recording exercises<sup>67</sup> with the TrioSurPlus musicians and video-recording them walking around Freiburg, Karlsruhe and Frankfurt, I proposed developing extra-musical audiovisual material that would be related directly to their image, capturing sounds in their everyday surroundings. The musicians chose the places we would walk around to capture the sounds, and the proposal was that the places should be important for them in their daily lives. Olaf Tzschope decided on the *MünsterMarkt* in Freiburg, where he frequently buys delicious food to cook in his house.<sup>68</sup> The field recording was performed by me. Olaf did not feel comfortable walking in his familiar location while carrying the microphones and exploring the space. I completely

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<sup>67</sup> The experience I had with Igor, collecting sounds for the piece *Abirú* in a walking improvisation field recording with two microphones, was so exciting that I repeated it in most of the composition processes of the other pieces. In this way, I collected different experiences of this exercise with various kinds of professionals, each with their own sound identities, exploring their sound surroundings.

<sup>68</sup> I experienced many of his meals during the week that we were working together, and recorded these experiences as well, which also became parts of the piece at various points.

understood that carrying out these actions with cameras and microphones was quite a big self-exposition. However, he shared with me all his tactics to get better prices and good products at the market and various historical details of his favourite place in Freiburg. By chance, on one of the days of the video recordings, we had the opportunity to record an exceptional day for the market: an empty one. The market is normally open six days per week and almost always crowded with buyers and tourists. However, on the 26<sup>th</sup> February, it was one of the coldest days of winter 2018, around -8° Celsius, and only a small number of brave sellers and consumers decided to go to the market on that day. In addition, we both captured some images and sounds of the market and the people around.

With Christian Kemper, we were more fortunate regarding the weather, and he decided to pass by the Karlsruhe train station and walk until the zoo, coming back to the station. During this walk, I tried to capture different perspectives of him, field recording the various places we walked through. In different spots, we came across amazing sound situations, which we also described in the interview we had at the end of the recording day. Sound situations that were important to him became a priority for me to include in the sound material to compose the piece.

The first memory that comes to my mind, when I think of the collaboration on *Portrait in three* is the experience of acting as an ‘extended ear’ of the composer during our recording walk in my home town: although I was supposed to follow my own interests and impulses in terms of what sounds should be recorded, there was a certain 'double bind' aspect in this situation, since I was constantly aware of being filmed and collecting material for a purpose which then was rather impalpable for me. Thus, being in the so-perceived role of an ‘extended ear’ was an

interesting experience which I was completely comfortable with - more comfortable, indeed, than with the idea of being 'portrayed'.<sup>69</sup>

I started to explore the sound moments he described as most important to him as an important source of ideas to compose the piece. I focused my attention on understanding that sound mixture and trying to transpose it, so that it became an evincing moment of the piece. He described the mixture between cars passing through a tunnel and listening to the crescendo sound of water drops from the bridge when the cars go away, and this combination was totally unexpected for both of us. It just happened and became part of the sounds that we wanted to bring to the audience in the concert.

Daniel Lorenzo decided to walk in the area surrounding his house in Frankfurt-Sachsenhausen to perform the field recordings for the piece. It was a hot day, and we had a constant background of aeroplanes landing and departing. However, we also found interesting sound situations that made up part of the piece. Walking through a region of private gardens, we recorded the sounds of families enjoying the summer, a large irrigation system working and some bees. After some conversations with Daniel, I discovered his fascination with poetry and we decided to also video record the situation in which he is sitting declaiming a poem using a camera with a POV<sup>70</sup> perspective, which also made up part of the video for the piece.

Most of these important sound moments, recorded individually with members of the ensemble, are essential parts of the intermissions of the piece. Around 6'43" with

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<sup>69</sup> From private conversations between myself and Christian Kemper (quoted with permission).

<sup>70</sup> Point-of-View-Shot, a subjective perspective.



images and sounds captured with Christian, 17'32" recordings with Daniel and with Olaf around 21'06". However, the final part mixed video recordings of all members.<sup>71</sup>

### *Listening*

Presence – something is there. Of course, when we hear something, we can simply say ‘there was sound’. We can describe the sound literally using a wide variety of languages. (Emmerson, 2000, p. 1)

Simon Emmerson in his book, *Living Electronic Music*, also describes our perception system as a search engine. “This engine seeks to construct and interpret the environment ... The listener – is part of that environment and not a detached observer.” (ibid., p. 2) He divides the approach of the ‘search and response’ into three parts:

1) *Action and agency*. The listener can gain basic information on objects, agencies and actions in the world... [constructing possible sources] ... 2) *Psychological Presence: Will, Choice and Intention*. What are the options, choices and strategies open to the (surmised) agencies in the ‘auditory scene’? ... 3) *Personal and Social Presence*. Where are you? Who are you with? What do they mean to you? How do are relate to them? (Ibid., p. 2)

The musical performances presented as a result of the collaborative composition works here are a juxtaposition of video frames and sound slices that depict the everyday lives and sound identities of the musicians in different contexts. The performances are an audiovisual environment, composed to play with the audience’s search machine on all three of these levels. For example, with Trio SurPlus in *Portrait in three*, we can see the musicians’ playing actions in the video part, but sometimes the sounds are in sync and

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<sup>71</sup> The indications of time here are based on the video documentation of the concert: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dW6BdRnNjXw>

sometimes not: sometimes there are sounds that clearly do not fit with the reality. Another example is that the sounds surround the audience in rhythmical movements coming from all directions and not just the front where the musicians are located. Finally, the electronic sounds are based on field recordings and instrumental sounds, the videos feature normal everyday situations that connect different self-concepts of the musicians in serious musical engagement on the stage, a combination of different worlds, jumping from one to another. I would be pleased if someone in the audience, provoked by the performance, asked themselves “Where am I?” This would mean that the perception game had achieved one of the composition challenges. Moreover, an overall aim of this research was to raise more questions about perception than answers for those involved: composers, improvisers, musicians and listeners.

### *Improvisation and creative sessions*

The work with Olaf Tzschope, Christian Kemper and Daniel Lorenzo was also an incredible experience for me. They performed a great number of sounds, following our proposals to produce sounds by mixing their sound repertoire with the possible sound transformations available in the Max patch. They were very open to exerting themselves to try out all the sound possibilities accessible using their instruments. With Olaf and Christian, in Olaf’s studio, we created an immersive sound situation using the the four-channel speaker system, but in the studio with Daniel, we had problems with feedback because of the room’s format and the sensitive condenser microphones. In the end, we found a way to work with two headphones and a binaural simulation to recreate the spazialisation of the sounds that we were recording.

With all three performers, we produced some fascinating sound material, and I would say we only used around 20% of all the recordings we made while composing the piece. In some ways, I wish that we could find future possibilities to collaborate again and produce more pieces using the remaining 80% of the material, which is still very valuable. This characteristic of producing more sound material than was used in the piece was not exclusive to the composition process of this piece, but was something all the pieces composed in this portfolio had in common.

### *Portraiture Art*

The compositions dedicated research to each collaborator, in order to depict an essence or some unique characteristics of each individual. Inevitably, this raised thoughts of parallels between the composition process and the art of the portrait. Cynthia Freeland defines this genre of painting or photography:

The portrait encompasses distinct and even contradictory aims: to reveal the sitter's subjectivity or self-conception; and to exhibit the artist's skill, expressive ability, and to some extent, views on art. (Freeland, 2007, p. 97)

She suggests four ways that portraits can depict subjects, the first by being accurate likenesses:

[...] if it renders the person distinguishable and recognizable. [The second way] a portrait reveals subjectivity is by providing testimony to the presence of an individual person. [The third way] a portrait can render subjectivity is by offering information about the sitter's interior life and psychological states. [...] Fourth and last, a portrait can capture a person's essence or unique 'air'. (ibid. p. 100-101)

In the first phase of my composition process, I try to capture unique sounds and visual from each collaborator, rendering the musician's individuality and sound identity visible in the mediums I had available. In addition, in keeping with the portrait idea, I named the works with Trio Surplus *Portrait in three*, and the piece with Platypus *Portrait in four*, summarizing the work that began in an exploration of the singular individuals and culminated in the reunion of these individual musicians on the same stage.

### *Visual sound bonding*

Specifically, in the composition of this piece for Trio SurPlus, most of the gestural actions that produced sounds and which were recorded in video are linked and synced; or to put it another way, the images are bonded with the sounds, which do not represent a real or world situation or a real instrumental source. The sound events placed in sync with these images are composed sound events, resulting from the musicians and their instruments, with the Max patch sound elaboration. Therefore, in a figurative attempt to create strangeness, listening sounds are bonded with images that do not have a comfortable correlation with them.

Michel Chion, in his book *Audio-vision*, proposes a term that reflects on the opposite of acousmatic sound: "Schaeffer proposed 'direct' but since this word lends itself to so much ambiguity, we shall coin the term *visualized sound* – i.e., accompanied by the sight of its source or cause." (Chion, 1994, p. 72). Chion's proposition is to explain the relation between sounds and images in the field of cinema in general, which is directly related to explaining audiovisual relations following a hierarchical system in which the images are more relevant than the sounds.

From the perspective of my composition, the multi-channel fixed audio layer, composed with the material produced by me and the collaborators, received an additional layer of visual information, featuring portraits of their visual identities producing sounds or looking for sounds, which in most moments of the piece are not related with the real world, but instead the images are synced with another multi-channel constellation of sounds that surround the audience. In this way, the images bring extra conceptual information to the piece, but are not composed to be the essential part that the audience should perceive.

It is possible to watch the video projection and listen to the fixed electronic part (stereo reduction) following this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frHNXLcpuc>

The documentation of the concert can be seen at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dW6BdRnNjXw> .

### *Comments about authorship*

In order to conclude the commentary about *Portrait in Three*, I would like to share as well the comments from Daniel and Christian about the authorship of the work answering the following question: “If the piece were presented on television/radio involving copyright distribution, how would you define your part of the work? How you would classify your authorship in the composition?”<sup>72</sup>

Daniel from Trio SurPlus:

If the piece should be presented on the television/radio involving copyrights distribution, I don't think I should be tagged as any kind of co-creator or collaborator. Of course, I was more engaged in the birth of this piece but still I have nothing to do with the overall concept or how the music sound turned out. The only responsibility and merit lie in the composer, Vinicius Giusti. Besides the role of the score, during the process of composition I see myself rather as a generator of material or ideas, but this has nothing to do with authorship.

Christian from Trio SurPlus:

Therefore, I consider myself solely as a performer in this project and don't think of any authorship whatsoever on my part. Nevertheless, I remember *Portrait in three* as a rewarding project, during which I learned a lot about my self-perception as a performer - so it revealed some valuable personal aspects after all!

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<sup>72</sup> All comments here are quoted with permission.

## Hadt\_Spazio

*Hadt\_Spazio* was the name of the live electronic performance we presented in Berlin at AckerStadtPlast. Ogiermann already had a project called HADT\_, which explored unexpected analogue feedback sounds in his AKAI tape deck.<sup>73</sup> This tape deck is connected to a mixer, in which the input signals and outputs of the AKAI are directly linked, passing by the chain of the mixer, giving some control to Ogiermann to improvise. The AKAI tape deck has an individual overdrive safe control that in this unusual connection starts to generate intermittent and irregular feedback. In the end, these feedback sounds are the electronic part we transformed using my live electronic setup, which modified the electronic sounds from Ogiermann and diffused them in the space surrounding the audience. It is possible to listen to an example of this interaction between the feedback sounds and my live electronic transformations in our promotional video for the concert:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=6&v=1oOb58E74oQ&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=1oOb58E74oQ&feature=emb_logo)

### *Improvisation and creative sessions with Ogiermann*

We met for one week in Bremen, in Ogiermann's atelier and one week before the concert. In the first week, we started with the creative/improvisation sessions, recording hours of sound improvisations, video field recording in Das Viertel, the area where he

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<sup>73</sup> The AKAI tape deck is a model CS M01A.

lives in Bremen, and recording long conversations in a café and in his atelier, about capitalism, politics, music concepts, ideology, life in general, etc.

Working with him was a different experience for me, in which it was easier to define an open form to compose the piece and use an experimental approach to develop the collaboration. For example, from the beginning, we did not define an end result or a fixed format to present the collaboration to the audience. We were open to constructing only a video recording, or a bank of sounds for a sampler, which someone else could also use to compose a piece for Ogiermann and his sampler sounds. However, in the end, external conditions constrained us to hold a performance in Berlin, which is documented in the video. Despite that, we are still open to planning the next steps of our work collaboration.

I think it would be great to have a form of live-installation of the piece. That we could “live in”, go in and out, do something, transform it over a longer period, rather than making it as a piece.<sup>74</sup>

During the week before the concert we defined the form of the performance. We alternated between fixed moments of video and electronic parts, which we could choose to improvise over or not, and moments with only improvisation using the live electronics.

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<sup>74</sup> From private conversations between myself and Christoph Ogiermann (quoted with permission).



## The performance

For this performance, I composed four fixed electroacoustic pieces with video that were diffused in an eight-channel sound system. Ogiermann is an multi-instrumentalist improviser and in each piece of fixed electronic music we concentrated on investigating each one of these instruments. Video/Tape Part 1 is dedicated to his voice sounds and one of his texts and Part 2 to his keyboard sounds. His violin sounds are the source of Part 3, and Part 4 commits to his electronic sound repertoire.

Hadt\_Spazio 2018

Performance Form Score

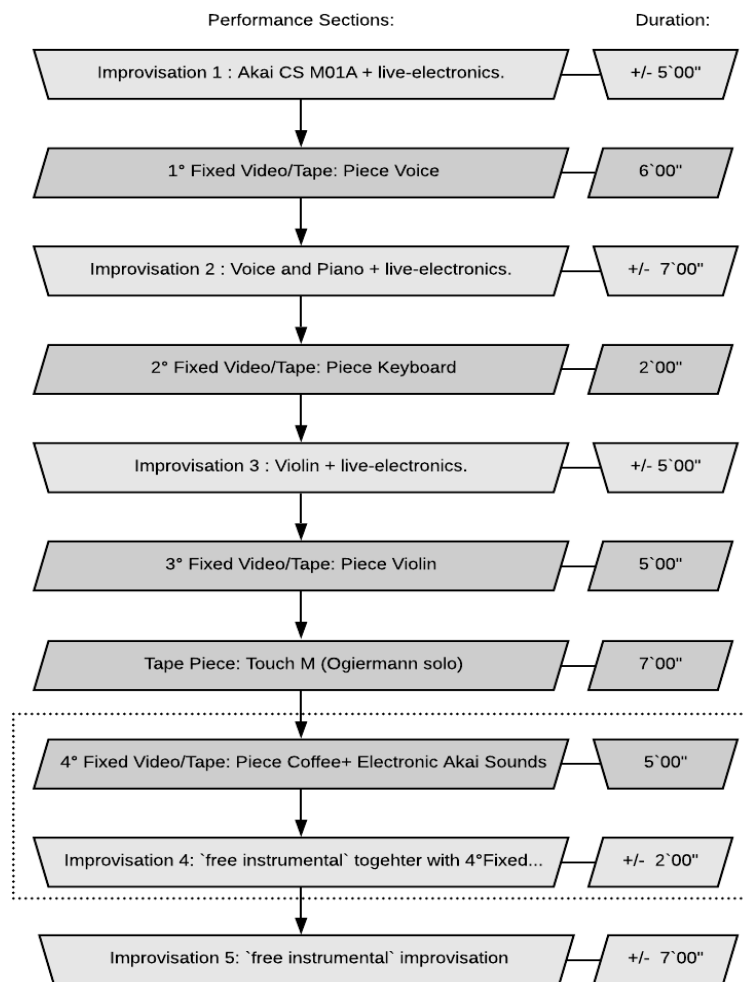


Figure 15 – Performance form score for the presentation of *Hadt\_Spazio*

*The four fixed video/tape pieces*

All these pieces were also composed to allow Ogiermann to improvise over them during the concert, if he wished to do so. There are moments of low activity and intensity in sound gestures that create a space that can be filled by another layer of sound events.

The videos with the stereo reduction of the fixed electronic part can be accessed and watched at the following links.

#first tape: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOdJEyOu4eM>

The voice sounds, singing, screaming and the use of the words poetically or politically are one of the strengths of Ogiermann's artistic expression in his sound repertoire. His work with words and voice sounds has a strong sound identity that characterises his improvisation work. The original text that was recorded in our improvisation and creative sessions in his studio was also written by him:

flatus:  
" w y [aç]  
! äh \_\_\_\_\_  
(bläää)

*All zu Sam: W `hx! - W `hx! - W `hx! - W `hx!*  
*der ChinaMann vom Zirkus*  
*solspiraio*  
*den Maul zum Furz*  
**culgeule**  
*coltgold*  
*All Es Gleichmacher*  
**EquiFuckTuss**  
*(non! und the Same time:*  
*Schimpfwort Allmende)*

FRACK MEN

**froid:**

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(erhatte aber die Gewohnheit über die gekachelten Wände der U-  
bahnensola ngemit den Händen zu fahren bis sich die Handflächen  
an den Fugen blutig gerissen hatten)

**KACHÈL central (Mischna)**  
die *note* den Körper tauschen lassen  
habeas corpus ad subjiciendum

(Gemara)  
"soll ich, wenns  
dunkelt,  
den Beutel am Körper  
lassen,  
ihn einem  
ungläubigen geben  
oder über den e-  
sel werfen"

**Teilhhaber**  
als Leibhaber

Trans Sub Starre  
! unten drunter fest bleiben !  
UniVersalie sein:  
Geld *note a* Neutrum  
*shine*  
:: am **corps** kleben  
abakaderabera  
*other corps:: (accelerando a tempo oszillospeed)*

ELEKTROONENGELDWOLKENNOOSPHERE (et in Arcadia sumus)

Moneterrismus  
GELDGasmenge  
(bläää)  
in conditio flatus

Fett steigt auf  
Zwiebeln steigen auf  
Staudensellerie steigt auf  
Kohl steigt auf  
Hülsenfrüchte steigen auf  
Knäckebrot steigt auf  
Sauerkraut steigt auf  
Melone steigt auf

Methan steigt auf  
(Rammnose und Stach*Hypnose*)

The piece does not use the entire text; some parts are only visual text, and some parts are only sounding without text. Additionally, for the sound material, I also used his voice in our conversation at the café, talking about politics, organisation of concerts, critical discussion on new music, and about the project.

#second tape: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQOH46C1nUM>

This is a short video piece of 2 minutes that was filmed in the most well-known corner of Bremen, portraying Ogiermann in the field recording tasks that I proposed also to Trio SurPlus. In order to create the visual metaphorical idea for the piece, the improvisers captured sounds on the fly in one of their everyday environments.

#third tape: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_KNluQqKaxo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_KNluQqKaxo)

The third fixed electronic part is a good example of the sound mixing of Ogiermann's violin sound repertoire and sound elaboration due to the use of the multiple sound player combined with the live Max patch.

#fourth tape: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AW76wMauII>

The fourth and last fixed part is also based on the sound that named Ogiermann's project Hadt\_, the electronic feedback sounded by his analog tape machine AKAI CS M01A in loop with a mixer. The video tape started with a documentation of our long conversation in a café, at the famous Bremen corner. The conversation was edited so that there was no clear sense of what we were talking about, but it still expressed our enthusiasm. Following this, we have the electronic fixed piece that was composed using a

similar process as the others: a montage of the resulting sounds of the combination between the live patch in Max with the multiple sound player, sounding selected sounds of the tape machine. This part is the best representation of the announcement that we promoted for the concert: the feedback source is now connected to a live electronic real-time system of fragmentation, temporal change and spatialisation, leading to a “forest” with screaming “animals” and thundering masses of sound surrounding the audience.

### *Audiovision*

The video parts displayed in the pieces could also be considered as bridges for the audience to visit a world outside of the concert situation. The video recordings are not embellished to the standards of cinematographic art, and in the video montage there are numerous blackout moments, to avoid the visual attractiveness distracting from the audience’s capacity to listen to the performance or a rethorical visual strategy to compose the visual part of the pieces. However, when I was using the videos to compose the pieces, I was conscious of how Michel Chion describes the audiovisual combination:

[...]one perception influences the other and transforms it. We never see the same thing when we also hear; we don’t hear the same thing when we see as well. We must therefore get beyond preoccupations such as identifying so-called redundancy between the two domains and debating interrelations between forces. [ ... I formulate] the audiovisual as a contract – that is, as the opposite of a natural relationship arising from some sort of pre-existing harmony among the perceptions. (Chion, 1994, p. xxvi)

As already mentioned, the live presence of the performers in parallel with the video of their images in deferred time or space situations, created a contrast between the professional self-identity and the everyday life self-identity in the pieces composed here.

This is not a unique characteristic of my work: Hannes Seidl and Daniel Kötter composed *Freizeitskapel* in 2010 for the Neue Vocalisten Ensemble and the duality presented in this piece is similar to what I intended in my works here. This gave the audience the opportunity to experience the presence of two self-concepts of the performers at the same time in the performance, and constructed an attractive narrative for the piece.<sup>75</sup>

Other new music productions in recent years have presented ways to deal with the dichotomy of live performance and video projection of the same performers on stage. The live video elaboration in real time is not the main theme here, because I would like to contextualise my work alongside other composers who follow a similar composition proposition dialogue between video and live performance. Pedro Gonzales Fernandez's work *4 mouths* for Volan ensemble, is an example of work that approximates my perspective, showing interviews with the musicians portraying their point of view about their own thoughts. Andreas Eduardo Frank and his series of pieces *Me & Myself* also presents the soloists in multiple facets. Moreover, the videos can be reconstructed to accompany different performers without any attachment to the identity of the musicians that premiered the piece. Andreas's approach is also similar with composer Emilio Guim's perspectives. Michel van der Aa wrote *One* for the soprano Barbara Hemminger, in which the video is a duo with her other selves in the presentation. Additionally, Brigitta Muntendorf developed her composition series *public privacy*, by composing a mixture of

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<sup>75</sup> The partnership between Seidl and Kötter did not stop with that piece. They are responsible for *Fernorchester* in 2011 for ensemble Mosaick, *Recht* in 2015 for ensemble Nadar, *Liebe* in 2016, with Wolfram Sander and *Land* in 2018, with Andrew Digby, Paul Hübner, Ona Ramos, Elsa Scheidig, Gabriel Trottier. I believe *Freizeitskapel* and *Fernorchester* are pieces certainly dependent of the determined musicians involved in the composition process. The others are not so dependent of the identity of the musicians that took part in the video recordings.

performance between youtubers' videos and the live presence of a professional soloist on stage, all of them playing together in sync following the structure of the piece.

The images in the video recordings documenting the performers were an essential aspect in all the compositions of this portfolio. However, I would like to emphasise that the video, the image media, works for me as a passport for the audience to better know and gain an impression (during the performance) of the other multiple self-identities of the performers in front of them.

### *Some conclusions on working with Ogiermann*

I believe that we both had good experiences in this project. As we have the same self-concept function in the project as composer and improviser, it was not always easy to take the decision to move forward in the composition process. However, as experienced musicians, we managed these simple difficulties and created a comfortable situation to compose the performance. Another point I found interesting in our work came up during some of our analyses of the performance, when Ogiermann expressed a little exhaustion at being the only sound source in our collaboration, as I was only transforming his sounds with the live electronics. My live electronic actions and sounds were dependent on him. This was the result of my proposal and the way our work developed, and I believe neither he nor I could have foreseen that this would become difficult for us. Another decision that we took early on in the composition process, which on reflection I believe could have been different, was my on-stage persona. It was a probably a good contrast for those in the audience, due to the different ways I performed the live electronics and how active Christoph was on the stage. However, for me, it was a painful decision. First of all, I lost

control of the sound direction, so that I was not listening to what the audience was listening to. It was someone else controlling the resulting sound mixing from both of us to the audience. In this way, I lost the possibility to improvise a dynamic narrative of what was in my mind in specific moments of the performance.

Secondly, the performative difference between both of us was tremendous. Ogiermann was the active persona he normally is on stage, and my position was entirely the opposite. Nevertheless, these are questions that we are already solving for the next performances together. Some of these, I already improved in the composition with the performance Tra Due, with Johannes Buttler.

The documentation of the concert can be seen at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fO0A9u1Cn9o&t>



## Tra Due

We began the work with the main idea of dedicating a week of the composition process to improvisation/creative sessions. We were in Leipzig in summer, 2019, in a great hall with multiple percussion and electronic instruments at our disposal. Over the course of the week, we developed and recorded sounds together, deciding which instruments we would like to explore more, video recorded in places related to Johannes's everyday life, prepared nice meals and discussed the details of the piece.

### *The improvisation or creative sessions*

From the beginning until the end of the creative sessions, we documented all of our activities in both video and audio. However, at the end of putting together the montage, I took the decision to compose the piece without images, as I had done with *Abirú*. This was mainly because I felt that it would be a great experience to have one of the pieces composed with live electronics, following my proposal for the composition process, and without using images as a support for the audience in addition to the sounds.

However, the visual material that we dedicated time and effort to creating was still a valuable resource to compose a second piece with Johannes, one that could bring different kinds of imaginary visual scenes to the audience. For *Tra Due*, we decided to use only the sound and spatialisation features to illustrate the different sound environments that portrayed Johannes's self-concepts.

The whole piece allows the audience to listen to someone playing percussion instruments featuring different perspectives and situations. All of these are also linked

with the possibility of listening to Johannes playing his multiple self-concepts as a musician who acts and plays different styles of music. We had the opportunity to record in unusual places in the Leipzig surroundings. These included some water channels for irrigation, abandoned trail stations and some historical sites. Of course, without the visual reference, this information is lost to the audience. However, at the same time, listening to these places without any visual information gives other possibilities to our imaginations. Possible relationships may arise that are not related to cultural and historical contexts that bond the sound to specific places, instead giving the space to the audience to imagine their own sound world.

In order to situate one way to listen the piece, it is important to mention that the repertoire of sounds used to compose the piece was recorded in our interactions during this week together. A good example of this was an occasion where I sat beside Johannes in his car. He was driving through the city to a lake for a walk and I was trying to capture all the unique sounds that his car produces. At a certain point, we came to a stop, and he started to improvise with all the electrical parts of his car, because when the radio is on, these electrical commands create aleatory interference in the sounds of the radio. This documentation makes up part of the sounds that I used to compose the main parts of the electronic part of the piece: the first electronic fixed part is based on these recordings.

When we arrived home after recordings, we would cook together, discuss the most interesting spot we had found, with outstanding sounds and images, and document it in words.

## *Improvisation*

Improvisation was a constituent element in my compositions from the moment I started composing pieces with live electronics. I could not dissociate the idea of the words *live, have life, be alive*, from the term 'live electronics'. It has become a constant in my composition work: if I used any live electronic technique, then open parameters for the performers would be part of the instructions for those pieces.

There is no script for social and cultural life. People have to work it out as they go along. In a word, they have to *improvise*. ... First it is *generative*, in the sense that it gives rise to the phenomenal forms of culture as experienced by those who live by them or in accord with them. Second, it is *relational*, in that it is continually attuned and responsive to the performance of others. Third, it is *temporal*, meaning that it cannot be collapsed into an instant, or even a series of instants, but embodies a certain duration. Finally, improvisation is the *way we work*, not only in the ordinary conduct of our everyday lives, but also in our studied reflections on these lives in fields of art, literature and science. (Ingold and Hallam, 2007, p. 1)

Improvisation offers the possibility to re-focus the audience's and musicians' minds on the immediate moment, as if that were the last possible moment of listening to or playing the piece that is being performed. This is a natural characteristic of improvisational music. In the case of this portfolio, the compositions were not composed to be a direct communication from sound producers to receivers, the musicians and the listeners. Instead, the pre-composed fixed electronics also guided the musicians and gave the audience the opportunity to observe the musicians in the position of listeners as well. They were also listening and reacting to a world of sounds that were based on the collaborative work, transforming their own sounds.

Improvising music, it appears, is best envisioned as an artistic *forum* rather than an artistic *form*; a social and sonic space in which to explore various

cooperative and conflicting interactive strategies. It highlights process over product creativity, an engendered sense of uncertainty and discovery, the dialogical nature of real-time interaction, the sensual aspects of performance over abstract intellectual concerns, and a participatory aesthetic over passive reception. Its inherent transience and expressive immediacy even challenge the dominant modes of consumption that have arisen in modern, mass-market economies and the sociopolitical and spiritual efficacy of art in general. (Borgo, 2007, p. 34)

*The form that the piece took*

The piece is a result of our long work together. Johannes and I have worked on other projects together, so this piece benefits from our common language, which we had already developed.

The piece has a form interleaving electronic fixed parts and improvisation sets with electronic sound manipulations. The following graphical representation gives a clearer understanding of the structure of the piece:

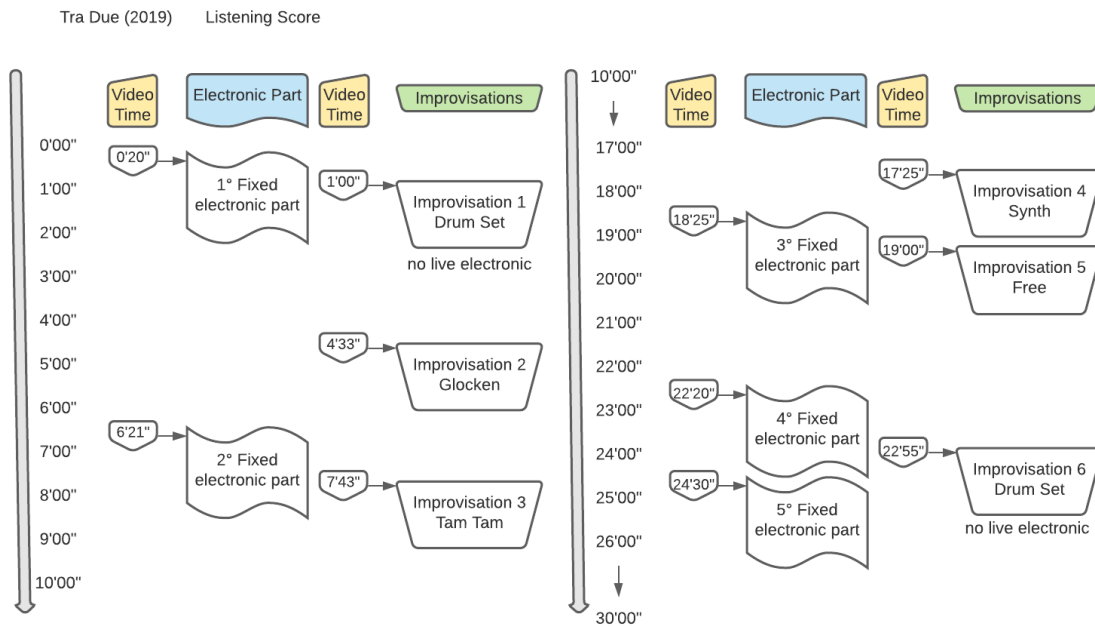


Figure 16 – *Tra Due* – Listening score

The documentation of the concert can be seen at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nphOpw154UM&t> .

## Chapter 5 – Conclusions

I will take advantage of this concluding chapter to list an agglomeration of thoughts that went in multiple directions immediately after this research. Some are about doing and learning, and how the applied composition process developed during the research period. Some are exciting ideas, about how the idea of musical identities is an extensive topic to be explored and researched. Some are concerns on things it is necessary to change, like the repetition of old organisational ideas in our music production chain or how we look at distributed creativity from the wrong perspective, often arriving at solutions that are more illustrative than effectively fair distribution. Some are future plans for the next pieces or composition proposals with other artists. Some are how to create advanced live electronic environments to develop these further compositional projects. However, most of these thoughts are impressions after the experience of composing all these different pieces in close collaboration with fascinating people who dedicate their lives to making music.

As regards doing and learning, it is worth mentioning that the composition process evolved with each piece. During the activities and experience with each musician, I perceived ways to better propose the experimental and atypical requests to the next participants in the general composition project.

My next observation is about identities in music and how, after clarifying these concepts, I was able to drive the composition process in a direction that took the self-concepts of the musicians into account. Consequently, I was able to develop the audiovisual material for the pieces with more care, and to create a more comfortable situation for the musicians. Identities in music also became a central topic in this

research, and it was an important connection between the social function and the personality behind the instrument. The presence of the personas that are revealed at certain moments in the pieces are revealed precisely because of the way the pieces were composed. The diagram below attempts to illustrate how these concepts of identities are interrelated. It is a complex illustration, partly because it is clearly a system in a feedback chain, in which each identity category is defined but nonetheless influences the other categories in return.

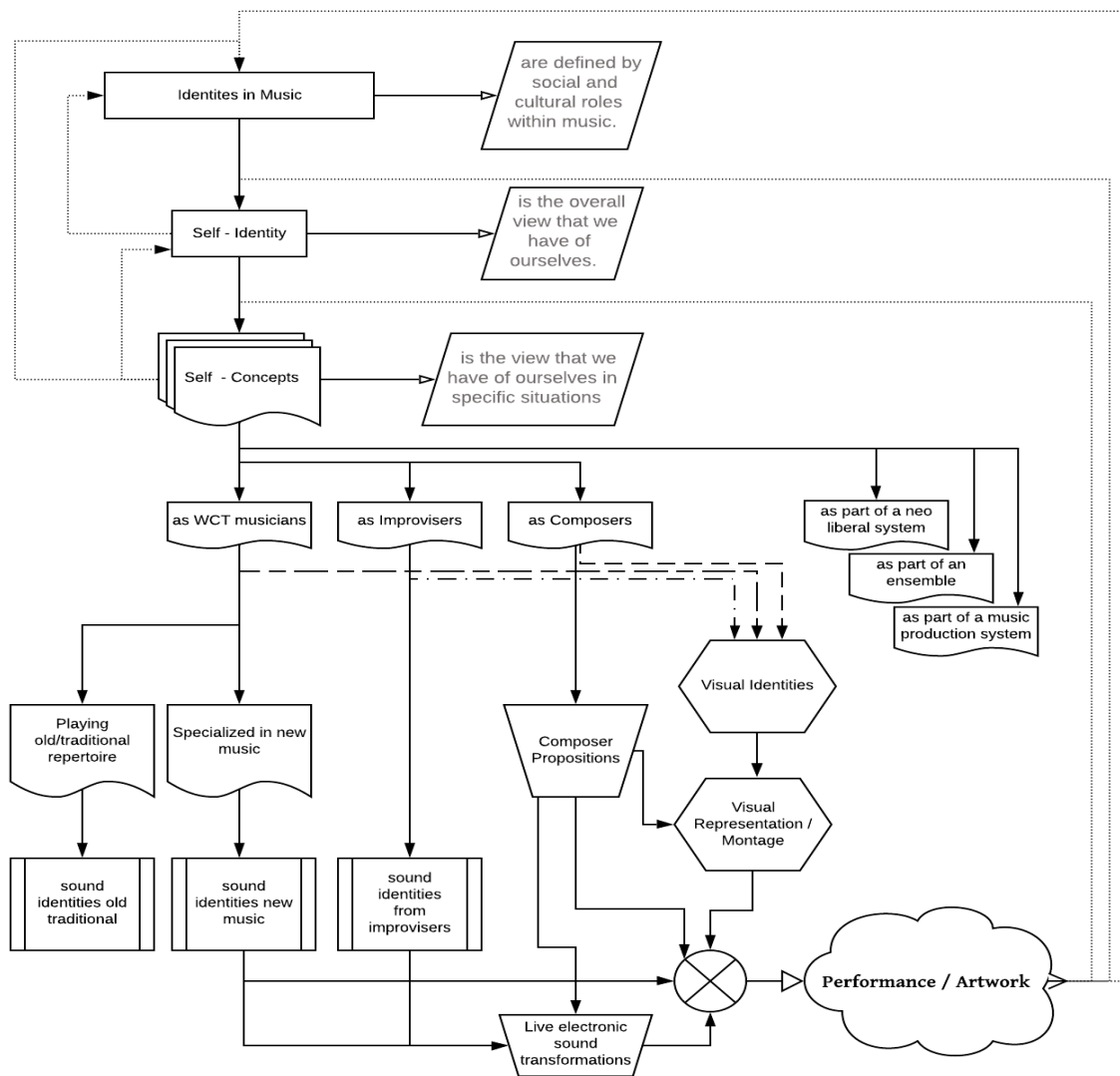


Figure 17 – Identities in music and sound identities

Some of these ideas are related to the collaborative work, which is normally viewed as a fairer way to work than a strict music production company, such as an orchestra specialised in playing a classical repertoire. Or in other words, a project based on distributed creativity is viewed as one that allows more individuality to each participant in the project. However, after this work, I believe that it is also possible to have collaborative projects that give unequal recognition of the participants' work and an inefficient management of time and payments. It is important to demystify the process. If a project is collective and collaborative, it is not a guarantee that the value and recognition of the creative work of all those involved will be recognized in a responsible way. It is difficult, but nonetheless crucial, to be efficient in this distribution of royalties or responsibilities in collaborative works.

I suggest that there are two things that can sometimes make collaborative work more difficult in some moments than strict hierarchical processes: First, if you propose a diverse and experimental modus operandi of work to someone, this requires more effort to learn, and simultaneously, other efforts to de-automatise or deconstruct processes that were already ready to be used. Second, in long collaborative processes, and particularly in experimental ones, the development of the work is dynamic and can change directions abruptly, sometimes in conflict with the initial proposal. These situations are not always comfortable for everyone involved in the project. So, they require more effort to adapt to the new objectives. In conclusion, the way to deal with these difficulties in collaborative and experimental proposals to make music is simple: always maintain good communication and respect the visual, sound, work experience, self-concepts and



personal privacy of the musicians and non-artists who accept the challenge to take part in such research work.

### **Reflections on successes and failures**

As already mentioned in this conclusion, the composition of the pieces could be described as a linear development process of composition, in which the previous pieces influenced the composition process of the later pieces. Either the aesthetic ideas observed during the practical development of the collaborative work with the musicians or the solutions for organizational adversities during the concerts became a source of analysis for the next composition work.

In this project, one characteristic was better clarified in the year 2018, the year in which most of the pieces were premiered: the presence of the audience was crucial for the concluding presentations of each work. As the compositions focused on the elaboration of a live performance, in which unique elements relate to and hold the sound world of each instrumentalist or improviser, the live presentation is the ideal expression of the artwork composed in each singular project. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that in projects including a great number of real-time events individual to the performance, the presence of the audience is crucial for the integral perception of the artistic object that results from the composition process.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, by investing time in the promotion of

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<sup>76</sup> It is also important not to confuse the audio-visual documentation material for the result of the artistic work in this kind of composition process.

the event and if possible, organizing multiple concerts in the following days using the infrastructure already organized for the one performance, we can enhance the result, by presenting the performance to a larger audience.<sup>77</sup>

The documentation video also served as a source of additional insights into the composition process. For example, watching the documentation video of the composition of *Portrait in four* for the Ensemble Platypus, it was clear that a language support text accompanying the video would bring another layer of information for the audience, emphasising the game of images and the presence of objects from the daily life of the musicians. From my observations after analyzing the results of the performance, it was evident that if a textual element could be a constituent element of the video in the piece with Platypus, it would open another interpretative door for the audience and add a significant layer to the work in parallel with the personal videos recorded by them. I then developed this compositional strategy of using texts as an extra layer of material on the piece in the next composition work with Ogiermann. The Ogiermann composition work is strongly influenced by poetry and speech sound content, which became an essential element in the piece that was included as part of the performance. This is a clear example in which the experience of the earlier practices influenced decisions in subsequent composition processes.

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<sup>77</sup> At the premiere of *Hadt\_Spazio* in Berlin, with Christoph Ogiermann, we had the chance to present the concert twice, and to document it, on two subsequent days. For us, it was a valuable opportunity to compare the two versions from one day to another. We also invited the audience from the first day to return to the second day for free, so they could experience another version of the piece on the second day.

Related to this, the production of the piece *Tra Due* turned out to be an important point of differentiation that offers a clear comparison between the pieces composed in this portfolio. *Tra Due*, in its presentation, did not include any visual layer accompanying the sound performance. Although during the improvisation sessions we were interested in developing visual materials for the final piece, in the final stages of production I decided not to include any visual elements captured on video, and we focused on creating sound sessions that somehow represented Johannes' multiple sound identities without visual representation aids. I believe that this decision was crucial to developing a deeper reflection regarding which layers and types of media are essential when creating these references to an extra-musical sound world within musical contexts, related to specific persons and expanding the ways of expressing oneself musically. *Tra Due* is the proof in this constellation of pieces that is possible to bound a specific person with a sound artwork depending on sounds and performative elements, and not contingent on visual media depicting or representing the visual person identities.

One key element for the written part of this thesis was the consequence of striving from the beginning to experiment with a composition process in which the composer does not assume the position of the sole decision maker for each project. This experience of reflecting from the beginning of the research process on the composer's position, as one who does not provide a structured and scored sound plan to the musicians but instead creates opportunities so that the material can be composed in collaboration with the musicians, probably influenced the written commentary on the pieces. This assumed a more descriptive journalistic point of view than a compositional aesthetic statement.

The pieces developed in this portfolio comprise multiple sound and image elements organized in a musical performance presented to an audience by specific performers. The pieces share a common characteristic, the compositions are an interweaving of compositional lines or modes and disciplines. In the performance as it is presented to the audience, this creates an immersive sonorous world comprising (1) a layer of field recordings and images from the everyday life of the musicians, (2) a layer of electronically arranged and spatialized sounds based on previous recordings in the improvisation sessions, (3) a layer of real-time sound transformation by the multi-channel live-electronics and (4) an acoustic improvisation layer exclusive to each performer and to the performance. These sound layers are not all present for the listener simultaneously. The pieces are structured to show its different combinations and with certain abrupt or smooth transitions between one each. The pieces are presented to the audience in such a way that the audience can jump from one combination of visual and sound layers to another. The presence of the musicians involved in the composition process becomes the main connection that maintains coherence between all these sound layers in these conceptual musical proposals. They are the main key to connect all these sounds perspectives presented at the performance of each piece, following the initial intentions of this research project.

Specifically, the artworks developed in this portfolio have an intensive relationship with the personal identities of the musicians that performed and who were the subjects of the pieces. These musical pieces were made from fragments of the self-identities of each musician involved in the composition process. Moreover, due to the undissolved performative part in each piece from each musician, the pieces portray

different perspectives to the audience, or better, present the multiple perspective of their sound worlds in diverse multimedia layers. Each piece had a different sound result following the approach defined and molded by the composition situation and by the unique interaction with the musicians who are the main source material for each piece.

### **Further developments**

I would like briefly to mention that my next composition project will be a piece for Rei Nakamura, mixing piano, video and live electronics, developing a collaborative composition process that builds on the knowledge gained during this research. Moreover, I will resume my efforts to seek funding to continue the project with Tomomi Adachi, which unfortunately was interrupted by the difficulty of finding financial funds to carry it out. Finally, I intend to develop new sound transformation modules in Max 8, which now offers a multi-channel object system that facilitates the control and connection of multi-channel modules. I hope that this will enable me to create new ways to interact with the musicians' sound identities, multiplying their sounds using a multi-channel diffusion system.

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