It is not My Music, it is the Film's Music

Collaboration in the Making of Music for *Janusz*

Anne Teikari

Film composing, MA

Conservatorium van Amsterdam 2023

Advisors: Sini Mononen, Patrick Schenkius

Research coordinator: Yaniv Nachum

NON-PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

I declare

1. that I understand that plagiarism refers to representing somebody else's words or ideas as one's own;
2. that apart from properly referenced quotations, the enclosed text and transcriptions are fully my own work and contain no plagiarism;
3. that I have used no other sources or resources than those clearly referenced in my text;
4. that I have not submitted my text previously for any other degree or course.

Name: Anne Teikari   Place: Amsterdam

Date: 4.1.2023   Signature:

ABSTRACT

Anne Teikari

FILM MUSIC IS NOT MY MUSIC, IT IS THE FILM'S MUSIC

Collaboration in the Making of Music for *Janusz*

Inherently, film is a collaborative art form. The idea of a film composer as a collaborator fights against the romantic, mythical concept of a classical composer that we are used to. The "God-like" genius who extracts their wizardry on the note paper apart from the worldly matters, gets wrecked as soon as the first music demo is sent from the film composer to the film director. It is rare that the first demos are accepted as such, rather takes a lot of tries to set the music in its right place in the film. This requires from the film composer a skill to look at the film in addition to listening to it: The film is about the story, not about my music.

In this MA thesis, I focus on the collaboration of making music for a film, and how the communication of the crew produces decisions that can be seen and heard in the film. As a case study, I will look at a 10-minute-long short film *Janusz* (2022)*,* to which I composed the music during my first year of studies.

The aim of this thesis is to produce information about the collective nature of making film music. In a film, there are multiple viewpoints from different professional backgrounds affecting the compositional work, so what kind of roles and makers are present in building the music?

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

Film Music is not My Music, it is the Film's Music –
Made in Collaboration

As a part of my film composing master's degree at the Conservatory of Amsterdam, I will focus in this final thesis on the collaborative nature of making music for a film, and how the communication of the crew produces decisions that can be seen and heard in the film. As a case study, I will look at a 10-minute-long short film *Janusz,* to which I composed the music during my first year of studies, and how the music was sewed in the film during the editing process.

The aim of this research is to produce information about the collective nature of making film music. In a film, there are multiple viewpoints from different professional backgrounds affecting the compositional work, so what kind of roles and makers are present in building the music?

Janusz was directed in the beginning of 2022 by film directing student Matthijs Sluijs. The editor of *Janusz* was editing student Coen Hagenaars. The three of us held a close collaboration during the editing process of the film. At the time, both Sluijs and Hagenaars were third-year students at the Netherlands Film Academy. The editing process of *Janusz* took place during February and March 2022, and its premiere was at the Netherlands Film Academy in May 2022.

Janusz is a story about a teenaged boy called Janusz, whose family consists of him and his mother with whom he holds a close relationship. While working at the same orchard Janusz starts to realize that his mother is having a relationship with the boss of the orchard, the farmer. The feeling of abandonment shakes Janusz so that he decides to leave his home – to look for an emotional and physical home elsewhere.

The story is set in a small village with a vast Polish immigrant community in the Netherlands. This way, the idea of looking for a home, a connection to people, is an inherent part of the setting of the film.

The emotional evolvement of Janusz is the center point of the story. We see a teen boy looking older than his actual age is. He is walking on the roads, and as viewers we are not sure of what he is looking for. At the end, he finds a place where he feels safe enough to express his feelings. The outburst of his emotions tells us that he was looking for a mother, a human connection, all along.

In my previous profession as a musicologist, I was already interested in the people who were making music. I found myself interested in that yet again, but now also as an artist, a film composer myself.

While looking for material for this research, I happened to watch a lot of interviews with the actor Adam Driver. He seemed to verbalize the way I look at making film music; how everything gathers around collaboration. When Driver was asked if there was anything from his military experience that affected his acting career, he answered:

> "... the things that are great about [military] are directly applicable to being an actor. You have to know your role within the team. ... If you don't do your job, then someone else is not going to do their job as well. ... There's a bigger picture that has nothing to do with any one of us, that we're working towards." (SAG Aftra Foundation 2019.)

The job description of a film composer might have more similarities with a screenwriter than an actor, but the collaborative nature of making a film is a part of every section of filmmaking. Inherently, film is a collaborative art form. As a result, I am, for instance, trying to become more fluent in my workflow not only for the sake of being more fluent in my workflow, but for the sake of the jobs of the editor, the sound designer, the musicians, the recording engineer, and the mixing engineer would be easier.

The idea of a film composer as a collaborator fights against the romantic, mythical concept of a classical composer that we are used to. The "God-like" genius who extracts their wizardry on the note paper apart from the worldly matters, gets wrecked as soon as the first music demo is sent from the film composer to the film director. It is rare that the first demos are accepted as such, rather takes a lot of takes to set the music in its right place in the film – based on the vision of the director. The process of making music for a film might involve many insights from several people in the team. In my experience as a film composer this process is frightening, humbling, and most of all fun and rewarding.

Image, sound effects, dialogue, and music-track in a film are inseparable for the audience. They form "a combinatoire of expression" (Gorbman 1987, 16). Behind this combinatoire are several professions and professionals, a bunch of communication between them, decision-making and negotiation. I'd say that roughly at least 80% of filmmaking is talking with people. Everything in a film is an outcome of communication and decisions based on that communication. The collaboration cannot be extracted out from the outcome, as the film does not reveal the discussions it is based on (i.e. Kuusela 2020, 67).

It is worth acknowledging that the conversation about collaborative process of art making is a conversation about the context of art. Revealing what happened "behind the scenes" is not needed to describe the art piece itself, but to describe how it was born and what kind of meanings one wants to connect into it. (Kuusela 2020, 67.)

Making film music is about how the music can serve the story, literally the bigger picture. This puts the film composer's perspective to look at the film: the film is about the film and its story, not about my music.

The organic collaboration that we shared with the director and the editor while editing *Janusz* made it feel almost as if the music was an embroidery to a long scarf, which was the film. This

means the way all the image, music, and sound design elements create the film together. To me, this concept depicts the overall sensory experience that film can convey to its viewers. Hence, in this thesis, I will look at film as what Michel Chion (2009, x) calls "a sensory text", or audio-viewing.

In the second chapter, I am going to lay a theoretical background to look at the collaboration of making music for a film. I will do this by not only focusing on the research made about film music. A film collects versatile different art forms together from visual arts to literature, from sound design to performance arts. I will look at art forms that are standardly made individually, such as literature, and compare what it brings out from the collaborative nature of making a film (Kuusela 2020).

To have a closer look at the different roles of collaboration in a film, I will look at makers of a film in the light of Annette Arlander's (2020) division in to three categories of being an author: the signing author, the maker, and the influential factors. I will also look at how the ideal of collaboration does not mean that there was no room for a birth of the genius myth, where the individual artist is put on a pedestal.

In the third chapter, I look at the functions of film music from the perspectives of music as a manipulative device defining image, and the flexibility of film music which allows it to be an inherent part of the story. Composing music for a film means not only making music that is connected to the image, but music that is connected to the overall story.

The fourth chapter considers the methodology and data gathering of this research. As the main method has been artistic research. The art making process, the praxis, has been an essential part of the research.

Main part of the research data are the interviews made separately with the director and editor of *Janusz*. As a part of the interviews, we watched three scenes from *Janusz* and analyzed the

music together in retrospective. In addition, I used my own notebooks and music demos as a research data. In the chapter five, the analysis, I go through the data using thematic content analysis.

In the conclusive sixth chapter I will look at the music making process of *Janusz* in the light of what the process taught me as a composer and a collaborator myself, and how the question of collaboration with this crew was able to produce the decisions that can now be seen and heard in *Janusz*.

COLLABORATIVE NATURE OF COMPOSING FOR FILM

A Composer in a Film Crew

Composing for the Films (1942) by Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler is one of the main analysis pieces made about film music. Adorno and Eisler write about Classical Hollywood film industry in that took place around 1910s–1960s in particular and set the standard for the craft for a long time since. To make a comparison to what making film music can be today, I chose to use this opus as a background. Making music for a film nowadays differs from that quite a lot. Not only in the ways of how the technicalities and aesthetics of making a film have evolved during the years, but within this, the profession and role of a film composer has changed and become more diverse.

Still, the modern film often gets comparison to the classic Hollywood era. Since then, for example the use of source music, music that has already been composed, and especially popular music, has become more and more common in films. There are films in which the music is basically only source music – Stanley Kubrick's and Quentin Tarantino's films as the most famous examples. The role of a composer was not always equal with others in the crew. Adorno and Eisler describe it as follows:

> "[U]nder average circumstances, the composer is far from enjoying equal rights with the producer, script writer, or film director. Film composer is considered as a specialist. … they are only loosely connected with the enterprise and can be easily dismissed." (Adorno & Eisler 1947, 90.)

This statement depicts the approaches of its own time. It was for example possible – and I guess still is – that the music ordered from the composer was not used in the film in the end at all. This

can be seen telling about the subsidiary position of a film composer compared to other makers in the film crew, such as director, who are seen as more "creative".

As a film composer working 75 years later, I see this statement somewhat old-fashioned on the other hand, but also as an accurate description of the core position of a film composer. The old-fashionedness lies in that the writers almost seem to victimize the film composer, opposed to the great technological and organizational powers of filmmaking. The accurate part is that a film composer is not working as a "free artist", but as a collaborator and musical executor, who makes the music to serve the film, and usually has to compromise musical decisions considering that.

Composers' freedom in their expression is dependent not only of their skills and artistic vision, but the support they can obtain outside the music department. The extent to which the composer succeeds to influence the musical planning, performance and recording procedure depends on their authority and adroitness (Adorno & Eisler 1947, 91). For a composer, it is important to not only "stay in touch" with the director considering the music, but to see the filmmaking as a teamwork. Gathering acceptance and being in touch with the crew more broadly – with producers, sound designers, editors and so forth – also means broadening the composer's artistic footstep and, in that way, freedom.

As I have let people in the crew know who I am; the insecure, vulnerable film lover trying to do their best, I have let them see that I am there giving my genuine input and interest to the film. Usually this means, that people start listening to you – of course assuming that you are listening to them too. This must be very different from the old Hollywood days, and even today, if the composer is seen as a separate piece of the puzzle, solely producing cues that are needed like a robot.

In my experience, the more a composer can obtain support from departments outside of the musical one, it creates space for the composer's own expression. This seems paradoxical at first: to get more freedom in one's work, you must acknowledge others' opinions and presence.

But, if the composer closes themselves into the room of the sacred composition process, trying to keep all the strings in their own hands, they also close themselves from the collaboration – and suddenly, there is no film to work on nor creative freedom. As Adorno and Eisler (1947, 101) put it: if the film composer is willing having freedom in their own artistic work in the film, it is achievable if it is based on genuine collective work.

What it means that the composer should keep in touch with the film production? Adorno and Eisler (1947, 101) write: "The planning of the music can be effective only if it is not separated from the planning of the picture." To me, this means that the music has to be made together not only with the image but built together with the story. In practice, this means beginning the conversation about the music with the director as early as there is an idea of a story.

Working on film music can be done in many different ways, but I have noticed that, also, my strength as a film composer lies in the first half of the film: when the script is being made, and the music is planned on a conceptual basis. I start to make musical sketches and demos very early on. The conversations with the director and words about music can mean so many different things, so I want to have an auditive reference to the words.

A film composer needs the film, the story, to compose. Giving opportunity to the film crew to take part and give feedback on the music, and opening the composing process creates trust: trust for the people in the crew to give the composer to work freely. This also divides the communication more evenly between different parties of filmmaking compared to only staying dependent of the director.

When working as a group, it involves aspects that do not occur in the format of a classical composer or a novelist, who are traditionally seen working in solitary. Although, this stereotype of solitary work is a rather modern look at these professions, not a historical given (see for example Kuusela 2020).

In her book *Kollaboraatio – Yhteistekijyys nykykirjallisuudessa ja taiteessa [Collaboration – Collective Making in Contemporary Literature and Art, 2020]*, cultural researcher Hanna Kuusela goes through the experiments of collaboration in literature. I chose to discuss my topic with Kuusela's book to have a broader view on what kind of questions comes about when the standard of a solitary artist, such as a novelist making literature, gets broken – in comparison to making a film, which is a collaboration as a standard.

Kuusela (2020, 113) points out a Finnish collaborative novel *Ihmiskokeita [Human experiments]* (2016) which was done as a collective manner among its fourteen authors. One of the partakers, author Laura Lindstedt, described the making of the novel as freeing from responsibility compared to her own individual work. "When you know that you are not responsible for the outcome alone, also the pressure decreases. You can try out things and take things further than you would normally do", she said.

A radical collaborative writing group Wu Ming stated that the many writers of the group protect the outcome, the book, from bad compromises. They're looking for the "highest compromise", not the lowest nor the amicable settlement (Kuusela 2020, 122).

When delegating the responsibility of the music as a film composer, in an everyday-life-kind-of-manner, it is also less work for me when trusting the music to the hands of other professionals. Cutting of the music goes to the editor; placing of it to the sound designer; mixing it to the mixing engineer; playing it to the musicians; recording to the recording engineer. This is the trust and groupwork a filmmaking needs. Also, the group work can protect me from both my own

perfectionism and sloppiness: it is freeing to know that someone will tell you when the music is "good enough", or when it's not.

The pressure of the productional and technological volume behind filmmaking – meaning money and time – is powerful. The pressure consists of the timetables, the ambitions of all the other artists in the group, director's needs and visions, hiccups in communication. Making film music requires vulnerability to produce your artistic part, and sensibility to communicate with others considering their vulnerabilities.

What kind of Maker is the Film Composer?

Artist, researcher, and pedagogue Annette Arlander (2020) asks, "What is an author?" in her article about authorship and agency. From the perspective of performance arts, the article gives a look at not only the different roles that making of an art piece consists of, but also what kind of tasks define the role of a maker, and in what relation these roles are to one another in group. When contemplating about who "owns" an art piece, film music in this case, Arlander's approach offers useful insights.

Authorship is strongly associated with human activity. When looking at making art, Arlander suggests dividing authorship in three types: the signing author, the maker, and the influential factors. By categorizing the filmmaking in this way, it is possible to see more closely what each person's part is in the whole as the impact of different authors, makers and factors become visible. As a starting point of Arlander's are the three meanings of the Finnish word of an author, "tekijä".

> In Finnish we use one term for 1) the author as the person signing the work, 2) the maker (creator or producer) of the work, and 3) the causal agent or influencing factor with regard to the work. (Arlander 2020.)

The signing author is someone who signs specific works and functions as a guarantee of their quality. In the case of a film crew, this usually means the director. The author can also be another instance or person than the one producing the work, which Arlander calls as the makers. This could mean basically anyone in the film crew who is working under the guideline of the director, producing material for the film in one way or another.

For example, a person who sets up the locations for a film, more sort of concrete work, but also a film composer can be seen as a maker (as well as a signing author, more about that later), someone who produces music that is useful for the film strictly to the wishes of the director. This seems to have been the case especially in the Hollywood era, about which Eisler and Adorno are analyzing. The film composer was not exactly seen as a creative part of the film crew, but as someone who is a music producing automat, more technocratic. Closer to a signing author in a film could be the screenwriter, or the actors, or even the cinematographer, as they hold a lot of power over the visual outcome to which the film based on.

The third level of authorship, the influential factors, encases for example the environmental, technical, or economic circumstances surrounding the work. These circumstances can be called as an "unknown factor", "human factor", "crucial factor" or "environmental factor". (Arlander 2020.)

In a film, this naturally refers to technical equipment, to which the film is based on, but of which people even seldom seem to have power over. As a film composer the main technical device is the Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) in use, in my case Cubase. DAW is an influential factor considering its impact to the workflow of the composer, especially in the way the composer is able to harness the DAW into their own use. This far I have mainly used the free sound libraries of Cubase when making electronic music, which also enfolds their own aesthetics as the sounds are coded by someone else.

The environmental factors come across in a film especially while filming, considering the weather circumstances – of which the human most certainly has no power over. To minimize the weather circumstances studios and all kinds of technical apparatus has been created in order not to be dependent on the environmental factors. Economic circumstances are also crucial, especially in big productions requiring a lot of human and technical resources, hence money, and the realization of the film production lies in the hands of the grants.

With the help of these categories Arlander aims to widen the traditional European view of authorship, that is based on the literary author, "auteur", and their signing function, the author-function. Arlander looks at performance arts, but the view is relevant for most types of performances where somebody makes an object, action or performance and is thus its maker, signing their names on the pieces. (Arlander 2020.)

In the case of film composers, can a film composer be seen as an author, an *auteur*? Auteur usually refers to director, but could film composers such as Ennio Morricone or John Williams be seen as auteurs? Or my main inspirations in film music – Jonny Greenwood and Mica Levi – could they be seen as auteurs for the sake of their recognizable voices as film composers?

Late 2019 I took part to a film music workshop held by a Finnish film composer, Pessi Levanto. In his opinion there are two types of film composers: the all-arounders, who can practically produce the Hollywood-type of film music, big orchestral scores to whatever kind of film genres from horror to action to romantic comedies. They might lack in personal touch in their music but can adjust like chameleons to different aesthetics and dramaturgical needs. Musical generalists, in a good sense.

The other type is the one who the directors call when they're looking for a specific sound and vision that only those specific composers are able to convey. These film composers might lack in overall technical skills or might not be able to produce "believable" outcomes to all film genres

but can put their personal vision into such use that is recognized as theirs, and on point to a particular film aesthetic.

I would see myself as a part of the latter group, or rather the experience has taught me that it is the reality. I thought I'd be able to work in any kind of films, but I've realized that my strength lies in close collaboration and communication with the directors and the crew. I can easily get a grip of intimate storytelling with a psychological center point, and produce music is strong in personal vision.

To me, this separation into two type of film composers as makers is for sure practical, but a bit scarce, and probably there are film composers who fall right into the middle. Also, I don't think that the question of whether a film composer is an auteur or not, can be contemplated in a satisfying way by this division. A film composer can be seen as an auteur – for the sake of their chameleon skills, or for the sake of their personal vision. Or maybe it's about the combination of the two?

These categorizations do not take into consideration the reality of making a film, which is that every film and project is different. The dynamics and roles in a film crew differ from one project to another. Some directors want to take more control over the music, some give more freedom to the composer, some are more open to crazy ideas, some stay strict to what they are looking for. Film composer is the one who has to adjust to the needs and vision of the current film. Yet, this does not mean that the film composer was supposed to not have a vision of their own, but that it has to be adjusted and based on to the current circumstances. I think this applies to any department in making a film: how to try to stay truthful to one's own voice when adjusting to the film at hand – and this is probably a challenge many film makers are inspired by.

What makes the film composer the maker of the music in the film? I am someone who signs the music by creating the concept and structure for the music – that is based on the vision of the director. The signing part considers mainly the structural and conceptual aspects of the music:

what is the musical material chosen like, what is the instrumentation, the composed harmonies, and melodies? Although I already make a lot of decisions in the 30 seconds demos I send to the director as suggestions, to which direction the music is going to be built at, it will all be decided with the director. Making film music is at least as much communication as actual composition of music.

Considering the teamwork of making film music, the collaboration can also be divided into individual professionals: from the point of views of a single actor, cinematographer, or a production designer. They bring their own personal expertise to the collaboration, although outside they might not seem like a signing author. For example, the editor has an important part in the conceptual narrative thinking of the music because they get to place the music right into the image. A great part of making of the music is of course sound design and mixing: they have a big impact on how the music sounds. Both of these actions require another person: the sound designer and the mixing engineer.

An author can share their authorship in many ways, either by working together, or in name by giving credits to others involved in the work. Arlander (2020) considers the part of the performer as an author's way of sharing their authorship with an impactful influencer of a performer. In the case of *Janusz*, the music came truly alive in the hands of the violinist, Natálie Kulina. She improvised in the studio recording based on the musical cues I had written. Finding a musician who understood the soundscape and the concept so easily was not only luck, but crucial for the outcome and atmosphere of the musical outcome altogether. Also, the relaxing spirit of the recording engineer Ido Zilberman created in the studio, is something that cannot be overlooked.

In a way, the musical performance of a musician is a performance inside the film. Music could even be seen as a correspondent to an actor's body, as a moving entity of its own, a character that expresses the feelings of an actor. I do let myself to be emotionally involved to the story, gather my personal experiences, in order to construct a personal relationship and vision with the story – perhaps, like an actor.

> At the end of the day the idea of a single author, who would alone be responsible for a specific work is almost ludicrous. ... Everything that we use in our works is more or less made by others, like language, existing before we use it. (Arlander 2020.)

In other words, there is no use to look at film composer as an individual maker solely responsible for the outcome of the music in a film. In film, an authorship is deliberately shared to all members of the film crew, to performers of the music, to participants making the music in another way, and to technology. A film composer is there to convey the production of the music in an aesthetically, dramaturgically pleasing way to the film and the vision the director holds. This consists of skills not only in music making, but delegating, communication, and directing.

Collaboration Does not Prevent the Birth and Maintenance of the Myth of the Genius

A Finnish film director Hannaleena Hauru enhances the collective nature of filmmaking and brings the makers from every department to the surface in her feministic meta films. Collaborations have also become more and more common in other fields of art that are considered as "individual", such as writing and classical composing. In these areas the collaboration is often thought as something that is to break the myth of the genius that is based on an individual creator. Focus on collaboration as an artist is not only a personal preference, but it can also be seen as an artistic brand.

Even if collaborative working method in writing literature or composing classical music can be seen as radical, a film is a collaboration by definition. Making a film, even a short one, requires a crowd as a starting point. A film is a production of multiple voices, and received as one piece, but literature is usually seen as a production of one single voice, the writer's one.

Cultural researcher Hanna Kuusela (2020, 20) points out a paradox according to art historian Claire Bishop: as art made together with people is more popular than ever, at the same time the art world produces individual cults and geniuses. "Makers of collaborative literature rarely stay silently behind their pieces", Kuusela states (2020, 60). For example, although Aki Kaurismäki is one of the most internationally known Finnish film directors, he does not shoot the films himself. What kind of maker is he?

Never mind all the collaboration, the function of an author and authorship remains strong, and the author often comes before the art piece. When talking about authorship, one cannot ignore the historical aspects, traditions, spaces, and procedures in which art is being made. The traditional division of work has been done to bring prestige to the makers. (Arlander 2020, 20–21.)

Kuusela brings out the paradox in the making of collaborative art. She analyses, how one of the main meanings of the book written in collaboration, called *Ihmiskokeita* [Human experiment], was what kind of experiences it had caused in its individual writers. This way, one cultural meaning of collaborative writing and artmaking is its meaning for individual artistry. (Kuusela 2020, 101–102). When focusing on the collaborative nature of making art the artists get to look closer to their own artistry.

The paradox lies also in this thesis: I, emphasizing the collaborative nature of filmmaking, want to make a master's thesis about my own part as a film composer in the filmmaking. Does the need to look at the process of making film music stem from my need to see myself as a separate individual artist in the collaboration?

Acknowledging how lucky I was getting to work with the director and the editor in *Janusz*, I think it is possible to describe these collaborations as a starting point of "a democratic community building a joint aesthetic thinking in time", as Kuusela (2020, 200) describes it. This is the sort of collaboration I would like to see myself a part of in the future. It does not prevent people from

conflicts in communication and artistic visions, nor take away the final responsibility of the outcome away from the director. But I got to take part in a collaboration that was based on mutual trust and authentic communication, which created a safe space for the group to focus on making as good film as possible.

In this way, a film is a *Gesamtkunstwerk* – a concept created by Richard Wagner. The ideal in the *Gesamtkunstwerk* ("total work of art") is that all different forms of art would be integrated. A film combines literature, theater, visual expression, music, performance, and sometimes also dance, just like opera. In *Gesamtkunstwerk* it is essential that all of these sectors of artistic expression are directed toward the same end, making a one whole piece of art. (Britannica.)

When talking about film as a collaborative art it does not mean that there was no structure, quite the opposite. The director is responsible for the end product and the artistic process in the film's infrastructure: from writing the script to finding the producers and finance for the film; from casting and finding the other makers to the crew; from editing the footage to a final cut; to realizing and recording the music for the film to the sound design, mixing, and the final exports.

Kuusela (2020, 129) refers to Jo Freeman's the book *The Tyranny of Structurelessness* (1970), in which Freeman states that the romanticized ideas of communities lie in the conversation of openness, anti-leadership or anti-structure, that can mask actual use of power. Hence, when resisting structure, the contemporary collectives are in danger to produce masked power. There is no such thing as a group "without structure", as interaction always produces structures.

Collaborative way of making art does not prevent the individual myth of the genius being born and maintained or protect people working on the art piece from misbehavior and misuse of power either. Looking at collaborative art as something that can solve the problem of misusing power is naïve. (see for example Kuusela 2020, 36–37.) This has been widely discussed over the past 7 years especially after the #metoo-movement, which started from the film industry and brought these issues into the surface.

FUNCTIONS OF FILM MUSIC

As a part of the film's narration, film music also has its own individual ways of working. In one of my favorite scores in *Birdman* (2014) (comp. Antonio Sánchez, dir. Alejandro González Iñárritu), the music lives the life of the chaotic inner mind of the main character, Riggan Thomson (Michael Keaton). Thomson is an actor battling with the ego that does not want to let go of his previous success as a superhero actor. He then debuts as a theatre director and has to face the present realities of his life. The music is reacting to the character's behavior, yet holding a presence and entity on its own, as a separate interpreter that follows Thomson's mind. This individuality is emphasized as the music is played by Sánchez himself with one drum set.

One of the main, or most known functions of film music is its ability to convey emotions that cannot be seen on the screen otherwise. Music has a way to work unconsciously, which makes it powerful and scary at the same time – the viewer cannot necessarily put a finger on why they feel that something bad is going to happen, but it's made with a subtle drone creating rather a feeling than a sound.

Music can be a part of creating the inner diegesis of the film's story and make it more wholesome with a soundtrack that gathers the musical gestures typical of that certain time present in the film. Music and sounds have the ability to bring us immediately back to the era of when the musical style was popular or invented. This has also to do with technology: we hear the evolvement of the sound equipment in the music we listen to. Hence, music is a powerful tool of nostalgy and gathering generations together. If the makers of the film want to touch group of people who lived their youth listening to popular music in the 1960's, music with acoustic guitar harmonies referring the Mamas and the Papas could be an option. Nostalgy is something that people feel related to, seeing themselves as a part of an era, having a place in time, feeling safety and comfort. The effect is even more immediate when using source music that has been made during that certain era.

In a similar way, music can put the viewer into a place in time also geographically, representing and conveying information through references to orientalism, Western films, French milieu, Finnishness, stereotypes of different groups of people, or urban environment of New York. Music can also be depicting ideas and themes in a more general level such as love, loneliness, longing, isolation, closeness.

Opposed to a very detailed functions depicting the inner mind of a character, music can create a certain "vibe", an atmosphere, in a film. It can be connected to the surroundings of the moment, a general state people are living in. I would say this kind of use of music is present for example in the HBO series *Euphoria* (2019–) (comp. Labrinth, dir. Sam Levinson). In the series music is constant, following each character with emotive motifs, at the same time creating a strong recognizable atmosphere for the whole environment of the series.

Film Music as a Manipulative Device Defining Image

The traditional way of looking at music's functions in film is either in parallelism or counterpoint. This enhances the fact that musical meaning is mostly subordinated to narrative meaning in the standard feature film. In parallelism, music 'resembles' the action or mood of what happens on the screen. In counterpoint, music 'contradicts' the action or mood of what happens on the screen. Instead of these categories, Gorbman (1987, 14–15) suggests a concept of 'mutual implication'. In this way, it is possible to respect the film's narrative complexity.

Also French film theorist and composer Michel Chion (2009, 228) suggests instead of saying that film sound is subservient to the image (the classical formulation), couldn't we just say that sounds and images both devote themselves to the constitution of narrative cinematic space-time?

The notions of parallel and counterpoint assume that the image is autonomous, when, as mentioned before, film should be looked as a combinatoire of different actions (Gorbman 1987, 16), or as "a sensory text". Both concepts acknowledge how all the image, music, sound design, create the film together (Chion 2009, x). This is a way to acknowledge the collaboration in the outcome.

> "[W]hatever music is applied to a film segment will "do something"... As long as the general musical style is not completely at odds, ... the scene seems to justify it". (Gorbman 1987, 15–16.)

Evaluating film music requires taking into consideration of the film as an audiovisual whole. Kevin Donnelly (2005, 14) notes this nature of film music as a part of film narration when he writes how a mediocre song can sound really good when combined with right kind of images. The context of such music is crucial, and its full potential is only realized in the space of the cinema. Ultimately it is the narrative context, the interrelations between music and the rest of the film's system, that determines the effectiveness of film music (Gorbman 1987, 12).

Audiovisual dissonance is extremely rare, since images put up no resistance to sounds. The problem is, "everything works"; there never is any resistance, only a sort of laissez-faire abandonment of sounds and images. Why is this? No doubt in part because the random superimposition of sound and image is familiar to us in real life. (Chion 2009, 230.)

Film music exists to communicate. It can communicate several factors from inner thoughts of a character to telling the story from a broader point of view, linking it to a certain era for example. At times, the communicational manner of film music is understood as manipulation. Jean-Luc Godard has promoted that all music in film is manipulative. Godard preferred having a finished music score before the film was completed, so that he could cut excerpts of the music in and out of the film, as, for example, in *Pierrot le fou* (1965), where Antoine Duchamel wrote themes blind that were then manipulated by the film director (Donnelly 2005, 4).

Much of the film music I have made has been done before the shooting of the film. I prefer this way of working, because it allows me to bind the music to the storyline inherently. This was true in the case of the documentary I composed music for in my first year, when most of the music in the film I had composed before the shooting. In the case of *Janusz* it was the other way around: I had made a lot of music before the shooting, but only when I saw the footage it kind of "clicked" what the director had been looking for.

Film music in general is a manipulative and controlling device to the viewer. It wishes to shape the audience's reaction to the story (Donnelly 2005, 4). Critically referring to Claudia Gorbman, Donnelly (2005, 5) writes how screen music's desire is to make the viewer an unproblematic consumer. This means how music can soften the storytelling in a way that is easier for the viewer to understand and interpret in the way the makers want to. This can for example mean that music can make the viewer sympathize with a character in the story that is "immoral" or "evil".

Music has an extraordinary feature to affect people emotionally but might be used in such subtle way that its power is difficult to recognize. Therefore, music can be construed as insidious and needs a special care when combined with a film: "It masks the way it works", Donnelly (2005, 4) writes.

Gorbman (1987, 15) refers Siegfried Kracauer, on how music "helps the viewer define the images, which are themselves polysemic". If one removes music from a scene whose emotional content is not explicit, there is also a risk of confronting the audience with an image they might fail to interpret (Gorbman 1987, 18). This can also be seen the other way around: music used as a deliberate tool to blur the meaning of the image.

The audience has learned how to react to musical codes (Donnelly 2005, 6). Devices such as changes in rhythm, articulation (accents, phrasing), have corresponding effects on the way we receive information from the film's diegetic space. As most familiar example, the tremolo of the strings creating tension and horror; the low drone creating an ominous atmosphere. These

commutations are based on culturally coded connotations, and therefore they signify certain emotional reaction in us as audience. (Gorbman 1987, 17.)

Musical codes also direct our observation of the image. Gorbman (1987, 13) talks about "cinematic musical codes". As the camera eye searches out the sound source, cinematic space naturally "unfolds". Since loud means near and soft means far (with corresponding levels of reverberation), a continuous progression from soft to loud means a continuous movement forward in cinematic space, toward the sound source (Gorbman 1987, 25). Music can direct the spectator's look to the sky at the top of the screen; a knife on the kitchen table; a child's crib behind the character's back; a light coming out from a window. When different sounds are present, the eye looks for different objects in the image.

Flexibility of Film Music Connects it to the Story

In this chapter I take a closer look at how the music is molded in the edit studio to match the image in practice. This requires a lot of flexibility from the music, as its flexibility is in relation to the image narration. To be not only connected to the visual image, but to the story in a more conceptual level.

The soundtrack takes many more liberties with the film diegesis than the image (Gorbman 1987, 22). Music's nonverbal and nondenotative status allows it to cross all varieties of borders: between levels of narration (diegetic/non-diegetic); between narrating agencies (objective/subjective narrators); between viewing time and psychological time; and between points in diegetic space and time (as narrative transition). In this way, music mediates, and is a fluid rhetoric component. (See Gorbman 1987, 30.)

Understanding the fluidity and flexibility that music can have in the film's diegesis, we must recognize the functions it can have: temporal, spatial, dramatic, structural, denotative,

connotative – both in the diachronic flow of a film and at various interpretive levels simultaneously (Gorbman 1987, 22). But in order to work with the music in a flexible manner, the music needs to have a sense of concept: a sense of itself as a whole. This means connecting the music with the story as a whole. I would describe it as a pool or a bucket of thematic musical material that is to be varied in different needs and moments of the film. This does not mean that the music would be restricted into one genre, but that the conceptual thought behind the music follows a logic that aligns with the story.

"It would be absurd to write more complex music than can actually be perceived at any given moment", Adorno & Eisler (1947, 104–105) write. In motion-picture music, the idea of the whole and its articulation holds absolute primacy. The composer must invent forms and formal relations if they are to write meaningfully. In a sense, the composer must have full control over elements that in traditional composing are, often wrongly, considered to be involuntary and purely intuitive. (Adorno & Eisler 1947, 95.)

Each musical form accompanying a motion picture is a kind of variation, even though it has not been preceded by a manifest theme. The dramatic function is the real theme (Adorno & Eisler 1947, 93). To realize the primacy of the whole in motion-picture music thus does not mean to take over the forms of "absolute" music and to adapt them by hook or crook to the film strips. Good motion-picture music is fundamentally anti-formalistic (Adorno & Eisler 1947, 96). The composer must be able to compose concluding passages, which round up a preceding dramatic development of the picture or dialogue, without a preceding purely musical and closed development. (Adorno & Eisler 1947, 98.)

The music must hit definite points, the time of the music and the picture must coincide down to the last detail. Consequently, the music must be flexible, so that occasionally whole bars or phrases can be omitted, added, or repeated; the composer must have at their command a certain amount of planned improvisation – the opposite of bad, accidental improvised

composing – in order to achieve complete synchronization and a lively performance. (Adorno & Eisler 1947, 109.)

When composing film music, also silence is meaningful. Music creates "zones" of segments: with music / without music. As music is intermittent it appears to enhance its influence on the film's structure and makes a difference when it occurs. This way, the most important thing about music becomes the point when it starts and when it stops, and how the placement of cues structures the entire film's temporality. Anne: compare to HBO series Euphoria that has continuous music, as if it was a silent film; you do not notice the music anymore after a while, it's just a flow of atmospherical sound space. What then starts to make an effect are the dramaturgically built silences. (Chion, 2009, 407–408.)

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of this research is to produce information about the collective nature of making film music. The main research method of this research has been artistic research. This means that the art making process, the praxis, has been an essential part of the research. The difference to scientific approach is that instead of narrowing down the lens at one specific phenomenon, artistic approach widens up and enrichens the perspectives to look at a phenomenon.

As the main data gathering method, I interviewed the director and the editor of *Janusz*. A part of the data consisted also of the notebook I had written about my own artistic process. This process I have reflected against the film music literature and research made about collaboration in the arts sector.

The interviews were made separately with the director Matthijs Sluijs and the editor Coen Hagenaars in August 2022 at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. As an interview method, I used a combination of a half-structured and a theme interview. The theme of the interviews was the collaboration we held with the interviewees in the making of music to *Janusz*. I asked both interviewees common questions about their overall thoughts on music, film music, and how they saw their own positions in a film crew. In addition, we watched three clips from *Janusz* to analyze the music in the end product.

Most of the transcriptions of the interviews were made with YouTube translator, one of them I made myself. At the first glimpse of the transcriptions, I highlighted insights of the interviewees where they described both our collaboration and their personal relationships with their crafts. I then realized I was also interested in their personal artistic processes while our collaboration in *Janusz*.

The notebook of my artistic process enfolds the personal notes and self-reflection, also the conversations I had with colleagues about the composing process. It opens up the composing

process from the first pitch until the final cut, and through this writing process also the research question was sharpened to consider the collaboration.

My own compositional process in *Janusz* in a way started already before I knew I would be working on the film. After listening to the presentation of Matthijs Sluijs of *Janusz* in a pitch meeting with the directors and composers at the end of September in 2021, I thought *Janusz* was a film I wanted to work with. It was a deep drama film that presented the theme of an intimate relationship in a vulnerable way, and I thought Matthijs was – and is – courageous to handle such a topic. Matthijs mentioned then already that he wanted to work with strings, which are the closest instrumentation for me as my main instrument is violin.

The first step I take when working on a film is that I make a Spotify-playlist of my own. This I did after the pitch meeting. I started to picture the world of the film with existing music and build a relationship with the story. After it was confirmed that I was to make music for *Janusz*, the director shared a Spotify-list he had made, from which I realized my approach had been way more dramatic and intense from what he was looking for. Matthijs' playlist was made of soft pop songs with acoustic atmosphere, as mine was with dramatic string quartets by Shostakovich. This was already telling that the concepts of "vulnerability" and "intimacy" can mean so many different things. I started to listen to Matthijs' playlist in the mornings while writing my journal, trying to involve myself into the vision he had of the music.

My main tool of composition in *Janusz* was improvising. I recorded clips with violin on my phone at home, and there were tens of clips of music already before the shooting of the film started. Some of them I played to Matthijs, who gave comments on what he liked and resonated with and what he was not looking for. It does not mean that the earlier you start the process, the quicker the music would be settled: it just means there is more time to search for the right approach and time to get to know the people you are going to work with. I think it is important to start making music early, even just as a tool to communicate: one can only get so far with

words when talking about music. And even though the playlists are a great tool, it is still me who is going to make the music.

Making a lot of music is also using the craft of a composer to search for the right musical language. Even though the music "hit" the film only when I saw the first edit version – and improvised on that – I think that was possible because I had already created a way to work with the story. The method was very intuitive and because of the nature of our collaboration, I had enough room to search and try out things, even if they weren't always right.

Artistic Research

The praxis of music making, and compositional work described afore is an example of the artistic research that is the main research method of this thesis. In Culture Action Europe's "The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research", artistic research is described as follows:

> Artistic Research (AR) is research through means of high-level artistic practice and reflection; it is an epistemic inquiry, directed towards increasing knowledge, insight, understanding and skills. … Through topics and problems stemming from and relevant to artistic practice, AR also addresses key issues of a broader cultural, social, and economic significance. … AR is undertaken in all art practice disciplines – including architecture, design, film, photography, fine art, media and digital arts, music, and the performing arts. (Culture Action Europe 2022.)

With this definition, artistic research is practice-based and practice-led research in the arts. It has been also often used in a transdisciplinary setting, combining artistic research methods with methods from other research traditions (Culture Action Europe 2022).

Working as a musicologist and music journalist before studying film composing, I was mostly interested in the people making the art: what were the institutional, collaborative and/or

personal dynamics that were involved in the making of music and art. I think this affected the focus of this research which turned out to be the collaboration, rather than just my own compositional process in *Janusz*. Artistic research was still not an approach taken for granted in this research, quite the opposite. It was scary to step away from the process of making art and look at your own way of working as a part of a group from a reflective, analytical point of view.

Through artistic research it is nevertheless possible to produce information about *the process of making art* – music for film in this case – more closely than by many other means. A Finnish philosopher Juha Varto describes the specialty of an artistic praxis and research based on that in his book *Taiteellinen tutkimus* [*Artistic Research,* 2017]. Varto describes the epistemology of artistic research being based on various ways of knowing and practicing art. These can include, for instance, the theoretical and historical knowledge we have on art, but also the experiences and influences of the artist affecting the praxis. An important part of this, is the knowledge on producing art: the used media, practical ways of arranging artistic work and collaborative methods. When Varto mentions that an artist should "take care" of their epistemes, he refers to the knowledge an artist is able to gather from their own artistic practice. He encourages to stay focused to the artistic process, without mixing it up with other theoretical viewpoints from other scientific fields, but to keep the knowledge that stemmed from the art making process in the environment where it was born in. (Varto 2017, 56–57.) What Varto is saying to me, is that the knowledge I gather from my own art making, is valuable, and it is enough.

What Varto (2017, 58–59) emphasizes is the artistic thinking: to make research out of one's artistic practice, it is necessary to step away from the praxis in order to reflect on what one already knows at some level. To "know something already at some level" refers perfectly to the intuitive process that art making is, to me, mostly about. The feeling of something whispering and calling, and you cannot exactly put a finger on it, why you feel like you should try something out. This creative and associative state should be protected, as the analytical point of view may destroy something valuable; making art hardly makes sense in the moment, because it is based on imaginary and play. The analysis might have its time later.

So, in order to make artistic research, it is needed to step away from that practice of making art. This was difficult in making this thesis: it felt really hard to start thinking about labels on things that felt so personal. Combining the artistic work with research felt unnatural, repulsive even. This might be in connection with the fact, that when focusing an analytical gaze on one's artistic praxis, one must verbalize the previously non-verbal.

In the verbalization process the autoethnography, such as keeping a diary, comes at hand. In this study, the notebooks of the data gather together the personal notes and self-reflection, as well as the conversations I had with colleagues about the music process. The notebooks consist of writing about the composing process from the first pitch until the final cut, and through this writing process also the research question got sharpened.

The premise of artistic research is largely different from the scientific research. Where artists' craft is based on bodily and emotional knowledge – which is the case, for instance, when trying to "tune" oneself to the composing process – scientific research often rely on peer reviewed, rational knowledge that has been accomplished through an empirical research process. Also, the status of language is predominant in science, when in art "knowing" is not always returnable to language. The way science uses language can sometimes weaken or simplify the power of art and its possibilities as a research method. (Ryynänen etc. 2021, 163.)

In artistic research, the aesthetic quality of the art form being in question – be it visual arts, theatre, dance, literature, film, or music – is elementary part of the research process and even when conveying the research results (Ryynänen etc. 2021, 143). One aim is to produce understanding of the characteristic quality of the certain art form and its possibilities. The frame offered by art, such as fiction or even fantasy, creates a sort of meta world, from which it is safer to view and contemplate the matter of interest than straight through one's own experiences – this gets realized especially when working with a fiction drama film. (Ryynänen etc. 2021, 147.)

This research has been first and foremost artistic: the goal of the music making process was to accomplish an independent piece of art. The idea of making any research about composing for *Janusz* came only in the latter half of the film editing process. This means, I was not an artistic researcher throughout the composing process. My colleagues and interviewees – the director and the editor of the film – knew I was making research about the composing process only when we had already been working on the music. Both of their responses to this research were spontaneously positive, although in that stage the point of view of the research was not yet clear. The director offered to help with the research as much as needed, which was like a mandate to continue the research. As using the art making process as a part of a research came later, this research represents a "top-to-bottom" approach to research (see for example Ryynänen etc. 2021, 153).

As Sanna Ryynänen and others (2021, 167) point out, even in the clearly research-led processes, art should not be made subordinately to producing knowledge. Art has and should have an aesthetic value on its own, which should always be noted. The question of art's autonomy, intrinsic value and independency makes art the area of human and social action we know it for, and this should not be dismissed.

Interviews

The way the interviews got settled in this research could be called contractual participation: it becomes realized when the researcher invites the research participants to produce research materials based on tasks the researcher has planned. Because the director and the editor were in a way part of the research process as they were working on the same art piece with me and the collaboration became the research topic of this thesis, the role of the participants comes near to so called co-researching. Still, I as the researcher manage the research. (Ryynänen & Rannikko 2021, 16.)

As an interview method, I used a combination of a half-structured and a theme interview. In a half-structured interview, some aspects of the interview are settled, but not all of them. In a theme interview the subject is the same to all interviewees. Theme interview acknowledges that people's interpretations of situations are relevant, as well as the meanings of situations that arise in interaction between people. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 47–48.) The order of the questions was planned beforehand but kept flexible during the interviews.

I made separate questions for the interviewees about their parts as an editor and a director in the making of *Janusz* and chose three clips from *Janusz* to talk over the compositional matters from a more practical point of view in retrospective. A qualitative interview is supposed to give the interviewees space to reflect on their own parts and experiences as individuals in the collaborative composing process.

Questioning the division of the roles in research is perhaps the most apparent ethical point of view in research. The researcher weighs their own role as a researcher and the possibilities of the participants to partake the research throughout the research process (Ryynänen & Rannikko 2021, 19). The music composing process in *Janusz* took months, which supported the blending of the roles in this research in a way that cannot be accomplished in one, separate interview (Ryynänen etc. 2021, 162). Through dialog and cooperativeness, the knowledge is constructed amongst the participants (Ryynänen etc. 2021, 162).

Interviewing people familiar to you may invoke special problems. In this case, the interviewees were and are also colleagues of mine. It made me at the same time more equal with the interviewees but also more vulnerable as they saw me in a new role. It is a danger for the interviewer to ask questions they already know the answer for, which was something I had to keep in mind when planning the interviews. On the other hand, one might try to be half a formal interviewer, half a joking colleague. (Warren 2012, 132.) It was important to stay myself during the interviews, but also stay responsible to the task, which was to accomplish the interviews.

Asking open questions of interviewees is generally known more effective in gathering narrative-rich data, than asking closed questions (Roulston 2012, 71). In addition to the issue of *what* questions to ask, there is also the *how* to ask questions and follow up with prompts. It is up to the interviewer to make the introductions, set the tone, and ask the questions politely (Warren 2012, 132; 135). Where I had to stay especially sensitive during the interviews was when asking questions about what was difficult for the interviewees during our collaboration. For them to feel comfortable enough to be honest expressing their thoughts, I tried to stay neutral and open.

The interviews were held at Conservatorium van Amsterdam. I wanted to take care of organizing the interviews and not burden the interviewees any more than necessary. Also, I wanted to keep the meaning of the meeting clear and for the interviewees to be able to focus on the task at hand.

ANALYSIS: COMPOSING *JANUSZ*

The main themes that rose from the interviewees are the different perspectives on music and filmmaking of a director and an editor in a film as makers. Their perspectives, both as young professionals and individuals watching films, somewhat differentiated from each other. The editor listened to music almost his whole time awake to boost energy and have a soundtrack in the background of daily activities; the director listened to music to cool down and have a moment to himself in the middle of a hectic everyday life.

As a part of a film, the editor described liking music that takes over storytelling and is not subtle at all. He talked about how they've been taught at the Film Academy to be careful to not use music too early in the editing phase – the edit must work by itself, without the help of music. The director looked at film music as a direct way for him to communicate a certain feeling to the audience, and as a viewer of a film he saw music in a similar way: even if a scene was difficult to grasp by itself, music could reveal something that is not seen in the image in a straightforward manner. Music reinforces the image and is an independent part of the narration.

This shows, how different personalities come to the table to look at the film with their different opinions, aesthetics, and viewpoints as film professionals. That is the source of making a film: film consists of so many components and fields of expertise, on which everyone lays their eyes at, bringing their visions to serve the story. Director is the one gathering these professionals around the table, making sure that everyone is working on the same film, the shared goal.

The interviewing situation felt warm and friendly. Clearly the collaboration had been a meaningful work period for all of us, and we were glad to reflect upon it afterwards. This is also why I wanted to explore this collaboration: during the composing process I learned a lot of myself not only as a composer, but as a creative individual, and about the meaning of collaboration.

This reminded me of when I was singing in choirs, and we used to learn every voice's stems. When starting to work on a new piece, everyone sang through the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices, before starting to focus on each stem of their own. This not only made everyone aware of the piece on a deeper level but gathered the choir into making the same piece. Also, being aware of everyone's part creates compassion and respect towards the different parts.

The interviews started with questions about the editor's and director's personal relationship with music and film. Further the questions considered more the collaboration in *Janusz*: how was it for them to work with a composer; what felt difficult, what went smoothly. Worth mentioning is that with the editor we had already worked together in the documentary film made earlier the same year.

Both interviewees felt that communicating about music was the most challenging thing in the composing process. How to describe something you're looking for in the music, what words to use – "sad music" can mean so many different things to different people. It also took me seven demos to catch and create the music the director was looking for. That, I must say was not only because of the communication, but that I had been digging a hole for myself where I was not paying enough attention to the story anymore. I was more "having fun" with the story by myself, diving into the inspiration it gave to me as a composer. This also had to do with the making of the documentary music that had been finalized right before I started to work on *Janusz*. The documentary composing process had been very challenging as it was the style of music I had never done before, and I was tired after the process. This affected also at the beginning of the compositional work in *Janusz*: I had energy only to jam by myself.

With the start of *Janusz* I felt like I could just relax now, with violin that I knew how to play, with the sort of music that was somewhat familiar to me. This attitude created laziness and taught me that it is not good to be too self-confident when making art. The insecurity, as exhausting as it is, is actually elementary in making art. I was too tired for that and drew myself into the cave of comfort – where you don't hear other people anymore but are just dancing by yourself.

Process of Janusz

All of us three recalled the most fun part of working with the music on *Janusz* was when working on it in the edit studio together: trying out different options; me grabbing my violin from its case and trying out melodies in front of the film, creating new music "on the go"; exploring together what it means for the music to be a part of the film; what are its functions and what can it convey; what does it mean considering the characters and what the director wants to express with it. The mutual trust between us all three was something we all felt and cherished. "A dream collaboration", as the editor put it.

What I got out from the interviews is knowledge about the craft of a director and an editor, but even more so, knowledge about film music from how they looked at it. I think it is highly meaningful to get to know other people musically, and what are their perspectives on music as a part of their own professional processes.

Thoughts on Film and Film Music

The editor of *Janusz*, Coen Hagenaars, is a music enthusiast who grew up in a very musical household. His father is a music producer and he's used to going to concerts since he was a baby. He describes listening to music whenever possible, for more than half of his time: mostly from his headphones on the go, or at home from speakers. Mostly he listens to a genre he calls indie, but also a lot of music from the 90s, and electronic music that his friends are making.

Coen described creating scenes or stories in his head while listening to music. His way of listening to music seemed very visual: as he likes going to gigs, he might think of how the musicians would look like when playing the music, or some songs would evoke dramaturgical

scenes in his head. For example, the song "Teardrop" by Massive Attack makes him think of "rain in a movie or someone sitting in a car looking out the window and there's rain".

> C: I could imagine with a specific song, or I would really want to use this scene of this music in a scene where someone is running away or something. There are songs that sound extremely cinematic.

Coen contemplated that a song sounding cinematic has to do with how we have been taught to listen to film music when watching films: a certain kind of cinematic language is associated with a certain kind of music.

The director of *Janusz*, Matthijs Sluijs, works a lot, and when he feels like he needs time for himself, music is something he uses to ground himself. He listens to music mostly when he is on his own. He said to be a big fan of Ben Howard, and liking classical piano, and sometimes electronic music. I would describe his taste in music soft and fragile.

> M: Sometimes also when I go to bed, just before I'm gonna sleep and because of the kind of music I listen, it makes me calm or safe, and I think sometimes when I am really in a hurry, it was a busy day, I really get calm by listening to music.

Music Building the Story

As a film director, to Matthijs music is a tool that allows him to communicate directly to the audience what he feels inside. He sees music as a way to engage the viewer to the story. He sometimes sees that there is a great distance between an audience and a character in a film.

> M: When I watch films and I'm really like when the music is such on a level of feeling it's more like an engagement for me to feel what the story is about.

Matthijs described a lot of music's ability to be direct. In screenwriting, you have a character, a feeling, a set, and you must explain explicitly that they are sad, for example. He says that it can be "cloudy", but with music you can be direct about the emotion. He recalls a Dutch saying, music going "through your bone". Even if the scene is not great, but there is music that is touching, the viewer is able to feel what the character is going through – music is able to convey what the image is not.

As an editor, Coen says to like film music that is "in your face", creating the story in an explicit, non-subtle way. He likes when music in a film is trying to grab all the viewer's attention. He was very well aware of the different functions music can have in a film: music being emotionally connected to a character or a plot or creating a general atmosphere or "vibe" for the film.

Coen described using music in a film to be a lot about enhancing the storytelling, creating a feeling or a tension. He described editing to be very different in every film, also considering the music: in some movies the composer is more supporting the sound design while in other movies the music holds a more present role in the storytelling.

When starting to work on a film, Matthijs tries to find a piece of music that connects to what he is feeling about the story and what he wants to tell. When he is talking to a composer or another crew member about music, he says it has a lot to do with taste. He describes music as the "soul of the filmmakers", because of this directness.

> M: When I start approaching a project, I'm listening to music and asking myself is this connecting with what I feel? It doesn't have to be like that I have a totally clear vision of what the story is really going to be.

Matthijs created a playlist for *Janusz* and shared that to me. A playlist from the director is a very helpful tool to get into the world of the film and the story. Most of all, it helps to create a

personal relationship with the story musically and to build my own approach to it. Because of its directness, music opens a door to the world of the film emotionally.

> M: And the composer, you know it's more like in how they use music or how they compose things, I think you can feel how they are inside.

Janusz is a film about longing; you're at home, but you don't feel like home. You still have a longing for a home.

> M: It's about a longing of a friendship or longing of intimacy. All the stories I want to tell are really like character driven or like inside of people. It's not always the plot you know. That's different sometimes to describe that, because how can you make what is internal external. And I think music is really painting with emotions.

That is a paradox Matthijs is talking about: film is a visual art form, but how can you make a feeling visible? Something, that we primarily can only experience inside of us? In visual arts colors have been expressing certain emotions, abstract expressionism being the closest to expressing emotions. In that, music is helpful, it has the abstract yet direct nature. Music works by hiding itself to the background, it cannot be seen, yet brings out things from the inner mind to have a space in the front.

Collaboration

Coen describes having social skills is something a good editor really needs. But even more than that, it is about finding the right collaborations. One can be a great editor, but only able to collaborate with those specific two directors, that specific composer and sound designer for example.

C: Like it's about finding a good connection and a good way of communicating but you don't necessarily have to be able to communicate with everyone.

Coen sees himself as very lucky as he has been able to work with a lot of people he really likes. He said he would be capable of working with someone that he was not that friendly with, he holds that sort of tolerance.

The closest collaborators of him in a film crew are the director, the sound designer, and the composer, the ones that he sees most regularly on an everyday basis. One of the producers is usually more involved in the post-production with the editor. In addition, Coen describes the relationship between the editor and the cinematographer to be almost weird, since there the editor is so closely working with the artistic output of the cinematographer. While having to stay respectful, the editor must think the film as a whole – which shots and scenes are telling the story the best.

The composer's responsibility, Coen says, is like everything else when making a film: trying to interpret what the director is trying to tell you, trying to understand what they want with the music. This is based on a personal relationship with the director. This he says to be even harder than when working with the editor and with the visual footage, as there are fewer clear terms to use when it comes to music that is so abstract. Producing the music is naturally the composer's responsibility, coming up with first drafts that the composer thinks sounds closest to what the director is looking for – and then "tweaking this until both you and the director are satisfied with your input".

The edit is the cutting or burning point where everything comes together to make the story alive: the music, the sound, the image, the titles. In the final cut the picture needs to be finished, and the sound and music need to have a draft that can be finished in the sound design and mixing.

Coen's way of working is very open. He never wants to say no but will try everything instead of talking of how abouts. To try things out is the only way to see if an idea works or not – in the end it's about what kind of effect the changes will make and how it makes you feel. This is where the film as a multi-sensory text comes to play: the sound, the cuts, the acting, the production design come together and form an audiovisual whole.

> C: I always want to try everything like if Matthijs has an idea or you or a producer or whoever, even if first year student comes in and says you should turn those two shots, I'm gonna try to turn them around you know. I want to, because you cannot know how it works from only envision you have, to see it, hear it, feel it.

This is something I found very inspirational when working with Coen, as there were no bad ideas, and everyone could comment on each other's crafts.

For Matthijs, making a film is about building relationships and connection with other people. This shows that working with him is a lot about communication. In relationships, he says one can become creative, when you feel trusted and heard. Matthijs says our best tool as filmmakers is our humanity: the connection we can make with the story.

> M: Film is about people. It is about life, it's about what it means to be a mother what it means to be a lover what it means to be a murderer what it means you know. That's why people go into the movie.

We started working together early in the process, already during the writing of the screenplay. When going to the edit and starting to work with the music, we already had history together and knew each other. That created a space for us to understand each other when working together, in order to create a mutual trust.

M: If we didn't have all the talks before and all the demos before, I think then it would be much more difficult because then you get something that is more time pressured, and it's more difficult to get that relationship.

Even though it took me seven demos before getting the music right with the eighth, I never felt rejected per se or that I was such a shitty composer that I couldn't manage. I felt that Matthijs trusted me and wanted to give me the space I needed to get where we needed to go with the music. It was just part of the process. Also, thinking back, I think the root of the final music was already in the first demos, but it just had to be revealed.

M: My biggest gift I could give you was just time that you need, time to build this elephant. It's difficult because you have a deadline and an edit, but it's not helpful to say that, yeah tomorrow it needs to be done. In an exercise like this the only thing you can do as you work so intensely together, is just allow people to have time.

Being Part of a Film Crew

As an editor, Coen feels that his work starts ideally "as soon as possible". He would like to give feedback on the draft of the script when it is still fully being written, if possible. When the script is finished, he can start to help out with the pre-production stage and make his own vision of the edit.

Coen feels that for him it is always very hard to imagine the style of editing before the actual film is shot, the film footage is basically his working material. He tries to come up with some style element beforehand that could help the content of the film and talk with the cinematographer about what they are thinking that they should shoot, and if that is covering everything that Coen would like to show in the editing. When the shooting starts, the editor is not involved at all. After the shooting, he will get all the material and "that's where really the fun part starts".

C: Most of the time everything that I came up with in pre-production completely changes and I just look at the material and make out of that what I think works best.

This is also the point where the social aspect becomes a part of the work. The editor talks a lot with the director, sitting in the studio for hours, for days, for weeks, trying to put whatever the director has in their minds to be shown on the screen. Coen describes the role of the editor to be like the first audience – that is also why he likes to throw away all the plans he had in the pre-production and just look at the material and see what it makes him feel, trying to make that feeling appear on the screen for the rest of the audience.

For example, if in the footage there is a scene that is supposed to be very sad, but it doesn't make Coen see and feel that, he starts to change and try to manipulate the footage with sound design, or with a very heavy score, thinking what could convey the feeling that the director is looking for.

C: In the end you're working towards something that's like the best version of the movie you can make. That's also how I usually grade myself like how close I got to use the material to its full potential. … Even maybe the movie is not that good or there are some ugly cuts in there, if I use the material to its full potential, I'm happy. On the same side I could make a very nice movie with very clean editing and then in the end feel like shit because I feel like there was way more in the material.

Coen says his job as an editor is to rewrite the film again. The scenario has all the great ideas that the writers have come up with; topics, themes, characters. Then in the shooting some parts of the scenario don't work like had been anticipated, or some things get way better than they would have hoped. Then in the editing, the editor basically starts to rewrite the film to make the best out of the material that is at hand – throwing scenes around, cutting stuff out. That can be

really close to what had been written in the scenario, or it can be far away from the original script.

Matthijs sees that his strength as a director, is the ability to inspire people. His part is to have an idea on how to communicate the story emotionally to an audience, but he tries to inspire people with his perspective on it. His biggest struggle in the beginning of working with a crew is that the director is very exposed and vulnerable. He also says it's important to see the beauty in it, in your own voice.

> M: Film is really about empathy. Film is really technical, but I think my job is to hold this core and say that the film is really about the boy who's longing for mother's love. My role as a director is to make sure there is a clear core of what the film is about. And then I am allowed to inspire people, like inviting people to that.

Kevin J. Donnelly (2005, 11) has pointed out that Classical Hollywood was premised upon a system where musical scores would be written for each film after shooting and editing, being constructed to precise timings and exigencies of the final cut of the film. While this system is still dominant, more recently it has been partially displaced by a practice that exploits pre-existing music as an inspiration for the film, and cutting the film footage to fit the music's structure.

With the editor Coen Hagenaars and the director Matthijs Sluijs, we worked exactly opposite to the old Hollywood system of making of film music. The edit process involved a great amount of music demos I made, as the editor was willing to cut the film considering the rhythm and vibe of the music. I could make an example or a suggestion with music on the film, but in the edit room we tumbled the ideas and tried out tens of versions of the music to the nearest millisecond.

This openness in collaboration created a workflow, where I would make a demo from 10 to 30 seconds, and the next day go to the edit studio to try out the demos. I also sent examples of the music attached to the film to the editor.

At the end, the final score consisted of demos from the first until the last, and choosing the right demos was made in collaboration with the editor and the director together.

To what Donnelly refers as pre-existing music, which means a temp track, was not really used in the edit room, as I was producing the music to try out with the picture in the edit. Temp music was used more as an inspirational tool for me, in a very wise way from the director, as I was struggling to find the right way of interpreting the emotional turbulence of the main character.

Working Together on Janusz

During the edit of *Janusz*, Coen says it was most challenging when the three of us were in the edit studio, the director, me, and Coen, and Matthijs had a vision that was a bit hard to explain and we would get stuck on that for a while. Sometimes we could talk for a long time, but neither me nor Coen actually understood what Matthijs was aiming for. It was something in the communication that was difficult for me, but also for Coen, that to communicate about music is hard.

The coaches of the Film Academy had different perspectives on our work, especially considering the music. The coaches might have had completely different opinions about the music, which caused even some arguments between them. Mainly this considered the function and placement of the music in the film. Also, their approach differentiated from what we were trying to express in the film and the music. For Coen, working with the music was very much a process of finding out what are all the aspects on which music can be judged.

Overall, Coen felt like working with the music went very well. The hardest thing one must deal with is time: if there is enough of it, it is possible to end up with exactly the kind of music you are

looking for. It just takes time to get there and a lot of tryouts. With *Janusz*, Coen said we ended up in a very good place because of this.

When asking for something that could have gone better, Coen can't come up with anything. On my part, I can't think of exactly anything that could have gone better per se. Because there was mutual trust and safe space to create, we were able to focus on the actual storytelling – with image and music.

When talking about the tryouts, I was able to be fast with my creation of new music demos also because of the forementioned trust and safe space. Even though there were so many demos that didn't end up in the film, I never felt locked or pushed down, but willing to try again, try to get closer of what the film and the director were looking for. Every time we had a new idea for the music, it took one or two days for me to come up with something new to try out in the studio. I would send the material to Coen, that he would check together with the director, and I would join them later in the day to talk about it.

Coen also pointed out how this tempo of working was helpful for him as he was able to try out the music and what it does to the image right away. Coen is someone who gives his all to the craft, so working together in the edit studio, diving together into the story was a great joy.

> C: I like that people come by in my room and we hang out and talk about the music. I like really getting super deep into a project that I'm doing like really having this on my mind constantly, and then it's just fun that people come by who are also thinking about it and you can talk super in depth about this specific music. It's always something new because everything gets together so the social aspect of editing is also really fun for me.

Sometimes I was afraid that Coen as an editor had to take too much responsibility of working with the music. He didn't feel like this: the fact that the editing was mostly finished early in the process helped, which allowed us to play around with the music.

Coen describes the collaborations we had as "dream collaborations". He sees it would be hard to accomplish something similar in the professional world. What also must be said, I probably would not have chosen this topic for the thesis, if the collaboration had been negative or difficult. The challenges I faced considered the actual artistic work, not the collaboration.

This was the first time for Matthijs to work with a composer. It was scary for him in the beginning to communicate about music, such a fragile art form, and was discovering for himself how to direct music in a film and communicate about it. We started to talk very early even before the shooting of the film, what he wanted to tell with the story of *Janusz*, and what the function of the music would be. Matthijs said he had a clear idea of what the film is about, but not that clear of an idea of what the music would sound like. That was something we got to discover together.

Matthijs talks a lot about the meaning of relationships when making a film. He sees these relationships as the core of his professional life. What I think we both share with Matthijs is not a very technical point of view to making a film, but a deeper need to tell a story and express a certain emotion with it.

I was producing a lot of demos. At first, they were not exactly what Matthijs was looking for. But what I learned from this, was that the demos are only material to build from: a sculptor needs the wood or clay to start making the sculpting from. This process was really challenging and humbling, as I had to really get face to face with my own habits of working.

> M: What I really like about the process with you was, you were not angry. And that was something I was really grateful for, because I was like, all right this is not what I'm looking for but the next one is a little bit more close, and the other one is a little bit more close.

After a while making the "wrong kind" of demos I realized that I had used to the story to serve my own inspiration as a music maker, when as a film composer it should be the other way

around. I should harness my inspiration and skills to serve the story and the film. It is about the film, not about my music.

I was openly lost with the process, telling the director that I didn't really know what to do. But because we had gotten to know each other with Matthijs. We didn't get angry with each other: Matthijs knew that I would do my best, and I knew that I would get to the best possible version of the music at some point, with the help of Matthijs and Coen. This was also a privilege, as we did have the time in the process as we started so early with the music. The music was really built along the story, not only along the image.

> M: For me it was really important to give you the feeling that there is no pressure because how I get to know you was that you were really vulnerable and fragile in a way, and that you need space that you can be creative. When you sit down to have a talk with me, just feel safe and trust the process. That's important for strong collaboration in any department, but I think especially in music because it's so fragile [art form].

When making a film, there is a tension between the high pressure of an industry with a lot of money, deadlines, publicity, fame, and all the pressure that comes out of when working with such (expensive) technical tools. So, the stakes are high, yet film allows to show such vulnerable and fragile sides of humanity, as it can get so close to what it is to be a human being, that no other art form is able to do. It seems almost of a paradox.

Matthijs talked about how important it is to be authentic when working in an environment like this. When you need to be fragile, you also need to know who you are, and then you can allow yourself to be vulnerable – and that's where the creativity comes from. Insecurity is not actually a flaw or something to be avoided, but a way to stay open to possibilities and people.

M: When you need to be fragile you really have to know who you are. And then you can allow yourself to be vulnerable. Because if then something happens, it's just the process. Then you can make big magic because you allow yourself to be creative.

I also think that everyone messes up constantly one way or another, but if they're open about it, it's easier to communicate and connect to the person. The authenticity means also that there are no roles to be held.

I asked Matthijs if he felt frustrated at any point as I didn't manage to get the music right. He said he only felt frustrated about how he could explain better what he was looking for, how he could get me there. He also says that this is the frustration he will probably get throughout his life when working with films. This is something that has to do with the relationship: Matthijs said it is important to separate the person from what they do.

M: Making music for film is important, but for me as a director it's really important that what they make and who they are really separate. Like I'm only talking about what they make. … If I had the feeling, all right Anne is gonna mess this up, then there was no trust. And I trusted you all the time.

In the collaboration of the three of us, Matthijs felt also that Coen helped him a lot to frame and ask for the things he was looking for in the music. There was also a moment when I got my violin with me in the edit studio, and just grabbed it out while we were looking at the film, trying out things live and getting the feedback right away. Also, if Matthijs or Coen had an idea, we could try it out right away. That was something that Matthijs and Coen also recalled, the music being so physically built in the moment, allowing everyone to take part in the music making process and respond to it.

M: That was really a moment where I was like yeah, this is why this process of the edit is really working, because we were vulnerable but in creative way. There was no wall or something like oh I know I'm the director so I'm gonna tell you.

Also, I don't feel like as I am responsible for the music, the best musical ideas must come from me – it's often quite the opposite. Being responsible for the music doesn't mean that all the ideas must come from me, but that I am able to bring the ideas given from anywhere into a musical existence. This is where I see my insecurity as a plus: when you haven't decided on your vision too strictly, you're open for other's ideas to join the process. Being creative means being curious and let the art piece and the creative process kind of reveal itself to you.

A Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara has stated referring to Carl Gustav Jung, that a piece of art has their own way of working – the artist has to be sensitive enough to listen where the music wants to go. "Don't try to force it your own ideas", Rautavaara says. (YLE 2015.) If you decide everything beforehand, it's difficult to hear music's own way anymore.

All in all, it was easy for Matthijs to work with the music when we had a mutual trust. According to him, communicating about the music in a personal level with me was easy, as he said he knew I wouldn't go crying at home if he didn't like some demos. That is also something I know: even though insecure and vulnerable, it would be difficult for me to take it personally if a director didn't like a piece I made. Maybe it's because my focus is on the music and the film, and how I could make it the best I can. It was easy for Matthijs to ask me anything, which I found honored to hear, that I had been safe enough for him to ask for things.

Music in the Edit of Janusz

Coen says they have been taught multiple ways of looking at music and montage at the Film Academy. Mostly, the editors have been warned not to use music too much too early in the

editing process. It can be dangerous for the editor to become dependent on that specific music because the edit must work "in and of itself". Then, the editor can start putting music on the image to enhance it or make it work even better.

> C: That means that as an editor you can be extremely helped by the music. The music can be super helpful to a point where it can be even dangerous to use music too early because then you can just get stuck on the music.

To have a scene that is not really working out, and then put music under it to make it look good, would be "a bit dangerous". It is also said about film music, that a "very mediocre song can sound great with the right picture". But in other words, if it's the wrong match, both image and music will suffer.

Nevertheless, Coen says using music from an early stage of editing is also important. As montage is about rhythm of the film, that makes it undeniably connected to music.

> C: … it [combining music with the montage] gave me like on a surface level just that the rhythm needs to, the cutting needs to add up with the cues in the music, or it can be that you're editing really fast, and you want to contrast that with like slow music or something. If the music's not cleared yet and you'll find this really beautiful piece of music and you're not sure if you can use it, you might need to change the whole editing again afterwards. So, they're very connected.

When working in the edit with music, Coen was very open to using music in his edit from the early start. This was the case with both documentary and fiction films in which we worked together. From my point of view, this is also the reason why I think the music is so connected to the image, as if the music is coming from within the picture, not from somewhere outside. This is of course also because of the conversations I had with the director, the director had with Coen, and the conversations we had together, the three of us. But to really trying out the music,

concretely, what it would do to the picture and vice versa from the early start of the edit, is what helped me a lot to work on the music.

Even if the demos I sent before the edit to Matthijs weren't exactly what Matthijs and Coen were looking for, they could still try to make scenes with the demos. They had enough of material that was close enough. Coen said he was never held back because of not having the right music.

When Coen and Matthijs started to work with the music in the edit, it was after the first coaching. After I had seen the first rough cut of the film was when I got a grip of what the music should be like. I was at home watching the first edit version, improvising with violin while watching, and recording what I played. Later the same day I sent the 8th demo to Matthijs and Coen, and that was the start of working with the music in the edit. After that, I started to go to the edit studio regularly.

I might have sat in the edit studio with my laptop trying out things on the go with the music on the film. This close collaboration seemed to have been the most fun part to all of us three.

> C: So close collaboration was what made this project especially fun for me like the fact that you were there so often. And the fact that we had like a bunch of good material already from the start to work with, like stuff that was close to what we wanted.

In the future, Coen says he doesn't expect there to be demos from so early on, as he understands this was a unique collaboration in that part: there was enough time, and I was fast enough to make a lot of takes.

> C: So, we just started to try to match music with pictures and see how that works. I started to try to find in what moments in the movie could benefit from this music, or where music is necessary if we're trying to be consistent. We just had to find the right moments and especially right in and out points, this was like super important.

Talking about the in and outpoints of the music became one of the most essential and challenging parts of the edit. We had found the right sounds and melodies in the music, the right musical material to work with, but we needed to find the timing and the actual dramaturgical function of the music.

> C: First I felt like the only thing that I knew was important about music was like the content of the music, like the actual song and the emotions that this actual song is conveying. But during this process of *Janusz* I started to find out that of course the placement is so important and like how much it's connected to the picture.

As the editing of the film is all about rhythm, and music also has a certain rhythm, matching these two is a big part of the editing process of music to the picture. This means the synchronization of image and music to reinforce the editing and mark out its rhythms (Chion 2009, 206).

But as opposed being able to point out the exact in and outpoint dramaturgically in the film, the aesthetic of the film is more subtle, and options to where to put music were multiple and had a great effect. As opposed to a Hollywood-like style, referring to Adorno and Eisler (1947, 110), where they describe a music that works like a clockwork with the image, it is natural that such music is "cool and remote rather than expressive". And expressing a feeling was something Matthijs was looking for in the music all along.

What then made the first demos not work with Matthijs' vision? He says that the music was "all too much". I remember in one meeting when listening to the demos with Matthijs before the shootings, he said while listening to the music that he wanted to tell the musicians to go out of the room from playing and just stay with one musician.

M: Sometimes we just listen to the demos and then we were like this is, I feel this is too intense or something, it's a great piece but it doesn't match with the picture. It needs more fragility. The music alone could be really interesting, but it also really has to match [with the image].

In the interview Matthijs was talking about why he wanted to use string instrument was because with strings, long bow strokes, you can create a space, a tone travelling in time. Opposed for example to piano, when you put down a key, it lasts as long as it does, as with strings you can create something going forward with one note. Compared then to pizzicato – that lasts as long as it does – to create a rhythmical essence and function.

Adorno and Eisler (1947, 108) have pointed out how instrumentation is never a matter of selecting colors as such, but a matter of "setting". This means composing the music so that it really activates each instrument. "The task is not to compose ordinary music of unusual instruments; it is more important to compose unusual music for ordinary instruments", Adorno and Eisler write. This way the composer has to "invent" new ways to use a specific instrument.

M: I think it came more out like talk we want to tell a story about a boy who is looking for the warmth and security of a mother. How can we communicate that longing or that desire for the love of mother like the form of security. That's why we thought maybe we can use strings because it's closest to our voices as human beings. It's warm actually. Maybe I'm rambling but it's more like that string is more traveling in time. I think that was also why it was important to use different locations to tell that we travel a lot in time, because your longing is growing. I think that the idea of using strings is in how it travels through space. It is in the same room, and you can't avoid it. It's more fluent or something, creating an overall atmosphere of this feeling.

Matthijs was looking for this "pom pom pom" -thing since the first meetings we had with the music. When playing songs from his Spotify-list – it might have been the smallest details in the

songs that he was looking for. Travel in time, to picture a journey of someone, was essential from the beginning, and the rhythm was picturing the journey, the steady movement of going forward. To combine with that, the long strokes with the strings were to create an overall space, an atmosphere, where the journey was made in. I think this was a point that I misunderstood from the beginning, and one of the reasons I couldn't find the right tone from the start.

> M: The character has to grow, or plot has to grow, and how can we use music to feel that something is growing. That was something I talked a lot about with Coen, how can we give the feeling to the audience that this is going forward.

In the edit of a film, everything can change. Also, we might have a vision for the music since the first meetings before the shootings, but the story can really take a turn in the edit where the story is rebuilt. Matthijs says it is sometimes difficult to hold your first intensions in the edit, and the core of what you want to tell.

> M: It's so much about feeling that it's not easy to grasp what you want in music or what is the function of the music. Finding the words sometimes to describe what I was looking for [was difficult]. But I think we managed it well like you were like also really open and also Coen helped a lot in explaining what I was looking for.

What was eye-opening for Matthijs was a meeting we had with the film composing teacher Kaveh Vares, who used the word alienation of the music. The music was moving along with the character, but looking at him from a slight distance, trying to open a route for the audience to move along with him. As Matthijs had felt he had to use a lot of words to describe something, it was helpful to have a concept from the musical language to describe what he was aiming for.

Also, the theme of trust in collaboration is essential. Because we shared a same vision, I trusted Matthijs' and Coen's work with the music and was interested in what they thought of how the music should be a part of the film. If Coen or Matthijs had done a cut of the music in the edit, I

was more interested than cautious to hear what the result would be. I am not saying that this would be the case all the time in the future, but it is telling of the level of trust we shared during the edit. This is opposed to what Adorno and Eisler (1947, 111) describe from the Hollywood days:

> Composers of cinema music are exposed to a special danger that other composers hardly ever have to face: arbitrary cuts made by the film director when they dislike something. Such cuts are made with total disregard of musical logic, …

As I trusted Coen and Matthijs' vision of the music, I was allowed to relax during the editing of it. I also had gotten to know both of them, so I knew they were music lovers trying to work on the music in a way that it would serve the film.

Flexibility of Film Music in Janusz

I remember Coen saying in the edit about the first demos, that it was difficult to work with them as they were a one whole piece. Reflecting on it, he said that the demos didn't form clear cues for him to edit on. The demos might have repeated themselves or they were building up to something, but the buildups were too long for what they could use or cut in a coherent way. He was missing clear musical cues at first. We managed to solve this later, as I started to make simply shorter music pieces, from 5–15 seconds to 1,5 minutes. I started to approach the music more as a musical commenting on the film than building a music piece per se.

Donnelly (2005, 12) describes how film music works through its own logic and (more importantly) through its logic of interaction with other stylistic aspects of film. Cross-rhythm and counterpoint are notable attractions in music, and indeed a similar aspect exists in the relationship between film and music, most notably cross-rhythm between time in the music and time in the image (pulse, scheme, pace, etc.), and cross-rhythm (in terms of

interplay/contradiction) between spaces of music and the space of the diegesis. This contrapuntal aspect occurs when music and film interact, each having an impact on the other.

Adorno and Eisler (1947, 111) see this practice as a kind of "planned improvisation", where composer is writing a type of music that would not be thrown completely out of gear by anticipated cuts. What composer can do about it is to be as careful as possible with regard to the safety of their "setting", that is, they not only must avoid writing any bar unless they can accurately imagine its sound but must also be sure that everything they write is fully realizable under the average conditions of performance.

In the composing process of *Janusz* the improvisation was collaborative. Finding the violinist Natálie Kulina was a clear turning point in the process. Kulina's way of playing was versatile, and it reminded me of Adorno and Eisler's (1947, 108) notion on the nature of instrumentation as more than just "sound painting" the film with various "colors". Afterwards some viewers have asked if the music consisted of an accordion, or a flute, as it was all done just with one layered violin. But to approach the very typical and traditional classical instrument in a film from a new perspective and getting to work with a musician who understood the style and vulnerability it required, is something I am very proud of. The violinist was not keen on being "perfect", but rather interested in producing sounds that were not traditional in the classical violin music we have been used to.

Janusz: The Bed Scene

The conversations about the actual music in *Janusz* between me, Coen and Matthijs occurred while watching scenes of *Janusz.* The bed scene was chosen as one conversation point as the scene was difficult to compose music to and Coen also struggled with it while editing the film.

In the bed scene, Janusz sees his mother in bed with a man and faces the feeling of abandonment. First, we see Janusz walking in their house, and leaving his shoes in the hall. That is when he also sees shoes of someone else and realizes there is someone else in the house with his mother. Janusz walks upstairs and we see from his point of view how he watches the couple in the bed from a distance. After that, we see a close-up of Janusz's face, where the final feeling abandonment happens.

The bed scene was probably the most challenging to work with for both the edit and the music. Coen described it being the hardest because it was such an important scene for the film, but he felt like it wasn't working at all. To the viewer, the scene should have given plain information for them to understand what Janusz was going through, why he decides to leave his mother and their home. Coen felt like this was not clear in the image.

> C: All those ways like emotionally and just like a factual information it was not there. It wasn't there in either sound or a picture, especially I couldn't see it from the acting, I couldn't see it in cinematography, there was not much in sound to convey this emotion, so let's try music. So it's a bit of cheating [way of using music] you know but it helped.

Coen was really up to having music in the scene, but I also felt it was difficult to compose for the scene. I could not really connect to the character in the moment. I didn't know whether I should try to interpret Janusz's emotions that I couldn't see or create an overall atmosphere that I didn't know what it was. It was difficult to figure out how to depict the feeling of loss in such a way that would be clear enough but not break the general atmosphere of the scene.

The in and end points were essential in the scene too, and we tried tens of options to start and end the music in various spots of the scene. In the recording of the music, the violinist Natálie and I had played tens of different clips with different harmonic material in the studio. In the edit studio Coen started to pile up the clips differently forming the score for the scene.

For Matthijs the vision of the scene turned out to become different from what he had thought before shooting. The idea was to make a long shot where we were in Janusz's head and making a point of view of when he was walking at the attic. Then comes out the revelation that his mother is lying in bed with the boss, the farmer. Actually, the shot of the mother who is lying in bed, is the end of the scene, but it was cut so in the edit that the scene is in the middle of the scene. Before that, there was a moving shot, showing the point of view Janusz, who was walking in the attic to this revelation of his mother in bed with another man.

> M: In the edit we saw that that shot was not working. … Then we thought, we have to build tension, and how we're going to do that? … we need something that builds up because he has to discover something. And I think the music is really helping in communicating what he is feeling about what he sees that he is afraid of actually.

When Janusz now walks into the house, he sees the shoes at the door and walks up, it's all there building the tension. We already know there is something going on but it's building up. The music starts before the shot of the mother who is laying in the bed with the boss. That is because Janusz already has this feeling of feeling alone, feeling out of place, and that his mother is the only person who he can hold on to. That's why we see Janusz and his mother laying in a bed together in the first shot of the movie – they only have each other.

Matthijs wanted the music over there that does not have clear inpoint and outpoint. The music is there connecting all these sequences together and creating one whole feeling for the scene, expressing the feeling of Janusz' abandonment and that he is losing something.

> M: What I like is also the music goes higher at some point, when we see the couple in the bed for a long time. There is some point in the music where, really high, and then we cut to Janusz. He discovers something, and he loses something at that point, warmth, and security of a mother. It's totally clear for me that without music it would not be so intense, or I could not emotionally connect to what is happening.

Janusz: The Following

In the following scene Janusz has walked around the roads and finds himself in a Polish supermarket. He wanders around the isles and chooses an energy drink to buy but does not have enough money to pay it at the cashier. Then, a customer before him, a woman called Ewelina, decides to give him the coins he is missing. After that, Janusz stares at Ewelina's back and decides to start following her, hoping she could help him.

When Janusz realizes maybe Ewelina can help him, the music starts. Janusz follows Ewelina and arrives to her house, and in the moment when Janusz knocks on their window, we hear the last cue in the music. The music starts when we see a close-up of Janusz's face looking at Ewelina's back, making the decision to go after her. Music ends when Janusz reaches Ewelina's family's mobile home, knocking at their door and Ewelina opening the door with her husband. This is also the first time where the theme in the music appears: a double-stop on A- and D-strings, with a glissando from B to A on A-string. It is a movement to tonic, which is describing the finding of a home.

For Coen, the important plot point was when Ewelina pays for Janusz's energy drink and when Janusz realizes that Ewelina could maybe help him. The music starts right at this realization. Other narrational plot points are when we see Janusz following Ewelina and Janusz arriving to Ewelina's family's house.

> C: The following aspect is here shown in the music like you're with him and in this emotion. He realizes in the store that she could maybe help him out and he comes up with this plan of following her to her house, and the music stays for this entire emotion.

In *Janusz*, the music is dispersed except for the end sequence; music appears in small comments, and it really makes a big difference when it does. It's difficult to even talk about those musical comments as "music", since it was as if the music blew a word here and there to help the

spectator go along with Janusz. The music was thought to be holding hands between the main character and the audience, so that it would be easier for the audience to feel sympathy for Janusz' character. This approach never attempted the music to be heard on its own, apart from the film, but always attached to the image.

Janusz: The End Sequence

When staying at Ewelina's family's home, Janusz has grown a bond with the mouse of the household. He comforts himself caressing the little animal at night when he can't get sleep. The father of the family, who is not happy with accommodating Janusz in their home, notices this and gives Janusz a bad look when he sees Janusz taking care of the mouse. Probably the father does not want Janusz to have that kind of connection to something in their home.

In the end sequence, Janusz realizes all of a sudden that the mouse is gone. He can't find it anywhere and the mouse's cage is empty. He starts looking for it in the living room, rushing around the house. He goes outside and faces the father, pushes him against the wall screaming "where is my mouse?!". This is the first time when we see some emotion coming out from Janusz, something he has held back until now.

> M: We see something we never saw from this person. Because he is able to allow himself to feel something. Emotionally it touches us, I hope [laughing]. Some people are like, it's making a connection emotionally.

The music in the scene starts when Janusz goes outside and stops at the trash cans to go look for the mouse. The music was made based on a temp track Matthijs put on the scene during the edit, suggesting for me to look what he was trying to do with the scene musically. I thought that the soft music of the temp track really brought out the frustration of Janusz that he had been holding back. Yet still, my first tryout after watching the scene with the temp music was not

correct. But when I started to improvise on the temp track while watching the scene, I grabbed what Matthijs was looking for in the scene.

> M: Janusz learns actually that what he really needs as a human to grow up actually is to also let his emotion go. To breath out, something he literally does. And why the music is so intense, why it is so holding that, that's why I think it's really good.

The music is quite slow and soft, with a steady pizzicato rhythm with an upper harmonic and melodic lines with violin. The softness is supposed to enhance Janusz's frustration and anger to the audience, but also giving him a sense of comfort. The music is not trying to depict the anger of Janusz, but actually let Janusz know that everything is okay, and it is okay to let your emotions out. This is a contrast Matthijs talked about from very early on: in the end there's going to be a fight scene and he wanted comforting music to contradict it to give safety to Janusz. At some point we discussed in the edit that is this too slow, but also the tempo of the music gives space to Janusz's feelings and frustration. The music is actually not depicting the anger, but what Janusz had been looking for.

> M: I think what is going on here is almost a literal outcome of what he is looking for actually, that he is held by a mother. That describes what he is longing for. Not another mother, but a place or a person who holds him. … the fact that he is fighting someone is not the most important thing in this scene. It's the moment where he is just breathing out. And Ewelina is holding him.

With the mixing of the music Matthijs was very certain that the music has to be around us. For him, every scene before the ending was like "a little of something", not a whole scene. But in the end, he wanted everything to come together and make it more round also in the soundscape.

> M: Everyone who looks at this scene is like okay he looks for his mommy. And I think that's the function. And that's because you can empathize because of the music, why he

is fighting, why does he say where is my fucking mouse. If you would make this film without this scene, you would be like what the fuck is going on.

This was something Matthijs said he struggled with explaining it to the coaches: the story is not built in a traditional way, you're all the time thinking what is going on. Matthijs wanted to communicate a feeling, and it would be boring if it was all clear in the beginning – he wanted the viewer to explore something along the film.

CONCLUSION: MUSIC IN *JANUSZ*

During the process of composing for *Janusz,* I learned about what it means to work collaboratively as a composer in a film crew; what it means to have a safe space and trust in order to be creative and vulnerable with your colleagues; and what the saying "the ego of a film composer is a film composer's worst enemy" actually means.

About the collaboration I learnt for example how the editors have a lot of ideas considering the musical storytelling and functions the image needs that don't appear in composer's head. As the editor Coen Hagenaars said, listening to some songs would evoke dramaturgical scenes in his head, and he described how a certain kind of cinematic language is associated with a certain kind of music. The editors are practically married with the visual footage for weeks, building the visual storyline inside and outside. In this way, they know the storyline more inherently than the composers – but also the distance that film composers have towards the footage can be helpful, also for the editor. I also learnt that the role of a film composer in a crew differs from film to film: in some movies the composer is supporting the sound design while in other movies the music holds a more dominant role in the storytelling.

What I also learnt is that having musical examples from early on is extremely useful. The director Matthijs Sluijs had made a playlist for *Janusz* during thinking about the story and shared it with me, which opened a route for me to step into the world of the film. Communication and using words about music turned out to be the most difficult thing when working with music in a film. Matthijs said he struggled finding the right words about music or music's functions in a film. It is difficult to use words about music that is so abstract and non-verbal in itself. Trying to interpret and understand what the director wants with the music is a research in itself, so audible musical examples – from a playlist or music made by the composer – is a method in trying to get aligned with the director's vision.

During working on *Janusz*, the most humbling yet embarrassing point was when I realized that I had used the story to serve my own inspiration as a composer, when it should have been the other way around: me using my skills as a music maker to serve the story. This is also tricky, because music is something that is built actually outside of the actual diegesis of the film. No film *needs* non-diegetic music per se. This is different for example from the jobs of sound designers and editors, whose crafts start when there is footage to work with. Music is something that is created outside of the film, and it can get mixed up what the film actually needs from the music and what the composer wants to compose. Especially when the composer's architype, even if a film composer, is still very much colored by the romantic view of a composer, in which the composer makes "absolute" music representing their own skills and personal expression. In a film, the expression is determined and should be representing the film instead of the composer. This is why it is said that the film composer's biggest enemy is their own ego.

Interviewing the director Matthijs opened my eyes to what trust means when working in a film crew. Making a film is always a challenge, it is such a big pile of technical work and organization. In order to be able to actually focus on the challenge of making art, instead of problems in communication or technicalities and so forth, trust between the crew members creates safety that is essential for creativity and fruitful collaboration. It feels difficult to describe the importance of the bond we held during the collaboration in *Janusz*. Trust means that you know that the other person won't abandon your input depending on what kind of material you bring to the table. They will not misuse their power or hide their actual opinions, but you can trust that they mean what they say. Being straightforward and openly yourself requires not being afraid of getting offended or abandoned.

When composing film music, I feel a sense of purpose. It has a lot to do with the fact that the music I make is for a particular use. Being a film composer is a service – an artistic customer service, and the customer is the film (if we want to describe the craft in capitalistic manners). The job description does not involve making music solely for the composer's own good and benefit, but for the film's good and benefit. It's about creating a space for the director and the

film crew to explore the story musically. I see myself as a musical interpreter of the story, offering a platform for the director to be inspired and see the story in a different light through music. But seeing film composing as a customer service and not as "my music", does not mean that it was not self-expression. Getting to explore different musical genres and instruments through the stories also means that I get to express and find different parts of myself as an artist.

What I have learned through this research, is that the most important thing in film composing is listening: listening to the stories being told; to the people in the stories and to the ones you work with; and listening to the music. Creating musical realities for stories means diving inside the story and listening to what its reality sounds like.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adorno, Theodor & Eisler, Hanns. 1947. *Composing for the Films*. London: Dennis Dobson Ltd.

Arlander, Annette. 2020. The Shadow of a Pine Tree. Authorship, agency, and performing beyond the human. In Ewa Bal & Mateusz Chaberski (ed.), *Situated Knowing – Epistemic Perspectives on Performance*. London: Routledge. 157–170.

Chion, Michel. 2009. *Film, Sound Art*. Translated by Claudia Gorbman. New York: Columbia University Press.

Donnelly, K. J. 2005. *The Spectre of Sound: Music in Film and Television*. London: British Film Institute.

Gorbman, Claudia. 1987. *Unheard Melodies.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hirsjärvi, Sirkka, Hurme, Helena. 2008. *Tutkimushaastattelu. Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö*. [*Research interview. The theory and practice of a theme interview*.] Helsinki: Gaudeamus Helsinki University Press.

Kuusela, Hanna. 2020. *Kollaboraatio – Yhteistekijyys nykykirjallisuudessa ja taiteessa. [Collaboration – Collective Making in Contemporary Literature and Art.]* Helsinki: Vastapaino.

Roulston, Kathryn. 2012. "The Pedagogy of Interviewing". In Jaber F. Gubrium, James A. Holstein, Amir B. Marvasti & Karyn D. McKinney (ed.) *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc. 61–74.

Ryynänen, Sanna & Rannikko, Anni (ed). 2021. *Tutkiva mielikuvitus – Luovat, osallistuvat ja toiminnalliset tutkimusmenetelmät yhteiskuntatieteissä. [Investigative imagination – Creative, participatory and functional research methods in social sciences.]* Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

Ryynänen, Sanna, Nortio, Emma & Varjonen, Sirkku. 2021. Soveltava teatteri taideperustaisena tutkimuksena. [Applied theatre as arts-based research.] In Sanna Ryynänen & Anni Rannikko (ed.), *Tutkiva mielikuvitus – Luovat, osallistuvat ja toiminnalliset tutkimusmenetelmät yhteiskuntatieteissä. [Investigative imagination – Creative, participatory and functional research methods in social sciences.]* Helsinki: Gaudeamus. 142–167.

Varto, Juha. 2017. Pidä huolta epistemestäsi! [Take care of your episteme!]. In Juha Varto, *Taiteellinen tutkimus. Mitä se on? Kuka sitä tekee? Miksi? [Artistic research. What is it? Who does it? Why?]* Helsinki: Aalto ARTS Books. 55–71.

Warren, Carol A. B. 2012. "Interviewing as social interaction". In Jaber F. Gubrium, James A. Holstein, Amir B. Marvasti & Karyn D. McKinney (ed.) *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc. 129–142.

Online Sources

Britannica. German Romanticism and Naturalism. https://www.britannica.com/art/theater-building/German-Romanticism-and-Naturalism (last checked 3.1.2023)

Culture Action Europe. The Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research. https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research/ (last checked 18.8.2022)

SAG Aftra Foundation. Conversations with Adam Driver. 15.1.2019.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5wmoYWB4b0&t=2747s (last checked 22.6.2022)

YLE. Einojuhani Rautavaara kertoo musiikistaan. [Einojuhani Rautavaara tells about his music.]
4.3.2015. https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2015/03/04/einojuhani-rautavaara-kertoo-musiikistaan
(last checked 3.1.2023)