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Realisation of the Concept of Instrumentalists' Theatre
in the Composition *through the youth of these things*

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Introduction

The following text is a description of the composition *through the youth of these things* for instrumental ensemble, objects, and electronics, written for the Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej and its conductor, Szymon Bywalec. It also aims to present the creative process: from the initial concepts, through the attempt to develop premises – the method of working while composing – and finally issues related to the stage and the actual here and now of the performance.

The proposed method of instrumentalists' theatre, which accompanies the creation of the composition *through the youth of these things*, refers to the perception of the New Music experience seen through the prism of performance, and is a proposal for the creation of a story with a compositional practice in which sound is the main point of reference, but at the same time incorporating contemporary theatrical concepts.

State of Research

The specifics of the artistic perspective adopted, combining the experience of performance with the practice of composition, required research into both theatre, composition – especially its area related to the involvement of theatrical means, and the processes of musicalisation in theatre.

The popularity of the notion of postdramatic theatre[1], introduced by Hans-Thies Lehmann, has influenced the vast literature devoted to a movement of theatre in which the dramatic text is not the principal means of expression.

Among the most recent entries, it is worth mentioning the Methuen Drama publishing series, the individual volumes of which explore the relationship of

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[1] H.-T. Lehmann, *Teatr postdramatyczny,* Dorota Sajewska, Małgorzata Sugiera (translation into Polish), Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2004.

postdramatic theatre to problematic issues of i.a. politicality[2] , form[3] , or expanding the perspective to include non-European culture[4] .

One of the most important records in this regard is first and foremost the published in Polish writings of Heiner Goebbels[5] . Other important sources include Rita Mačiliūnaitė-Dočkuvienė's [6] work exploring the relationship between musical narrative and postdramatic theatre in the context of her own work as a composer. This topic has also been explored extensively by Mladen Ovadija[7], in a publication perversely addressing the dramaturgy of sound in postdramatic theatre.

These texts drew my attention to issues of genre and a broader understanding of sonority in theatre plays – including the issue of formulating notions (e.g., presence, multifaceted polyphony).

Music theatre is the subject of a comprehensive publication by Eric Salzman and Thomas Dési, *The New Music Theater*[8], which considers historical perspectives such as Luciano Berio's *azione musicale*, Maurcio Kagel's instrumental theatre, Dieter Schnebel's visible music and Karlheinz Stockhausen's theatrical concepts, as well as the stage works of Helmut Lachenmann, Wolfgang Rihm or Salvatore Sciarrino and others.

From the perspective of compositional practice, David Roesner and Matthias Rebstock have made an extremely important contribution to describing the theatricalisation of New Music by formulating the concept of Composed Theatre[9].

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[2] *Postdramatic Theatre and Political,* Karen Jürs-Munby, Jerome Carroll, Steve Giles (ed.), Methuen Drama, Bloomsbury Publishing, London-New York 2013.

[3] *Postdramatic Theatre and Form,* Michael Shane Boyle, Matt Cornish, Brandon Woolf (ed.), Methuen Drama, Bloomsbury Publishing, London-New York 2021.

[4] A. Sengupta *Postdramatic Theatre and India. Theatre-Making since the 1990s.* Methuen Drama, Bloomsbury Publishing, London-New York 2023.

[5] H. Goebbels, *Przeciw Gesamtkunswerk,* Lukáš Jiřička (selection and introduction), Korporacja Ha!art, Kraków 2015.

[6] R. Mačiliūnaitė-Dočkuvienė, Muzikinės naracijos komponavimo būdai postdraminiame teatre, dysertacja doktorska, Lietuvos Muzikos Ir Teatro Akademija, Vilnius 2017.

[7] M. Ovadija, *Dramaturgy of Sound in The Avant-Garde and Postdramatic Theatre,* McGill Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca 2013 (eBook edition).

[8] E. Salzman, T. Dési, *The Music Theater. Seeing the Voice, Hearing the Body*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2008.

[9] *Composed Theatre. Aesthetics, Practices, Processes,* M. Rebstock, D. Roenser (ed.), Intellect, Bristol/Chicago 2012.

This research is being continually expanded by the international research team led by Roesner, *The Sound of Theatre. Musical and Acoustemological Approaches to Contemporary Performance Practice in an International Context*[10], which includes the podcast series *Staging Sound. Reflections on Theatre Music and Sound Design*[11].

The notion of composed theatre is also referred to in Kent Olofsson's publication *Composing the Performance*[12]. This is a multifaceted description of compositional strategies adapted to stage performances based on a radio play[13]. The ideas of sonic scenography formulated in this book had a direct influence on the creative concepts of the described work *through the youth of these things* and provided the impetus to explore the available literature precisely on sonic scenography, including Mareike Dobewall, David Roesner, Johannes Birringer.

Further artistic research included reference to the available literature on atmosphere and aura (e.g., the concepts of Gernot Böhme, Hermann Schmitz), including publications that directly link atmosphere and music (especially the cross-sectional articles by Friedlind Riedel and Monty Adkins).

The performative involvement of musicians has been linked to the experience of 'presence' in the performing arts, a concept formulated by Erika Fischer-Lichte[14]. On the surface of musicology, her writings are referred to by Weronika Nowak[15], who redefines Fischer-Lichte's concept of performative space when writing about Luciano Berio's stage works. This research is contrasted with Heiner Goebbels' perverse concept of the aesthetics of absence[16].

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[10] https://www.en.cas.uni-muenchen.de/research_groups/current_rg/rg_roesner/index.html, accessed 20.09.2023.
[11] https://stagingsound.podigee.io, accessed 20.09.2023.
[12] K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance, An exploration of musical composition as a dramaturgical strategy in contemporary intermediate theatre*, Lund University, Lund 2018.
[13] Ibid., p. 7.
[14] E. Fischer-Lichte, *Estetyka performatywności,* Mateusz Borowski, Małgorzata Sugiera (translation into Polish), Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2008.
[15] W. Nowak, «*Outis» i «Cronaca del Luogo» Luciana Beria w perspektywie kategorii przestrzeni performatywnej i heterotopicznej,* doctorate disertation, UAM, Poznań 2019.
[16] H. Goebbels, *Estetyka nieobecności. Jak to się wszystko zaczęło,* Anna R. Burzyńska (translation into Polish) [In:] H. Goebbels, *Przeciw Gesamtkunstwerk,* op. cit., pp. 203-214.

The work on the sonic texture of the piece involved reference to specialist literature on instrumental playing techniques. On the other hand, the non-musical context of the composition was related to literature associated with the autoethnographic genre and poetry.

Methodology

The path to the compositional method on *through the youth of these things* was based on the one hand, on the formulation of theoretical assumptions based on the available literature, but primarily on artistic experience. My first attempts at combining theatrical elements with instrumental performance, the performative role of percussion, the use of objects and the video layer, were made during my composition studies in 2014-2019.

The core work on the score has been preceded by the composition of works for various ensemble configurations (from solo to orchestral), both acoustic and using electronic media and extensive theatrical means. Based on these experiences, the concept for the work on the score was established.

Simultaneously, as part of a research project with musicians from the Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej, audio samples of non-harmonic extended playing techniques were recorded. Elements of the textures composed in this way made it possible to create a computer sketch of the composition in question.

The piece *through the youth of these things* was notated in the form of a score with accompanying performance notes. It is divided into three movements (I, II, III). In this text, the terms: **part** and **movement** are used interchangeably and equivalently.

In this dissertation, the term 'New Music', understood as an avant-garde tendency in contemporary music derived from the philosophy of T.W. Adorno, is spelled out in capital letters.

Thesis structure

The description consists of **three main parts**, preceded by an introduction, and followed by a conclusion.

The first – *Artistic Perspective*, shows the process of formulating the main ideas of working on a piece *through the youth of these things*. Selected examples are used to describe the experience of working with an instrumental ensemble.

The second – *The Path to Instrumentalists' Theatre*, deals with the genre within the described composition and the four main areas of influence of the formulated concept. This part concludes with the main assumptions of the concept of instrumentalist theatre.

The third – *The Realisation of the Concept*, is a detailed analysis of the work described. The starting point is the three main aesthetic categories: *the youth of the things*, *the expression of melancholy*, and *the sense of the end*, which determine the emotional level of the composition. The following chapters describe the form and narrative of the piece, its visual layer, and the peculiarity of the presence of the instrumentalists in the space of the stage. The section concludes with a chapter devoted to the sonority and musical material of the work described.

I Artistic Perspective.
   The Experience of Working with an Instrumental Ensemble

The path to the articulation of the working method for the piece that is the subject of this text is linked to the composer's view of working primarily with instrumental ensembles. In previous years, my fascination with the concept of the 'Gehalt-Aesthetic Turn'[17] postulated by Harry Lehmann influenced the individual's search for possible forms of extra-musical expression: the use of movement, gesture, the video layer. Today, in retrospect, these theses seem to have exaggerated the importance of digital instruments and electronic media, as well as the conceptual dimension of New Music. Particularly after the experience of pandemic isolation, we can talk about the technological oversaturation of transmission and the feeling of longing for an acoustic sound, silence, and the community experience of the concert. However, it is worth noting the important philosophical values of Lehmann's assumptions, which directly influenced my further research explorations:

- Firstly – by drawing attention to the common ground of communication between creator and spectator through reference to extra-musical reality[18].
- Secondly – by pointing out the consequences of technological progress: i.a. the ability to sample audio and use it in the composing process[19].

Awareness of these ideas led to the formulation of the initial research questions. Following the arrows are the main areas that will be discussed later in the thesis based on the available literature:

- What is the role of live performance? Why does the ephemeral, the 'becoming', influence the change of perception? Does electronic music capture all the desired qualities? → **(non)presence**, **atmosphere**

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[17] H. Lehmann, *Rewolucja cyfrowa w muzyce. Filozofia muzyki,* Monika Pasiecznik (transltion into Polish.), Fundacja Bęc Zmiana, Warszawa 2016, eBook Edition.
[18] Idem. *Avant-garde Today—A Historical Model of the Modern Arts,* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2QkwZELXzg, 36:29-37:09 accessed 13.09.2023,
[19] See *ePlayer* [In:] Idem, *Rewolucja cyfrowa w muzyce…,* op. cit.

- How has performance and postdramatic theatre influenced the separation from theatre of classical narrative, character creation, and working with text? → **genre, (non)presence**, **polyphonicity**
- Is it still a musical work? The specificities and limitations of musical performance and practice. → **genre**
- How could one build a narrative without text? Is this an opportunity for musical material? → **genre**, **atmosphere**
- How is the space planned? What is sonic scenography? → **sonic scenography, (non)presence**
- How does the composed space and the actions that take place in it influence the musicians? → **(non)presence**

The internal desire to 'tell stories' through sound has influenced the interests associated with theatrical practices, especially concepts strongly linked to sound: Composed Theatre and postdramatic theatre, which resists the primacy of the dramatic text.

Regardless of these considerations, I was looking for the ways to break away from a strict conceptual relationship with the musical material and from the criteria of its selection in the context of content relations. Thus, I began to intuitively explore the concepts of aura and atmosphere and operate with them in the context of constructing a sonic texture. At the same time, it was significant to rely on the following parameters characteristic of compositional practice: score notation, working with musicians, the leading role of sound.

These ideas were reflected in the creative process. The following chapters summarise the four art projects realised during my studies at the doctoral school. The experience of working on them led to the selection of the main areas of research, which at the time was still intuitive. Although some elements of the strategies described below were already present in the earlier compositions, the work on the projects described here was planned as a process in which the individual ideas and strategies (e.g., in the work *Imaginarium Polkolor*, based on electronic sound, sonic scenography and objects) were verified in artistic practice and set the main assumptions of working on the composition *through the youth of these things*.

I.1. *And it rose and it fell and pulsed like a wave*

The piece was created in 2019/20 thanks to the active participation of Duo Van Vliet musicians Rafal Łuc and Ian Anderson, to whom it is dedicated. The instrumentation consists of viola and accordion, extended by the electronic sounds and the optional video layer – prepared with Konrad Żukowski's footage. The working method was a multi-stage process. The first meeting was devoted to conversation, mutual listening, and experimentation. The joint dialogue facilitated the development of a satisfactory performative situation. In further stages, successive drafts of the score and sound ideas were commented on and continuously revised. The following material and performance solutions were developed as part of the shared experience:

- the sonic unification of viola and accordion with an electronic layer by working with instrumental recordings from rehearsals. The electronics in many passages provide a gently detuned, sonic *afterimage*.
- during the first performance, a screen was placed behind the performers onto which a video layer was projected. It has a scenographic function and makes it possible to create a similar stage situation wherever the composition is performed[20];
- the introduction in the viola part of a process of detuning the instrument and setting it in the context of the composition's narrative[21], as well as a timbral transformation using a dismantled bow and parallel shifted chords; the accordion part was based on unison chord combinations in both manuals.

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[20] So far, the work has been presented in the historic interiors of St Catherine's Church in Krakow, in the neutral gallery space of Wrocław's IP Studio and in the club venue of the Main Post Office in Krakow.

[21] This procedure reappears in the composition *through the youth of these things*, see Ex. 21, p. 114.

Fig. 1. *And it rose and it fell and pulsed like a wave,* view of the stage setting

Ex. 1. *And it rose and it fell and pulsed like a wave,* score, bars 168-170. Visible composed detune of the viola part

I.2.   *Imaginarium Polkolor*

The composition was created in 2020, mostly during pandemic isolation, and the scenic elements were planned with the specificity of an online premiere in the form of a video documentation. It is scored for three performers, electronics, and live video projection for Ensemble Kompopolex, a Wroclaw-based ensemble specialising in electroacoustic and performative composition. The musicians write about themselves as follows:

> They perform committed and engaging pieces, often abandoning their instruments in favour of cables, keyboards, dancing and singing[22].

Working on the piece allowed me to experiment with the following parameters:

- conventional acoustic instruments were omitted, leaving only objects[23] and electronic sound. This allowed a creative focus on the relationship between objects and performers, as well as the sonority of objects in the context of amplification and the use of electronic media;

- the composition was created in a process – during the first rehearsals with the ensemble, a simplified textual notation was used, allowing free experimentation with the musicians' movements and gestures; over time, details and nuances in the sound layer were added and the notation was made more precise;

- theatrical elements were consulted with Joanna Bednarczyk, director and playwright;

- time in the piece is organised around interwoven measured and ad libitum segments in which the use of objects is intensified (example 2); a similar organisation of time appears in the first movement of *through the youth of these things*;

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[22] *Wykonują utwory zaangażowane i angażujące, często porzucają swoje instrumenty na rzecz kabli, keyboardów, tańca i śpiewu* (own translation), http://www.kompopolex.pl/ensemble.php, accessed 13.09.2023.

[23] The only instrument in the composition is an electric guitar lying in the stage space, operated jointly by the performers.

- the use of sampled sounds and electronically processed objects, combined with a limited, processed and fragmented text [24], influenced the further development of thinking about atmosphere in terms of sound material;
- a division into three stage spaces (1-3, see Fig. 2), assigned to each section of the form of the composition, was applied: the musicians start the piece separated by a semi-transparent curtain (1), behind which images from a live camera are projected; over time, this space transforms, and in subsequent sections of the piece the musicians move closer towards the audience (2, 3).

Working with a small setting, in which musicians are simultaneously assigned complex rhythmic parts, timbral nuances of objects, as well as choreographic and theatrical parts – influenced my awareness of the problems involved in performing works with limited production possibilities. Given the vast experience of Ensemble Kompopolex's musicians in performing technically complex works, I realised that it would be impossible to translate such extensive involvement of performers into larger ensembles. At the same time, there was a growing sense of sonic insufficiency in me due to the lack of acoustic instruments.

The technological complexity and the necessity of involving a significant space to perform the piece, limits the possibilities for its live presentation, especially in the context of a wider concert programme. This awareness, though, provided inspiration when formulating the premises of the composition *through the youth of these things.* It allowed me to see the importance of the timbre in creating atmosphere, as well as the narrative potential of objects and elements of sonic scenography. It was the impetus for further exploring the possibilities of performative involvement of the musicians, considering their instrumental practice and, as far as possible, limiting the technical complexity of the future piece.

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[24] Excerpts from L. Tolstoy's *War and Peace* were recorded by Monika Frajczyk.

Ex. 2. *Imaginarium Polkolor,* score, b. 65. *ad libitum* fragment, interleaved with a precisely notated rhythmic sequence of 3rd performer

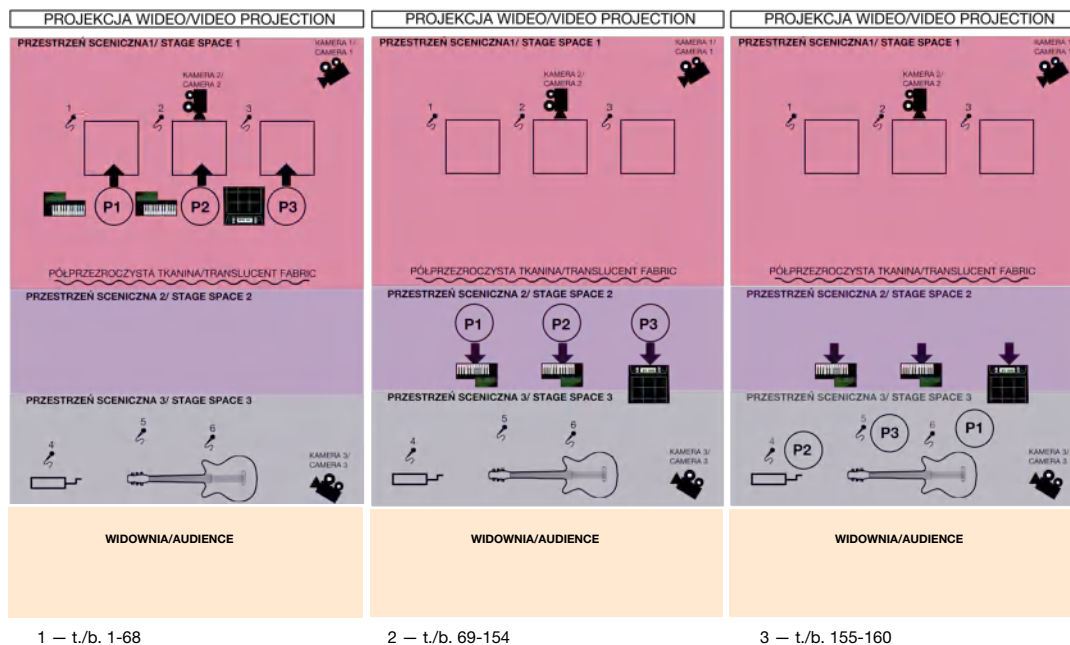1 — t./b. 1-68   2 — t./b. 69-154   3 — t./b. 155-160

Fig. 2. *Imaginarium Polkolor,* three stage spaces

I.3.   Sound Library[25]

In view of the preparatory work for the score of the doctoral piece, as well as the need to explore the sound of acoustic instruments, a recording session with the Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej, conducted by Szymon Bywalec, was completed in August 2020 as part of an artistic and research project. The aim of the recordings was to record samples of non-harmonic instrumental sounds – both static sounds and complex textures – with a view to creating an original library to support the compositional process. It was created based on the following assumptions:

- based on Helmut Lachenmann's categorisation of sound types[26], five main categories were designated: 1. – Cadential-Sound, 2. – Timbre-Sound, 3. – Fluctuation-Sound, 4. – Texture-Sound[27], 5. – Structural-Sound;
- the recorded score has been orchestrated for a single ensemble of winds, brass, percussion, piano, harp and string quintet;
- the work on the materials began by categorising the possible extended sound production techniques possible for each instrument;
- it was assumed that these samples would not have an artistic function (they are not excerpts from works), but would only allow complex sound constructions to be built up during experiments using digital audio workstations (DAWs);
- as a result, ca. 150 samples of diverse dynamics and sound production techniques were created for settings ranging from solo instruments to *tutti* ensemble.

An important aspect of the work on the sample recordings was also getting to know the musicians of Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej, listening to the ensemble's sonic possibilities and defining possible performance boundaries in advance. The

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[25] The library is described in detail in the paper: *Projekt badawczy: Cyfrowe narzędzie wspierające proces kompozycji na zespół instrumentalny* presented in October 2022 at the International 'Strefa' Conference at the Academy of Music in Krakow.
[26] Helmut Lachenmann, *Sound Types of New Music,* Hans Thomalla (translation into English), https://germanphilosophy.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/lachenmann-sound_types.pdf, accessed 13.09.2023.
[27] Lachenmann uses the German term *Texturklang*, Ibid., accessed 13.09.2023.

library discussed functions not only as a repository of sound files, but also as a virtual instrument (VST) in the Native Instruments Kontakt environment, programmed by Rafał Ryterski specifically for this project.

Ex. 3. Sound library, recording materials, score, E2 sample

Ex. 4 *declined/restored\elapsed*, score, bars 150-154 – implementation of sample E2 (Ex. 3)

I.4. *declined/restored\elapsed*

The sound library described above influenced the composition *declined/restored\elapsed* for small orchestra (2020/21)[28], written for the members of London Philharmonic Orchestra and Foyle Future Firsts programme participants[29]. The active participation of outstanding instrumentalists in the work on the piece, preceded by workshop sessions, while limiting electronic media – allowed me to explore extensively the timbral parameters of the instrumental ensemble, and to build two parallel narratives:

- **the first** – was based on recomposed excerpts from computer-processed quotations from *fin de siècle* period orchestral literature; **the second** – on internal transformations of *quasi*-choral noise sonorities on the verge of audibility;
- in composition, the use of electronic media was completely abandoned – computer processing only supported the process of working on the score,
- single objects were used in the percussion part: electric fans placed under the resonating membrane of the snare drum and the preparation of the gran cassa with a metal chain;
- The sound library described above enabled the simulation and subsequent transcription into score of the deconstructive processes of the final part of the piece, which are presented in Examples 3 and 4 (pp. 18-19).

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[28] Instrumentation: Obsada: 2[1.2/AFl] 2[1.2/EngHn] 2[1.2.BCl] 2[1.2/CBsn] –2 2 2 1 – 2Perc – Harp – Cel[Pno] – Strings (3 2/2/2/2).
[29] The piece was composed as part of the LPO Young Composer Programme 2020/21.

Summary

The stated experiences from the realisation of the above-mentioned artistic projects became an impulse to further search for possible connections between the sound layer and extra-musical content, e.g., by using objects, atmosphere, and sonic scenography – but without the direct performative involvement of the musicians.

The realisation of the artistic projects discussed above allowed me to reflect again on the meaning of instrumental performance and acoustic timbral qualities. I became aware that the experience of the musician's presence on stage represents a vast artistic potential for me, and those instruments – like objects – can serve a scenographic function.

II   The Path to Instrumentalists' Theatre

The artistic experiences discussed in the previous chapter influenced the formulation of the leading role of the instrumentalists in the planned piece, as well as the distinctive role of timbre, objects, and sonic scenography elements. The perceived impact of theatrical practices – both on previously created works and on the assumptions of the composition *through the youth of these things* – necessitated consideration of contemporary theories linking music and theatre.

II.1.   Genre: The Problem of Definition

Given the intertwined nature of musical and theatrical creation, it is important to consider the key definitions and concepts. As most of these have already been described and commented on in detail so far[30], the following section will recall the research that most strongly influenced the method of working on the piece.

Erika Fischer-Lichte, points to the multitude of terms used by artists in the context of the theatricalisation of musical activities since the early 1960s[31]. On the other hand, Eric Salzman and Thomas Dési address the recurring question, particularly in the context of programme music and R. Wagner's concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk, of the potential of music to shape history on its own[32]. Referring to examples of stage works by modernist composers, from the serialists to B.A. Zimmerman to H. Lachenmann and B. Ferneyhough, they write of the latter two as follows:

> The association of familiar stories (...) with the unfamiliar and highly abstract languages of these composers has the odd effect of suggesting something extra-musical in the music but without any clarity as to what that might be. It as if there were metaphors in these scores for something left unsaid, something about shades of *angst* and anxiety

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[30] See e.g., D. Megarrity *Musicalising theatre, theatricalising music: writing and performing intermediality in Composed Theatre,* doctoral dissertation, Queensland University of Technology, Queensland 2015, also K. Olofsson, *Composing the performance,* op. cit. pp. 61-80.
[31] Fischer-Lichte mentions among others D. Schnebel's 'visible music', Stockhausen's 'scenic music', M. Kagel's 'instrumental theatre', see E. Fischer-Lichte, Theatre and Theatrology, op. cit. p. 159. More examples of terms can be found in the literature: 'theatre of repetition' (German: *Das Theater der Wiederholungen*) by Bernhard Lang, performance-opera by Niels Rønsholdt.
[32] E. Salzman, T. Dési, *The New Music Theater*, op. cit., p. 92.

perhaps. In the end, it may be that these scores belong to the history of opera rather than the narrower (or perhaps wider) world of music theater[33].

And although the need to preserve a certain ambiguity and understatement is an important value of artistic exploration, the problem of being able to fully experience the emotional sphere of a composition based on structural sound material, even the most sophisticated, is clearly outlined.

A further consideration of the problem of genre relates to the changes that have occurred in theatrical practice since the mid-twentieth century.

Posdramatic theatre is a term formulated by Hans-Thies Lehmann which describes the processes that led to the theatre's detachment from the primacy of the dramatic text. As H-T Lehmann points out:

> Postdramatic theatre therefore contains the present/revival/continuous impact of older aesthetics, including those that have already abolished the idea of the dramatic at the level of text or theatre[34].

This kind of theatre is assumed to be free of a hierarchy of means (sound, image, movement)[35] and is often based on extreme concepts of time[36]. In most cases, however, it still involves ensembles of actors and the production machinery characteristic of institutional theatre.

A derivative of this notion is one that functions in the context of French authors (Kate Bredeson mentions P. Quesne, H. Goerger, A. Defoort)[37] – *l'écriture de plateau*. This term, as Bredeson notes – was formulated by Buno Tackels:

> While Tackels points to many of the same phenomenon Lehmann observes in Postdramatic Theatre, he seeks not to reiterate, but to extend the idea of the postdramatic to include contemporary French performance and theory[38].

Direct reference is made to postdramatic theatre by Jelena Novak in formulating the premise of 'Postopera' a look at contemporary opera practice in which the

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[33] Ibid.

[34] *Teatr postdramatyczny zawiera zatem w sobie teraźniejszość/wznowienie/ciągłe oddziaływanie starszych estetyk, również tych, które już wcześniej zniosły na płaszczyźnie tekstu lub teatru ideę dramatyczności* (own translation), H-T. Lehmann, *Teatr Postdramatyczny*, op. cit., p. 27.

[35] Ibid., pp. 132-135.

[36] Ibid., pp. 258-265.

[37] K. Bredeson, Process: *'Set Writing' in Contemporary French Theatre,* [In:] *Postdramatic Theatre and Form*, Michael Shane Boyle, Matt Cornish, Brandon Woolf (ed.), Methuen Drama London-New York 2021, p. 148.

[38] Ibid.

relationship between voice and body ('voice-body') and the opera's dramatic development is being lost[39].

To describe the intertwining processes of the sonification of theatre[40] and the theatricalisation of composition, as well as the widespread use of digital media in musical practice[41], David Roesner and Matthias Rebstock formulated the term **Composed Theatre**. Roesner referred to these issues as follows:

> (...) the interests in the musicality of theatrical performance and the theatricality of musical performance have given rise to a wide range of forms of what we propose to call Composed Theatre[42].

However, this term is not identified by the author with the genre[43], it also functions in parallel with the assumptions of postdramatic theatre, "narrowing and expanding" at the same time the framework formulated by H.-T. Lehmann[44].

Composed Theatre is made up of artists from diverse backgrounds: theatre, dance, and composition[45]. Matthias Rebstock lists five main assumptions ('symptoms') of Composed Theater[46]:

1 – it uses "compositional strategies and techniques"[47] in the context of working with elements of a theatrical performance[48], 2 – it is characterised by an "absence of hierarchy" of individual media, but in most cases the elements are created according to a 'musical syntax'[49], 3 – the working process is linked to composition

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[39] J. Novak, *Postopera. Reinventing the Voice-Body* s. 27-31, Ashgate, Surrey/Burlington 2015, pp. 27-31.

[40] M. Rebstock, *Composed Theatre: Mapping the Field,* op. cit., pp. 23-28.

[41] D. Roesner, *Introduction: Composed Theatre in Context*, op. cit., p. 9.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid., p. 11.

[44] *With regard to the latter, it should be added that our notion of Composed Theatre is at the same time narrower and wider than Lehmann's more loosely grouped catalogue of performance phenomena.* Ibid., p. 10.

[45] Rebstock mentions, i.a. H. Goebbels, G. Aperghis, M. Tsangaris, C. Bauckholt, R. Ashley, M. Monk, R. Wilson, Ch. Marthaler, also theatre ensembles, *Die Maulwerker*. See M. Rebstock, *Composed Theatre: Mapping the Field,* [In:] *Composed Theater...*, op. cit., p. 19.

[46] In this summary, Rebstock's original English citations are given in footnotes below.

[47] *That means, if the field of interest is characterised by the use of compositional strategies and techniques* (...), Ibid. p. 20.

[48] *A second characteristic or symptom of Composed Theatre consists in the aesthetic conviction of the independence and absence of hierarchy among the elements of theatre.* Ibid.

[49] (...) *the organisation and interaction of all such elements should follow musical or compositional principles,* Ibid., pp. 20-21.

in the context of form and structure[50] , 4 – the work is based on a collective, non-hierarchical participation of creators and performers in the process of creation[51] , 5 – "Composed Theatre basically exists only at the moment of its performance", and only then is the creative process completed[52].

This concept allows most processes in the field of New Music to be described synthetically. Roesner refers, for example, to the situation of 'staged concerts' possible in Composed Theatre[53].

The connections between postdramatic and Composed Theatre were analysed, among others [54], in the context of his own work by Elliot Vaughan, who formulated the artistic concept of Post-Aural[55] music, in which the sound aspect of a piece is equivalent to the processes accompanying the performance[56], emphasising, i.a., the importance of the "physical interaction" between performer and instrument[57]. He also refers to The New Discipline[58] manifesto, an influential text in which Jennifer Walshe drew attention to the consequences of the increasing theatricalisation of New Music. The statement is characterised by the realisation that bodily existence on stage[59] also refers to the need to develop new working methods for performers

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[50] *Composed Theatre is not only – or even not necessarily – characterised by compositional strategies at the point of performance but also – or even only – during the artistic processes of creation.*, Ibid., p. 21.

[51] *Composed Theatre (…) works against hierarchical normsand with a more collective approach, leaving more space for each individual to bring in their own competences and personality than there is in traditional theatre work. The performers will very often get involved in the developing process of the piece itself (…)*, Ibid.

[52] *(…) Composed Theatre,* (…) *basically exists only in its performances: it is only in the moment of performance that the different elements come together, and everything before that moment points to it.*
(…) The composition process is prolonged through the process of staging until the very moment of the performance. Ibid.

[53] D. Roesner, *Introduction: Composed Theatre in Context*, [In:] *Composed Theatre…,* op. cit., p. 11.

[54] These views were also commented on by Kent Olofsson (See: *Polyphonicity – Strategies of Working with Form and Narrative,* p. 49.) He also refers to the text of the New Discipline manifesto, see. K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance,* op. cit., pp. 249-250.

[55] E. Vaughan, *Beyond the Aural. Towards an Intermodal Framework for Creation and Analysis of Performed Music,* master's degree thesis Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington 2019, pp. 21-33.

[56] Ibid., p. 33.

[57] *An instrumentalist – a creator – deals immediately with the tactile and corporeal modes as they interact physically with their instrument, and this encounter might occur repeatedly, evolving over weeks or even years,* Ibid., p. 36.

[58] J. Walshe, *Nowa Dyscyplina,* Agata Klichowska (trnalsation into Polish.), „Glissando" Issue 29/2016, p. 79.

[59] Ibid.

and redefine the function of the creator. Despite the involvement of means often very distant from the common understanding of sonicality, in the sense of the New Discipline – all these activities belong to music[60].

At the same time, it is worth considering a possible narrowing of the concepts cited here, especially Composed Theatre, in order to precisely define a situation that remains embedded in musical performance and the link between the performative situation and the instrument, while maintaining an apparent openness to a strictly musical use of timbre. The theatrical and visual elements then emerge from the performance situation and provide a platform for communication with the audience, but many parameters (e.g., time, instrumentation, abstract, ephemeral sonority) remain in accordance with the musical experience. In short: we can still listen with our eyes closed.

In this context, Anna Zawadzka-Gołosz proposes an exceptionally interesting metaphorical view of theatrical processes, formulating the notion of 'inacoustisation' (Polish: 'inakustyzacja') – a process of "instrumentation of harmonic structure"[61], analogous to the staging of a theatrical performance and the related to the choreography notion of 'choreophony' (Polish: 'choreofonia')[62]. As Zawadzka-Gołosz writes:

> (...) for the initial structure is given a characterisation – it becomes subjective in its timbre, while the movement of the sound objects on the sound/listening stage is already guided by subjective perception, composed (not spontaneous)[63].

Wolfgang Rihm's textless theatre *Séraphin. Versuch eines Theaters für Instrumente/Stimmen/... (1993-1996) for voices and instruments* is also an important track. Its starting point was the radical concept of Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty. This led, as Salzman and Dési note, to such perception of performance "that neither text nor stage action is necessary as the activity of the performers already is

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[60] Ibid.

[61] A. Zawadzka-Gołosz, *Przestrzenna tkanka dźwiękowa z perspektywy „harmonii barw",* typescript of the conference paper, Kraków 2023, p. 8.

[62] Ibid.

[63] *(...) wyjściowa bowiem struktura otrzymuje charakteryzację – subiektywizuje się w brzmieniu, a ruch obiektów dźwiękowych na scenie dźwiękowej/słuchowej kieruje już subiektywną percepcją komponowaną (nie spontaniczną).* (Own translation), Ibid.

action"[64]. In the text accompanying the 1994 premiere, Rihm wrote of the desire "to find a theatrical form that is not based on action but is itself action"[65]. He also refers to the emotional aspect of music, rejecting top-down structural assumptions:

> It is becoming more and more clear to me that I do not compose by planning, but that I express states of music myself when I write something down[66].

However, the staging layer of the piece remains still open to some extent. Describing the differences between the 1994 and 1996 versions, Alastair Williams states:

> This diversity is in keeping with a certain indeterminacy built into the conception. As Ulrich Mosch puts the matter, 'Séraphin is conceived as theatre with an "empty place", which can be filled through images and/or scenic events. However, every moment need not be occupied'[67].

Rihm's turn towards emotionality and his understanding of performers' musical activities as performative acts, contributed to formulating the concept of instrumentalists' theatre.

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[64] (...) *that neither text nor stage action is necessary as the activity of the performers already is action.* T. Desi, E. Salzman, *The New Music Theater,* op. cit., p. 94,

[65] *Der Wunsch: eine Theaterform zu finden, die nicht auf Handlung fußt, sondern selbst Handlung ist.* (Own translation), W. Rihm, *Werkeinführung,* https://www.universaledition.com/wolfgang-rihm-599/werke/seraphin-4616, accessed. 20.09.2023.

[66] *Mir wird immer klarer, dass ich nicht komponiere, indem ich disponiere, sondern dass ich Zustände von Musik selbst ausdrücke, wenn ich etwas aufschreibe.* (Own translation.), Ibid., accessed 20.09.2023.

[67] A. Williams, *Music and Signs: Wolfgang Rihm,* [In:] A. Williams *Music in Germany since 1968,* Cambridge Univeristy Press, Cambridge 2013, p. 180. Recalled quote: U. Mosch, *Autonome Musikdramaturgie: Über Wolfgang Rihms Séraphin-Projekt,* [In:] *Musiktheater heute: Internationales Symposion der Paul Sacher Stiftung Basel 2001*, Hermann Danuser (ed.) Schott, Mainz 2003, p. 223.

II.2. Assumptions

In searching for a method of working on composition *through the youth of these things*, I decided – taking into account the ideas mentioned above – to refer primarily to my own experiences, connected with working with an instrumental ensemble. These assumptions do not exclude the concept of Composed Theatre, but indicate priorities in the ways of working, shaping the scenic layer and, above all, a multi-faceted approach to the musical material.

- The aim is to avoid compromising situations in which the scenic design, especially the visual layer, remains unsatisfactory due to limited production and realisation resources.
- The proposed solution is to structure the visual and semantic layer based on maximising the available means of performance, but without going beyond the possibilities associated with instrumental practice.
- The narrative is formed by several simultaneous ensemble activities, understood after Heiner Goebbels as a 'collective protagonist'[68].
- As a result, percussion has a particular function in the piece, where performance practice involves 'building one's own instrument' and complete control of the body.
- The lack of hierarchy postulated by postdramatic, and Composed Theatre also applies to the relationship in the sound layer: between instrument parts to electronics and types of sound material.
- A particular function in the composition is played by timbre and musical material, composed according to the concept of atmosphere, and linked to the performative potential of instruments and sound objects.

Given the assumptions discussed, it is impossible to create a work intended solely for electronic media without considering the context of live performance and the resulting uncontrollable sonic results. The loss of total control by the creator and the openness to interpretation are the key values in this case.

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[68] See*: (Non)presence – Musicians' Interactions with Space,* p. 45.

II.3. Areas of Impact

Artistic experiences, as well as the literature I had previously encountered, in particular Kent Olofsson's *Composing the Performance*[69], where I first discovered the concept of sonic scenography, and the following direct contact with the author, influenced the approach to research that was to underpin the work on the future doctoral composition.

It concerned the following areas:

- the visual layer – in relation to the sonic scenography;

- sound material – on the level of the concept of aura and atmosphere;

- performative situation – referring to Erika Fischer-Lichte's concept of presence and Heiner Goebbels' aesthetics of absence;
- polyphonicity – the idea of working with time in relation to a composed performative situation.

Each concept is discussed in detail in the following subsections. It should be noted that these areas are interrelated and often interact with each other.

II.3.1. Sonic Scenography – Visual and Spatial Layer

Olofsson's concept of 'sonic scenography' primarily inspired an exploration of the possible connections between sound and the material object that emits it. David Roesener also refers to related terms in the literature: 'acoustic scenography', 'Klangszenografie', 'sound scenography'[70]. They also cover areas such as spatial sound design strategies in public spaces and initiatives that operate at the interface between art, science, and commercial projects[71].

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[69] K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance…,* op. cit.
[70] D. Roesner, *1. Sonic scenography,* [In:] Adrian Curtin, David Roesner (ed.) *Sounding out 'the scenographic turn': eight position statements,* "Theatre and Performance Design" Issue 1 (1-2/2015), pp. 109-110.
[71] See. J. P. Herzer, *Acoustic Scenography and Interactive Audio. Sound Design for Built Environments,* [In:] *Oxford Handbook of Interactive Audio,* Karen Collins, Bill Kapralos, Holly Tessler (ed.), Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York 2014, pp. 81-92.

Considering existing research in the fields of composition, sound art and theatre, this concept can be understood on three levels, which are described below.

Firstly, sonic scenography can directly shape the spatial orientation of the audience. In Olofsson's view, the sounds emitted from the loudspeakers can have an analogous function to the visual elements of the performance, creating references to a specific place and having an emotional impact on the listener[72]. The direct link between the function of sound and the experience of space also stems from Olofsson's awareness of the discourse in the field of scenography concerning the connection between sound and visual elements[73]. There are also some parallels with the concept of atmosphere, which will be discussed later in this text.

Olofsson's emphasis on processuality and transformation, which he describes in the context of his own work as "a fundamental dramaturgical strategy"[74], allows him to be extremely flexible with sound – material that serves a scenographic function can at any time become the leading texture of sound[75]. As he describes:

> At the end of the second song in *Fält*, *Save my Soul*, stylistically influenced from modern r&b music, the rhythmic beats and the piano solo gradually dissolve into a noise texture that sounds like waves[76].

Responding so quickly and seamlessly to a change of stage situation is impossible with a traditional set design without the involvement of significant logistical resources.

Olofsson emphasises the technological aspect of designing sonic scenography – resulting from the number, placement and configuration of the loudspeaker system, he points out the acoustic consequences of working with amplification and notes the possibilities offered by sound projection software[77]. In his latest publication, he emphasises even more the potential of immersive sound systems (e.g., Dolby

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[72] K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance,* op. cit., p. 184.
[73] P. Howard, *What is Scenography?* Routledge 2002, New York/Abingdon, p. 16, after: Ibid., p. 235.
[74] Ibid., p. 191
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid., p. 189.
[77] Ibid., p. 236.

Atmos)[78] and the perceptual consequences of almost total darkness surrounding the audience[79].

Mareike Dobewall[80], working in the same academic environment[81], has developed a method of shaping sonic scenography based on the human voice, paying particular "attention to the conscious dialogue between the musicians and the performance space"[82] Dobewall calls such sonic scenography "acoustic"[83] and "site-sensitive"[84]. The locations themselves can also be treated by her as instruments[85]. Kent Olofsson, citing Dobewall's concept, points to similarities in terms of the identical goal of creating a sense of space in the audience[86]. For Dobewall, the potential for the experience of unreal space is also significant:

> We may associate the sonic scenography with a place where we have been before physically, emotionally or in our dreams[87].

The point of reference, the catalyst for transforming perceptions of places, in her view, is the direct involvement of performers:

> As my sonic scenography is performed by musicians it is informed by the way in which the performers are present in the space. Their physical presence carries an understanding of the space[88].

Just as Olofsson emphasised the transformative potential of sound material, Dobewall sees it in the musicians' engagement with and movement in the space[89]. This assumption is also closely linked to the working process, in which Dobewall

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[78] Idem., *Expanding Sound Design in Performing Arts,* "Critical Stages/Scénes critiques", Issue 25 (2022), https://www.critical-stages.org/25/expanding-sound-design-in-performing-arts/ accessed 10.09.2023.
[79] Ibid.
[80] M. Dobewall, *Voicelanding – Exploring the scenographic potential of acoustic sound in site-sensitive performance,* Stockholm University of the Arts, Stockholm 2021, https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1148192/1294346, accessed 30.08.2023.
[81] Stockhom University of the Arts (Swedish: *Stockholms konstnärliga högskola*), Olofsson is a professor at this university, https://www.uniarts.se/english/people/co-workers/kent-olofsson/, accessed 10.09.2023.
[82] *During the creative process I bring attention to the conscious dialogue between the musicians and the performance space.* Ibid., p. 3.
[83] Ibid., p. 42.
[84] Ibid., p. 31.
[85] See sketch of performance venue, M. Dobewall, *Musica Mundana* [In:] *Voicelanding…* op. cit. https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1148192/1151860, accessed 10.09.2023.
[86] K. Olofsson, *Expanding Sound Design in Performing Art,* op. cit., accessed 10.09.2023.
[87] M. Dobewall, *Opening Scenography,* op. cit., accessed 10.09.2023.
[88] Ibid. accessed 10.09.2023.
[89] Ibid. accessed 10.09.2023.

gets to know the space together with the performers, pays attention to its qualities and sonic possibilities[90].

Johannes Birringer refers to the 'polyphonal'[91] situation – combining the physical experience of sound and movement, combined with the involvement of interactive systems – by the term 'audible scenography'[92].

This understanding of the performer's function is at the same time close to a **second** level of understanding of sonic scenography, where sound generators (usually loudspeakers or sounding objects) are placed in the stage space in such a way that their visuality and physicality directly affect the reception of the work.

The phenomenon of linking the performative visual and sound layers is referred to – particularly in the context of Simon Steen-Andersen's work – as the 'sonification of the musical gesture'[93]. Alongside this, by the use of mechanisms and digital sound processing, the sonic possibilities of objects are noticeably expanded – e.g., in Wojciech Błażejczyk's project *Objectophones* (Polish: 'Obiektofony')[94] or through the transformation of an acoustic instrument by motors on it – in Lisa Streich's composition *Pietà*[95]. A particular example is Heiner Goebbels' performative installation[96] *Stifters Dinge* (2007), where live performers are replaced by sound constructions:

[90] Ibid., accessed 10.09.2023.

[91] J. Birringer, *Audible Scenography,* „Performance Research: A Journal of the Performing Arts", Issue 18 (3/2013), pp. 192-193. See *Polyphonicity – Strategies of Working with Form and Narrative*, p. 49.

[92] Ibid., p. 193.

[93] Marcelo Alejandro Flores Lazcano, *Sonifying physical gesture: Sensor Augmented Electric Guitar,* doctoral dissertation, University of California, San Diego 2018, pp. 6-8.

[94] http://wojciech.blazejczyk.eu/pl/projekty/obiektofony/, accessed 7.09.2023.

[95] There is both a version of the composition for solo cello, motors, and electronics (2012) and further versions with ensemble, also 'motorised' (2016, 2018), see https://www.lisastreich.se, accessed 7.09.2023. See also: *Music after the Fall, Modern Composition and Culture since 1989*, University of California Press, Oakland 2017, p. 201.

[96] Term used by the composer, https://www.heinergoebbels.com/works/stifters-dinge/4, accessed. 7.09.2023. In *Aesthetics of Absence*, Goebbels uses the term interchangeably with the word 'spectacle' (Polish: 'spektakl', p. 203). while consistently emphasising the absence of performers (pp. 203, 212). The phrase 'no-man show' also appears (p. 212). See. H. Goebbels, *Estetyka nieobecności,* op. cit., pp. 203, 212.

non-anthropomorphic machines and objects, natural elements such as water, fog, rain, ice, and stage elements such as curtains, spotlights, and acousmatic sound[97].

Johannes Birringer calls all these audio-visual elements of Goebbels' performance "choreographic objects"[98] and describes the performative situation as follows:

> (…) as one of its most unusual characteristics, this installation performs itself. Thus the attention is directed at the overall **sonic scenography** or machinic choreography materializing its *Lauf der Dinge* (to use a reference to Fischli/Weiss's notorious kinetic chain-reaction piece, *The Way Things Go*, 1987) and enunciating its 'thingness', its multifarious object-presentness[99].

The potential of the loudspeakers in shaping the scenography was also pointed out by Olofsson in the context of his earlier productions:

> In a theatre production (…) *Everest*, (…), we placed eight big, stacked sub-basses close to the audience. They appeared as a looming mountain, both in their visual appearance and through the physical sensation of the loud, low frequencies that literally shook the audience[100].

Thirdly, sonic scenography refers to the participatory function of sound in theatrical performance. As David Roesner indicates, the interest in sound constructions in theatrical performance dates to the activities of Adolphe Appia[101]. These activities, in Roesner's view, are noticeable in the context of placing sound objects and instruments in the stage space, and, through the presence of musicians on stage, "creating hybrid spaces that are both fictional and real and at once theatre stage and concert venue"[102] These trends, to paraphrase Erika Fischer-Lichte, point to the 'concert nature of performance'[103].

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[97] *nieantropomorficzne maszyny i obiekty, żywioły natury takie jak woda, mgła, deszcz, lód i elementy wyposażenia sceny, jak kurtyny, reflektory i dźwięk akusmatyczny.* (Own translation), H. Goebbels, *Estetyka nieobecności,* op. cit., p. 213.

[98] J. Birringer, *Choreographic Objects: «Stifters Dinge»,* „Body Space and Technology" Issue 12/2013, https://www.bstjournal.com/article/id/6812/, accessed 25.09.2023. p. 1.

[99] Ibid. *Stifters Dinge* in the context of Heiner Goebbels' concept of the 'aesthetics of absence' will be discussed later in the paper, see *(Non)presence – Musicians' Interactions with Space*, p. 45.

[100] K. Olofsson., *Composing the Performance…*, op. cit., p. 237.

[101] D. Roesner, *1. Scenographic turn,* op. cit., p. 109.

[102] Ibid., p. 110.

[103] Erika Fischer-Lichte has written about the performance character of the concerto in the context of the stage experiments of avant-garde composition concepts of the 1960s. See *Teatr i teatrologia. Podstawowe pytania*, Mateusz Borowski, Małgorzata Sugiera (translation into Polish) Instytut im. Jerzego Grotowskiego, Wrocław 2012, p. 159. In the English version of this thesis, the quote is based on original phrase "the performative nature of concerts" after: E. Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance. A New Aesthetics,* Saskya Iris Jain (translation into English), Routledge, London/New York 2008, p. 19.

The experiences described above influenced the formulated concept of working on the piece *through the youth of these things* – postulating, on the one hand – a possible limitation of visual elements not strictly related to sound, and, on the other hand – reaching for objects, treating the loudspeakers as material objects, and visually and choreographically involving the instruments and performers. This assumption also influenced the exploration of possible strategies for working with the instrumentalists, while possibly linking the movement and visual layers to the musical performance, and the special treatment of the roles of the percussionists' parts and the conductor.

The research on sonic scenography led to an extension of the research into other areas: atmosphere, questions regarding presence and polyphonicity.

II.3.2. Atmosphere – Shaping the Musical Material

On many occasions, when listening to works, regardless of their genre, instrumentation or when composed, I experienced an ephemeral sense of 'extra value', which extended the emotional or meaningful layer of the composition and went far beyond the rational sum of the individual components of the work. At the time, this experience was entirely intuitive. At the same time, the question of why this was the case, and the need to systematise it, kept recurring in personal attempts at composition. The need to grasp, at least vaguely, the potential of the sound material as a catalyst for triggering references to time, place, situation or emotion in the audience led to a search for possible strategies of working with the indefinite 'in-between' situation[104].

While searching for materials on sonic scenography, with the help of Kent Olofsson, I came across the artistic project *Voicelanding – Exploring the scenographic potential*

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[104] T. Vadén, J. Torvinen, *Musical meaning in between. Ineaffability, atmopshere and asubjectivity in musical experience,* [In:], *Music as Atmopshere*, op. cit., pp. 46-48. See also: M. Bille, P. Bjerregaard, T.F. Sørensen*, Staging atmospheres: Materiality, culture, and the texture of the in-between*, "Emotion Space and Society", Issue 15 (2015), https://www.academia.edu/87483867/Staging_atmospheres_Materiality_culture_and_the_texture_of_the_in_between, accessed 2.08.2022.3

of acoustic sound in site-sensitive performance by Mareike Dobewall[105]. In this work, she explores the possibilities of working with sonic scenography in relation to the human voice and site-specific situations. She refers to texts by the natural and architectural philosopher Gernot Böhme[106] , one of the most important researchers of this notion [107] . She points to a perceptual understanding of the atmosphere constituting the "shared reality of the perceiver and the perceived" and emphasis on the function of objects and audiences in its production [108] . For Dobewall, the production of atmosphere is particularly influenced by the communal aspect of performance:

> It is through everybody's involvement in this frame of time and space that the participation of the performers and the audience members creates a community in my spatial sound performances. This community is as ephemeral as the music that binds it together. It is an unstable and diverse intersubjectivity that is nonetheless fixed to site[109].

She also introduces the notion of 'Stimmung'[110], which appears in the German-language literature and will be discussed later in this chapter. She also refers to Rachel Hann who, in her book and accompanying video series *Beyond Scenography'*, adapts Böhme's atmospheric ideas in the context of the function of scenography in performance and its references to place ('place orientation')[111]. Here, scenography is understood as a critical space that builds the world of the performance ('acts of worlding'), going far beyond its mimetic, decorative function. For Böhme, it is the scenic art that constitutes a significant 'paradigm' of producing atmospheres[112].

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[105] M. Dobewall, *Voicelanding – Exploring the scenographic potential of acoustic sound in site-sensitive performance,* Stockholm University of the Arts, Stockholm 2021, https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1148192/1294346, accessed 30.08.2023.
[106] Idem, *Ephemeral Communities,* [In:] Ibid., accessed 30.08.2023.
[107] Jean-Paul Thibaud, *Introduction* [In:] G. Böhme, *The Aesthetics of Atmospheres,* Jean-Paul Thibaud (ed.), Routledge, New-York/Abingdon 2017, p. ix.
[108] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere, a Basic Concept of New Aesthetic,* [In:] G. Böhme, *Atmospheric Architectures…* op. cit., p. 24, after: M. Dobewall, *Ephemeral Communities,* op. cit., accessed 4.09.2023.
[109] Ibid. Accessed 4.03.2023.
[110] Idem, *Space as Voice Teachers,* Stockholm University of the Arts, Stockholm 2021, p. 55.
[111] R. Hann, *Beyond Scenography Episode 2*, *Scenic Politics: Scenes, Mise en scène, & Atmospheres | Beyond Scenography,* https://youtu.be/mt-CLCLF5cs?feature=shared&t=1054, 17:34-19:05, accessed 30.08.2023.
[112] G. Böhme, *The Art of Staging as a Paradigm of Atmospheres,* [In:] G. Böhme *Atmospheric Arhitectures,* op. cit. pp. 157-166. See also section *Staging atmospsheres,* [In:] M. Dorrian *Museum atmospheres: notes on aura, distance and affect,* „The Journal of Architeture" Issue 19 (2/2014), pp. 187-188.

In recent years, the concept of atmosphere has been brought into the realm of music studies, e.g., in the work specifically of Böhme[113] or in the anthology *Music as Atmosphere*, edited by Friedlind Riedel and Juha Torvinen[114], and has been explored in depth in relation to ambient music by Monty Adkins[115]. These texts will be examined in the following section.

Atmosphere – Definitions and Premises

As Böhme notes, the concept of atmosphere is freely used in everyday language to describe events and situations. But it is easier to talk about and describe the atmosphere than to define it precisely[116]. Riedel also points to the dual etymology of the term: both meteorological and medical[117].

Böhme's understanding of atmospheres is linked to the foundations of the 'new aesthetics' (German: *neue Ästhetik*)[118], a concept in which he postulates that a work of art should be experienced rather than assessed on the basis of value criteria[119] and interpreted (or found) meanings[120], which dominate aesthetics[121]. Although this concept has sometimes been criticised [122], it is an extremely important counterweight – especially from the creator's point of view – to the way in which art is perceived, which also continues to affect New Music. Rather than suggesting

[113] G. Böhme, *The Grand Concert of the World,* [In:] *Atmospheric Architectures. The Aesthetics of Felt Spaces,* Anna Christina Engels-Schwarzpaul (ed., translation into English.), Bloomsbury Academic, London-New York, 2017, pp. 123-134.

[114] *Music as Atmosphere. Collective Feelings and Affective Sounds,* Friedlind Riedel, Juha Torvinen (ed.), Routledge London-New York 2020.

[115] Monty Adkins, *Fragility, Noise and Atmosphere in Ambient Music,* [In:] *Music Beyond Airports. Appraising Ambient Music,* Monty Adkins, Simon Cummings (ed.), University of Huddersfield Press, Huddersfield 2019, pp. 119-146.

[116] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere, a Basic Concept of New Aesthetic,* [In:] G. Böhme, *Atmospheric Architectures…* op. cit., p. 13-14.

[117] F. Riedel, *Atmospheric Relations…,* op. cit., pp. 9-10.

[118] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere as a Basic Concept…,* op. cit., pp. 14-17. Krystyna Wilkoszewska wrote about the differences in the two concepts, i.a. the deprivation of the "anthropological perspective" (own translation) in later considerations, see K. Wilkoszewska, *Czy istnieje eko-estetyka?* "Diametros" Issue 9/2006, pp. 141-142.

[119] G. Böhme, *Filozofia i estetyka przyrody,* Jarosław Marecki (translation into Polish.), Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2002, p. 3-4.

[120] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere as a Basic Concept…,* op. cit., p. 15.

[121] G. Böhme, *Filozofia i estetyka przyrody,* op. cit., p. 3.

[122] See: K. Wilkoszewska, *Czy istnieje eko-estetyka?* op. cit., p. 139. The critique concerns Böhme's notion of 'ecologically motivated aesthetics'.

a closed, predetermined, single line of interpretation of a work, it provokes the creation of sound surfaces that open up the listener's experience of the music.

Böhme indicates that through subjective sensory experience, there is an "affective stirring by the environment" and, as he goes on to write:

> This finding leads to the attribution of quasi-objective affective qualities to the environment. With reference to the work of Hermann Schmitz, I call these atmospheres[123].

It was Schmitz who, as Riedel notes, popularised the concept of atmosphere in philosophy, combining it with the auteur's concept of 'new phenomenology', which "considers atmospheres to be a fundamental category of experience and human existence" [124] . Both Riedel and Böhme point to Schmitz's identification of atmosphere with emotion[125,126] and his characterisation of its specific "area-less"[127] spatial properties[128,129]. It is on this point that his views of Böhme – as he himself points out – differ from Schmitz. In his view, they acquire spatial qualities through 'ecstasies of things'[130] situations in which, as Mark Dorrian points out: "they [things – own addition] go outward from themselves, taking leave of their formal limits in such a way as to generate spatial ambiences" [131].

Ideas regarding the characteristics of objects directly influence the composition *through the youth of these things*, by structuring the narrative layer of the piece around everyday objects in the percussion parts and surrounding them with the sonic texture of the instrumental ensemble.

The connection between atmospheres and physical objects ("atmospheres 'reside' in objects, things and people emanate atmospheres"[132]) is emphasised by Krystyna

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[123] Idem., *Filozofia i estetyka przyrody*…, op. cit., p. 6-7.
[124] F. Riedel, *Atmospheric Relations…* op. cit., p. 19.
[125] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere as a Basic Concept…*, op. cit., p. 20.
[126] F. Riedel, *Atmopsheric Relations…,* op. cit., p. 17, 20.
[127] H. Schmitz *Atmospheric Spaces*, Margaret Vince (translation into English) „Ambiances" (wyd. Online), 19.04 2019, http://journals.openedition.org/ambiances/711, accessed 30.09.2023, pp. 2-3.
[128] Ibid., p. 20.
[129] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere as a Basic Concept*…, op. cit., pp. 19-20.
[130] Ibid. pp. 21-23.
[131] M. Dorrian, *Museum atmospheres: notes on aura, distance and affect,* „The Journal of Architeture" Issue 19 (2/2014), p. 195.
[132] G. Böhme, *Filozofia i estetyka przyrody,* op. cit., p. 7.

Wilkoszewska who, in an essay commenting on Böhme's concepts, describes atmospheres as "moods found on the side of things"[133].

Notable terms related to the notion of atmosphere that are referred to in the texts discussed here include: 'aura' formulated by Walter Benjamin and the aforementioned 'Stimmung'.

Aura and Stimmung

Walter Benjamin, in his famous essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, describes the **aura** as "the inimitable phenomenon of a certain distance, however close it may be"[134], which he associates with the uniqueness of an object, a landscape, a work of art. As he points out, widespread reproduction deprives the reproduced object of its connection "with the place and time of its existence"[135] and leads to the "dying" of the aura[136].

Commenting on Benjamin's views, Gernot Böhme writes about the relationship between aura and atmosphere:

> The aura is obviously something spatially diffused, almost like a breath or a haze – an atmosphere, precisely. Benjamin says that one 'breathes' the aura. This breathing means that one absorbs aura bodily, lets it enter the bodily economy of tension and expansion, lets this atmosphere infuse the self[137].

These concepts are in many ways equivalent, although the starting point for their formulation is different. Moreover, as Mark Dorrian notes, in Böhme's conception of the atmosphere, the criterion of "distance" is not so fundamental[138].

Helmut Lachenmann wrote about the aura, which he described as "the realm of association, memories, archetypal magical predeterminations"[139]. He considers it to

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[133] K. Wilkoszewska, *Uwagi na marginesie książki Gernota Böhmego „Filozofia i estetyka przyrody"*, „Sztuka i Filozofia", Issue 24/2004, p. 22.

[134] W. Benjamin, *Dzieło sztuki w dobie reprodukcji technicznej,* [In:] W. Benjamin, *Anioł historii. Eseje, szkice fragmenty,* Krystyna Krzemieniowa, Hubert Orłowski, Janusz Sikorski (translation into Polish), Hubert Orłowski (selection and editing), Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 1996, p. 208.

[135] Ibid., p. 206.

[136] Ibid. p. 207.

[137] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere as a Basic Concept...,* op. cit., p. 18.

[138] M. Dorrian *Museum atmospheres: notes on aura, distance and affect,* „The Journal of Architeture" Issue 19 (2/2014), p. 188.

[139] H. Lachenmann, *On Structuralism,* "Contemporary Music Review", Issue 12 (1/1995), p. 98.

be one of the four components (along with tonality, acoustic and physical experience, and structure) that influence the emotional impact of sound[140].

The ambiguity of the German word '**Stimmung**', which can be understood as a term for the atmosphere, but to describe the action of tuning of an instrument, is unique, since the term, as Riedel notes, was already used in the 19th century to describe sound phenomena[141].

In this context, it is worth mentioning that Gernot Böhme cites the treatise *De signatura rerum*, by the philosopher Johann Jacob Böhme, active at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, who believed that the:

> The body is regarded as a sounding board, and its form and materiality as tuning or character (*Stimmung*, called *signatura* by Böhme), which is accountable for the characteristic expression a thing can have[142].

Atmosphere and Music

To further outline the researchers' perception of atmospheres in the context of sound, it is worth returning once again to Hermann Schmitz's concept. Schmitz calls atmospheres "spaces of emotions" and characterises them as one of the two most important examples of "area-less spaces"[143], along with the "felt body" (German: *Leib*). However, he also includes the "space of sound" among such spaces[144].

Riedel points out the consequences of such a perception of sound. She writes of Schmitz's treatment of "music and sound" as a "*particular kind of* spatial structure"[145] and that this approach allows an egalitarian, emotional reception of music, regardless of the genre or the theoretical preparation of the listener:

> (…) the experience of "feeling space" in music is no longer exclusive to absolute music and to aesthetically educated people (…)[146].

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[140] Starting from an avant-garde perspective, Lachenmann points out that, given the knowledge of how these parameters function, the composer should in some cases consciously avoid them. Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] G. Böhme, *The Grand Concert of the World,* op cit., p. 123.
[143] H. Schmitz, *Atmospheric Spaces*, Margaret Vince (translation into English) "Ambiances" (online edition), 19.04 2019, http://journals.openedition.org/ambiances/711, accessed 30.09.2023, p. 3.
[144] Ibid., p. 2.
[145] F. Riedel., *Atmospheric Relations…,* op. cit., p. 21.
[146] Ibid., p. 22.

Riedel also examines in detail the latest available research on atmospheres in musicology and ethnomusicology[147]. She writes i.a. about Brigit Abels' ideas of the communal experience of music, the perception of atmospheres in the context of "questions of cultural identity and embodiment" [148]. The research cited by Riedel relates primarily to the music of non-European cultures. In this context, it is worth noting that she draws attention to the limitations of Schmitz's concepts and their embeddedness in Western philosophical and aesthetic discourse[149]. Riedel herself, writes of the assumptions of the 'atmospheric relations' she postulates as follows:

> Because music and sound do not simply manifest as objects in the world (even though they of course can be turned into objects), but as modes of world, they are particularly good at affording atmospheric relations[150].

At the same time, she points out that all musical activities leading to the evocation of atmospheres constitute (after Mikkel Bille) "atmospheric practices"[151]. In some respects, this assumption is identical with the views of Gernot Böhme. In his concept of the "new aesthetics", he links "aesthetic work" with the "production of atmospheres"[152].

In the essay *Grand Concert of the World*, Böhme directly addresses atmospheres in the context of sound. Importantly, he takes into account and even emphasises the technological and material changes that took place in music and sound art in the second half of the 20th century. As he writes: "Musique concrete and sound installations, in particular, forced a revision of the theory of music"[153]. He is aware of the influence of phenomena such as spatial sound ("The tendency of music towards spatial art, particularly, has brought it into the realm of an aesthetics of atmospheres") [154], sampling, the emancipation of noise sounds[155] and, above all, the soundscape, exemplified by Raymond Murray Schaeffer's World Soundscape Project. In doing so, it raises questions of sound ecology:

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[147] Ibid., pp. 14-16.
[148] Ibid., p. 12
[149] Ibid., p. 26.
[150] Ibid., p. 5.
[151] Ibid.
[152] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere, a Basic Concept…,* op. cit., p. 17.
[153] Idem, *The Grand Concert of the World,* op. cit.., p. 124.
[154] Ibid., p. 127
[155] Ibid., p. 128

> (…) atmospheres are generated in bars through particular sounds, and the wait in airports, subway shafts, a dentist's clinic, department stores or hotel lobbies, is made pleasant, or cheerful and active, by music[156].

While seeing the negative effects of polluting the audiosphere, unlike Benjamin – in the case of music – Böhme also sees potential in the technological revolution and points out that:

> Wherever that is not the case, contemporary humans carry their own acoustic world with them, first on Walkmans, today on MP3-players[157]

In the atmospheric perception of music, Böhme sees an opportunity to move away from a discourse on the question of what exactly emotion is in music, a question that has been widely discussed and asked, for example, in Peter Kivy's famous essay *The Corded Shell*:

> When we (composers, critics, musicologists) say that a melody is sad, do we mean that it expresses sadness or that it is *tinged with sadness?*[158]

It should be stressed that although Böhme's proposed solution is certainly inspiring:

> the aesthetics of atmospheres can provide the simple answer that music as such is the modification of bodily felt space[159].

– as has already been pointed out – it is not complete unfortunately. Even the very questions of creation, of feeling, and even of the definition of atmosphere in relation to music, are not easy to resolve in an unequivocal manner. However, the concept is undeniably a significant contribution to the affective turn [160] initiated in the humanities at the end of the twentieth century, which draws attention – as Małgorzata Góralska points out – to the importance of "feelings associated with

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[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid., p. 130, Böhme refers here to a text by Shushei Hosokawa, *The Walkman Effect*, "Popular Music" Vol. 4 (1984), pp. 165-180, https://ia804700.us.archive.org/24/items/Sesion11/Hosokawa%2C%20Shuhei%20-%20The%20Walkman%20effect.pdf, accessed 5.09.2023.

[158] *Kiedy mówimy (my kompozytorzy, krytyce, muzykolodzy), że melodia jest smutna, czy mówimy przez to, że wyraża smutek, czy że jest nacechowana smutkiem?* (own translation), P. Kivy, *Struny muszli,* [In:] *Brzmienie uczuć* (Jan Czarnecki, Mateusz Miguł, Iwona Młoźniak, Małgorzata A. Szyszkowska, (translation into Polish), Małgorzata A. Szyszkowska, scientific editior of the translation), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2022, p. 13.

[159] G. Böhme, *The Grand Concert of the World,* op. cit., p. 127.

[160] Mikkel Bille, *Review: Gernot Böhme, 2017, The Aesthetics of Atmospheres. Edited by Jean-Paul Thibaud. London, Routledge,* p. 1.

particular cultural creations" [161]. From the perspective of composition, these views influence a shift in thinking about musical material: from the structural, linking it to the physicality of sound, the experience of space, the instability of timbre, the use of electronic sounds, prepared instruments, and their performative transformations. Especially since, in his text *The Voice in Spaces of Bodily Presence*, Böhme linked the ongoing expansion of possible sound playing techniques in New Music to the perception of instruments through the prism of "character" of their "bodies". This kind of thinking in the piece *through the youth of these things*, was developed even further, with the involvement of the scenographic and performative potential of instruments [162].

In this context, it is worth recalling Monty Adkins' view of atmosphere, formulated from the perspective of ambient music. This genre, pioneered by Brian Eno [163], is characterised, according to Adkins, by the following qualities:

> (…) a pervading, generally slow, pacing; often a tonal or modal framework; fragmented melodic lines or shorter 'cells' that imply a sense of non-closure; the use of drones; and a sense of continuity or singular 'atmosphere' (…) [164]

At the same time, as Adkins notes over the years, it has undergone constant transformations and modifications to the framework. Unlike concert music, for the most part, the immanent medium for ambient music is recordings [165]. Brian Eno described the consequence of this shift as follows:

> The act of making music becomes the art of creating new sonic locations and creating new timbres, new instruments: the most basic materials of the musical experience. [166].

This kind of experience of music in space, Adkins points out – particularly affects the atmospheric aspect of it:

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[161] (…) *odczuć towarzyszących obcowaniu z poszczególnymi wytworami kultury*. (Own translation), Małgorzata Góralska, *Zwrot afektywny a współczesne badania nad książką i czytelnikiem. Rekonesans Badawczy*, [In:] „Przegląd Biblioteczny" Vol. 2 (2018), p. 223.
[162] G. Böhme, *The Voice in Spaces of Bodily Presence,* [In:] G. Böhme, *Atmospheric Architectures,* op. cit., p. 140.
[163] Brian Eno, *Ambient Music*, za: M. Adkins, *Fragility, Noise and Atmopshere in Ambient Music,* op. cit., p. 119.
[164] M. Adkins, Fragility, *Noise and Atmosphere in Ambient Music*, op. cit., p. 121.
[165] Ibid., p. 126.
[166] B. Eno, *Foreword* [In*:*] M. Prendergast, *The Ambient Century. From Mahler to Moby – the Evolution of Sound in the Electronic Age,* Bloomsbury, New York/London 2003, pp. xi-xii.

> We construct our own private 'atmosphere' and 'tint'. Our use of ambient music in the creation, augmentation or interruption of spaces, be they private or public, in itself expresses a desire to exercise agency within, or mediate our environment[167].

Adkins sees noise as a constitutive quality for the creation of atmospheres[168]: "Noise is as a territorialising form of sound: one that masks, obliterates, is transgressive and overpowers"[169], while also seeing it as a category of beauty[170]. He also refers to the fragility of sound, introducing Nomi Epstein's categorisation [171]. All these qualities, however, are reinterpreted and also become an essential aesthetic category of the composition *through the youth of these things*.

Titles of compositions by representatives of New Music also allude to the issues under discussion: György Ligeti's *Atmosphères* (1961) [172] and Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Stimmung* (1968).

With extraordinary sensitivity and awareness of space and environment, Catherine Lamb works with atmospheres. In the album commentary for *Atmospheres Transparent/Opaque* (2019)[173], the composer writes as follows:

> Rather than terms like loud/soft or foreground/background, *opaque* might suggest a tone that is filled, dense, and vibrant, whereas *transparent* might indicate a tone that is losing its fundamentality, becoming fused into the intensity of opacity; or that one might see through its sound, becoming atmospheric[174].

Rebecca Lane, a flutist who has collaborated with Lamb on many occasions, describes her work this way:

> It is an invitation to listen, to open up a sensitive listening space where boundaries between musicians, audience, and the environment are fluid[175].

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[167] M. Adkins, *Fragility, Noise and Atmosphere in Ambient Music,* op. cit., p. 124.
[168] Ibid., p. 138
[169] Ibid., p. 134
[170] Ibid., p. 137.
[171] N. Epstein, *Musical Fragility,* op. cit.
[172] More on the example of Ligeti's *Atmosphéres* and other composers (i.a. John L. Adams) in the context of atmosphere and ecology See: T. Vadén, J. Torvinen, *Musical meaning in between. Ineaffability, atmopshere and asubjectivity in musical experience,* [In:], *Music as Atmopshere*, op. cit., pp. 51-53.
[173] Catherine Lamb, Ensemble Dedalus, *Atmospheres Transparent/Opaque,* New World Records 80806-2.
[174] C. Lamb *Composer's Note* [In:] Catherine Lamb, Ensemble Dedalus, *Atmospheres Transparent/Opaque,* New World Records 80806-2 2019, album commentary, p. 15.
[175] R. Lane, *Atmopsheres Transparent/Opaque*, [In:] Ibid., p. 12.

When Lamb's music is experienced in the context of a CD recording, atmosphere is achieved on two levels. Firstly, it is indicated by the properties of the sound material itself – by paying particular attention to timing and timbre, its detuning and intrinsic sensitivity. Secondly, as mentioned above, the creation of atmosphere is affected by the individual listening experience.

Own Understanding of the Atmosphere

The understanding of atmospherics proposed in this method is on the one hand linked to the physicality of sound, the pursuit of the 'ecstasies of things' through objects, but also closely linked to the sound material. At the same time, my assumptions take the compositional workshop into account in terms of the transformations that have occurred with the digital revolution – i.e., the widespread possibility of sampling and multichannel sound projection. It is possible to make use of field recordings, to reach back to fragments of recordings retained in one's memory[176], to use sound synthesis, to be aware of sonic space (resulting from the placement of musicians and objects and the alignment of loudspeakers). The ephemeral nature of performance is also considered, especially in the context of extended playing techniques: unstable sounds, friable structures, and the use of preparation, tuning and interaction with objects that are not fully controllable.

Atmosphere-based approaches in the piece *through the youth of these things* are described later in the text. In the context of aesthetic assumptions (*Sensation of the End*, p. 66) and working with musical material (*Musical Material and Sonority*, p. 91).

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[176] M. Adkins, *Fragility, Noise and Atmosphere...* op. cit., p. 131.

II.3.3. (Non)presence – Musicians' Interactions with Space

Marvin Carlson points out that Michael Fried „introduced the concept of 'presence' into the analysis of modernist minimalism", which he defined as "the distinctive co-presence to which the work compels the observer"[177], and called such a situation "theatrical presence"[178].

Erika Fischer-Lichte formulates presence as "an intense experience of the presentness"[179] She also investigated the relationship of presence to aura in Walter Benjamin:

> While the notion of aura emphasises the moment of awe during the transformation (...), the notion of presence is emphasised above all by giving the extraordinary to the ordinary (...)[180].

The three concepts of presence she distinguishes (weak, strong, and radical) can refer both to the persons ("human bodies"[181]) involved in the performance and, in the case of the first two categories – to the objects[182], which, following Gernot Böhme, she links to the 'ecstasies' discussed in the context of the concept of atmospheres:

> (...) things reach ecstasy when they appear as what they always are, which is overlooked by the people who instrumentalise and functionalise them in everyday life[183].

Just as the seamless interweaving of sonic scenography and atmospheric concepts was evident, the concepts of atmospheres and presence merge and, in the case of the concept discussed, influence the individual elements of the compositional work.

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[177] M. Carlson, *Performans,* Edyta Kubikowska (translation into Polish), Tomasz Kubikowski (ed.), PWN, Warszawa 2007, p. 206.
[178] Ibid., p. 207.
[179] E. Fischer-Lichte, *Estetyka Performatywności,* op. cit., p. 156. The English version of this thesis also relied on the edition: E. Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance. A New Aesthetics,* Saskya Iris Jains (translation into English), Routledge, London/New York 2008, p. 96.
[180] *O ile pojęcie aury podkreśla moment zachwytu w trakcie przemiany* (…)*, o tyle pojęcie obecności zostaje podkreślone przede wszystkim przez nadanie niezwykłości temu, co zwyczajne* (…) (own translation), Ibid., p. 162.
[181] Ibid., p. 150.
[182] Fischer-Lichte also extends her considerations to include electronic media, Ibid. p. 163.
[183] *(…) rzeczy osiągają ekstazę, kiedy pojawiają się jako to, czym zawsze są, a czego nie dostrzegają ludzie, którzy w życiu codziennym instrumentalizują je i funkcjonalizują* (own translation.), Ibid., p. 162.

On presence and "becoming present'" has also written Anna R. Burzyńska[184] in relation to the absence of traditional stage action in Phillipe Quesne's performances. The personal experience of encountering Quesne's theatre and Vivarium Studio – thanks to the retransmissions available online during the isolation – in particular the performance *La Mélancolie des dragons (*2008), inspired me to seek answers to questions about the role of the participants in the performance, including the musicians and the audience during the performance. In this performance, Quesne also makes use of seemingly unnecessary objects from which the characters build a unique theme park[185].

Quesne, a set designer by profession[186], builds his theatre on highly immersive, detailed composed visual spaces[187]. His productions are practically devoid of dramaturgical text[188], and the professionally educated actors are replaced by people from his circle of family and friends[189]. These are performances devoid of spectacular dramatic tension. As spectators, we glance into a created reality and – as Quesne himself points out – we become voyeurs, observers of the vivarium[190]. Kate Bredeson defines the situation as follows:

> The name of Quesne's company reflects the ways that, in his art practice, he creates enclosed worlds where human bodies and objects meet, and into which he invites others to look[191].

Burzyńska notes that instead of following stage expressions, linking together plot events and their consequences, Quesne offers the audience an observation that escapes appraisal[192] Bredeson, on the other hand, sees in Quesne's performance a "radical potential" realised by "simple human presence and creativity"[193].

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[184] A.R. Burzyńska, *Nad brzegiem morza w kostiumach myśleć o końcu świata. Philippe Quesne i Vivarium Studio,* "Didaskalia", Issue 127-128/2015, p. 19.

[185] Ibid., p. 24, this situation is also similarly described by K. Bredeson see: K. Bredson, *Process, 'Set Writing' in Contemporary French Theatre*, p. 154.

[186] Philippe Quesne, *Teatr, który daje natura,* Piotr Olkusz in conversation with Philippe Quesne Didaskalia", Issue 127-128/2015, p. 28.

[187] A. R. Burzyńska, *Nad brzegiem morza...* op. cit., p. 20.

[188] Ibid., p. 19

[189] K. Bredeson, *Process, 'Set Writing' in Contemporary French Theatre*, p. 153.

[190] Philippe Quesne in conversation with Thomasem Sellarem, *Flight Paths* "Theater" Issue 37 (1/2007), p. 42, after: Ibid., p. 152

[191] Ibid.

[192] A. R. Burzyńska, *Nad brzegiem morza...* op. cit., p. 19.

[193] K. Bredesson, *Process, 'Set Writing' in Contemporary French Theatre,* op. cit., p. 155.

Heiner Goebbels also wants to involve the audience in the process of active interpretation. He rejects performances in which the audience follows the expressive personalities[194]. Instead, he postulates the concept of a "theatre of absence", in which the individual layers are conducted independently of one another, and the emotional experience of the audience is found in the "cracks", of elements, separated from one another[195]. A radical solution is a performance without actors, which Goebbels realised in *Stifers Dinge* (2007)[196].

Rejecting the figure of the dominant actor taking the central position (also visually)[197], Goebbels proposes a solution that is related to his experience as a composer. It derives directly from his collaboration with the musicians of Ensemble Modern, a democratically organised[198] ensemble founded in Frankfurt am Main in 1980 and specialising in the performance of New Music. The instrumentalists' openness to experimentation and out-of-the-box working methods was described by Goebbels as follows:

> This confidence gave me wings in my search for a musical and scenic intensity which I could not always explain to myself, but which should always emerge as planned from the unpredictable interplay of many media (...) Otherwise I would not have created any musical theatre[199].

With a committed group of instrumentalists with outstanding performance capabilities, Goebbels constructs an "experience of presence divided into multiple elements"[200]. He refers to this way of thinking about the instrumental ensemble in the context of performance as the **'collective protagonist'**[201].

Alongside this, Goebbels seeks performance practices that differ from technical perfection or timbral nuance of performative praxis[202]. An example of this is the

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[194] H. Goebbels, *Estetyka nieobecności,* op. cit., p. 204.
[195] Ibid. p. 205.
[196] Ibid., pp. 212-213.
[197] Ibid., p. 210.
[198] https://www.ensemble-modern.com/en/about-us/ensemble/2023, accessed 6.09.2023.
[199] T*his confidence gave me wings in my search for a musical and scenic intensity which I could not always explain to myself, but which should always emerge as planned from the unpredictable interplay of many media (...) Otherwise I would not have created any musical theatre.* (Own translation), H. Goebbels., *Stworzyć kompleksowe społeczeństwo skromnego dobrobytu. Ensemble Modern jako przykład,* op. cit. p. 302.
[200] Idem., *Estetyka nieobecności,* op. cit.., p. 206.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Idem., *Stworzyć kompleksowe społeczeństwo...* op. cit., p. 302.

composition *Schwarz aus Weiss* (1996), or, as the composer describes it, *A musical play with Ensemble Modern*[203]:

> In *Schwarz auf Weiss*, the musicians of the Ensemble Modern do not disappear into the orchestra pit for the benefit of the soloists on stage. They perform on the boards themselves, discovering stage skills beyond musical virtuosity: they write, sing, tidy up things, play badminton and other games, throw tennis balls at (or beside) metal sheets and drums, and read (…)[204].

Moreover, the individual parts are played by the musicians on instruments with which they have had no previous contact [205]. For Goebbels, the performative discomfort associated with the new experience of performative engagement constitutes the first level of loss of presence [206]. The second relates to the relationship with the audience and the rhythmic-visual coordination of the musicians scattered around the stage:

> Structural disturbances, obstacles, and difficulties in bringing musicians together (…) allow the audience to visualise communication processes within the ensemble, in which each musician is responsible for himself or herself, as there is no conductor in the ensemble[207].

It is significant that the amplified sound layer is, according to Goebbels, the only area of presence in the performance[208].

Considering the views discussed so far regarding the piece *through the youth of these things*, a dichotomous situation emerges.

On the one hand, the objects and the stage space remain empty and soundless until the musicians fill them. It is the instrumentalists and the conductor who interact with the space, modulating it by creating fleeting sounds, changing the properties and parameters of the instruments and objects. The intended events are often

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[203] https://vimeo.com/454036989, accessed 30.09.2023. The term 'musical play' is also used in the context of *Schwarz auf Weiß* by Anna R. Burzyńska in her translation of the Goebbels' text. See: H. Goebbels, *Estetyka nieobecności,* op. cit., p. 206.

[204] *W «Schwarz auf Weiss» muzycy Ensemble Modern nie znikają w kanale orkiestrowym na korzyść solistów na scenie. Sami występują na jej deskach i odkrywają w sobie sceniczne umiejętności poza muzyczną wirtuozerią: piszą, śpiewają, porządkują przedmioty, grają w badmintona i inne gry, rzucają piłkami tenisowymi w blachy i bębny (lub obok) i czytają* (…) (own translation), Idem., *Estetyka nieobecności,* op. cit., p. 207.

[205] Idem., *Stworzyć kompleksowe społeczeństwo…* op. cit., p. 302.

[206] Idem., *Estetyka nieobecności,* op. cit., p. 207.

[207] Ibid., p. 208.

[208] Ibid.

difficult to repeat explicitly, and the experience of the performance creates a shared relationship with the audience.

On the other hand, building the narrative of the piece around a 'collective protagonist', diluting the proportions of electronic and acoustic sound, and composing the polyphonically realised scenic events, which only when perceived as a whole form the semantic layer of the piece, refers (though not in all aspects) to the aesthetics of absence. From this perspective, one should also consider the possible situation of the experience of recorded performance, which reduces the experience of the present to a digitally captured representation[209].

In recent years, the issue of the simultaneous experience of presence and absence in reference to both Goebbels' and Fischer-Lichte's concepts has increasingly become a research issue in the performing arts[210]. Taking these aspects into account, the discussed approach proposes to speak of the experience of '(non)presence'.

II.3.4.   Polyphonicity – Strategies of Working with Form and Narrative

In writings on musical theatre[211] or exploring issues of musicality in postdramatic theatre[212], references to polyphonic techniques are common, going beyond the basic understanding of the term as music with independent movement of musical parts[213].

These issues are related to the pursuit of independence of individual elements of performance, an opposition to the hierarchisation of means, which was expressed i.a. by Heiner Goebbels in his famous text-manifesto *Against Gesamtkunstwerk*[214].

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[209] Monty Adkins writes about the experience of perception captured on a digital recording of a destroyed magnetic tape in the context of William Basinski's *Disintegration Loops*, See M. Adkins, *Fragility, Noise and Atmosphere in Ambient Music,* op. cit., pp. 126-127.

[210] E.g., in autumn 2022, in Lisbon, an international conference *Presence Absence Invisibility* took place, https://lisbonpai.netlify.app, accessed 20.09.2023.

[211] Weronika Nowak has formulated the concept of the 'stage labyrinth' in relation to Lucian Berio's musical theatre, See: W. Nowak «*Outis» i «Cronaca del Luogo» Luciana Beria…* op. cit., UAM Poznań 2019, pp. 6-7.

[212] M. Ovadija, *Dramaturgy of Sound in the Avant-Garde and Postdramatic Theatre*

[213] Wolf Frobenius, Peter R. Cookie, Caroline Bithell, Izaly Zemtsovsky, *Polyphony* [In:] *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* Vol. 20, Stanley Sadie, John Tyrell (ed.), Macmillan Publishing, London 2001, p. 74.

[214] H. Goebbels, *Przeciw Gesamtkunstwerk*, [In:] H. Goebbels, *Przeciw Gesamtkunstwerk*, Lukáš Jiřička (selection and introduction), Anna R. Burzyńska (translation into Polish.), Korporacja Ha!art, Kraków 2015, pp. 99-102.

Rita Mačiliūnaitė-Dočkuvienė[215] has provided a synthetic historical overview of the 'anti-hierarchisation' of theatrical elements since the beginning of the 20th century. In describing these processes, Duška Radosavljević recalls the view of David Roesner, who called Goebbels' strategies "the musical process of de-hierarchization"[216]. According to her, the effect of such polyphonic strategies is the rejection of the "hegemony of text and character"[217].

The potential for transferring conventional compositional techniques (including polyphony and counterpoint) to theatrical expression is one of the main research areas of Composed Theatre[218]. As Roesner points out, analogous to compositional practice, polyphony in intermedia performances is characterised by the simultaneous juxtaposition of equal but differentiated means ('voices') – "while providing structural linkage"[219] of the work as a whole. Roesner distinguishes three levels of handling polyphony:

1. which involves the use of musical polyphonic techniques to juxtapose elements[220],
2. based on the simultaneous juxtaposition of elements without a specific connection[221],
3. establishing a connection between the "independence and organization" of the elements[222].

These considerations – including the proposed notion of 'intermedial polyphony'[223] and an indication of the importance of notation[224] – are directly quoted, commented

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[215] R. Mačiliūnaitė-Dočkuvienė, *Muzikinės naracijos komponavimo būdai postdraminiame teatre*, Vilnius 2017, pp. 30-31.

[216] D. Roesner *The politics of the polyphony of performance Musicalization in contemporary German theatre*, p. 18.

[217] D. Radosavljević, *Aural/Oral Dramaturgies. Theatre in Digital Age,* Routledge, London/New York 2023, p. 70. Her views on polyphony are commented on later in the chapter.

[218] D. Roesner, *Introduction: Composed Theater in Context,* [In:] *Composed Theater*, op. cit. p. 12.

[219] Idem. *It is not about labelling, it's about understanding what we do: Composed Theatre as Discourse,* [In:] Ibid, p. 332.

[220] Ibid.

[221] Ibid., pp. 332-333.

[222] Roesner recalls Michael Hirsch's statement, Ibid., p. 333.

[223] Roesner synthesises Jörg Laue's notion of performative polyphony with Freda Chapple's work on intermediality. See Ibid.

[224] Ibid.

on, and expanded by Kent Olofsson. Starting from a historical understanding of polyphony as the simultaneous occurrence of vocal lines [225], Olofsson draws attention to the statements and work of Georges Aperghis, one of the main figures of Composed Theatre's, and to pursuit of equality of media[226] within a discussed movement, and, as a result, the possibility to independently develop multiple storylines on stage[227]. Łukasz Grabuś, analysing Aperghis' stage works created at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, also emphasises the "equality" of sound and visual elements appearing simultaneously "on the theatre stage and in musical scores"[228]. As he points out:

> The simultaneous or alternating vocal and instrumental actions of the performers are extended by the processes of photography, recording and computer processing of the acquired material, which the composer treats as parallel lines of the unfolding musical action[229].

Olofsson takes a similarly multifaceted approach to the role of the actor[230]. And he goes one step further in his interpretation of contrapuntal strategies. Parallel events developed through a diverse range of media create a 'polyphony of situations'[231]. This kind of narrative has an impact, as dramaturgist Jörgen Dahlqvist – who works closely with Olofsson – notes, to go beyond the previous "reading of the dramatic text" through "open[s]ing up a space of actions that require interpretation"[232].

In his artistic reflection, Olofsson simultaneously points out a significant difference from the leading representatives of Composed Theatre[233], mainly in his working method. Although in many of his productions he uses "superimposed layers of

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[225] K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance…*, op. cit., p. 72.
[226] W wypowiedzi Aperghisa, na którą powołuje się Olofsson wymienia on takie elementy jak: głos, scenę, dźwięk i tekst., M. Rebstock, *Ça devient du théâtre, mais ça vient de la musique': The Music Theatre of Georges Aperghis,* [In:] M. Rebstock, D. Roesner, *Composed Theatre,* op. cit., za: Ibid., s 226.
[227] K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance. An Exploration of Musical Composition as a Dramaturgical Strategy in Contemporary Intermedial Theatre.,* pp. 72-73.
[228] Łukasz Grabuś, *Formy śmiercionośne. Kilka strategii dramaturgicznych we współczesnej operze,* Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2012, pp. 190-191.
[229] Ibid., p. 191.
[230] K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance…,* op. cit., p. 170.
[231] Ibid., p. 169.
[232] J. Dalquist, *Fält,* program note, K. Olofsson (translation into English), After: Ibid.
[233] I.e., the already mentioned H. Goebbels and G. Aperghis, as well as i.a.: Ch. Marthaler, M. Tsangaris, Ibid., p. 68.

independent «voices»"[234], his aim is to strive for a synthetic treatment of the individual elements of a performance and to dissolve the distinctiveness between them[235]:

> While Robert Wilson, Christoph Marthaler and Heiner Goebbels all work with independent elements that they, step by step, build into larger sections, there is in our[236] works rather a tendency to start out from 'harmony', vertical 'images', from which the separate 'voices' can be shaped[237].

And while such thinking is not far from Goebbels' views ("only if the individual arts structurally interact with each other will it be possible to violate something in the established hierarchy")[238], what is noticeable in Olofsson's ideas is a desire for the 'interplay'[239] of the individual layers and a change in the meaning of the individual measures, rather than a complete rejection of hierarchy:

> Sometimes it is more of a theatre performance, sometimes more of a musical concert, it can be more emphasize on a literary text, on a video sequence and sometimes the visual aspect of the stage design may be the strongest element[240].

The use of multiple media does not mean for him a rejection of compositional practice. On the contrary, he seeks a full integration of the theatrical elements with the sonic layer[241], and he describes the use of polyphonic techniques directly related to sound transformations as an immanent feature of his existing concert works[242]. To describe the internal counterpoint of musical material, space, or image, he introduces the concept of 'polyphony within polyphonies'[243]. Another noteworthy term formulated by Olofsson is the 'polyphony of temporalities'[244], in which

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[234] Ibid., p. 226.
[235] Olofsson's proposed solution is the concept of vertical dramaturgy, analysing the "interplay between performers, elements and art forms" (p. 247). He distinguishes it, following Curtis Roads, on two levels of time: 'macroforms' – the planning of these relationships throughout the work (pp. 210-214) and "mesostructures" – "here and now" (p. 198), understood as the construction of meaning within event triggers (p. 175), based on an awareness of the relationships between the various elements of the performance (p. 223).
[236] The joint work of Olofsson and Dahlqvist.
[237] Ibid., p. 227.
[238] H. Goebbels, *Przeciw Gesamtkunstwerk*, op. cit., p. 101.
[239] M. Tsangaris's views on the move towards a synthesis of multiple measures, perceived as a 'mono medium' were pointed out after M. Rebstock by D. Roesner, see *It is not about labelling...,* op. cit., p. 333. See also: *The Role of the Audience,* p. 54.
[240] K. Olofsson, *Composing the Performance...* op. cit., p. 240.
[241] Olofsson gives example of *Fält,* Ibid. p. 170.
[242] Ibid., p. 230.
[243] Ibid., p. 229.
[244] Ibid., pp. 237-239, 246.

individual narratives (e.g., expressed in text, events presented as extended or shortened to the limit) are juxtaposed – 'here and now'[245] – independently of the chronology of the performance. This occurs within the framework of the shared time, which the artists experience by working together[246], sharing conceptual and physical 'shared space' of the performance[247].

One of the most recent performative readings of polyphonic techniques is proposed by Duška Radosavljević[248]. The author approaches the issue from the perspective of her analysis of verbatim theatre[249] and her postulated notion of 'post-verbatim' theatre. She uses – in relation to theatrical activities – the concept of counterpoint, which she understands (according to the basic definition in Grove's musical dictionary) as a "means" of achieving polyphony[250]. In parallel with these terms derived from music theory, she works with the notion of dialectics[251]:

> I use the term 'dialectic' as a reiteration of my stated commitment towards embracing contradictions, and the term 'counterpoint' as an expression of interest in the generative spaces found in between the contradictions that the layering of the simultaneous polyphonies offers[252].

She also points to references to polyphonic techniques in literary studies, citing the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin[253]. Apart from providing an interesting summary of the discourse so far, she points i.a. to David Roesner's notion of "simultaneity"[254] in his work on the musicality of dramatic theatre[255], which refers to the multilayered

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[245] This notion derives from Hans Gefors' views on musical and dramatic time, Ibid. pp. 237, 239.
[246] Ibid., pp. 240-241.
[247] Ibid., pp. 199-200, 241.
[248] The actual chapter of her publication on this topic is entitled: *Counterpoint: A Performative Intervention*, pp. 69-73.
[249] Verbatim theatre is a movement in British theatre that is based on the use of direct experience, (e.g. interviews with participants in an event) to present an actual story on stage. See: *An introducion to verbatim theatre* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ui3k1wT2yeM, accessed 15.07.2023.
[250] The definition cited by the author: https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/display/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000006690?rskey=dFt3ub&result=1D, accessed 30.09.2023, after Radosavljević, *Aural/Oral Dramaturgies…,* op. cit., p. 69.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Ibid., p. 73.
[253] D. Radosavljević, *Aural/Oral Dramaturgies*…, op. cit., pp. 69-70.
[254] D. Radosavljević, *Aural/Oral Dramaturgies*…, op. cit., p. 70.
[255] D. Roesner, *Musicality in Theatre. Music as Model, Method and Metaphor in Theatre-Making*, Ashgate, Surrey/Burlington 2014, p. 1.

nature of performance and its constant "potential polyphony" in the interplay of elements[256].

The Role of the Audience

Radosavljević's research is not directly concerned with Composed Theatre[257] and also goes beyond the musicological[258] understanding of the term. However, the researcher points to the semantic implications of the juxtaposed elements and the multiplicity of their possible interpretations. Her point of view refers to methods of establishing a "multi-faceted", active dialogue with a multisubjective audience[259]:

> Unlike in music where the response can be primarily affective, theatre can generate its own counterpoint between the affective and the rational experience. By this I mean the opportunity for an individual audience member to simultaneously experience affective displeasure and the intellectual closure predicated on it (…) In other words, the work must create space for the audience's co-creation of meaning to occur[260].

An important parameter here is the creation of "cognitive dissonance or disruption" in the performative situation, which engages the audience in personal interpretations of individual meanings[261]. The special importance of the audience[262] in the performance-making process has also been pointed out by Erika Fischer-Lichte. She writes that the audience are "equal participants who take part in the play, bring the performance into existence by their physical presence, by their perception, and also by their reactions" [263].

In the piece *through the youth of these things*, due to the simultaneous leading of the object parts, the modification of lighting and, later in the piece, also the performative

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[256] D. Roesner, *Musicality in Theatre,* op. cit., p. 36 after: Ibid.
Roesner relates the notion of 'simultaneity' to the distinctive role of the score as a reference point for elements of rearrangement in Adolphe Appia's realisations, see: D. Roesner, *Musicality in Theatre,* op. cit., p. 34.
[257] D. Radosavljević, *Aural/Oral Dramaturgies…*, op. cit., p. 160.
[258] Ibid., p. 166.
[259] *I think of polyphony's constituent counterpoint as a means of constructing a multi-faceted process of call and response with (the multiple subjectivities of) the audience,* Ibid., p. 71.
[260] Ibid. p. 72.
[261] *The counterpoint represents a necessary cognitive dissonance or disruption that will engage the audience to make sense of it.,* Ibid.
[262] Most publications on the polyphony of the performance also draw attention to this issue, see D. Roesner, *It is not about labelling…,* op. cit., p. 333, H. Goebbels, *Przeciw Gestamtkunstwerk,* op. cit., p. 101, and also, referring to Fischer-Lichte – Olofsson. See: K. Olofsson, Composing the performance, op. cit. p. 63.
[263] E. Fischer-Lichte, *Estetyka Performatywności,* op. cit., p. 47.

transformation of the entire ensemble and the change of the conductor's function, it is impossible to perceive all the events on stage simultaneously. The spectators, as in the early 20th century performance of Max Reinhardt's (1873-1943) *Sumurum* described by Fischer-Lichte – are "put in charge of selecting experiences themselves (...)" and consequently "were literally becoming the 'creators' of their own performance"[264].

[264] Ibid.

II.4. The Concept of 'Instrumentalists' Theatre'

The aim of the concept discussed was not to develop a new genre or system of work. As indicated in the previous chapters, these issues have already been widely considered. Nor does it answer questions about the balance between theatre and music. Above all, it was about finding strategies that would enable the most engaging storytelling for the listener. One in which the visual elements are precisely composed and do not distract the audience unless necessary, and in which the composition can be perceived both aurally and scenically.

This premise is at the same time the opposite of that proposed by Heiner Goebbels: who confronted the musicians of the Ensemble Modern with a situation beyond their respective speciatlisations [265]. Here the aim was to push the traditional performance situation to its limits. The point of departure and reference is primarily compositional practice closely linked to instrumental performance. The synthesis of theatrical experience is intended to lead to the identification of possibilities for the adaptation of means affecting the fuller reception of the entire work. Significantly, such a composition is at once actually 'sounding' and 'stage', with no division between 'concert' and 'theatrical' music[266].

The instrumentalists' theatre also pays homage to the tradition of musical theatre and directly relates to the notion of instrumental theatre by M. Kagel[267]. However, it is important to point out a significant difference: in the proposed approach, the **instrumentalists**, although directly creating a performance, **interact** primarily **with their instrument** and, more broadly: **with their performance practice**. Such assumptions require treating sonority with special attention and linking it to the physicality of sound.

The musical material is linked to the concept of aura and atmosphere, but at the same time it benefits greatly from the experience of the digital revolution, the

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[265] Ibid.
[266] The distinction between stage and concert works is noticeable, for example, in Kent Olofsson reflection, see pp. 230-231, as well as in many works of other composers (C. Bauckholt, O. Neuwirth).
[267] M. Kagel, *Teatr instrumentalny,* Stanisław Cichowicz (translation into Polish), „Res Facta" 3/1969, pp. 53-62.

possibility of accessible computer editing and sound recording, the use of multiple sound sources[268], and digital lighting control.

At the same time, these assumptions encourage a reconsideration of the importance of the visual side of performance – Kagel wrote: "the bare stage, the scene itself, is a sufficient incentive"[269]. As in the concept of instrumental theatre, the present assumptions take into account the choreographic aspect: the movement is composed according to the musical narrative, e.g., the performance of the chorale-like structure on the harmonium requires a physical gesture linked to the pedal-pumping (see: p. 84). At the same time, attention must be paid to the sonic scenography and lighting, bearing in mind the limitations of the concert halls and the circumstances of the diverse, wide-ranging concert programmes of ensembles.

The premises of the 'instrumentalists' theatre' concept influenced the following parameters of the compositional work:

a. strategies for working with form and narrative,

b. the visual and spatial layer,

c. the issue of presence of the musicians in this space and their interactions with it,

d. the shaping of musical material.

Simultaneously, in many cases these strategies affect more than one area of the piece (e.g., the disassembling of instruments has direct consequences both sonically and visually). These will be discussed in the following chapters, preceded by an introduction to the aesthetic background of the composition *through the youth of these things*.

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[268] On the sonic possibilities of loudspeakers and microphones and treating them as an instrument, Cathy van Eck wrote, See: C. van Eck, *Between Air and Electricity. Microphones and Loudspeakers as Musical Instruments,* Bloomsbury Academic, London 2017.
[269] M. Kagel, *Teatr instrumentalny,* op. cit., p. 54.

III   Realisation of the Concept

through the youth of these things – information about the piece

through the youth of these things for ensemble, electronics, and objects

- Time of origin: 2021/22
- Ensemble[270]:

[Cond /Harm]

1[Fl/AFl] 1 1[Cl/BCl] 1 – 1 1 1 0 – 2Perc – [1Sampler /Synth] –

Strings (1 1/1/1/1),

Detailed list of percussion instrumentation:

lightweight, rectangular table shared by the performers (amplified) or if available:
resonating top made of plywood[271]
4 water bottles,
4 wine glasses,
4 glass bottles filled with particles of plastic and glass,
2 ceramic or glass figurines,
2 toy soap bubbles,
a large transparent glass vase,
rotating tray,
Tibetan bowl,
10-15 sentimental everyday objects (toys, figurines, videotapes, framed photos)
hidden in a bag,
additionally: bag, flat vessel, 2 towels to wipe hands.

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[270] Notation according to the Universal Instrumentation Code (UIC) used i.a. by the PWM Edition,
see: https://pwm.com.pl/pl/wypozyczenia/szczegoly/3459305,uniwersalny-kod-instrumentacji--
pelna-informacja-o-instrumentacji-utworow-orkiestrowych-on-line.html, accessed 10.07.2023.
[271] This kind of tabletop was suggested by the performers and used instead of amplifying the table
with contact microphones during the first performance of the composition. These tabletops were
originally prepared for the performance of Thierry de Mey's famous *Table Music* (1987), in which
all sounds are created by the performers' interaction with the table, see:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGF_QhZKx_s

- Duration

  score: 25′ca.

  recording: 26′30″

- First performance: Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej, Szymon Bywalec (conductor), Przemysław Kunda (sound direction), 10.07.2022, *Polifonie*, the Centre for the Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor Cricoteka, Cracow.

III.1. Aesthetic Considerations

The following section proposes three main areas of aesthetic impact that directly influenced the narrative, the choice of objects, and the sonic material of the composition *through the youth of these things.*

III.1.1. The Youth of Things

Édouard Louis, in his novel *Who Killed My Father* – an emotional reckoning with his adolescence marked by violence in a working-class family in the north of France, which is a fragmented listing of memories addressed to his unconscious father – recalls the shoddy objects he bought from a local shop:

> a watch that went backwards, a machine for making Coke at home, a laser that could project the image of a naked woman on a wall a hundred yards away[272].

For him, they were the only available substitute for the electronic gadgets he saw in the commercials:

> You were fascinated by all technological innovations, as if, through the novelty they embodied, you could infuse your own life with a newness to which you were not entitled[273].

The need for comfort, expressed by their parents through the acquisition of things („they were driven by the desire to have everything that had been denied to them and to their parents before them" [274]), or the attempt to cope with the stigma of provincial origin ("the fear of being *out of place*, the fear of being shamed" [275]), recurs throughout the works of Didier Eribon and Annie Ernaux, leading French authors who narrate the experience of social exclusion from an autoethnographic [276]

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[272] In this version English edition was used: É. Louis, *Who killed my father,* Lorin Stein (translation into English) New Directions Publishing, New York 2019 (eBook ed.)
Original footnote for the Polish edition: É. Louis, *Kto zabił mojego ojca*, Joanna Polachowska (translation into Polish) Wydawnictwo Pauza, Warszawa 2021, p. 30.
[273] Ibid.
[274] D. Eribon, *Powrót do Reims*, Martyna Ochab (translation into Polish), Karakter, Kraków 2019, p. 75.
[275] A. Ernaux, *Miejsce,* [In:] *Bliscy,* Anna Kozak (translation into Polish)*,* Wydawnictwo Czarne, Wołowiec 2022, pp. 36-38.
[276] I. Komór, *Wstyd*, „dwutygodnik", nr 270 (12/2019), https://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/8624-wstyd.html, accessed 10.07.2023.

perspective. The resonance of these texts[277] has influenced numerous theatrical adaptations, also on stages in Poland[278].

Louis concludes the passage quoted at the beginning:

> *In general, these memories are inhabited more by things than by people*[279]*. You lived out your youth through the youth of these things*[280].

This extremely poignant sentence became the main inspiration for the composition and, in time, its title: *through the youth of these things*[281]. By focusing primarily on a very short excerpt, the extra-musical layer of the composition was shifted beyond the main political discourse of the authors in question. It was still an important context during the composition process, but the core of the story became primarily ordinary, sentimental objects and the sonorities they evoke. One consequence of this decision was the complete abandonment of the use of text, apart from the titles of the movements. The ambiguously understood presence of musicians and the unique function of instruments became an immanent extension of the objects. They play an equal, performative role during the performance. This way of thinking, in conjunction with the other areas of aesthetic interest, influenced the particular function of sonority: the choice of sound qualities, recomposed quotations and musical structures (see *Musical Material and Sonority*, p. 91).

Around everyday objects are built scraps of family stories in Mikołaj Łoziński's novel *Książka* (*the Book*)[282] , whilst Marcin Wicha has created a sensitive memoir of his deceased mother in the book *Rzeczy, których nie wyrzuciłem* (*Things I didn't Throw*

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[277] Ibid., See also: J. Fargo, *J'Accuse!,* „New York Review", 18.04.2019, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2019/04/18/jaccuse-edouard-louis/, accessed 10.07.2023, P.Z. Dryef *Edouard Louis: la vie avec ses fréres d'armes et d'esprit*, "Le Monde", 10.08.2018, https://www.lemonde.fr/m-actu/article/2018/08/10/edouard-louis-la-vie-avec-ses-freres-d-armes-et-d-esprit_5341064_4497186.html, accessed 10.07.2023.

[278] Magdalena Rewerenda wrote about adaptations and performances loosely originating from the works of Eribon and Louis in a synthetic text: *„Z elit czy z ludu?". O klasie, prowincji i wstydzie w polskim teatrze ostatnich sezonów,* „Czas Kultury", Issue 16/2022, https://czaskultury.pl/artykul/z-elit-czy-z-ludu-o-klasie-prowincji-i-wstydzie-w-polskim-teatrze-ostatnich-sezonow/, accessed 10.07.2023.

[279] W powieści fragmenty pisane kursywą to większości przywoływane z pamięci wypowiedzi ojca.

[280] Original footnote for the polish edition: É. Louis, *Kto zabił mojego ojca,* op. cit., pp. 30-31.

[281] É. Louis, *Who killed my father,* op. cit.

[282] Artur Madaliński, *Mikołaj Łoziński, „Książka",* „dwutygodnik" nr 04/2011, https://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/2029-mikolaj-lozinski-ksiazka.html, accessed 10.07.2023.

Out)[283]. Obsession, expressed by collecting objects, is an important theme in Orhan Pamuk's novel *The Museum of Innocence* [284]. Often, such narrative treatments influence the choppy, non-linear progression of the plot. Certain elements of this thinking influenced the composition in question. Although individual events – both audio and performative – often follow from each other (see *Linearity*, p. 68), their meanings and the connections between them are already abstract. The content layer is mainly influenced by the choice of objects and the treatment of the instrumental ensemble, [see *(Non)presence of the Performers*, p. 84]

III.1.2. Expression of Melancholy

At the same time, it was significant to go beyond the objects themselves. A sense of pervasive powerlessness in the face of the surrounding reality, leading Louis to formulate a powerful accusation [285]: „The history of your body stands as an *accusation* against political history"[286]. Whereas Eribon links the journey from Paris to his hometown with experiencing melancholy:

> Suddenly, in circumstances like these, there rises to the surface of your consciousness everything from which you imagined you had freed yourself and yet which you cannot not recognize as part of the structure of your personality – specifically the discomfort that results from belonging to two different worlds, worlds so far separated from each other that they seem irreconcilable, and yet which coexist in everything that you are (…) Strangely enough, it is precisely at the moment in which you try to get past this diffuse and hidden kind of malaise, to get over it, or when you try at least to allay it a bit, that it pushes even more strongly to the fore, and that the melancholy associated with it redoubles its force[287].

A directly related musical text used in *through the youth of these things* is Johann Jacob Froberger's XXX Keyboard *Partita* (FbWV 630, 1652)[288]. Although it was

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[283] Marcin Wicha, *Rzeczy, których nie wyrzuciłem*, Karakter, Kraków 2017.
[284] Since 2012, there is also a museum in Istanbul that displays the objects mentioned in the novel, see: https://www.masumiyetmuzesi.org/en, accessed 10.07.2023.
[285] J. Fargo, *J'Accuse!* op. cit., accessed 10.07.2023.
[286] É. Louis, *Who killed my father,* op. cit.
Original footnote for the polish edition: É. Louis, *Kto zabił mojego ojca,* op. cit., p. 57.
[287] In this version of the thesis, the english edition was quoted: D.Eribon, *Retouring to Reims,* Michael Lucey (translation into English), Penguin Books, London 2018 (eBook edition), Original footnote in the polish edition: D. Eribon, *Powrót do Reims,* op. cit., p. 10.
[288] In the description of the recording by A. Staier the composition is referred to as a 'suite', but in the editorial commentary on the edition of J.J. Froberger's works Siegbert Rampe points out that the term "did not enter the German-speaking countries until the eighteenth century", cf. J.J. Froberger, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke IV.1. Clavier- und Orgelwerke abschriftlicher Überlieferung: Partiten und Partitensätze, Teil 2*, Sieberg Rampe (ed.), Bärenreiter, Kassel 2010, p. XXXII.

discovered by coincidence during a radio rebroadcast of a concert by Andreas Staier, it makes a significant sonic contribution to the work as a whole. At the same time, the material taken from the *Partita* has been transformed and made almost unrecognisable to the listener. This context is not intended to dominate the listener in any way, nor is knowledge of the score a precondition for a thorough perception of the work discussed.

The material taken from the *Partita* has been transformed and is almost unrecognisable to the listener. This context is not intended to dominate the listener in any way, nor is knowledge of the score necessary to fully appreciate the work under discussion. However, the unusual sonority of the *Partita* runs through the first two movements of the discussed work *through the youth of these things*, and the *Partita's* subtitle: *Plainte faîte à Londres pour passer la melancholi la quelle se joüe lentement avec discretion* [289] (French: *Complaint made in London to pass the melancholy which is slowly joined with discretion*) – constantly influenced the process of working on the piece, becoming both an escape from reality and a bridge between this feeling of melancholy in the past and today. (See *Musical Material and Sonority,* p. 91). Its abbreviated form without reference to place: *Plainte faîte (…) pour passer la melancholi*, was placed in the *through youth of these things* score as the title of Part II of the piece.

In this context, the composition also loosely refers to the aforementioned theatre performance *La Mélancolie des dragons* by Philippe Quesne and Vivarium Studio[290].

The work opens with a scene[291] of a group of rockers trapped in a snowy landscape in a dilapidated white car with a mysterious trailer attached. The space has been rendered extremely realistically (including the vehicle), and the soundtrack consists of nostalgic heavy metal songs (by Metallica and Scorpions) played on the car radio.

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[289] Notation in accordance with the edition: Ibid., p. XXXVII, 14.
[290] Excerpts from the video documentation promoting the performance are available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7yi4TOH1Do, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTm8pwPpItA, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfzebgiYMNY accessed 6.09.2023.
[291] Description of the storyline after: Anna R. Burzyńska, *Nad brzegiem morza…* op. cit., pp. 23-24.

An elderly woman they meet by chance helps them repair the car. Anna R. Burzyńska describes further events as follows:

> The grateful rockers decide to organise a show for her, as the only spectator, of the attractions they have planned for the theme park of their dreams (in a sense, the negative of the sub-Parisian Disneyland): soap bubble machines, inflatable black bags onto which reproductions of paintings (such as Dürer's Melancholia) can be projected, showcases with wigs hanging inside that, when suspended by a fan, will dance to the rhythm of the music. The park will be called Melancholia of the Dragons[292].

In *through the youth of these things*, the only direct reference to the performance is the percussionists' gesture of reaching for bubbles (in this case, small toy bubbles) at the end of the composition. It was also inspired by Vivarium Studio's way of working, which combines the involvement of the audience in the transformation of the performance, as well as Quesne's aesthetic of expressing melancholy as an "attitude towards the world" and escaping literal commentary on reality[293].

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[292] *Wdzięczni rockmani postanawiają specjalnie dla niej jako jedynego widza zorganizować pokaz atrakcji, które zaplanowali dla wymarzonego parku rozrywki (w pewnym sensie negatywu podparyskiego Disneylandu): maszyny do produkcji baniek mydlanych, nadmuchiwane czarne worki, na których wyświetlać można reprodukcje obrazów (na przykład Melancholii Dürera), gabloty z zawieszonymi w środku perukami, które – podwiewane przez wentylator – tańczyć będą w rytm muzyki. Park nosić ma nazwę «Melancholia smoków».* (Own translation), A. R. Burzyńska, *Nad brzegiem morza...* op. cit., p. 24.
[293] P. Quesne in conversation with Piotr Gruszczyński *Kochanek utopii,* leaflet accompanying the performance *Swamp Club,* Centrum Kultury Zamek, Poznań 2014, after: Ibid., p. 23.

III.1.3. Sensation of the End

The awareness of the limitations of communicating extra-musical content, which resulted from the abandonment of the verbal text, became at the same time an opportunity to turn to less literal forms of expression: the sensation of atmospheres over time, the processes of slow decay of composed structures.

In the essay on atmosphere as an aesthetic model cited previously[294], Gernot Böhme quotes a passage from C.C.L. Hirschfeld's description of nature in his eighteenth-century multi-volume publication on the art of gardening. Böhme draws particular attention to the "scenographic" presentation of the landscape, in which colours and sounds, by the choice of individual "objects", directly influence the feeling of the space[295]:

Quiet and solitude are at home here. A solitary bird fluttering about, the indistinct buzzing of unknown creatures, a wood pigeon cooing from the hollow top of a leafless oak, a stray nightingale lamenting her lonely sorrows[296].

Cisza i samotność są tu jak w domu. Samotny ptak trzepoczący skrzydłami, niewyraźne brzęczenie nieznanych stworzeń, grzywacz gruchający z wydrążonego wierzchołka bezlistnego dębu, zabłąkany słowik lamentujący w samotności nad smutkami[297].

The opening phrase of the quoted passage is the title of the final movement (III) *through the youth of these things*, which represents a slow contemplation of the situation at the end, in which the instruments, out of tune and deprived of their original technical capabilities, form a static texture of sound, accompanied by a slow chorale played by the conductor on the harmonium.

There is a similar contemplation of timelessness in Part I, the title of which is taken from an anti-war poem by Charles Reznikoff, first made known to me in Polish

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[294] See: *Atmosphere – Shaping the Musical Material*, p. 34.
[295] G. Böhme, *Atmosphere. A Basic Concept...* op. cit*,* p. 25.
[296] Christian Cay Lorenz Hirschfeld, *Theory of Garden Art*, Linda B. Parshall (translation into English), University of Pensylvania Press, Philadelphia 2001, p. 188. After: Ibid., p. 26.
[297] Ibid. (Own translation).

translation thanks to Konrad Hetel's poetic profile *±1354*[298] on social media. It is presented below in its original version and in Piotr Sommer's Polish translation:

Hardly a breath of wind	To nawet nie tchnienie wiatru
starts the leaves falling:	każe opadać liściom –
the little purposes are lost	**małe cele giną**
in the great designs.	**w wielkich projektach.**
Fortunate man,	Szczęśliwy człowiek
where the fugitives	gdzie uchodźcy
are only birds and leaves[299].	to tylko ptaki i liście[300].

[298] https://www.facebook.com/plusminus1354/?locale=pl_PL, accessed 10.09.2023.
[299] Ch. Reznikoff, *Inscriptions 1944-1956* [In:] *The Poems of Charles Reznikoff: 1918-1975,* Seamus Cooney (ed.), A Black Sparrow Book, David R. Godine, Publisher, Boston 2005, p. 222.
[300] Idem, *Co robisz na naszej ulicy,* Piotr Sommer (selection, translation into Polish, editor)*,* WBPICAK, Poznań 2019, p. 130.

III.2. Form and Narrative

The development of narrative strategies that enable contemporary composition to provide 'storytelling' that is directly related to the aforementioned subjects and that goes beyond abstract events and musical gestures was one of the main artistic objectives of the research.

In the piece *through the youth of these things*, form and narrative are shaped by the following simultaneously operating assumptions:

- horizontal progression (linearity),
- multi-faceted work with time,
- polyphonicity.

III.2.1. Linearity

The piece under discussion is set within a definite formal framework[301] and, to some extent, a definite time (25-30 minutes). It consists of three intertwined parts:

I – *The little purposes are lost in the great designs,* bars 1-200,

II – *Plainte faîte (…) pour passer la melancholi*, bars 201-276,

III – *Quiet and solitude are at home here*, bars 277-383.

The dichotomous temporal perspective: on the one hand extended in the context of compositional practice, on the other lapidary when analysed from the perspective of performance[302], directly influences the shaping of the narrative. Both the sound structures and the performative situation undergo a metamorphosis, but this transformation is based on a constant handling of similar qualities. The individual transformations are composed as processes, and their tracing in time forms the core

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[301] The concept of open form and the rejection of the temporality of the work was an important area of interest for composers of the Darmstadt School (e.g., Karlheinz Stockhausen, Pierre Boulez) as well as for Polish composers (e.g., Roman Haubensotck-Ramati, Zygmunt Krauze, Bogusław Schaeffer, Kazimierz Serocki).

[302] H.-T. Lehmann draws attention to the „making of time as a time an object of aesthetic experience", and the lengthening of performances is, in his view, „the most striking characteristic of postdramatic theatre", See: H-T. Lehmann, *Teatr postdramatyczny,* op. cit., p. 260.

of the formal structure of the piece, particularly in Part III. The linear progression also makes it possible to anticipate individual events. Already in Part I of the piece there are snippets of musical gestures on which the following sections of the composition are based.

III.2.2. Time

In the piece *through the youth of these things*, the way of working with time can be considered on two levels.

The first level (time of compositional structure) – refers to the construction of the piece: from the interplay of the two temporal perspectives (*ad libitum* and *a battuta*), through the unstable oscillating tempo of Part II, to the final phase of the piece, devoid of metrical pulse, in which the main point of reference is the quasi chorale played by the conductor on the harmonium.

The second level (time of internal events) refers to the inner transformations of the individual segments over time.

Part I juxtaposes constructions based on two quite opposite time perspectives. The *ad libitum* sections – framed in approximate second ranges – are interspersed with *a battuta* segments in tempo ♩=108 [303] . The choice of a relatively fast tempo intensifies the internal tensions of these segments, especially in the context of the jagged rhythmic course of the dominant structures of the musical material in the woodwind parts and the shifting accentuation, combined with the conductor's visual gesture. The beginning of this movement is dominated by suspended time, punctuated by short entrances of broken structures: first of the string instruments and, from bar 12, of the entire ensemble. From bar. 22 the passages with a strict tempo are increasingly prolonged, and between bar 95 and the final, longest – lasting about a minute – *ad libitum* sequence, the metrical course of the composition is interrupted only once, for about 15 seconds in bar 116.

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[303] The choice of such a tempo, in which the 'musical progression of the piece' is objectively slower than the recorded pulse, was to some extent inspired by the works of F. Filidei, e.g. *Finito ogni gesto* (2010), see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XHwJzSgQkY, accessed 30.09.2023.

Table 1 *through the youth of these things*, Part I, proportion between time *ad libitum* and *a battuta*

I. The little purposes are lost in the great designs

bar	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9	11	12	15	17	18	21	22	28	29	37
time (type)	15"	5"		5"	10"		15"	8"	18"		10"	10"		25"		8"		15"
duration (score)								1:00						2:00				3:05

bar	38	54	55	90	91	94	95
time (type)		8"		10"		10"	
duration (score)	3:20	4:00		5:20		5:45	

bar	116	117	200
time (type)	15"		60"
duration (score)	6:30		9:24
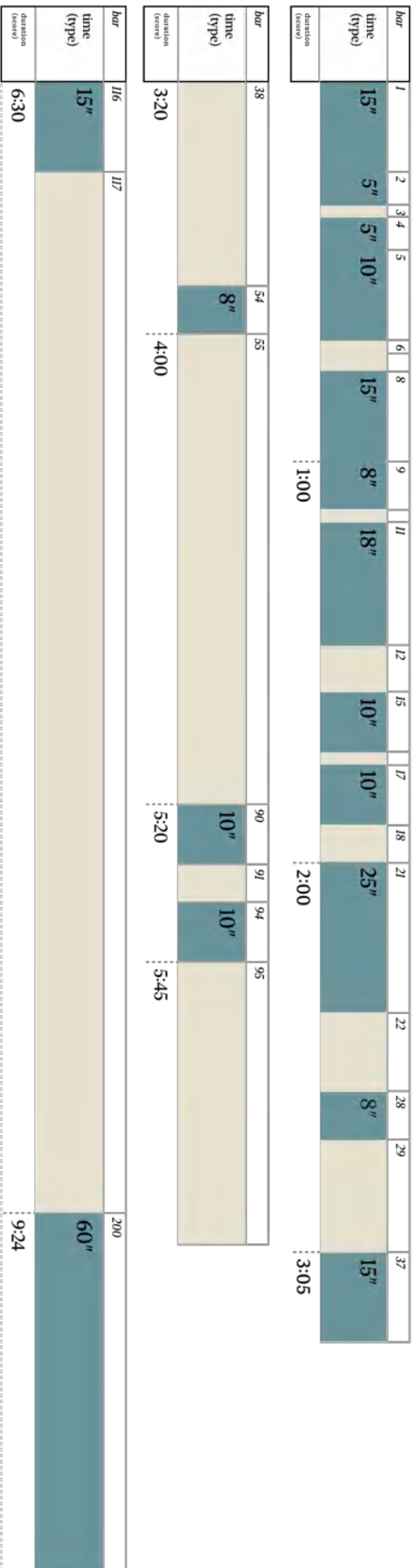
time *ad libitum* (ca.)
time *a battuta*

Part II is notated entirely in conducted time. This part is is characterised by temporal instability realised through the tempo fluctuations (see Table 2) and internal, often irregular looping of sound structures and actions performed by percussionists on objects (discussed in detail in the next subsection) [304]. Its narrative axis is the quadruple exposition of material based on a time-stretched, detuned afterimage of an excerpt from Johann Jacob Froberger's *Partita*.

In the **Part III**, time – initially measured, with the shift in the role of the conductor and the detuning and deconstruction of the instruments – is transformed into open time, in which the harmonium part played by the conductor becomes the reference point for the entire ensemble. However, this time is treated differently from the ad libitum passages in the first movement of the composition. The loosening of metrical discipline is closely linked to the aesthetic category of deconstruction at the end of the work: the timbral instability of the instruments, the slow persistence of individual sound structures and the emphasis on the ephemeral nature of soap bubbles in the percussionists' part. Open time returns in the last two bars of the piece, when the instrumental parts have been extinguished and the only actions are performed by the percussionists, accompanied by electronic sounds.

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[304] Mainly presenting sentimental objects to the audience on a rotating tray.

Table 2 *through the youth of these things*, Part II, time organisation

II. Plainte faite (...) pour passer la melancholi

tempo	♩=72	⇢ ♩=60		♩=72 ♩=54	♩=60 ♩=84	
time (according to score)	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00
material	Froberger 1	Froberger 2	transition	Froberger 3	Froberger 4	transition
bar	t. 201	t. 218 t. 225	t. 232		t. 248 t. 258	t. 272
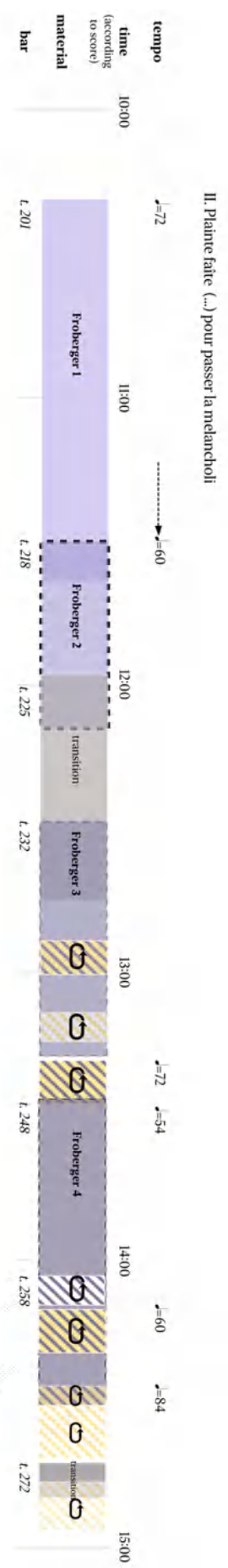
Partita phrase looped by harp

Partita phrase looped by harp and instrumental ensemble assemblies

repetition of instrumental sonorities (without *Partita* melody)

The loop sign used in the table was taken from the Freepik library, www.freepik.com.

Table 3 *through the youth of these things*, time organisation and transformations of the instruments

III. Quiet and solitude are at home here

Tempo	♩=60		falling apart	quasi ad. lib.	ad lib.
Bar	277	325	338	382	383

Cond.
Fl. — DISASSEMBLED
Ob. — NORM. → DISASSEMBLED → NORM. → GO TO... → HARMONIUM
B. Cl. — NORM. → DISASSEMBLED → NORM. → COVERED WITH CLOTH
Bsn. — NORM. → DISASSEMBLED → NORM. → DIASSEMBLED

Hn.
Tpt.
Tbn.

Musicians
Perc. 1 — GLASS 1 → DETUNED / GLASS 2 → DETUNED / GLASS 3 → DET. / WALK → LOOK INTO EYES → BUBBLES → BLOW
Perc. 2 — GLASS 4 → DETUNED / WALK → LOOK INTO EYES → BUBBLES → BLOW

Hp. — NORM. → PREPARED

Vn. 1 — NORM. → DETUNED → NORM. → DETUNED
Vn. 2 — NORM. → DETUNED
Vla.
Vc. — NORM. → DETUNED
Db. — NORM. → DETUNED

Rehearsal letters: T U V W X Y Z A1 B2 C1

time *a battuta*   time *ad libitum*

Time of Internal Events

In **Part I**, in segments with suspended time, sounds and sequences are composed with long fade-ins[305]: accompanying the static instrumental sounds, the recurring noise of loose particles, together with a jittering electronic part, create an effect that Rafał Zapała describes as a "feeling of suspension"[306] of the narrative. Parallel to this treatment, the internal development of the segments is noticeable, with successive *ad libitum* introductions – e.g., the 'melody' of the ebow appearing in the harp part in bars 21 (Ex. 5) and 37, accompanied by the overlapping of three tracks in the sampler part, sent to three different speakers on the stage.

Ex. 5. *through the youth of these things,* score fragment, percussion, harp and sampler parts, bars 18-23

Yet, at the same time, these sonorities overlap in chains with sequences notated in strict tempo, anticipating and transcending the *ad libitum* bar framework. In the conducted segments, the constantly recurring textures of the woodwind instruments are characterised by similar timbral qualities (high register, *decrescendo* dynamics), but both their length at each performance and their

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305 The structure of this fragment is discussed in detail in the subsection *Musical Material and Sonority,* p. 91.
306 Rafał Zapała, *Obszary i struktury materiału muzycznego w kompozycji „Skaner" na orkiestrę symfoniczną, elektronikę i soundscape*, doctoral dissertation, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, Kraków 2012, p. 67.

individual components (pitches, phrase shaping, secondary instruments) are constantly transformed. This strategy introduces additional parameters beyond the assumed structural juxtaposition of counted and open time. The sense of tempo is also disrupted by augmented parts: for example, the shifting pulse of the cello and double bass accompanying the slow, chorale-like synth part in bars 55-72 or the high, muffled harmonic sound of the harp, which oscillates between synchronisation with the whole ensemble and a completely independent rhythmic layer.

Ex. 6, *through the youth of these things,* score, bars 55-58.

Part II features a 'loop within a loop' construction. Individual runs of material overlap, repeatedly reverberating long after the next sequence has been introduced. In contrast, phrases based on Froberger's *Partita* are internally looped, which then leads to the 'triggering' of successive segments of repetition (see bars 248-272[307]). The looped musical time of the piece is closely linked to the actions on the objects in the percussionists' part. During the first appearance of the material, the percussionists remove a glass vase – the visual dominant of the first movement – from the table, along with the other objects used to pour the particles. In a reduced stage setting, the central object becomes a rotating tray onto which, with successive loops, the percussionists place further sentimental objects, previously invisible to the audience. In contrast to the repetitive, floating sound material of the instrumental parts of this movement, the percussionist' part is characterised by transformative and semantic development.

In **Part III**, time is subordinated to deconstructive processes in the instrumental parts. The free flowing, slowly emerging, and fading textures are counterpointed by the irregular pulse of the double bass (bars 318-325) and the recurring regular rhythm played as a key percussion by the disassembled flute (from bar 282 onwards). This structure recalls the opening gesture of the second movement. So does the recurring quasi-chorale of the synthesizer part from the first movement, which is then continued in the harmonium part. In bar 325, along with the intensification of the de-emphasis of the strings, the only expressive text in the score is introduced: 'falling apart'. It suggests the disappearance of a perceptible tempo and also affects the conductor's gesture. The end of the piece is based on the repetition of the dominant slow static sounds of disjointed and dismantled instruments. However, as in the previous sections of the composition, none of the repetitions are exactly the same, and the timing, measured in relation to the

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[307] The development of the harp part's phrase is locked in several times, it returns again and again to the beginning in an irregular rhythm, and the lead-up to the final quasi-triangle is preceded by a quadruple repetition of the increasingly abbreviated structure. There is a change of tempo (from ♩=54 to 60), but this trill is aborted. The harp phrase returns in bar 263, leading from the reintroduction of the quasi trill in bar 265 at a new, much faster tempo (♩=84). This sequence leads to another irregular loop in bars 268-272 of the entire ensemble except the harp.

harmonium part, further loosens the relationship between the individual instrumental parts.

III.2.3. Polyphonicity

Taking into account previous research on polyphonic practices (see *Polyphonicity – Strategies of Working with Form and Narrative,* p. 49), including intermedial situations, *in through the youth of these things* it is possible to distinguish the use of this technique in three areas.

First – refers to phenomena that can be described, following Olofsson, as the 'polyphony of situations' or more specifically as the 'polyphony of events', and, following Roesner – as the 'simultaneity' of performative actions. In the section III of the piece *through the youth of these things,* as mentioned earlier, the musicians detune, prepare, and disassemble their instruments. This process takes place seamlessly and independently for each instrument. The entire sequence takes about ¼ of the time of the entire piece[308]. Despite the simultaneous assembly of many inconspicuous actions, inscribed in the texture of the ensemble – their semantics, sonority and visual effect tend towards one common final situation: a duration in decay and fragility from which there is no return. As a result, the hierarchy of the individual elements disappears: the sound of the ensemble fully blends with the stage layer of the composition, and what can be seen directly affects what can be heard.

At the same time, elements of stage movement (the sole one in the entire composition) are superimposed on these actions. These concern both the conductor's part: the walking from the console to the harmonium and its unveiling, as well as the percussionists, who slowly go around the table and sit facing each other.

The subsequent playing with soap bubbles in the percussionists' part in the final phase of the piece – a joyful, naïve activity – creates a conceptual dissonance with

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[308] The beginning of this process is set at bar 277 (the disassembly of the alto flute) and the end at bar 363 (the beginning of the bubble blowing in the percussion part). The approximate duration of the whole sequence is 5′45″.

the dismantled ensemble and the visible effort of the conductor's pedal-operated harmonium, thus leaving the whole fragment open to the audience's interpretation.

Second – concerns the relationship between the musical material and the visual layer. Such activities include:

a. Actions performed on objects – with an indeterminate internal time progression – are juxtaposed with the independently developed texture of the ensemble.

Examples of realisation:

In bars 117-129, the static sound of the particles poured by the percussionists from bar 115 onwards (amplified by the harp and sampler part) loses its sonic significance with the entry of the tutti ensemble. It provides a side but still independent layer of sonic background and, at the same time, visual counterpoint. Such activities also include the action of filling glasses with water. Although the time frame of these actions is marked in the score, the tempo of pouring is determined by the water level marked on the glass. These processes are carried out independently of the tightly composed sonic texture of the other instruments (bars 59-62, 171-178). Completely independent of the instrumental ensemble, there are also 'technical' changes of objects on the table, noted in the score by means of a slogan: e.g., in bars 201-212 the percussionists remove almost all the objects used so far, while lining up, in bar 209, a rotating tray. The undesirable actions, in the piece in question, form an element of the visual narrative.

b. Simultaneous desynchronisation and synchronisation of the object parts with the instrumental ensemble, determined by the score notation.

Examples of realisation:

Directly following the fragment of the rearrangement of the objects on the table discussed above, the percussion 2 begins (bar 213) in close synchronisation with the ensemble, imitating by the movement of the figurines, the overtone trill of the bass clarinet, derived from the processed material based on Froberger's *Partita*. Then (bars 218-223), the objects' parts are led – which is particularly evident in the part of percussion 1 – by a repeated rhythmic rotating of the tray, separate from the other instrumental parts[309],and, the soloist harp part. In bar 224, an imitation of the 'baroque trill' is introduced again in the part of percussion 2, and in bar 232 the visual *ostinato* of the regular rotation of the tray returns. This time the rhythmically shifted noise of the low strings (Vc., Db.) is superimposed on this layer, and the 'melody' in the harp part is still continued. In the letter **P** (bar 243) the percussionists synchronise with the whole ensemble. However, already in bars 247-255, during the sequence in which the sentimental objects are placed on a rotating tray, the percussion is carried out independently of the harp part.

The percussion parts are almost inaudible, nor do they dominate visually, but they are one of the semantic climaxes of the composition. Examples of local desynchronisation and synchronisation with the ensemble also occur in Part I, where the figures and bottles moved by the percussionists both form an independent visual-rhythmic layer (bars 81-82) and sonically reinforce the texture of the whole ensemble (e.g., bars 95-97). In some passages, particularly the glass playing, the percussionists form a single layer with the instrumental ensemble (bars 104-107).

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[309] This action is accompanied by the rubbing the Tibetan bowl by the percussion 2 player.

It is also noteworthy that both percussion parts counterpoint each other. In bars 65-69, percussionist 1 playing on the glass forms a combined sound with the trombone, harp, and violin 2, while percussionist 2 playing on the figures forms an independent layer of sound and visuals.

Ex. 7, *through the youth of these things,* bars 65-69, percussion parts

The **third** – involves the coexistence of different types of musical material, which will be discussed later in the text.

III.3. Visual and Spatial Layer

The disposition of woodwind, brass and string instruments on the stage is consistent with generally established performance practice and was the starting point for the composition of the visual layer of the piece in question. This decision – on the one hand – was dictated by practical considerations – the limited possibilities of adapting the stage in a concert situation with a diverse repertoire. On the other hand, however – it allowed for an interaction with concert practice. Although the conductor-led ensemble is the visual dominant, the placement of external elements: domestic lamps, a black cloth-covered harmonium, loudspeakers – physically limits the space and affects the visual perception of the composition from the beginning of the piece. At the same time, all these elements (excluding the light) build the sonic texture of the piece.

A unique and visually highlighted is the function of the two percussionists playing the objects, positioned to the right of the conductor at the front of the stage.

Fig. 3, *through the youth of these things* stage view, premiere (photo: G. Mart)

During the first performance of the work, historic loudspeakers were also used (four units of two types)[310]. Their wooden cabinets and sound characteristics, which have changed over time, directly influence the auditory perception of the electronic layer

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[310] Performers are free to choose the type of loudspeakers they use for the performance, but it may be necessary to adjust the mix of the electronic part.

and the visual sphere[311]. They are supported by four additional modern studio monitors.

The stage is kept in semi-darkness for most of the piece, and the main lighting elements are popular domestic bedside lamps[312], as well as sentimental lamps: a child's toy lamp or a salt lamp, which surround the musicians[313]. In the first part, these things are controlled by the conductor using a DMX controller. The idea is that the light creates a level of communication between the conductor and the ensemble, weakening the hierarchical relationship. As the composition unfolds, the lights are controlled by the lighting engineer, who switches on the percussionists' lights and the harmonium stand lamp. There is no need for complicated theatrical lighting systems to perform the composition.

Such a composition of space, considering the objects, the positioning of the musicians and the planning of lighting changes, as well as the creation of a relationship between the visual and the sound, allows this composition to be presented not only in theatre venues, but also in standard concert halls.

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[311] In previous works, I have also used various types of cassette recorders with built-in speakers (*C'mon join to joyride*, 2017, *...still in the middle of happening*, 2020) and a vintage speaker for a tape recorder during the premiere of *ZMRÓŹ* (2019).

[312] Domestic lamps creating the ambience of a pre-war living room were used by Heiner Goebbels in the staged concert *Songs of Wars I Have Seen* to texts by Gertrude Stein, see https://www.heinergoebbels.com/works/songs-of-wars-i-have-seen/212, accessed 20.09.2023. 20.09.2023. Similarly, a standing domestic lamp is a major stage prop in Michel van der Aa's work *Up-close*, see T. Rutherford-Johnson, *Music after the Fall,* op. cit., p. 90. The standing hotel lamps controlled by the musicians are also part of my composition *They can't see you like I can* (2018).

[313] Similarly, to loudspeakers, specific lamp types can be selected by the performers.

III.4. (Non)presence of the Performers

In the piece *through the youth of these things*, the musicians interact with the composed stage space. This strategy is implemented on three levels:

1. in the **harmonium** part, performed by the conductor[314]

   In the centre of the stage, between the musicians, is a harmonium, which remains covered by a black cloth from the beginning of the piece. From bar 338 (letter **Z**), the conductor walks from the conductor's stand to the harmonium, then prepares the instrument for playing by pulling down the covering cloth, positioning the stand and adjusting the light. These elements are noted in the score as commands accompanying the conductor's part. In bar 345, the conductor begins to play the harmonium and performs a slow, *quasi*-chorale passage. Unnotated in the score, but directly influencing both the timbral specificity and the perception of the conductor, primarily as an aspect of his physical presence, is the action of pedal-pumping, which is immanent to the

Fig. 4 *through the youth of these things*, conductor performing the harmonium part (photo: G. Mart)

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[314] On the performative role of the conductor – the 'helmsman' in Georges Aperghis' *Avis de tempête* writes – referring to the composer's statements – Łukasz Grabuś, see: Ł. Grabuś, *Formy śmiercionośne,* op. cit., pp. 204-205.

playing of the harmonium and requires the physical effort of forcing air into the instrument's bellows in order to sustain the sound[315].

2. in the **percussionist's** parts, based on interaction with objects.

The percussionists perform seemingly simple, ephemeral actions using everyday objects. Some of these are not specifically described in the score, leaving the choice of particular objects to the performers[316]. This decision arises from an attempt to involve the musicians in the process of interpreting the piece, even at the stage of choosing the instrumentation. By choosing things linked to personal memories, the performers interact with the object not only by performing the actions indicated in the score, but also by making a choice that has semantic, visual and, to some extent, sonic consequences[317]. These objects are in a closed bag at the beginning of the piece. In the second movement (from bar 245), the percussionists take turns placing the objects on a pre-prepared rotating tray, a miniature imitation of the stage. The sequence is based on mutual interaction between the musicians: the performer first takes an object from the bag, places it on the tray and then slowly rotates it. Meanwhile, the other musician waits for his partner to complete the action before performing his own sequence. This treatment of objects with an undefined internal time flow is also used elsewhere in the composition. In the first movement, in ad libitum sections, the percussionists pour particles of plastic and glass into a tall glass vase. The score only indicates the beginning and end of the action, the approximate dynamics, and the speed of the action, e.g., 'very slowly'. Due to the characteristics of the objects used and the way time is notated, it is impossible to repeat each sequence identically. The audience can observe the filling of the

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[315] Already after the performance of the piece, while reading M.Adkins' text, I noticed that he mentions the hand-pumped harmonium, precisely as an example of an instrument-object in which a weakness of sound is embedded. See M. Adkins, *Fragility Noise and Atmophere in Ambient Music*, op. cit. p. 126. This assumption is based on the views of D. Wilson devoted to the work of K. Lang, see: D. Wilson, *Bergson, Mourning and Memory: The Fragility of Time in Klaus Lang's «Trauermusik»,*"Tempo" 71 (281/2017), pp. 53-70.

[316] E.g., during the premiere performance, percussionists amplified the sound of particles with small hourglasses.

[317] The score gives examples of suggested categories of objects, i.e., "toys, figurines, videotapes, framed photos, etc."

glass vase with plastic and glass particles and how these materials react with each other (e.g., the appearance of smoke as a result of the glass particles friction against each other).

At the end of the piece (from bar 343), parallel to the 'chorale' in the harmonium, the percussionists change their position on the stage, sit opposite each other and perform the elusive play with the soap bubbles, trying to catch them in turns. These actions affect the dichotomy of the perception of the percussion part. From the point of view of the performance practice, the need to control objects on a visual and aural level, to simultaneously realise open and strictly notated time, and to synchronise movement and rhythmic elements means that the part remains virtuosic according to the post-percussion[318] assumptions and requires performative effort and commitment from the performers even before rehearsals begin. At the same time, for the audience, it serves as a seemingly naive, sentimental counterpoint to the other events on stage. The percussionists' shared table, filled with objects, is constantly transformed by the performers. As a result, the stage situation before the performance begins and the final situation represent completely different perspectives of perception.

Fig. 5 *through the youth of these things,* view of the percussion part.
On the left – the beginning of the piece, on the right – the end (photo: G. Mart)

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[318] Aleksander Wnuk, *Tożsamość dzisiejszej perkusji. Postperkusja*, "Ruch Muzyczny", Issue 1/2022, online edition, https://ruchmuzyczny.pl/article/1747, accessed 10.05.2023, As Wnuk points out, the author of the term 'Post-Percussion' is Håkon Stene, See: H. Stene, *This is not a Drum. Towards a Post-Instrumental Practice,*The Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo 2014.

3. In the instrumental parts, in the last section of the piece

The process of ensemble transformation, as composed in the score, by the gradual disruption, preparation, and deconstruction of the instruments [319], changes its role in the composition and the way the musicians interact with them. As with the conductor and percussion parts, the rest of the instrumentalists directly influence the transition of the scenic situation as the piece progresses. From bar 280, individual instruments are detached from their original performance qualities by disassembling some of their construction elements. The challenge, particularly in terms of the introduced concept, was to find such deconstructive solutions that would have an aesthetically justifiable impact on the sound of the ensemble, while maintaining the desired performance and visual effect.

In the **alto flute** part, only the foot joint of the instrument is used[320]. From bar 282, the part is realised by whistling into the inverted foot. An additional rhythmic layer is achieved by regularly clicking the 'C' key[321].

From b. 310, after disassembly of the **oboe**, the upper part of the body, including the reed, is left intact. Despite of the considerable interference with the instrument's construction, it is possible to use some of the standard fingerings in this situation (e.g., g^1-b^1 «Polish notation – 'h'») and their octave transpositions, and d^3-$f\sharp^3$). In the described piece, the following fingerings are used: b^1, $a\flat^2$, and b^2), in some places in the oboe's part, above the individual notes there is a sign to obtain any multiphonic based on the given fingerings. Due to the high instability of the sound of the disassembled instrument and the limited control over it, these multiphonics can also be obtained by using the voice.

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[319] On works and projects using damaged instruments, i.a. Ross Bolleter's W*orld Association for Ruined Piano Studies*, writes Tim Rutherford-Johnson, see: *Broken Instruments, Broken Media*, [In:] Tim Rutherford-Johnson *Music after the Fall. Modern Composition and Culture since 1989,* University of California Press, Oakland 2017, pp. 211-216.

[320] The technique of playing on a dismounted instrument, in this case an alto flute head, was used by S. Sciarrino, e.g., in *Infinito Nero* (1998). Examples of the use of the flute foot alone were also discussed in Stacey Lee Russell's doctoral dissertation, see: S. L. Russell, *The Prepared Flute: A Survey of its History, Techniques, and Repertoire,* University of South Carolina, Columbia 2016, p. 28

[321] On the foot of the alto flute there are C and C♯ keys.

In the **bass clarinet**, the lower part of the instrument is removed, leaving only the reed and the upper part of the body. In this case, it is still possible to perform many standard fingerings and, thanks to the pre-chorus technique, to achieve multiphonic sounds of a complex timbre. The part on the dismantled instrument is performed from bar 337.

The **bassoon**, – is left with the wing, crook, and reed. In this situation it is possible to obtain a *d* fingering. While covering the hole of the wing with the palm of the hand, from bar 291 a very timbrally rich, modulating multiphone sound is obtained.

In the **horn** part, with the bell removed from bar 343, the air notes (with a different timbre from that of the standard instrument) and the combination of the *ordinario* sound, modulated by the voice, are recorded. The use of playing techniques similar to those already present in the composition, together with the change in the intonation characteristics of the instrument resulting from the removal of the bell, makes it possible to highlight the sonic effect of the dismantled instrument and to place it in the context of the whole piece.

The **trumpet**, due to the limited possibilities of disassembly, has not been deconstructed. In the case of this part, the instrument's bell (including its body) is covered with a damping cloth. As in the case of the horn, the final section of the piece, from bar 350 – mainly air tones and voice modulation of the *ordinario* sounds are used. Similarly, the main modification of the timbre is based on a change in the context of the sound structures used. Earlier in the piece, comparable structures were always performed with a wawa or practice mute.

In the **trombone** part, the 'F-Attachment Tuning Slide' is opened in the final section of the composition (from bar 289). This technique has been described in detail by Mike Svoboda and Michael Roth. The modification affects the tonal characteristics of the instrument and distorts the harmonic progression of the trombone. At the same time, the sound distortion level is highest in the lowest

register[322]. Based on the scale of the trombone developed by Svoboda and Roth in this way, in the composition *through the youth of these things,* first a slow slide glissando on the fundamental tones is introduced, and then, due to the instability of the instrument's tuning[323] – an undefined pitch, the lowest possible sound.

The **harp** is prepared with five wooden honey spoons[324]. From bar 301, these spoons are struck with the musician's hands and left to resonate. The inertia of the struck, undamped object affects the multiplied attack of the sound. At the same time, the interaction of the wooden material with the metal string deforms the sound of the instrument.

The individual string of each **string instrument** is being detuned by more than an octave[325] until the sound becomes unstable[326]. This transformation is planned as a process (bars 280-334) in which the scordatura is realised in multiple stages and asynchronously[327]. To avoid the sudden continuous downward glissando typical of instrumental tuning, this technique is masked by parts of other instruments. For example, in bar 291 – while the first string of violin 2 is being detuned, an out-of-tune e^2 double stop appears in the part of violin 1. This pitch is doubled by the oboe. At the same time, both parts are characterised by timbral

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[322] Mike Svoboda, Michel Roth, *The Techniques of Trombone Playing*, Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel 2017, pp. 62-63.

[323] Ibid., p. 63.

[324] This and many advanced harp preparation techniques have been created by Rhodri Davies. The individual preparation techniques are described in detail by Gunnhildur Einarsdóttir, see: G. Einarsdóttir *Harp Notation*, interactive webpage, https://harpnotation.com/de/notation-manual/prepared-harp/wooden-object-in-strings/ accessed 30.09.2023.

[325] The aesthetic and sonic consequences of the preparation and extreme detuning of string instruments bringing out tonal instability were described by Clara Ianotta, see *Moulting Spaces*, lecture given at the Darmstadt International Contemporary Music Courses, 6.08.2021 (typescript) https://internationales-musikinstitut.de/content/uploads/imd-iannotta-claralecture-darmstadtmoulting-spaces.pdf, accessed 25.09.2023. The preparation and scordatura of string instruments is explored by Rebecca Saunders, i.e. in *Blue and Gray* (2005), *Still* (2011), *Ire* (2012), *to an utterance* (2020), see: O. Abram*, Timbre-Based Composition, Multiple Perspectives and Ambiguity in Rebecca Saunders' Compositional Style*, "Tempo" Issue 75 (297) 2021, pp. 21-22.

[326] The instruments are detuned as follows: Violin I (string IV) by a minor tenth, Violin II (string I) by a perfect twelfth, Viola (string IV) by a minor ninth, Cello (string I) by a minor thirteenth, Double bass (string IV) by a major tenth. These pitches should be regarded as approximate, given the assumed aim of tonal and tuning instability, as indicated in the score. At the end of the detuning process, the description 'or as low as possible' is added to each notated target pitch.

[327] The concept of detuning composed during a piece appears, for example, in Hans Abrahamsen's Schnee -(*Intermezzo* 1-3). In my own work I have applied this procedure to the viola part in the composition *And it rose and it fell and pulsed like a wave* (2019/20), p. 12.

instability – a slow vibrato in violin 1, a timbral trill in the oboe part. As violin 2 is further disturbed, the unison in violin 1 is disturbed. Leaving the open string I unchanged, a harmonic glissando with an ascending direction (e^3-$c\sharp^4$) is obtained by changing the finger pressure on string II.

The process of descending movement itself has been composed as an independent musical quality – it is realised in the objects part by the percussionists pouring water into each other's glasses, which has the effect of lowering the pitch (t. 285-292, 292-300, 312-316, 329-339), the aforementioned trombone glissando with the tuning slide removed, the harmonic glissandos of the string instruments (e.g. bars 283-286 in the violin1, 2 and viola parts or bars 318-325 in the double bass part). The final process of detuning the strings (bars 325-334) is achieved using the *pizzicato* technique. These sounds are counterpointed by *col legno battuto* hits in the high register, single bowed notes, trumpet air noise and a prepared harp.

The deconstruction techniques discussed above have been agreed with the performers, are compatible with their construction and do not expose them to damage.

III.5. Musical Material and Sonority

The aesthetic background of the piece, which forms a grid of references without a cause-and-effect narrative, but strongly interconnected on an emotional level, directly influenced the development of the strategy for constructing the sound material. Among the assumptions were:

- going beyond the structural and abstract properties of the material by looking for possible direct connections between the content of the composition and the sound elements (e.g., use of objects, electronic sounds);
- drawing attention to the category of 'performativity of sound material' – the shaping of sound structures whose visual and choreographic properties result directly from the musical realisation of the instrumental part[328];
- reproducing aura, time, and places with sound qualities.

In *through the youth of these things* the composed sonority is assigned to the parts of the individual instruments of the ensemble, which is treated as a 'collective protagonist'[329]. It fills the entire form of the composition, and the visual and performative elements of the piece, such as changes in lighting, movement, and interaction with objects are all based on it.

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[328] The term was inspired by a program note to the cycle Sieben Sehnsüchte (1999) for violin and piano by Bent Sørensen, in which the composer calls the interactions between the musicians resulting from the realisation of musical parts involving extended sound playing techniques and voice, as 'little opera', See https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/19205/Sieben- Sehnsuchte- -Bent-Sørensen. The natural visuality resulting from the realisation of the instrumental parts is immanent to Andrzej Kwiecinski's work:
[the music can convey the visual side] *through the stage action i.e. what's happening among the musicians and that rush, the changes of instruments, the rotation, the quick rearrangement of pages in the notes (...) it's inseparable from the music and the density of texture I used (...)*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uC_CI6cgjIk, 1:36-2:10, accessed 2.08.2023.
[329] *(Non)presence – Musicians' Interactions with Space*, p. 45.

Introducing the category of atmosphere [330] into the compositional process influences the perception of sound material in an extended understanding[331]. It goes beyond the tonal-sound structural properties[332] or the distinction between music and sound, sonority, and noise[333]. This notion, which points to the experience of an indirect, liminal situation, makes it possible – at least to some extent – to abandon the aesthetic dispute between program music[334] (today primarily relational) and absolute[335] music.

Pursuing such a situation requires planning the sound layer in relation to what is visual and spatial[336]. This assumption directly influences the properties of the sound generators (whether instruments, objects, or loudspeakers), their parameters, and the scenic means (performers' actions, spatial positioning, visual elements). The sound material of *through the youth of these things* was derived from three areas of aesthetic reference: *the youth of things*, *the expression of melancholy*, and the *sensation of the end*.

Six types of musical material [337] have been distinguished on the basis of sonic characteristics, narrative function, choice of objects, performative properties, and resulting visuality. What distinguishes the proposed division from the categorisations used in the musicological literature and in compositional reflection

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[330] These issues are discussed in detail in the chapter: *Atmosphere – Shaping the Musical Material,* p. 34.

[331] Eivind Buene wrote about the proposal to broaden the understanding of musical material to include "rituals, and places of performance, the context of the music" See: E. Buene, *Again and Again and Again. Music as site, situation and repetition*, NMH Publications, Oslo 2017, s. 79.

[332] G. Böhme, *The Grand Concert of the World,* op. cit., p. 126.

[333] As F. Riedel points out: *categorical distinctions between "music" and "sounds," "noise" and "silence" seem obsolete when it comes to the capacity to afford or evoke atmospheres (…),* F. Riedel, *Atmospheric relations,* op. cit., p. 3. At the same time, she notes that Schmitz did not differentiate between the concepts of sound and music (p. 36). In Böhme's work, a distinction between these terms is noticeable; at the same time, as indicated earlier, he is aware of the importance of the emancipation processes of i.a. noise sounds.

[334] G. Böhme, *The Grand Concert of the World,* op. cit., p. 131.

[335] F. Riedel, *Atmospheric relations,* op. cit., pp. 21-22.

[336] G. Böhme, *The Grand Concert of the World,* op. cit., p. 127.

[337] A categorisation of sound material in the context of the shaping of sound texture and timbre was proposed by i.a.: H. Lachenmann (See: *Sound-Types of New Music*, op. cit.), in the context of a work analysis: M. Szpyrka's concept of 'textural models' (zob. *Koncepcja złożonej prostoty (Complex Simplicity) w kontekście utworu Part among Parts na orkiestrę kameralną i akordeon*, doctoral dissertation, Akademia Muzyczna w Krakowie, Kraków 2022, pp. 49-69), also Rebecca Saunders and expanding her categorisation O. Abram. (See: *Timbre-Based Composition…*, op. cit.).

is the emphasis on atmospheric properties in the selection of criteria for material structure (e.g., a given type may be characterised by varying performance techniques, instrumentation, register, and intensity of motion).

The different types of material are developed independently of each other and function in parallel with each other, and can be intertwined, as in the story within a story. They can therefore be metaphorically identified with the storylines of the narrative. The different types of material are presented in a table and discussed in detail below.

Material (type)	Instruments (leading)	Part	Aesthetic category		
			Youth of the Things	Expression of the Melancholy	Sensation of the End
1st suspended, referring to the imaginary end situation	particles of glass and plastic, electronics, harp (ebow), string instruments	I			■
2nd unstable structures of high register	woodwind instruments amplified by the other instruments of the ensemble, glasses (Perc.)	I	■		■
3rd based on the **J.J. Froberger's** *Partita*	1. stage of transformation – harp, electronics, instrumental ensemble assemblies, 2. stage of transformation – instrumental ensemble assemblies, single woodwind instruments, electronics	I, II, III	■	■	■
4th *quasi*-**chorale**	synthesizer, harmonium	I, III	■	■	■
5th Sounds of decay	planes of disjointed and dismantled instruments (wind instruments, glasses, strings), prepared harp	III	■	■	■
6th Pulsation	figurines, everyday objects (Perc.), harp, string instruments, instrumental ensemble combinations	I, II, III	■		

1. The material that opens the composition and continues throughout the first part of the piece is derived from an imagined end situation suspended in time. It is portrayed by a 'rain' of glass and plastic particles poured by the percussionists into a tall glass vase. These sounds are amplified by unstable and irregular high-frequency electronic pulses generated by the 'Scultpure' synthesizer[338], which allows the virtual shaping of the sounds of physical objects (component modelling).

In parallel to the jittering sounds of objects and electronics, acoustic instruments parts were composed as follows:

- static sounds performed with an ebow in the harp part,
- timbres with inner instability (natural harmonics played with a bow' stick (*col legno tratto*), *flautando* (bar 2), noises produced by playing on a bridge (see ex. 8, left),

Ex. 8 *through the youth of these things,* score fragments. Left – bar 28, Right – bar 90

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[338] Description of the Scultpure synthesiser on the developer's website, https://support.apple.com/pl-pl/guide/logicpro/lgsia12ea31/mac, accessed 6.08.2023.

- structures based on the internal transformation of sound – the process of transforming harmonic sounds into multiphonics (see Ex. 8, right) – in the cello and double bass parts, a slow glissando while changing the position of the bow on the fingerboard in the double bass (bar 119), a smooth transition from bowing with a woodwind to bowing with a bow's hair (see Ex. 8, left).

As indicated earlier (see *Time of internal events*), this material is characterised – in the instrumental parts – by a long fade-in attack of sound and limited evolution (see Ex. 8, right). Its reminiscences also appear in the following sections of *through the youth of these things*.

Ex. 9 *through the youth of these things,* fragment of the score (woodwinds), bars 18-20

2. Separately from the suspended material of the first type, **unstable pulsating textures in the high register** are also introduced in the first movement. Their tonal structure is constructed around an incrustative oscillation around a central pitch, transposed over time.

They are characterised by an intrinsic fragility – resulting from irregular accentuation and rhythmic complication, as well as from the playing techniques of the individual instruments (Ex. 9)[339] .

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[339] Nomi Epstein classifies the composer's choice of instrumental techniques, which are characterised by intrinsic instability and the possibility of incomplete resonance in a performance situation, as 'Performative Fragility', See: N. Epstein, *Musical Fragility: A Phenomenological Examination,* "Tempo" Issue 71 (281), p. 41.

In the **flute** part:

- 'whistle tones' phrases on multiple pitches
- multiphonic double stops

In the **oboe** part:

- microtonal detunings (achieved with both quarter-tone fingerings, and downward *portamento* w resulting from the modification of the embouchure),
- multiphonic double stops[340],
- air sounds in high register of undetermined pitch[341];

In the **clarinet** part:

- extremely high-pitched sounds obtained by tightening the teeth on the reed with a variable, uncontrollable pitch, modified by the smooth adjustment position of the teeth on the mouthpiece,
- reaching for the instrument's highest register,
- Introduction of sounds at the boundary of performance limit (pitch c♯4),
- phrases using alternative fingerings and quarter-tone detunings.

In the **bassoon** part:

- Extremely high notes obtained by tightening the teeth on the reed[342]. As with the clarinet, the pitch cannot be controlled by the performer, but it is possible to reach a much higher pitch (about two octaves) [343] than the traditional scale of the instrument.

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[340] Also referred to as double harmonics (German: *Doppelflageolette*), P. Veale, C.-S. Mahnkopff, W. Motz, T. Hummel, *The Techniques of Oboe Playing,* Bärenreiter, Kassel 2001, p. 124.

[341] This sound is obtained by breathing into the instrument with the reed removed. The technique was described by Peter Veale, Ibid., p. 138.

[342] This technique was described by Pascal Gallois and the author suggested the use of a plastic reed. During the first performance of *through the youth of these things*, after consultation with the bassoonist of the Orchestra of New Music, Jacek Olesik, it turned out that this sound was also possible to achieve with a cane reed., cf. P. Gallois, *The Techniques of Bassoon Playing,* Bärenreiter, Kassel 2011, p. 31.

[343] In the example given by Gallois, it is g♯4, during the performance a sound oscillating around the pitch given by the author was obtained, Ibid.

The woodwind section is occasionally accompanied by a background of instruments from the other groups, such as:

- brass instruments – air tones of the horn (bars 30-31), muted, high register sounds of the trumpet and trombone (bars 18-20) and by using the technique of simultaneous concurrence of two adjacent harmonics tones (split tones) [344] in the trumpet part (bars 24-27 – ex. 10, 30-31).
- percussion – rubbed glasses (bars 84-90, 98-107),
- harp – pedal buzz effect: buzzing strings realised by striking the string and holding the pedal between its positions (bars 23-25, ex. 10)[345];
- electronics – a detuned timbral variant of the woodwind section material: generated from simplified flute, clarinet and oboe parts in MIDI format using superimposed instances of individual oscillators (with different waveforms) of the Ableton Operator [346] synthesiser. By using the automation of the oscillator frequencies, these phrases were further detuned.

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[344] Nathan Plante is the author of a detailed description of this technique. As he points out, the technique appears in many works composed by Rebecca Saunders in collaboration with the trumpeter Marco Blaauw (as early as 2004 in the piece *Blaauw* for double bell trumpet). According to the author of *The Modern Trumpet* blog, a notable result of this collaboration is the exploratory piece Neither (2011) for two double bell trumpets, which explores the technique in question. The composer has also used this playing technique in chamber and large ensemble compositions, e.g. *Disclosure* (2008)*, Alba* (2013-14), *Skin* (2015-16), *Scar* (2018-19), See: http://themoderntrumpet.com/2020/10/20/split-tones/, Acessed 10.08.2023.

[345] This technique has been described in detail by Gunnhildur Einarsdóttir, See G. Einarsdóttir *Harp Notation*, interactive webpage. https://harpnotation.com/de/notation-manual/pedal-effects/pedal-buzz/, accessed 19.09.2023.

[346] See: section 26.7, *Operator,* https://www.ableton.com/en/manual/live-instrument-reference/, accessed 10.08.2023.

Ex. 10 *through the youth of these things,* score, bars 22-27

- In the case of the multiphonic sounds of the flute (bars 38-54), in order to further render the tonal instability of these techniques, samples of multiphonics [347] appearing in the batch were superimposed on the synthesiser sounds – spectrally processed[348] using 'Spear' software and reverb effects. The resulting sounds were additionally retuned[349] in some places;

- string instruments – the harmonic sounds of the double bass in bars 12-14, the violin in bars 22-26 (ex. 10) and playing with the wood of the bow – *col legno tratto* in the viola part, in bars 18-19).

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[347] Motivated by sound quality, the starting material for the transformations were recordings of the multiphonic in 'Hyperflute' commercial library by Alessandro Battici and Batticci LAB, see: https://www.alessandrobaticci.com/hyperflutepost/, accessed 10.03.2023.

[348] For the first multiphone (number 48 in A. Battici's publication), after filtering the source material, the predominant components of the flute dyad were swapped with each other and transposed: the lower pitch two octaves up and the upper pitch two octaves down. In the case of the second multiphonic (number 52), the ambitus was extended: after filtering, the dominant upper component was transposed an octave up and the lower one an octave down. ⯈ **Audio Example 1**.

[349] e.g. the afterimage of the multiphone in the flute part that appears in bar 44 are two identical samples – one of which has been detuned down by 10¢ and the other by an octave. In bar. 48 the background for the flute is provided by two identical samples, one of which has been raised by 14 ¢. The result is a gentle rumble of superimposed signals.

As the piece progresses, the parts become increasingly rhythmically linked to the accents of the woodwind section, e.g.: the air notes of the trombone in bars 50-53, violins 1, 2 and viola in bars 87-89 and bars 117-121, and together with the air notes of the trombone and the movement of the figurines in the percussion part in bars 95-97 (ex. 11).

Ex. 11 *through the youth of these things,* score, bars 95-97

The texture of these structures, which requires the synchronisation of multiple musicians at a relatively fast tempo, exemplifies the performativity of the sound material – the visual layer follows directly from the sound material notated in the parts.

The individual entries of the structures under discussion are amplified by the complex sounds of the brass instruments, the accents of the strings (*col legno battuto*), the damped harmonic sound of the harp[350] and the striking of the figures in the percussion parts. These introduce additional rhythmic impulses in relation to the main accent of the brass parts, for example by anticipating or delaying the accent of the woodwind section:

- in bars 12-13 (ex. 12) – as a triple impulse:
the **first** in the parts of trumpet, horn, percussion 1 (figurines), harp, cello and double bass;
the **second** in the parts of trombone, percussion 1 (figurines), harp and string quintet;
the **third** in the parts of French horn.

- in bars 30 and 33 – in the parts of the brass section, the string quintet and also (in bar 33) – the harp.

- in bar 63 – in parts of horn, percussion 2 (figurine), violin 1,2, viola, then trombone and in bar 80 in parts of horn, trombone, trumpet, harp).

These combinations may in some cases also close a phrase, e.g., in bars 27, 144 and 163.

Ex. 12 *through the youth of these things,* score, bars 12-13

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[350] Then the irregular pulse of the harp synchronises with the ensemble.

3. **References to the past** and the search for the resulting strategies of working with sound material and the visual layer, of dealing with the musical context, have been an important theme in my work[351] and written reflections[352] since the beginning of my composition studies. Many of the works composed at that time did not only refer to a sound embedded in the past. They were also inspired by specific performances, interpretations of compositions and references to them in culture [353] . Echoes of these strategies can also be heard in the later compositions immediately preceding *through the youth of these things*, in particular *declined/restored\elapsed* (2020/21) for orchestra. In this context, the use of a ***Partita*** by **Johann Jacob Froberger**, a composition by an outstanding, but at the same time not widely known outside of Baroque music circles, enabled me to address the emotional layer of the piece on the one hand, on the other, to work with unusual sonorities: apparently familiar to the listener (referring to melodic/harmonic structures common in Baroque music), but constantly blurred and interwoven with other materials.

The excerpt from Froberger's *Partita* was processed in two stages.

In the **first stage of its transformation**, the opening phrase of the *Partita* from Andreas Staier's [354] recording was cut, transposed (by about 2 semitones upwards[355]) and filtered through the AudioThing Speakers virtual effect plug-in

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[351] E.g., *still untitled :([love songs]* (2015) for four performers and electronics, *…über BWV 971* (2016) for flute and string trio, *Faites vos jeux* (2018) for piano trio, electronics and video, *Nachtwanderung* (2018) for orchestra, *They can't see you like I can* (2018) for bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, electronics and live video *Zmróź* (2019) for orchestra and magnetic tape.
[352] P. Malinowski, *W stronę komponowania kontekstem*, paper presented at the *Elementi* conference, Cracow 2018, *Composing with Context. Discovering Musical Objects,* Master's Project, Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium Aarhus 2019, *Film jako materiał dźwiękowy*, "Meakultura" 9.07.2020, https://meakultura.pl/artykul/film-jako-material-dzwiekowy-2355/ accessed 15.08.2023.
[353] E.g. *Faites vos Jeux,* which is a reinterpretation of a scene from Stanley Kubrick's movie *Barry Lyndon* and Franz Schubert's Trio Op. 100, see
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7iePhbFln2w&t=3s, accessed 16.08.2023. Examples of similar activities can also be seen in the musical literature. For example, as Jennie Gottschalk points out, Cassandra Miller's composition *For Mira* (2012) for solo violin *is an exploration of the instabilities of Kurt Cobain's characteristic vocal delivery in the last track of Nirvana's MTV Unplugged performance of November 18,* J. Gottschalk, *Experimental Music Since 1970,* Bloomsbury Academic, New York 2016, pp. 262-263. Also, Patricia Alessandrini creates her compositions, basing on the acoustically orchestrated, computer-overlaid layers of recordings of existing works, see: T. Rutherford-Johnson, *Challenging Dispositions. A Profile of Patricia Alessandrini* https://van-magazine.com/mag/patricia-alessandrini/, accessed. 30.09.2023.
[354] A. Staier, *…pour passer la mélancholie,* Harmonia Mundi, HMC 902143.
[355] Due to the baroque tuning of the instruments used on the recording, the transposition corresponds to approximately three semitones upwards in relation to the final score notation.

(VST), which allows the imitation of various types of speakers and microphones (mainly antiquated and low fidelity ones, e.g., telephone, computer, contact microphones). As a result, the original sound structure of the *Partita* has been disrupted, the tonal layer reduced and its mobility significantly weakened.

Ex. 13
above – J. J. Froberger, *Partita*, opening passage; (ex. after: J. J. Froberger, *Neue Ausgabe...*, op. cit., p. 14.
below – implementation of Froberger's material in *through the youth of these things* (excerpt from the harp part, bars 232-245) transposed a whole tone upwards.

The audio material modified in this way was converted into MIDI format with the aid of a computer algorithm and assigned to samples of air flute sounds, clarinet overtones, harp harmonics and noise percussion sounds. The UVI IRCAM Solo Instruments 2 library was used for the simulation, as well as the author's library of sound samples described above (see *Sound Library,* p. 17).

In the **second stage** of the **process of editing**, the computer-orchestrated material was ripped again as an audio file. This structure was cut into 23 short segments (slices) and recomposed into a new sequence. Apparently chaotic transformations resulted in harmonic configurations and phrase arrangements not heard in the source material. The resulting sound file, which is the outcome of reproduction activities, is at a distance from the original[356] as it is the result of processing material that has already been processed[357].

📢 **Audio example 2.**

In the composition *through the youth of these things*, the material resulting from both stages of processing appears.

The result of the transformations of the first stage constitutes the principal sound material of the second part of the composition. First, from bar 201 onwards, the individual components of the melody, the afterimage of the *Partita*, are carried over as timbral combinations of particular parts in an instrumental ensemble. This texture – although it retains the main properties of its computer-generated origin (tonal progression, noisiness, low dynamics) – has been expanded in terms of the ensemble cast, and timbral nuances, and composed as a *Klangfarbenmelodie*. The instrumental devices used allude to the first part of the composition, highlighting the instability and timbral fragility of the whole passage: 'ghost sounds'[358] in the bassoon part, damping of the brass section with wawa and practice mutes, the slow vibrato of the horn and trombone, microtonal detuning and lip multiphonics in the trombone part, voice detuning in the horn and trumpet, modification of the sound of the trumpet by opening and closing

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[356] Analysed from the perspective of Walter Benjamin, an aura is then produced, an aura is then created, directly linked to the "phenomenon of a certain distance", see: W. Benjamin, *Dzieło sztuki...*, op. cit. p. 208, see *Atmosphere – Shaping the Musical Material,* p. 34).

[357] Some of the most well-known and spectacular examples of actions in which the original material disappears as a result of reproduction include William Basinski's album series *The Desintegration Loops* (2001-2002), Alvin Lucier's performance *I Am Sitting in the Room* (1969). This process is also well illustrated by a popular YouTube video in which, through successive rips of the video from a VHS cassette, the original clip is almost unrecognisable and, in the end, completely unreadable: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mES3CHEnVyI, Accessed 25.09.2023.

[358] The sounds which consist mostly of air and the pitch is barely audible. This technique was described by Pascal Gallois, Ibid., p. 27.

the wawa mute, the long sounds produced by the ebow in the harp, harmonic sounds, *col legno tratto* multiphonics[359] and microtonal detunigs and vibrato, string instruments. The formerly acoustically dominating instruments of the woodwind section are closely integrated with the entire ensemble in this movement – by harmony-filling multiphonic sounds within the flute, oboe, and bass clarinet parts, slow *vibrato* of the bass clarinet and bassoon, timbral trills in the oboe part.

Ex. 14 *through the youth of these things,* score, bars 206-210. A fragment of the passage derived from J.J. Froberger's *Partita* in the flute part is marked

Over this texture thus carried, the leading melodic layer of harp harmonics (from bar 218) is superimposed – which is the clearest example of *Partita* melody in the work concerned. This material, with successive runs (see Table 2 *through the youth of these things*, Part II, time organisation, p. 73) and internal looping,

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[359] Only in double bass part.

changes its structure: from overlapping, polyphonic streams to emphasizing the looping verticals of the entire ensemble (in particular from the letter **P**).

It is worth noting the occasional 'interceptions' of the harp's melodic layer by the individual string instruments (*col legno battuto*, bars 234, 238, 241). As a result, the main axis of the phrase is visually counterpointed by additional instrumental impulses.

The electronic layer is composed in a similar way to the instrumental ensemble. At the beginning of the Part II, the processed material of the Partita introduced at the end of part I resounds. In bar 218, with the introduction of the harp, there appears – only once in the composition – a sample directly resulting from the transformations of the first movement (with the sounds of computer-generated clarinet subtones). However, it is a barely audible afterimage – the melodic material is played back only from small loudspeakers 2 and 7, and only the beginning of the 45-second recording is synchronised with the conductor. At the same time, a fragment of the soundscape of the early winter is played in loudspeakers 1, 4, 5 and 8. 🔈 **Audio Example 3**.

In bar 232, with the third progression of *Partita* material (the second in the harp), the sample resulting entirety from the processing of the second stage is introduced. The two types of processed Partita material thus emerge in parallel.

In Parts I and III, material is introduced that is the result of **second-stage transformations**. Initially in the form of short fragments of veiled gestures. These combinations are so far removed from the original that they blend texturally with the type 1 material. For example: the introduction in bar 28 of a dyad of a minor tenth in the clarinet part on the one hand distinguishes itself from the previously featured sonority, while on the other hand, the lack of further development of this structure prevents it from being directly linked to the *Partita*, and the disjunct background of the minor harmonics of the electronic layer is also close to the harp 'melody' conducted earlier, in bar 21. This bar,

though, provides a timbral anticipation for further introductions of this type of material[360].

The material resulting from the direct implementation of the results of the second stage transformation – based on a sound structure composed of cut fragments of the processed *Partita* – first appears in bar 41 in the electronics, then from bar 42 in bassoon, brass, and strings. A distinctive harmonic structure then emerges from a disjunct F-sharp major chord, a quasi-cadenza – formed by the overlay of a B-minor chord over a mentioned major triad in bar 45.

This fragment (like the type 1 material) was based on the fragile timbres of the instruments in the ensemble:

- In wind instruments – 'ghost sounds' in the bassoon part, slow horn vibrato damped with practice mute, manipulation of the wawa mute in the trumpet and trombone parts and micro-glissandos in the trombone.

- In string instruments – playing with the stick of the bow (*col legno tratto*) in the violin and viola and using natural harmonics in the violin 2, cello and double bass parts.

The distorted timbre is also influenced by the pulsating, mostly quiet dynamics (*niente-$\boldsymbol{p}$* dynamic envelopes dominate, except for a local, immediately retracted *crescendo* to $\boldsymbol{f}$ in bars 45-47).

The individual components of the 'chords' in the afterimage of the *Partita* are introduced as combinations of several instruments, for example:

- in bar 42 – as asynchronous entrance of the following parts: viola, cello, French horn, violin 1, double bass respectively (Ex. 15, sea colour)

- in bar 46 – at the climax of the *crescendo* – simultaneous introduction of: trumpet, violins 1 and 2, (Ex. 15, violet colour)

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[360] The clarinet part is then accompanied by the double bass bridge noise. Although in this case it acts as an unstable background to Material 1, this technique returns (along with the cello) in Part II as a pulsating texture superimposed on the harp-led melody, which is derived directly from the *Partita*.

- or as an imitation of a deconstructed arpeggio in bar 48 – respectively: horn, double bass, cello, violin 2, trumpet (Ex. 15, orange colour).

Ex. 15 *through the youth of these things*, score fragment, bars 42-48

A similar texture appears from bar 64 onwards – a seamless transition from pulsating type 3 material: first in bassoon, then in percussion 1 (glass) and string instruments (violin 2, viola, violin 1 respectively). Then in bars 70-77 – in violin 1, then in bassoon and brass, and from bar 72 – in the clarinet part. Also, again in bars 98-108.

Particularly noteworthy is the harp part: although it continues the long ebow bow swell characteristic of material type 1, in terms of accents and pitch it is related to the processed *Partita* material (especially in bars 41-47, 70-74, 100-105, ex. 16).

Similarly, the percussionists' part interacts directly with the material in question: the dyad chord played on the glasses (b♭², g♭²), although introduced earlier (bars 84-90), is an integral part of the sonority characteristic of the processed material, based on a fragment of Froberger's composition, in the context of the other ensemble parts. This is particularly evident in bar 104 (Ex. 16), where the percussionists dynamically align themselves with the rest of the ensemble, and the distortion of the sound of the glasses with accompanying crescendo, follows in parallel with the dynamic envelope of the brass section.

Ex. 16 *through the youth these things*, score fragment, bars 103-108

These fragments are accompanied by the electronic background created by the computer manipulation that has been discussed above. This material also fills the link between Parts I and II (bars 199-200) and reappears in Part III – the last time it is introduced is in bar 330.

4. Slow, *quasi*-choral textures with dominant minor harmonics appear in Parts I and III. In Part I, the individual introductions correspond to successive sequences of pulsating type 6 material.
   The material discussed here is characterised by structurally similar harmonic progressions that undergo slight temporal and tonal transformations. The overlapping of individual components and the free, almost 'improvised' rhythmic arrangement are characteristic.

Ex. 17 *through the youth of these things*, score fragment, bars 55-61

It appears in the score for the first time in bars 55-70 as a bass progression of the synthesizer part (accompanied by pulsations of cello and double bass), then in bars 110-116 along with a pulsating double bass' *col legno tratto* layer. In this fragment – from bar 115 onwards, together with an ensemble accent (flute, horn, trombone, and harp) – type 1 material is superimposed. The chorale-like texture reappears in bars 146-161, then (after an increase of the structure separating pulse sequences) in bars 163-179, and with a changed synthesizer timbre in bars 180-188.

In Part III, an analogous texture is introduced in the syntesizer part in bars 300-324, and from bar 345 (**A1**, Ex. 18) – together with a change in the conductor's role – in the harmonium part. The sound material of the first 11 bars of the sequence is almost identical to the immediately preceding sequence in the synthesizer part.

Ex. 18 *through the youth of these things,* harmonium and synthesizer/sampler parts, bars 345-360

From bar 352, it is counterpointed by the material of the keyboard part (the timbre of an FM synthesizer, reminiscent of an electric piano), amplified by the audio files played back in the sampler part. This sequence is characterised by a clear structural difference.

The harmonium is reintroduced in measures 359 (**B1**)-381. The layering of up to eight notes in a stopped vertical chord (368-373, Ex. 19) has a direct effect on both the both sound and visual aspect of the performance of this part – it requires a considerable amount of air to be forced into the instrument's bellows with an intense movement.

Ex. 19 *through the youth of these things,* harmonium parts, bars 365-370

This material, by using i.a. synthesiser sounds and a tonal construction that is freely reminiscent of popular music, in combination with the pronounced pulsation of material 5 – also provides an aesthetic counterpoint to the type 3 material based on Froberger's *Partita*. When this texture reappears in the part played by the conductor on the harmonium, the material acquires a different aesthetic quality: it is assigned to a physical sound object, and the breaking

sound of the faulty instrument[361] brings it directly closer to the previously introduced woodwind textures. At the same time, this timbre further emphasises the melancholic structure. This material becomes the only stable point of reference in the context of the disjointed and unstable sounds of the disassembled ensemble.

5. The types of sound material discussed so far are characterised by inner instability and brittleness, due to, among other factors, the choice of playing techniques, dynamics, and registers. In Part III of the composition, however, as

Ex. 20 *through the youth of these things*, score fragment, 343-351

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[361] Already after the performance of the piece, while reading M.Adkins' text, I noticed that he mentions the hand-pumped harmonium, precisely as an example of an instrument-object in which a vulnerability of sound is inscribed. See M. Adkins, *Fragility Noise and Atmophere in Ambient Music,* op. cit., p. 126. This assumption refers to the views of D. Wilson dedicated to the work of K. Lang, see: D. Wilson, *Bergson, Mourning and Memory: The Fragility of Time in Klaus Lang's «Trauermusik»,* „Tempo" 71 (281/2017), pp. 53-70.

the instruments are stripped of their original sonic potential, material is introduced that articulates sounds of decay that arise directly from the performative situation of the composition. Individual timbres (e.g., the multiphonics of the dismantled bass clarinet, bassoon, trombone with open tuning slide, and detuned sounds of string instruments) are then combined into static, smoothly arising, and fading timbral textures. As a result, the unique sonic qualities of the individual deconstructed instruments are brought to the fore as much as possible.

A different approach to structuring texture based on the type of material in question is evident in bars 325-334 – the previously dominant homogeneous texture is punctuated by irregular, impulsive disjunctions of the string instruments.

All detuning and deconstruction techniques are discussed in detail in chapter *(Non)presence of the Performers,* p. 84.

Ex. 21 *through the youth of these things,* score, bars 325-329

6. An important aspect of the sonority of the work under discussion is the regular – to some extent – pulsation. It appears first in the form of short, rhythmic sequences or as additional accentuation of long sonic surfaces, as well as repeated impulses that originally formed part of other types of sound material:

- in percussion 2 part – a repeated pattern of moving ceramic figurine[362] (bars 6-8, 18-20, in circular motion – bars 38-51).
- accents in the harp part performed with ebow (bars 9-12, 38-46, 50-54) – based on the distinctive timbre of the type 1 material.
- pulsation based on the fluid dynamic oscillation (crescendo-decrescendo) of the static sounds of type 4 material (e.g., in bars 42-44 in the cello part, 46-50 in the violin 1 and viola parts).
- repeated damped harp strokes in the high register (from bar 18,) as well as building up an independent rhythmic layer (from bar 30 onwards), initially as an element of timbral assemblages, amplifying type 2 material,
- rhythmical rubbing of the body of the string instruments and accents realised by circular bow movements – counterpointing type 2 material (bars 95-97, 106-107, 117, 123-124).

These elements fill the 'rhythmical matrix' of Part I of the composition. Despite maintaining the constant tempo pattern of this part (ad libitum and ♩=108), the pulsation becomes more pronounced as the piece progresses. It first appears as a distinct textural quality in bars 55-72, at which point the regular, displaced accents of the cello and double bass (*col legno tratto*) parts support the harmonic layer of type 5 material and are enhanced by an additional layer of brass instruments. At the same time, this fragment illustrates how individual instrumental sounds can relate to different types of material. The sequence in question begins with a joint accent of strings and harp – structurally linked to the type 2 material that appears in bars 55-70, but the subsequent harp impulses (bars 56-63) already form an independent rhythmic layer. At the same time, a slow *quasi*-chorale texture (type 5 material) is introduced in the synth part,

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[362] In later sections of the piece, the rhythm of the shifting figures is directly related to the type 2 material, bars 95-97.

and its entry is reinforced by the accents of percussion, harp, violin 1-2, and viola. From bar t. 64, type 3 material is independently led, with a smooth transition (in bars 72-74) into the pulsation layer. From bar 72, type 1 material returns in the percussion part, previously anticipated by the ebow bow sounds in the harp part (from bar 65).

In Part I, the pulse is also built up by short, virtuosic, fragmented phrases of string instruments, which interweave type 1 material from the beginning of the composition. They fulfill the premise of the 'performativity of sound material': their rhythmic and technical complexity engages the performers and influences body movement. In addition, these phrases are visually enhanced by the conductor switching on the lights between the performers.

Ex. 22 *through the youth of these things,* score, bars 5-8. The structures which fulfill the premise of 'performativity of sound material' are marked with the frame.

From bar 122 these structures are intensified and from bar 131 become the components of variable time signature sequences. In between, accented ensemble assemblages are introduced in variable cast configurations based on the montage technique:

- percussion 1-2 (figurines) and harp parts in bar 131;
- superimposed four impulses with varying dynamic envelopes within a single synthetic gesture: 1 – air sound of the horn, trombone in the high register, *col legno* technique in string instruments, 2 – the accent resulting from the opening of the wawa mute in the trumpet part, 3 – percussion parts (sliding figures), 4 – damped harmonic of the harp part along with the figures hits in the percussion parts in bar 132 (ex. 23, blue);
- the *crescendo* in the sliding movement of the figures in the percussion parts, the noise of the double bass bowed on the bridge, and the viola's *col legno tratto* technique amplified by the violin's harmonic accent in bars 133-135[363] (ex. 23, orange);
- consecutive impulses: 1 – bassoon's 'ghost sounds', the accent resulting from the opening of the wawa mute in the trumpet part, and string instruments *col legno* technique, 2 – trombone and, 3 – flute (*tongue stop*), horn air sound, percussion (figurines), damped harp harmonic and harmonic sound of the in bars 136-137 (ex. 23, green);
- two compounds of accents: violin parts 1-2 and viola following the percussion (figures) with the harp part in bar 139;
- flute (*tongue stop*), together with harp and violin 2 part in bar 143;
- 'ghost sounds' in the bassoon part, the complex combination of accents in brass instruments *frullato*, the circular movement of the figures in the percussion parts, and *col legno* assembly of string instruments in bar 144

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[363] In this case, a composite of two dynamic envelopes occurs.

Ex. 23 *through the youth of these things*, score, bars 132-138

Some of the accents are anticipated by the earlier introduction of individual parts with the dynamic envelope of the dal niente crescendo, and further stretched by precomposed decays (e.g., volume swell of the air notes in the flute and horn parts in bar. 136, the twice-accented harmonic decrescendo sound in the cello part in bar 137), and multiple sonorities are overlapped by crossfading dynamic envelopes (*dal niente-al niente*, e.g., the mentioned earlier horn and trombone part against the figure movement in the percussion part 1-2 in bar 132). In this case, new impulses appear accompanied by the timbral background of elements introduced earlier. At the same time, there are locally additional accents in the string instrument parts resulting from the rhythmic course of the virtuoso parts of this segment. The accented impulses, as indicated above, so far amplify the rhythmic progression of the type 2 material. This material also appears occasionally in the woodwind instruments in the described fragment, and interestingly – some of the dynamic envelopes of these parts – correspond to the rhythmic progression of the described ensemble combinations (although it should be noted that the control over the realisation of the dynamics, due to the register and sound extraction techniques, is much smaller in this case).

In bars 144-154 a regular, shifting accentuation of the circular movement of the figures in the percussion part 1-2 is introduced (Ex. 24). This layer is reinforced by a rhythmic tremolo realised by bowing on the body of violins 1-2 and viola. The texture of the string instruments is based on the C8 sample of the sound library introduced earlier.

Ex. 24 *through the youth of these things,* score fragment, bars 144-148.

The sequence described is preceded in bar 143 by a characteristic rhythm of damped harmonic in the harp part (♪ ⅞ ♪♪), which is also repeated in bars 159 and 166. From bar 145 the pulsation is also realised by the harp part, but as in the previous passages – this layer of accents is led independently, and only locally synchronised with the main pulse (bars 148, 150). The harp continues this kind of pulsation, with short pauses, until the end of Part I of the composition. An additional layer is added by accentual elements introduced earlier in the composition: the pulsation of the trombone's high-pitched note from bar 145 (together with the violin's *col legno tratto* in bar 157), the sonic compound of the horn (tongue stop), trumpet, cello and double bass in bar 152.

In bars 163-170, there is a dense amount of virtuoso string material, and from bar 170 a further sequence is introduced with a clear pulse of rotating string movement and independently led accentuation of the trombone and trumpet parts in the high register and as indicated earlier, the harp, continuing its progression. This material reaches internal climax in bars 180-189 – then this texture, together with the chorale-like material of the synthesizer part, is led in the whole ensemble (apart from a static part of rubbed glasses by the percussionists), then – from bar 189 onwards – it is gradually faded out until the end of the first movement of the composition (bar 199). The material then functions as a fully independent textural quality. In bars 160-163 (Ex. 27), 168-170, and 179-180 this sequence was preceded by ensemble volume swells. The first of these is a modified variant of two superimposed samples: the synthetic fold of G3 and the noise accents of sample B5 (Ex. 25-26). The other two volume swells are based on the *crescendo dal niente* dynamic envelope of the noise sounds.

Ex. 25 Sound library, recording score, sample B5

📢 **Audio Example 4**

Ex. 26 Sound library, recording score, sample G3

🔊 **Audio Example 5**

Ex. 27 *through the youth of these things*, score, bars 160-162

In **Part II**, although the material is based on type 3 sonority – transformations of Froberger's *Partita* – local pulsations are introduced.

- Sequence of repeated air flute sound in quintuplets (***p-ppp-p***, bars 201-202), also repeated bars t. 210-211 – as hexadecimal sextuplets with increased dynamics (***f*** poss.),

- Static timbres of oscillating *crescendo-decrescendo* dynamics, e.g., in the harp part played with an ebow (a reminiscence of type 1 material) in bars 201-213, the combination of slowly-vibrating 'ghost sounds' in the bassoon part, the vibrato of the bass clarinet and the action opening and closing of the wawa mute in the trumpet part in bars 202-205, the trombone with slow vibrato effect and practice mute in bars 207-208. 207-208, a smooth transition from harmonic sound to multiphone in the double bass part in bars 209-214, flute multiphonic in bars 213-214 and bass clarinet in bars 226-228, brass parts – trumpet air sounds with opening and closing wawa mute (bars 219-221), voice modulated sounds in the horn and trumpet parts in bars 225-228.

- In the cello and double bass parts, as in Part I, the technique of playing with a bow on the bridge of the instruments is introduced. By unifying the noise-like timbral characteristics and introducing a unified dynamic envelope (*crescendo dal niente* ending with a punctuated accent ' ***f*** '), the instruments build up a recognisable, pulsating texture – despite the irregular shift of accents between them and the variation in the length of the individual elements (bars 231- 245).

However, the pulsation of Part II *through the youth of these things* is particularly impacted by the looped repetitions of single notes of the melodic line based on *Partita* material. These are subjected to irregular rhythmic transformations. Their length is modified and, in the case of repetitions of fixed length, individual accents have been notated in variable time signatures. Some of the instrumental techniques used in these structures – e.g., in the flute and double bass parts – are based on accented, uninterrupted (ligature-prolonged) sounds, treated as afterimages of static textures from earlier segments of the composition (the work's opening, the beginning of Part II).

These structures were composed as:

a. accent performed by the ensemble in the reduced settings:

1 – flute multiphonic, air noise ('breahte in') od the oboe and air noise sounds of brass instruments in bars 238-241 (ex. 28, sea colour),

2 – looped harp phrases with accompanying objects in the percussion parts and sampler, in bars 258-261,

3 – alto flute multiphonic, 'ghost sounds' of the bassoon, horn air sounds, and the fluid transition from harmonic to multiphonics in the cello part in bars 263-262,

4 – alto flute multiphonic, air sound in the horn and natural harmonic glissando of the MSP cello in bar 266,

b. combinations of a tutti ensemble (or derivative cast configurations)[364]:

1 – the whole ensemble: bars 243-244 (excluding independent layer of cello and double bass, ex. 28, orange colour),

2 – the whole ensemble, with changed tempo and tonal arrangement and instrumentation in bars 246-249,

3 – excluding percussion part 2 in bars 267-268

4 – excluding the harp and with a static percussion part 1 on the glass – superimposed layers of accents in bars 268-276.

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[364] There are some elements of a thinking based on repeated or shifting layers between each other that can be seen in the author's earlier works, i.e., *Robotron* (2018), *ZMRÓŹ* (2019), *And it rose and it fell and pulsed like a wave* (2019/20).

Ex. 28 *through the youth of these things,* score bars 243-247

These repetitions are characterised by rhythmic and textural counterpoints: for example, the pulse of the cello and the double bass noises continues until bar 245 (resulting in an overlap of this layer with the repetitions of a.1 and b.1). In structure b.3, bars 266-267, the flute and percussion 1 (glass) parts accents have been delayed relative to the other instruments. Structures b.2 and b.4, however, have additional accents, particularly evident in the second of the fragments – which initially maintains a regular quarter note pulse with accents on the 1st, 2nd, and 4th sixteenth notes of each bar. This pulsation is counterpointed by a virtuosic, irregular section of harmonic cello glissandos. In bars 272-273, the loop stops and, from bar 274, it is introduced in a modified ensemble in terms of performance technique and configuration, composed as a seamless transition to Part III of the composition (parts of glasses in percussion 1, harp, bassoon, and clarinet).

The distinctive sound-visual layer of this segment is also the repetitive, regular accentuation of object sequences in interaction with the rotating tray in the percussion parts, as discussed earlier.

In Part III, with the performative transformation of the instrumental ensemble, the pulsation is reduced. As earlier, it is constructed on the basis of static sounds, the pulsation of which is the result of smooth, oscillating changes in volume fade-ins and fade-outs, e.g. in the harp part (played with an ebow in bars 280-283, 364-371 and 372-381), in the trombone part (performed with a practice mute in bars 280-282), in the bass clarinet part (multiphonic dyads in bars 286-288 and a low, slowly vibrating subtone in bars 301-305), and – from bar 302, accompanied by practice muted trumpet and horn (similarly muted and also voice modulated) and double bass harmonic (from bar 303 a harmonic double stop), or slow second glissandos in the cello part played *col legno tratto*.

In bar 318-325, a pulsating sequence is introduced in the double bass part, based on alternating rhythmic values (sixteenths-eights-septuplets-...) detuned by *flautando* glissandos, with a simultaneous change of dynamic envelope (*crescendo-decrescendo-...*) and a smooth transition of the vertical bow position (MST-MSP-MST).

A distinctive layer of pulsation is built up by deconstructed instruments: rapid key clicks in the alto flute part (from bar 282), oscillation of the high notes of the oboe and bass clarinet (bars 350-355), accents of bass clarinet multiphonic sounds (bars 337-339[365], 346-348, 357-359, 372-374, 377-378), strings devoid of stable tuning (bars 337-353).

Rhythmically regular and clearly visible to the audience – though almost inaudible – are also the air accents in the percussion parts, played by blowing into soap bubbles (from bar 372 in percussion part 2 and 377 in percussion part 1, played alternately until the end of the composition).

Ex. 29 *through the youth of these things*, percussion parts, bars 372-379

Final Remarks

During the work on t*hrough the youth of these things*, sonority was developed parallel to the semantic construction of the composition, and in some cases – influenced individual events on stage. It determines the narrative progression of the piece and – via objects in the percussion parts and reference to the perception of instruments as physical objects – the **sonic scenography**. The sound material also plays an overarching role in the production of **atmosphere** – the individual materials of the piece (e.g., type 1) function as extended frozen images of a non-existent reality. The performative actions and the visual aspect of the composition also arise from the sound – due to the **presence of the instrumentalists** – and the **polyphonic interplay** between the types of material is the leading structural strategy of the whole piece.

Conclusion

The description presented here takes a closer look at the various aspects of the composition *through the youth of these things* in stages, just as the individual objects and transformations of the ensemble are revealed to the audience during the performance. Working on the composition was a challenge from the very first sketches and assumptions. Therefore, on the basis of the available literature and my own creative experience, I decided to develop a set of assumptions, a concept according to which I planned the individual stages of the process of 'making real' the described piece.

In searching for strategies to enable 'storytelling' with music, via the process of working on *through the youth of these things*, I came to completely unexpected conclusions. I replaced extensive scenographic concepts, based on custom-built structures and mechanisms, with easy-to-find objects in which instrumentalists were involved in the exploration process.

The concert performance situation is characterised by much shorter rehearsal times than in the theatre process, limited access to technical facilities [366], and the coexistence of works by other artists within the same event, which is part of the New Music performance praxis.

I realised that I wanted to confront these limitations, understanding that they could also be an artistic opportunity. I limited the number of objects and visual elements to a single metaphorical suitcase, decided that the speakers and primarily instruments themselves would also be the scenography, and decided that interaction with sound, as the creative experience closest to my own, would be the main narrative construct of the future piece. In this way, the apparent limitations of the number of objects involved and the visual means allowed me to question once again the nature of compositional practice.

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[366] H. Goebbels, *Przeciw Gesamtkunstwerk,* op. cit., pp. 99-100.

The instrumentalists – approached in *through the youth of these things* as a multi-voiced community – are the leading element of both the story embedded in the sonic layer of the composition and the performative situation created on stage. This way of working has opened up my thinking about musical material to new concepts: about the shaping of emotions through the atmospheres and aura of a piece and has also led to a reconsideration of the stage presence of the performers.

The situation also creates, in a way, a **dual perspective of perception**. By reaching for unstable sound playing techniques and the interactions of the percussionists with the objects, which are impossible to reproduce in equal measure, as well as the difficult-to-predict sonic results of the vintage loudspeakers projecting the electronic layer, the composition is framed by the present experience of a live performance. At the same time, its expansive sonority makes it possible to listen to it without following the visual layer, and in this form, its long fragment was presented to listeners during a radio broadcast on Polish Radio's Second Programme[367]. The ambiguity of this situation was discussed earlier in the chapter on (non)presence and constitutes one of the most interesting aspects of the double perspective on the reception of the composition under discussion, and perhaps in the broader context of the working method proposed here.

Neither can the issue of performance preparation and rehearsal work be ignored. Many of the performance ideas described here, such as the dual role of the conductor, the extreme registers and dynamics of the instruments, and their preparation and detuning, would not be possible without committed musicians who are willing to search for new virtuosity in an artistically open-minded way, far removed from show-off. In this context, this composition and its working method are a response to the emergence of a whole generation of ambitious ensembles specialising in the performance of new music and would not have been possible without the extraordinary commitment and experience of the musicians of the

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[367] The broadcast took part 15.06.2023,
https://www.polskieradio.pl/8/8315/artykul/3189416,pawel-malinowski-i-muzyka-w-ktorej-piekno-laczy-sie-ze-smutkiem, accessed 30.09.2023.

Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej, which has been active for over 20 years, under the direction of Szymon Bywalec.

One surprising paradox is the ongoing shift in my work from extensive use of multimedia in subsequent pieces, after the completion of the youth of these things. The instrumentalists' theatre method allowed me to once again find the potential of instrumental performance, of understanding the beauty of sensitive and unstable sound and, above all, of the musicians' individual and yet holistic interpretation.

Photo: Grzesiek Mart

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Summary

Keywords: Instrumentalists' Theatre, Composed Theatre, instrumental performance, sonic material, atmosphere, sonic scenography, (non)presence.

This study, which consists of a **score** of composition *through the youth of these things* and an accompanying description, exemplifies the practical realisation of the instrumentalists' theatre concept, while also providing a record of the theoretical assumptions formulated. Its artistic aim is to possibly capture an audience-engaging narrative by engaging the performance practice characteristic of New Music.

The composition ***through the youth of these things***, was notated as a score for instrumental ensemble, electronics, and objects. It consists of three, intertwining attaca movements: I. *The little purposes are lost in the great designs,* II. *Plainte faîte (...) pour passer la melancholi*, III. *Quiet and solitude are at home here.*

The dissertation description consists of three main parts. **I. – *The Artistic Perspective*** presents the process of formulating the assumptions of the concept by the experience of the composer's artistic practice. **II. – *The path to Instrumentalists' Theatre*** provides an outline of the theoretical framework based on the available literature on the subject and identifies the main creative assumptions of the instrumentalists' theatre idea. Among the most important authors whose works have influenced its formulation are from the perspective of the relationship between composition and theatre, sonic scenography and aspects of polyphonicity, publications by: Kent Olofsson, Duška Radosavljević Matthias Rebstock and David Roesner, atmosphere: Monty Adkins, Gernot Böhmeg, Mareike Dobewall and Friedlind Riedel, reflections on (non)presence of the performers by Erika Fischer-Lichte and Heiner Goebbels. Part III. – *The Realisation of the Concept,* is the analysis of the piece *through the youth of these things* based on a pre-defined theoretical framework. The text pays attention to the organisation of the composition's time, its visual layer, the ways of shaping the sound material, but

above all to the special role of the musicians and the directly influencing narrative part of the objects and the scenographic function of the instruments.

The final part of the thesis draws attention to the special sound potential resulting from the extended handling of musical material and the exceptional performance possibilities of contemporary instrumental ensembles.

The written part of the work is preceded by an introduction and completed by a bibliography, indexes of illustrations, tables and audio and score examples.

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