

Manifesto for the Multivocal Voice:

Alex Nowitz

Zum Werksein gehört die Aufstellung einer Welt.¹

Martin Heidegger

If you celebrate it, it's art: if you don't, it isn't.²

John Cage

Abstract

The lecture-performance *A Manifesto For The Multivocal Voice* is a performative presentation that explores the principles of a performance voice in vocal arts today. The presentation of the abridged version of this text at hand in the form of a lecture-performance, at the 9th SAR, took place verbally (words) and vocally (sounds) issued by one person being both the author and the vocal performer. Encompassing speaking and singing as well as extended and disembodied voices, the presenter's voice itself becomes the subject of investigation. The live presentation therefore is an exposition of self-reflection with the means of various different vocal art practices. The aim of the paper, as well as of its preceding live presentation, is to unfold the connections between artistic intentions and socio-cultural impacts, to elucidate the crossings between the trajectories of extended vocal practices, on the one hand, and philosophical outreach of an expanded field of artistic vocality on the other. The paper refers to video documentaries ranging from vocal live performances with and without live electronics to an outdoor event during which the performer *whistles to and with* birds. The actual result of the extended voice may sound exuberant, excessive, even

monstrous. But this paper attempts to illuminate an æsthetics of vocal diversity countersigned by a philosophical approach to mapping the contemporary performance voice and its potentialities.

Introduction

Due to the lack of a concise and plausible term to outline the theoretical foundation for vocal art performance today, I devised the notion of the *multivocal voice*. Even though applied in a rather generic sense, with regard to the field of vocal arts, it derives from my experiences, discoveries, developments and findings that I have been coming across by learning and performing as vocal artist on various different stages over the period of three decades.

As both producer and recipient, we need to understand the foundations of vocal art performance as well as its impacts. What are the premises? What form of expression is included and what is excluded? Is there a philosophical ground that vocal art performance is built on? What are the intentions of the respective vocal æsthetics? In order to frame the reference points on a generic level and to map the realm of vocal artistry towards a critical and expanded field of artistic research, I've chosen the form of the *manifesto*³ which, precisely because of its non-linear character, permits the curating of provocative claims, confrontational intentions and sometimes maybe exaggerated views, all of which help shape a notion of *multivocality*.

Regarding artistic research, it needs to be noted that, even today, it is a highly debated, controversial field that still seems to be entangled in the objective/subjective dilemma.⁴ Owing to these circumstances, the Barthesian approach to research, the question of 'what is missing?',⁵ still provides a productive and suitable guideline to frame the reference points and, by doing so, to map the field.

In its written form, the *Manifesto for the Multivocal Voice* has a wide-ranging footnote section aiming to create a platform that pokes the natural sciences with regard to physiological aspects of vocal experiments, but also to foster the discussion toward the realm of the humanities currently ‘undergoing a vocal turn’ as American philosopher and electronic musician Brian Kane refers to.⁶ All in all, the aim of the manifesto is to open up the field of contemporary vocal arts towards a thinking in and through the voice – something we all are both extremely familiar with and, at the same time, alien to.

Manifesto for the Multivocal Voice

This text would rather be performed than read.

The term *multivocal voice* (*vieltimmige Stimme*)⁷ outlines a concept that has been ripped from my vocal art practice yet remains at its core.

As both illustration of the preceding and sonic anticipation of the following paragraph, I suggest to listen to and watch the video documentary of a short composition for voice solo called [Panache](#).⁸

The concept of the multivocal voice represents a range of expressions within contemporary vocal arts – a multitude of voices, all of which can be produced either *by* or *with* one singular voice. *By* indicates a voice as the sole source of sound (as the example of *Panache* aims to demonstrate). *With*, on the other hand, points to the aspect that the voice is used as sound material, but is multiplied through the application of technological means. In order to define the notion of the *extended voice*, we ought to differentiate two ways of how it can show itself. Firstly, it’s the

application of those techniques that expand the field of vocal artistry by going beyond the Western cultural norm of the operatic voice. These practices have come to be called *extended vocal techniques*.⁹ Secondly, the voice might as well be *extended* by the application of technological means, such as live electronics allowing the alteration and manipulation of vocal material. Certainly, all kinds of mixed forms between the two categories of an extended voice are possible as well. Serving as an example for both categories, I propose to listen to and watch the video documentary of [*Playing with Panache*](#),¹⁰ a composition for voice solo and live electronics (*strophonion*).¹¹

During the performance, the multivocal voice refers incessantly to the origin, posing the question: where do I come from? At the same time, it constantly raises the flag of destiny (*Bestimmung*), asking: where do I go to?

The multivocal voice shows responsibility not for one but many voices. It creates many orbits and is therefore multi-atmospheric.¹²

The voice contains a certain momentum that sets another person into motion. The motion (*Bewegung*), triggered by the voice, can take place purely on the inside, for instance in the form of an emotional activation (*Bewegtheit*) leading to a specific mood and atmosphere. Or, on the contrary, the condition of being moved comes to the fore, on the outside, through the play of diverse facial and gestural expressions. Even the whole body can be affected – through the expression of bodily movements or even dance. The voice touches the other by producing and sending out sound waves that set into vibration not only the ear drum but the whole auditory apparatus of the other person.¹³ The voice in general and, particularly, the multivocal version sends and receives uninterruptedly. What adheres to it, is the instant, the

blink of the eye (*Augenblick*) and the certainty of the oncoming (*das Entgegenkommende*).¹⁴ It emerges in the moment and exists through what comes. The latter can be understood in two ways – either as an oncoming vocal sound material or as a reaction of the recipient, who interacts within the process of vocal production. The recipient is at no time part of an inert mass but always a co-player.¹⁵

A multivocal voice performance is an audibly and visibly becoming ‘setting-itself-to-work of truth’, to use an expression by Martin Heidegger.¹⁶ In concrete terms, it is a *vocal truth* that sets itself into the work. During the performance, the multivocal voice artist immediately puts the voice into the work; that is to say, within the performance, the multivocal voice directly produces a work and exhibits it at the same time. In a best case scenario, it isn’t the carrier of the multivocal voice who does something, but *the voice itself alone*. Because, when the voice becomes an *it* by saying *it sings in us and outward from us* or *it performs without our input just as by itself*, that’s when we have reached that level on which the voice is threefold: *material*, *production tool* and *work* at the same time. This *it*-status is, for the multivocal voice performer, highly desirable.

As opposed to its subsequent interpretation, which is a secondary creation (*Sekundärschöpfung*), the immediate primary creation (*Primärschöpfung*) in and out of the instant skips the compositional process in the traditional understanding of involving an additional artist. The multivocal voice artist therefore can be both composer and performer in union – a *composer-performer*. The performance act is then also an *instant composing* procedure as long as the performer decides not to produce a score in advance in order to enact it during the performance situation. The performance, executed by a composer-performer, therefore is

a composition in *real-time*¹⁷. And the composition consists of a performance with compositional layers, in case of a solo presentation, comprising voice and body. If the performer then adds novel technology-driven devices such as gesture-controlled live electronics, s/he gains three compositional layers to deal with: the voice, the body and the instrument. In this way, the notion of the *multivocal voice* can also be understood as a *polyphonic performance voice* that, with regard to the application of electronics on the one hand, and of artifices concerning advanced vocal techniques, such as *multiphonics*, on the other, allows the splitting up (*Aufspaltung*) into further voices and diverse voice proportions. As an example for the three-layered performance practice involving voice, body and technology, that I propose to call *vocal* or *voice-induced sound dance*, I suggest to see the video documentary of [Untitled](#),¹⁸ a composition for voice, strophonion and a chair to be ignored.

One basic prerequisite for attaining a multivocal voice is to sharpen its control mechanisms, that is to say its cybernetics¹⁹ – perception at all levels, but first and foremost at the auditory level.²⁰ For the ears, together with brain, lungs, pharynx, mouth cavity and *mouth tools* (*Mundwerkzeuge*), as I call the components of tongue, soft and hard palate, lower and upper lip, and eventually with the vocal apparatus itself, hence that flexible suspension system which comprises an interweaving of muscles, fasciae, and cartilages which catch, dandle and embed the vocal folds, they all form a mutually dependant and influencing, complex feedback loop, within which all protagonists of the entirety of the vocal body (*Stimmkörper*)²¹ are both attentive and involved in constant interplay with each other.²²

The multivocal voice is, strictly-speaking, an oxymoron. Usually, the term *voice* signifies *one single* individual,

thus one singular entity. The application in plural, of *many voices*, refers to many individuals or entities accordingly. If two contradictory, inappropriate and incongruous (*unstimmig*) terms are put together within one semantic construction, the prerequisites to create an oxymoron are fulfilled. The conceptual pair of the *multivocal voice* would appear to be one such oxymoron. However, it is undeniable that many voices, in a single voice, or in a single vocal apparatus respectively, are not only latent, but truly reside there. Jean-Luc Nancy formulates this aspect as follows:

[...] *la voix est toujours en elle-même articulée (différente d'elle-même, se différenciant elle-même), et c'est pourquoi il n'y a pas la voix, mais les voix plurielles des êtres singuliers.*²³

Hence, by using the term *the voice* in the singular it should not be assumed that only a single voice is indicated.

The multivocal voice eludes clear representation other than that of its own kind, plural in appearance, singular in its uniqueness.²⁴ Multivocality, I claim, is the intrinsic and veritable determinant of the vocal art voice from today and tomorrow. The multivocal voice doesn't accept being misused through becoming a vocal specialist in the sense of the one-register voice, and thus doesn't accept being wedged in a tight, functional corset. It wants to avoid states of malaise (*Verstimmung*), which appear all too often when an interpreter slips into roles. It can lead to anachronistic and effectively spurious and apocryphal performances if the character has nothing to do with the situation of the present time, as there is the moment of personal development and the sociocultural framework that determine the life of the interpreting artist, on the one hand, and that of the recipient, on the other, at the given time of the

performance.²⁵

The voice in the realm of vocal arts today as well as tomorrow, and the multivocal voice in particular, refuses a clear assignment. It never denotes *just* the one or the other. Regarding the multivocality of a voice, an ambivalent basic structure is conceived *a priori*. The multivocal voice is multilayer and ambiguous. In the realm of philosophical discourse, from Greek antiquity to the present day, the understanding of the voice oscillates between the concrete acoustic phenomenon on the one hand and the metaphorical meaning on the other, as it displays in expressions such as the voice of the composer, the voice of the author, of the philosopher, etc. It goes back and forth. The multivocal voice is able to belong to both areas. But what is striking is the directness and immediacy that is inherent in the acoustic phenomenon of the multivocal voice as an artistic event and whose impact, at the same time, yields multiple, rhizomatic²⁶ and metaphorical meanings. In addition, one could say that it considers itself less as vocal object²⁷ than as vocal subject,²⁸ a subject that shows itself to be multivocal.

In general, the voice in the field of contemporary vocal arts is characterised by a multidimensional nature whereby a plethora of vocal planes is achieved: aesthetic, improvisational, psychological, technical, philosophical, performative, physiological, compositional, etc. It is key that the performance voice, if it opens up itself to the possibility of multivocality, develops *including powers* as opposed to adhere *conceptions of exclusivity*. The approach to vocal art practices is usually characterised for being exclusive – compartmentalising, isolating, sealing off the practitioner, and ostracising, segregating. If practising opera singing it's then implicit that one should not rehearse the Rock or Jazz voice. Genre distinctions are

strictly preserved in the interests of satisfying the existing market. In this way of thinking, experiments, regardless of type, are also excluded.²⁹ The conventional voice in the vocal arts, the singing voice is, according to the traditional Western model, a *one-register* voice only. In contrast, the conception of the *multivocal* voice rather opposes such considerations just because it resists being restricted. The multivocal voice is not a one-register voice, but a *multi-register* voice.

The multivocal voice excels precisely because of uniting many voices in one and proclaiming this as its practice. This requires the disengagement of gender attributions, that are usually linked to the voice, and consequently the farewell from binary thinking, a thinking in dualities that are based on self-contained categories of the *female* and the *male*. For it is the transitions that are fluid, and the boundaries aren't easy to determine. One only needs to think of the sounds a *contralto* is able to produce and then listen to and compare these with those of the countertenor, without actually watching the singers or without the aid of visual means in case of the technical reproduction of a recording. In both cases, it is by no means far-fetched that the listener is possibly guessing and assigning a mistaken as opposed to the actual sex. In certain areas of register it becomes more and more difficult to make clear allocations of gender attributions. Some singers are able, by only using vocal muscles, to swell up and subside the allegedly audible proportion of gender, which premise a sensitive and meticulous interplay between the vocal fold (*labia vocalia*), whose main muscle group is sometimes called *Spanner* (which is the German word for the *tensioner*), on the one hand, and the vocal ligament (*ligamenti vocalia*), whose muscle group is sometimes called *Dehner* (which is the German word for the *stretcher*), on the other.³⁰ A potential confusion of the female and male voice occurs more frequently when it's an

untrained listener listening to the voices, regardless whether it's a live performance or a rendering of a recording as long as, in both cases, the singers are professionally trained and not seen. In any case, the audible gender roles, including the conventional, culturally adapted attributes, become increasingly blurred, and may not even be perceivable at all. The sexes become very difficult to distinguish from each other. Predetermined vocal roles can dissolve almost completely.³¹

As a matter of principle, the enabling and the acquisition of a multivocal voice, and thus a multi-tempered voice, presupposes a multivocal thinking, thus an extended thinking. This thinking comprises a thinking in vocal sound banks and in vocal sound entities, a thinking in vowel planes and consonant fields, a thinking in segments, in registers, in vocal range sections, all of which, in regards to the possible entirety of vocal sound areas, exhibit gaps and show sites of fracture. For the voice in the totality of its potentially emerging segmentations produces those gaps naturally, yet cannot, at the present time, be continuous, but rather is non-linear. Looking at the evolution of the voice at the present time reveals the fact that it isn't always possible to continuously and gradually go from one technique to the other. In order to illustrate this thought, I point to the potential of blending two different singing techniques into each other. *Low tone singing*, as I'd like to call it, or harmonic singing, as an umbrella term known for a number of singing styles from Mongolia such as the *Kargyraa*-technique, sacred chanting of Tibetan monks or the *bassu* voice from the Sardinian *canto a tenore*-tradition are all produced by reinforcing harmonics applying mainly the vibrations from the ventricular folds.³² In contrast, the singing voice from the Western tradition uses the vocal folds (not the ventricular folds!) in order to reach any part of its register and, therefore, also the lowest

register. Within the concept of the *multivocal voice* now, the performer tries to gradually cross and blend both techniques even different muscular proportions are applied which is the reason why the task appears to be impossible.³³ But that's exactly what the *multivocal voice* sets oneself to do, namely to acknowledge such a paradox and try to dissolve it - not to let the impossible remain impossible, but to venture the experiment, which is in this case the continuous, gradual and unbroken transition from one vocal art technique to the other, and to at least tackle and to eventually try to perform it with an unbiased, thus open attitude. The task and goal are therefore to achieve a *permanent traversing and flowing into each other of the divergent vocal proportions*. Maybe or, in other words, only if this succeeds and such thinking possibilities will have been transformed into unmistakably audible (*unüberhörbar*) realities, the foundations are laid to advance the evolution in a way which brings the human in proximity to his or her actual destiny (*Bestimmung*). For if there is an objective of human evolution at all, then perhaps it's what creates an *outright permeable being*, a kind of *fluidum* of the self, and therefore approximates a *homo mundi*, that kind of seemingly utopian *earthly human*, no longer foreign to him/herself and the Other³⁴, regardless of her/his respective whereabouts on the globe.³⁵ Of course, we are far away from this idea. The vehicle, though, to set off in this direction can be, according to the framework of a *plural society*, the *plural voice* - a specifically experienced as well as consciously imbued concept of multivocality which renders the individual a *human fluidum* that allows him/her to encounter the voice of the Other in the sense of a *looking through* (*hindurchschauen*) and a *listening beyond* (*hinüber hören*), thus a *permeation with an authentic-empathetic gesture*.³⁶

A few preconditions for how the multivocal voice is able to generate many voices out of one vocal source have already

been mentioned as well as the thinking in vocal territories all of which, from day to day, are to be discovered anew. In a narrow sense, there are vowels and consonantal areas that count among those territories. In a more extended sense, but no less important, there are vocal sound areas beyond linguistic classification, such as whistled sounds and combinations of those with voiced or hummed sounds, respectively.³⁷ All exclusively whistled sounds are produced bypassing the regular vocal apparatus. In case of the *lower lip whistling*, as I'm prone to call it, the airstream gets channelled by the tongue assuming a tube-like form and then directed against the edge of the extremely stretched lower lip which, comparing to the flute playing, serves as mouth piece. This happens on the first level of sound production. On a second level, the fingers come into play and are applied as modulators allowing instant pitch changes that, at a great velocity, can create virtuosic effects such as trills. To give an example see the video documentary of [Searching the Magpie](#),³⁸ an outdoor event for voice and potential birds, recorded 2015 by flautist and sound artist Sabine Vogel³⁹ in the rural locality of Bend of Island, Victoria, in Australia.

Regardless of how vocal sounds are produced in detail, actually all body-voice sounds are day by day subject to new framework conditions and therefore they are also to be conceived (*erdenken*), explored as well as performed every day anew. Even by doing so, the multivocal voice isn't able to avoid the inevitability of its ephemeral *Gestalt* no less than any other time-based performance art form which comes about in the 'here and now.'⁴⁰ The occupation of vocal territories is also, in the first instance, an act of thinking, an inner process that manifests itself externally only through the utterance and, in consequence, becomes audible for others. During the process of this externalisation, the multivocal voice neither seeks to

bypass, nor to avoid its transience. It knows only too well what it means to be in the moment – this being exactly its declared artistic ambition, to rise and stay in the blink of an eye (*Augenblick*), even though that is, due to its nature, incessantly moving forward in both ways, objectively, in the continuum of clock time and, subjectively, ‘in the flow of time consciousness’.⁴¹

Contrary to some outdated vocal art concepts, the multivocal voice doesn’t permit being used as means of propaganda in the present or even as glorification of long-gone days. The traditional art voice, however, carries the risk *a priori* to be systemically trapped in the representational constraints of certain social classes, on the one hand, and by the fulfilment and satisfaction of the imaginative powers of the master, that is to say, the composer, on the other.⁴² With this *historical approach*, whose nature it is to suppress vocal creativity in favour of its own exchangeability which in turn is the guarantor to be able to survive (if at all) in the shark tank of the market, the voice in the vocal arts is perceived exclusively as helper and executive power of the composer. But the multivocal voice rather refrains from hierarchical structures. Following this rule, it avoids the interpretations of works older than approximately one hundred years. Choosing the time frame around 1913 as starting point for this claim is nurtured by a number of reasons. At least three of them should be mentioned here. Firstly, the manifesto *L'arte dei Rumori*, written in March 1913 by Italian Futurist painter, composer, builder of experimental musical instruments, Luigi Russolo, outlines a completely new classification of sounds that, later on, shall influence the doctrine of *musique concrète* and its protagonists from Pierre Schaeffer to John Cage or Karlheinz Stockhausen. Russolo considers the qualities of what he called ‘noise-sounds’ as extensions of ‘pure sounds’ demanding that ‘Futurist musicians should substitute for the

limited variety of timbres that the orchestra possesses today the infinite variety of timbres in noises, reproduced with appropriate mechanisms'.⁴³ Half a year before, serving as second reason, Arnold Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* was premiered, considered as seminal work of Western modern music introducing the *Sprechgesang*⁴⁴, a vocal technique that is in-between singing and speaking, creating the effect of a highly artistic voice.⁴⁵ Thirdly, 1913 also marks the eve of World War I. As a reaction to and protest against the horror of war, the DADA movement emerged at the *Cabaret Voltaire* in Zürich in 1916, or 1915 as concerns DADA in New York, and since then had a great impact on the production and reception of art in general and vocal art in particular.⁴⁶

In regards the future, the upcoming performance voice in the domain of vocal arts might refuse an exclusivity defined *a priori*, nor allow its colonialisation but instead operate primarily in border zones. It's a feature of the multivocal voice to proceed toward new paths by first seeking and then walking on them. It treads old paths only out of curiosity about the Other, and due to the awareness and knowledge about the vocal Self whose origin (*Herkunft*) can be derived from a given socio-cultural milieu which cannot be denied. But the beaten tracks often conflict with the voice individuation of the vocal performer from today as well as the related endeavours and therefore the development of the multivocal voice. By means of multivocality, in contrast, the voice artist and vocal performer tries, following the uniqueness of her/his voice, to transcend that as a metaphor of her/his origin, for the benefit of a unique multi-diversity (*einzigartige Vielartigkeit*).

The multivocal voice includes any singing voice – the operatic voice, the amplified Jazz and Rock voice as well as the strikingly penetrating speaking voice of the actor or the Dada artist, or else it refers to that kind of

experimental voice that denies any classification and attribution. The multivocal voice ramifies and branches out, constantly immersing, always emerging. It steps down into the sound spheres of supraglottal oscillation and subglottal vibration of throat singing⁴⁷ and arises into bright, soprano-like realms in the *falsetto register*.⁴⁸ It exhibits and transforms. The multivocal voice seeks limits only to exceed them. It explores and transcends. Following those remarks, it is needless to say that the multivocal voice rejects being representative of so-called national communities (*Volks- oder Nationsgemeinschaften*), which would be completely opposed to its urge for transcendence.

The multivocal voice seeks exchange – during playing. The methodological foundation of the multivocal voice is in fact the exchanging drive to play with other multi-attunements (*Vielgestimmtheiten*). These encounters do not only occur among human beings, but also among animals and, as the case of *Searching the Magpie* suggests, between humans and animals as well.⁴⁹ The question arises how playing with other multi-attunements can be understood. It's in this context that a special role is assigned to *mimesis*. Something that needs to be avoided is above all the depletion of the vocal art act by sheer imitation.⁵⁰ Mere mimicry cannot be the starting point for the contemporary performance voice if it aspires to multivocality. If, during the play with others, imitation is deployed as compositional principle, it should take place in varying ways in order to avoid surrendering to plagiarism. Therefore that which is imitated should function only as continuation, as development of the original material. Understood this way, *mimesis* can be a productive method for taking shape (*Gestalt*). It is of significant matter for the exchanging drive to play with other multi-attunements and thereby to internalise the ongoing process of suggestion (*Anregung*), seizing (*Aufgreifen*), reflection or mirroring (*Bespiegelung*), and actual utterance

(*Veräußerung*) while letting all this become a practice that has been experienced and lived through: stimulation by novel sound properties, the seizing of new ideas, comparison with the inner vocal self and thus with conventions, and eventually the process of uttering (*Veräußerung*) which equates with some kind of vocal sound conclusion. This procedure repeats itself in this way, again and again, always varying, through which the *gestalt* of the emerging vocal sounds always re-forms itself anew (*sich neu formieren*). By doing so, stasis is avoided. Hence the process stages are characterised by stimulation, seizing, mirroring and announcement (*Verlautbarung*) in the sense of uttering (*ein Vonsichgeben*) or becoming sound (*Lautbarmachen*); and again: stimulation, seizing, reflecting, uttering, etc. The multivocal voice practitioner should always be able to apply this method in the context of a performance, because the multivocal performance voice is unparalleled, manifold and modifiable to a high degree. It is also, again, important to emphasise that it does not allow appropriation by a political direction, which makes itself highly political.

For some, the multivocal voice may trigger animalistic associations. But the underlying technique and the state for the performer to produce an unconventional modality of expression is almost always of high artistic value. In doing so, it likes to support itself on the foundation of a concept of simultaneity, that can be based on the principle of concurrent events on both a vertical and horizontal plane. As an example for the vertical model, *multiphonics* should be mentioned because the totality of its sonic entities stem from simultaneously produced vocal sounds resulting in a two-part sound event. This is the case whenever the lip-whistled voice, for example, sounds together with, let's say, the simultaneously hummed low tone singing voice. In throat singing, it's possible that even

more than two voices appear at the same time. In this case it's a polyphonic sound. Further, with regard to a potential horizontal expansion, the multivocal voice can proliferate by incessantly striving to undertake the bizarre task of *wanting to override time*. This happens, for instance, when the voice appears to be split up (or splintered) by the rapid succession of highly different proportions of the voice, concerning both the vowel-associated components and the consonantal mouth sound objects.⁵¹ Certainly, vocal sounds, generated on the basis of a singular one, (which can happen for real, far from the illusionary techniques just mentioned) might as well be *put next and above each other* by calling in technological tools such as live electronics and their associated possibilities of addition and accumulation.

The work on the sonically authentic moment takes place in the here and now. The interpretation of a work from past times eludes the concreteness of the moment inasmuch as its interpreter is always confronted with the past at first, and only at the ensuing step with the actual instant of the present time. The task of the interpreter is all too often to incorporate (*einverleiben*) the long-gone, in order to convincingly embody it, which, in turn, establishes the premise for an ensuing presentation – a successful *reenactment*⁵² (*Nachstellung*), more precisely. Furthermore, the actual, primary act of creation, namely the composition, took place years, sometime decades, often even centuries ago. But even when looking at premieres from the present time, large time gaps occur between the process of the emergence, on the one hand, and the actual performance of the work, on the other, which is often due to an inflexible apparatus, particularly in the case when unionised orchestras and choirs interact poorly with the agencies of the solo singers, an opera house reliant on the patronage of their audience (*Abonnementpublikum*), the technocratic manager (*Disponent*), [check GERMAN version] and the artistic

directors pushed by performance of duty and obedience to the politicians, instead of actually relating to each other. The historically oriented singer-interpreter, therefore, always concerns her/himself with past music and vocal sound objects. Perhaps this may have still worked during Wagner's times, in that particular cultural era of which Nietzsche believed 'that we are all suffering from a consuming fever of history and ought at least to recognize that we are suffering from it.'⁵³ Today, on the contrary, in the age of internet, social media and [add in GERMAN version] unchecked rapid acceleration, we are instead consumed by the fever of the current, the fever of the unrestrained, placeless moment (*uneingeschränkter, ortloser Augenblick*)⁵⁴. It is this cultural framework condition that creates a new starting situation which, in turn, requires new approaches or concepts. It is neither yesterday nor tomorrow that the vocal subject can carry out the labour on the vocal sound object, it's only in the here and now. The strength and the true greatness of the multivocal voice is the capability to arise in the blink of an eye and to thrive precisely in that moment.

The multivocal voice does not want to limit itself, to seal itself off, to choke within the canon of the fifty piece repertoire. It consciously and skilfully evades the one-register dictate. The individual human is multilayered and complex, and this in a multiple way, in regards to its body, its emotionality, its mind, its interpersonal and intercultural exchange. It's already for that reason that its means of expression can inevitably only be orientated in a multivocal and thus multi-directional way.

As already alluded in a previous paragraph, mere imitation carries the risk of caricature and not least the grotesque.⁵⁵ This also concerns the voco-pedagogical means often applied here and abroad. As a matter of principle, it must be said

that pedagogics is always a tool to realise an ideology⁵⁶ and, accordingly, bears the impress of demagogy.⁵⁷ Without pedagogics there wouldn't be any ideology, and without ideology no demagogy, without demagogy no ideology and without ideology no pedagogics. Therefore voice pedagogics can be said to release manipulative powers. This requires a word of warning. An artist's instinct must never be subordinated to external vocal education, unless of one's own accord and above all as conscious decision. If this is not taken into account, a style of pedagogics arises that is fallen out of time so-to-speak, and therefore makes itself redundant.⁵⁸ At the same time we have to acknowledge, accept and thus take into account that, possibly, some voice artists are able to understand themselves only through *reflection and mirroring* of the *Other*. Then again, concerning the vocal practice of the multivocal voice, its search is always premised on the potential of finding the Other in one's own Self, already constituted in one's self. After all, the Self exists only through the Other, has emerged from the Other.⁵⁹

An important characteristic of the multivocal voice is that it is nomadic (not to be confused with the voice of the nomads!). The multivocal voice is constantly in transit and thus always carries its *home*. At the same time, it is always looking for the best possible life and framework conditions, making it not only a concept, but an attitude toward life opening up through the exploration of the Other.⁶⁰ Only if the *I* unlocks itself and allows the *Other* to enter the voice and, in so doing, incorporates it in order to eventually release it at some later point in time, the *I* experiences approaches of a possible entirety that the multivocal voice continuously searches and strives for. Thus it follows instinct and intuition, on the one hand, and pursues all those traces of the Other that it is able to locate, on the other hand. This means it is also a tracker, insofar as the

multivocal voice compares with both an anthropological-cultural archive of voices and a multi-ethnic vocal catalyst.

Instead of rounding off this paragraph and preparing the next, I suggest to listen to the [Labyrinth](#),⁶¹ for 8 loudspeakers and no light (2013), composed at EMS (Elektronmusikstudion) in Stockholm.⁶² The material of the composition derives, on the one hand, from Berlin-based voices all of which, in different languages, are reciting the poem *Minotaurus* by German stage designer Sonja Kloevekorn.⁶³ On the other hand, the piece consists of the voice material stemming from one voice encompassing the countertenor voice and a multitude of vocal sounds produced by various extended vocal techniques that are expanded by either the application of live electronics (*stimmflieger*)⁶⁴ or the use of studio equipment.

Above all, the multivocal voice is recording and playback device in one. It is a chest of memory full of remembrances that are saved within the body until death. Let's look at the example of the countertenor's voice. It is the manifestation of the *retention of the boy's voice over and beyond the puberty vocal change into the embedding of the muscular proportions of the adult man's voice*. In this regard, the countertenor is mainly a memory performance. Of course, apart from the physiological nature of the puberty vocal change, there are psychological, gender-specific and socio-cultural moments that act upon the muscular and mental memory. It seems important though to maintain the bridge to this particular memory and not to cut it off. In the case of *retaining the boy's voice beyond adolescence*, it's, above all, the *sound* and, in the more narrow, specifically cultural sense, the *music* that create the bridge.⁶⁵

In conclusion, the work on the multivocal voice is

characterised by remembrance work, on the one hand, which allows the performer to draw on a moment once retained, and by the capability to anticipate, on the other, which ensures that the sound captured is elaborately released again, at the right moment and with the help of a forward-looking as well as forward-listening attitude. This storage capacity spans long durations – years, decades, or even one's whole life. Once embodied it won't be forgotten that easily. Often, if untouched for a long time, the once embodied vocal material may slip off into unknown realms of our memory. But it can be retrieved if we always pay careful attention to the entirety of musico-sonic and the associated emotional-psychological and sociocultural circumstances that we were in, at the time when we experienced and went through those vocal moments that were to be remembered. All that determines the entirety of our condition to a specific moment in time, must be learnt and rendered memorable and retrievable. Only if this technique of *vocal mnemonics* is made available, are the premises for access (*Rückgriff*) to a treasure created which is never really lost but, instead, always awaits its discovery. Once retrieved, we just have to unlock the vocal valuables that the multivocal voice holds. Perhaps, it is a consequence of our task to insist, ceaselessly, on unclosing our voice. But it is exactly this literal audacity (*Waghalsigkeit*) that allows the anticipation and thus the celebration of vocal treasures that eventually open doors that lead to a better understanding of ourselves, from today to tomorrow, this being one of the necessary conditions not only to contemplate our next evolutionary step, but also to take it.

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¹ 'To the work-being belongs the setting up of a world.' in Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, p. 24. The German quote is taken from Heidegger, *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, p. 42.

² This is what John Cage answered while entering a restaurant after being asked by music journalist and critic Heinz-Klaus Metzger about the difference between an ordinary way of opening a door and doing so as an artistic action. See Riehn, 'Noten zu Cage', pp. 97-106 (p. 97).

³ Antonin Artaud's seminal work 'The Theatre of Cruelty: First Manifesto' was a great source of inspiration in regards to the notion of *vocal extension*. He asks to search for new pathways in treating speech and voice: 'Abandoning our Western ideas of speech, it turns words into incantation. It expands the voice. It uses vocal vibrations and qualities, wildly trampling them underfoot. It piledrives sounds. It aims to exalt, to benumb, to bewitch, to arrest our sensibility'. See Artaud, p. 64.

⁴ According to German philosopher Dieter Mersch who, in the chapter 'Artistic Research' (pp. 24 - 44) of his book *Epistemologies of Aesthetics*, elucidates that science has gone into opposition to the arts. 'The historical differentiation between art and science [...] goes back to the rationalism of the eighteenth century and its ideal of objectivity. Only then did science begin to assert itself in opposition to artistic practice, which was degraded as *subjective*. During the Middle Ages, *ars* was considered the height of

scientia, so that the two were intersecting — not competing — forms of knowledge’. See Mersch, *Epistemologies of Aesthetics*, pp. 30 – 31.

⁵ See the essay ‘Writers, Intellectuals, Teachers’ in Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, pp. 197 - 98.

⁶ See Kane, pp. 91 - 112.

⁷ See the definition of *multivocal* in the Merriam-Webster dictionary: 1. signifying many things; of manifold meanings; equivocal; S.T.Coleridge: ‘meet with an ambiguous or multivocal word’ 2.[multi- + vocal] vociferous. F.L.Paxson: ‘so bustling and multivocal in pacifism’; S.H.Adams: ‘scandals and horrors of the moment in multivocal ... clamor’, in <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/multivocal> [Last accessed 29 April 2018].

⁸ See Alex Nowitz, *Panache* (2015), Vimeo video “PANACHE by Alex Nowitz” (1:34) posted by Alex Nowitz on 31 May 2016, <http://vimeo.com/168750034> [Last accessed 28 May 2018].

⁹ As one of many results of the highly politicised period of the 60s and 70s in the twentieth century, the term *extended vocal techniques* has been coined in order to differentiate them from the Western norm of the bourgeois opera that had its peak in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, extended vocal techniques were already applied much earlier.

As introduced through the composition *Pierrot Lunaire*, premiered 2012, Arnold Schönberg’s *Sprechgesang* might be regarded as one of those starting points. Also, around that time *dadaism* and Italian *futurism* emerged all of which certainly had an impact on the vocal arts by using the potential of the voice in extended and hitherto unfamiliar ways. In regards to the history of extended vocal techniques, the collaborations of seminal vocal performer Cathy Berberian with Luciano Berio and John Cage, dating back to the 50s, have become very influential. It was the first time in Western music history that genre-typical boundaries were overruled by allowing the encounter of singing and speaking techniques from most different areas. If we then, in contrast, also take into account those vocal techniques that are applied in non-Western cultures by calling them *extended*, an aspect of postcolonial thinking comes to the fore. For the techniques used in the respective cultures are inherent in *their* approach to vocal expression, whereas the Western model, for them, has by no means any relevance. Therefore the term *extended vocal techniques* has gained an anachronistic and problematic overtone that I prefer to avoid. However, despite the inconsistency involved, I still use it because it has become an established term in the context of Western culture, known to a broader audience for denoting the vast field of vocal practices that all have in common to go beyond the norm. At this juncture it should be noted that these implications of an imprecise terminology have also—besides other reasons—become a driving force for me to propose the notion of the *multivocal voice*.
=>> maybe this could/should go into the main text, although it’s the ‘tone’ which doesn’t seem to suit the main manifesto which is why I put it into the footnotes !!!!!!!?????

¹⁰ *Playing with Panache* (2015), Vimeo video “PLAYING WITH PANACHE by Alex Nowitz” (2:02) posted by Alex Nowitz on 16 October 2016, <http://vimeo.com/187540317> [Last accessed 27 May 2018].

¹¹ For more information on the instrument *strophonion* see Alex Nowitz, ‘Designing and Playing the Strophonion: Extending vocal art performance using a custom digital musical instrument’, eContact! 18.3 — Sonic DIY: Repurposing the Creative Self (December 2016), https://econtact.ca/18_3/nowitz_strophonion.html [Last accessed 27 April 2018].

¹² From Greek *atmos* meaning *vapour* and *sphaera* meaning *zone, sphere or ball*.

¹³ French otorhinolaryngologist, Alfred A. Tomatis, was specialised in the treatment of singers, researched and disclosed the complex interplay of physiological and psychoacoustic processes that take place during the act of singing. ‘The listening faculty requires optimal hearing to control the whole ear, both vestibule and cochlea. [...] The vestibule produces an enormous flow of stimuli, feeding the cerebral cortex with information received through its connections to the muscles and joints and to its action over the entire skeleton. When it is functioning well the cochlea also adds important stimulation central to listening. [...] So it makes sense when someone doesn't want to listen he may turn his back or step aside, so that he presents the parts of his body that has fewer sound receptors. [...] When one person speaks to another, the listener is made to experience the same proprioceptive sensations as the speaker and frequently the listener models his body posture on that of the speaker. When the listener resonates in his body, his posture and his verticality are affected and he opens himself up to receive the speaker's words. The entire peripheral nervous system, both afferent and efferent, galvanizes. The information it sends sparks sensory responses towards the central nervous system, and involves the whole organism, including the cerebral cortex itself. The cochlea stimulates virtually the entire brain, while the vestibule controls the rest of the motor and sensory nervous system. In order to listen, the cochlea must summon the vestibule to position the body so it can receive the maximum amount of stimulation through postural responses, including the energy supplied by resistance to gravity and the presentation of sound receptors in the skin on the front of the body, etc.’ (Tomatis, pp. 83-84). Furthermore, Tomatis points toward the transmission of sound through bones: ‘In singing posture, the larynx sends resonance to the bones that touch it. The spinal column then sets all structures that touch it into resonance. Once the bones begin to sing, they cause the cavities to vibrate. The voice becomes vibrant, and more harmonious. It is the resonance emanating from every bone in the body that causes this change’ (Ibid., p. 89).

¹⁴ Compare Mersch, *Ereignis und Aura*, p. 142.

¹⁵ During the first live presentation of the *Manifesto of the Multivocal Voice* as a lecture-performance at the 9th SAR International Conference On Artistic Research with the provocative title ‘Artistic Research will Eat Itself’ in Plymouth on 12 April 2018 (see: <http://www.sarconference2018.org/>), the English translation of the original was presented by slides simultaneously while I was reading the same paragraph in German:

‘Die Stimme im Allgemeinen trägt ein Moment in sich, das den Gegenüber, also den Anderen, in Bewegung setzt. Die von der Stimme ausgelöste Bewegung kann sich rein innerlich vollziehen, etwa in Form einer emotionalen Bewegtheit, die zu einer bestimmten Stimmung führt. Oder aber die Bewegtheit drückt sich äußerlich in diversem Mimen- und Gestenspiel aus. Sogar der ganze Körper kann betroffen sein, was sich im Ausdruck des Tanzes zeigen kann. Tatsache ist, dass die Stimme den Anderen berührt, und zwar dadurch, dass sie Schallwellen erzeugt und aussendet, die das Trommelfell und den gesamten Hörapparat des Gegenübers in Schwingung versetzt. Die Stimme und die vielstimmige in besonderem Maße sendet und empfängt ununterbrochen. Das, was an ihr haftet, ist einzig der Augenblick (blink of the eye) und die Gewissheit des Entgegenkommenden. Sie entsteht im Moment und existiert durch das, was kommt. Letzteres kann in zweifacher Weise verstanden werden, entweder als kommendes Stimmklangmaterial oder als Reaktion des Empfängers, der beeinflussend auf den Stimmproduktionsvorgang einwirkt. Der Empfänger ist nie Teil einer trägen Masse, sondern immer auch Mitspieler’ (Nowitz, unpublished).

¹⁶ ‘Art is the setting-itself-to-work of truth’, in Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, p. 49. Also see ‘one essential way in which truth establishes itself in the beings it has opened up is its setting-itself-into-the-work’ (Ibid., p. 37).

¹⁷ The word *real-time* is borrowed from computer sciences describing real-time computing systems as being responsive within a specified time range. In the context of music transmission, a latency of between 6 and 20 milliseconds is considered to be tolerable. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Real-time_computing (Last accessed 28 April 2018). Also, note that *real-time* in combination with *composition* or *music* can have a slightly different meaning: *real* in the sense of *authentic*. During the 90s of the twentieth century, in Berlin, the term *real-time composition* has been proposed, even though the music was improvised, in order to indicate a difference to the notion of *improvisation* that has its roots in Jazz and Free-Jazz music. The German equivalent term of real-time music, *Echtzeitmusik*, puts emphasis on the authentic quality of music performed in the moment. The term *Echtzeitmusik* has been coined by a group of young musicians (at that time) which I was part of, performing in various ensembles, such as the trio *No Doctor* together with Nicholas Bussmann and Hanno Leichtmann or Tony Buck’s *Astro-Peril*, all of which performed at newly found venues in East Berlin such as the Anorak or Lychi 60 (now called Ausland). ‘The introduction of the term *Echtzeitmusik* reflected an attempt to distinguish itself from Berlin free improvisation and free jazz circles, which were identified with FMP and the Total Music Meeting festival. Although connections were present in the beginning, when for example the ensemble Butch Morris Berlin Skyscraper at the Total Music Meeting in 1995 featured a number of musicians from Anorak, the generational gap seemed too great and the aesthetics and musical goals too different’ (Blažanović, pp. 29-52, p. 39). To gain further insights into the author’s involvement in the Berlin *Echtzeitmusik* community, see also footnote 15 on p. 50 as well as the photo documentations on p. 56 and p. 107.

¹⁸ Alex Nowitz, *Untitled* (2016) for voice, strophonion and one chair to be ignored, Vimeo video “UNTITLED by Alex Nowitz” (3:29) posted by Alex Nowitz on 16 October 2016, <http://vimeo.com/187541243> [Last accessed 26 May 2018].

¹⁹ 'Cybernetics is the science of the mechanisms of control. Although this claims to be a new science, it is based on principles as old as time. Plato touches on these laws in his writings about government. They are as impossible to transgress as they are timeless. In cybernetic terms, a system is regulated when its functioning is subject to a control. Each organ of the human body controls a specific function' (Tomatis, p. 65).

²⁰ 'There is nothing complicated about singing. Every sound that a singer makes follows rules that are controlled by the listening function' (Ibid., p. 65).

²¹ The English and literal translation of *Stimmkörper* is 'voice body' or 'vocal body' and denotes the entirety of the voice in the body, thus all essential parts of the vocal apparatus, i.e. lungs (breath), larynx (vocal production), pharynx (amplification tube), tongue, palate, teeth and lips all of which are shaping timbre and the final sound of the voice. Therefore, the term belongs to the realm of physiology and should not be confused with the, nevertheless, fascinating conception of the 'vocalic body' or 'voice-body' as elaborated by Steven Connor analysing the cultural history of ventriloquism: 'The principle of the vocalic body is simple. Voices are produced by bodies: but can also themselves produce bodies. The vocalic body is the idea—which can take the form of dream, fantasy, ideal, theological doctrine, or hallucination—of a surrogate or secondary body, a projection of a new way of having or being a body, formed and sustained out of the autonomous operations of the voice. The history of ventriloquism is to be understood partly in terms of the repertoire of imagings or incarnations it provides for these autonomous voice-bodies. It shows us clearly that human beings in many different cultural settings find the experience of a sourceless sound uncomfortable, and the experience of a sourceless voice intolerable' (see the sub-chapter 'The Vocalic Body' in Connor, pp. 35-43). After asking 'What kind of thing is a vocalic body?' and 'What sorts of vocalic bodies are there?' Connor amends: 'Such bodies are not fixed and finite, nor are they summarizable in the form of a typology, precisely because we are always able to imagine and enact new forms of voice-body. The leading characteristic of the voice-body is to be a body-in-invention, an impossible, imaginary body in the course of being found and formed' (Ibid., 36).

²² 'The whole art is to abandon yourself, to allow all the regulatory processes, or cybernetic loops, to operate by themselves. A cybernetic loop is a circuit that has a circular path, with the end returning to the beginning. The act of singing is controlled by a number of such circuits. [...] The organ of control for singing is the ear and the whole system is under control of the listening function' (Tomatis, p. 65). Moreover, giving a striking example for cybernetic control, he says: '[...] when we hear ourselves, we hear a preponderance of lows. When we listen to our own voice on a recording, we are always surprised to hear how we sound. While making sounds in a room with good reverberation, the feedback we get allows us to control high and medium frequencies as well as lows. This is an example of cybernetic control. Singing obeys the same laws of regulation and hearing becomes listening' (Ibid., p. 67). Eventually Tomatis labels the mutually dependent processes of the act of singing and controlling as 'auditory-vocal loops' or 'control loops' parsing them in detail as 'audio-facial loop', 'audio-mandibular

loop', 'audio-larynx loop', 'audio-pharyngeal loop', 'audio-lingual loop', 'audio-thoracic loop', 'audio-mouth loop', 'audio-nasal loop', 'audio-recurrential loop', 'audio-lumbar-sacral loop', 'audio-cervical loop' and the 'audio-corporeal loop' (Ibid., pp. 67-76).

²³ 'The voice is always divided in itself (different to itself and differentiating itself) and, therefore, there isn't the one voice, but a multiplicity of voices within singular voices' (my translation of Nancy, p. 189).

²⁴ The Italian philosopher and feminist thinker, Adriana Cavarero, puts emphasis on the notion of 'uniqueness' which, from the start, is an intrinsic part of every single voice: 'In the uniqueness that makes itself heard as voice, there is an embodied existent, or rather, a "being-there" [*esserci*] in its radical finitude, here and now. The sphere of the vocal implies the ontological plane and anchors it to the existence of singular beings who invoke one another contextually. From the maternal scene onward, the voice manifests the *unique being* of each human being, and his or her spontaneous self-communication according to the rhythms of a sonorous relation. In this sense, the ontological horizon that is disclosed by the voice—or what we want to call a *vocal ontology of uniqueness*—stands in contrast to the various ontologies of fictitious entities that the philosophical tradition, over the course of its historical development, designates with names like "man", "subject", "individual"' (see the chapter 'A Vocal Ontology of Uniqueness', Cavarero, pp. 173 - 182).

²⁵ And, in addition, directors that repeatedly try to transpose the works of the old masters (*Alte Meister*) into a contemporary setting by imposing the *Zeitgeist* on them don't change much in regards to the matter as described.

²⁶ As opposed to follow tracings, the authors Deleuze/Guattari favor the idea of making a map based on the metaphorical notion of the 'rhizome' which they elucidate as follows: "The tree articulates and hierarchizes tracings; tracings are like the leaves of a tree. The rhizome is altogether different, *a map and not a tracing*. Make a map, not a tracing. The orchid does not reproduce the tracing of the wasp; it forms a map with the wasp, in a rhizome. What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency. It is itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to the constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways; in this sense, the burrow is an animal rhizome, and sometimes maintains a clear distinction between the line of flight as passageway and storage or living strata (cf. the muskrat). A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back to the 'same'. The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged 'competence'". See 'Introduction: Rhizome' in Deleuze/Guattari, pp. 1-27 (p. 12). Deleuze/Guattari continue

their explication by saying: "Let us summarize the principal characteristics of a rhizome: unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. The rhizome [...] is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and which it overflows. [...] Unlike the tree, the rhizome is not the object of reproduction: neither external production as image-tree nor internal production as tree-structure. The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots" (Ibid., p. 21 – 22, all my underlinings).

²⁷ In the realm of contemporary philosophy and psychoanalysis a quite vibrant discourse exists about what the voice—looked upon as object—is or, better said, could be. Here I confine myself to referring to four authors, all of which present stunning reasonings, as they are Michel Poizat and Mladen Dolar, Brendon LaBelle and Steven Connor.

In his book *The Angel's Cry*, Poizat opens the chapter 'The Vocal Object' by introducing the psychoanalytic approach in the following way: 'When psychoanalysis speaks of the vocal object, however, it is not referring to these 'reified' forms the voice can take, however useful they may be to illustrate certain properties of the voice as object. What psychoanalysis describes is something else, a process inherent in each individual, a process by which the voice is constituted as an object, an object of a drive, and thereby is constituted as lost from the very outset, independent of any reification into a tangible object of 'reality,' as that term is usually understood'. See 'The Vocal Object' in Michel Poizat, pp. 99-106 (p. 99). In another paragraph entitled as 'The Eroticism of the Voice', referring to Jacques Lacan and his concept of the *objet petit a*, Poizat notes: 'With Lacan the voice takes its place alongside the other objects of drives identified by Freud: oral object (the breast), anal object (feces), genital object (the penis). This might help explain the frequent association of the vocal with the sexual—without reducing the former to the latter—and may clarify a matter usually addressed only with confusion' (Ibid., p. 105). At this point, Poizat quotes Victor Andréossy: "'The strange power of singing resides essentially in the emotion it sets off. And if we look more closely, we can see that this emotion itself has its origin in the 'strongest of feelings,' in those of sexual arousal.'", in Victor Andréossy, *L'Esprit du chant* (1949; rpt. Plan de la Tour: Éditions d'Aujourd'hui, 1979), p. 122, as quoted in Poizat, p. 105. Subsequently Poizat adds the following paragraph: 'From the Lacanian perspective, it is as object of a drive (the "invocatory" drive) that the voice is inserted into an eroticizing system, which, like all systems built around drives, consists of the object's source (structured as an orifice, as a rim: in this case, the ear); its goal—a satisfaction; and its "impetus"—the tension it engenders by being sought, its characteristic circular trajectory ("to make itself heard"). The eroticization of the voice follows from its elevation to object status according to modalities that I have attempted to describe and has little to do with its role as a mark of sexual difference, the feminine voice signaling the female sex, the masculine voice the male sex. In fact, the voices considered most erotic, those that hold the greatest fascination for the listener, whether male or female, are voices that may be called trans-sexual—the deep voice in a woman (think of Kathleen Ferrier, or Marlene Dietrich, the "blue angel"), the high voice in a man (the castrato, the tenor). The familiar relationships between eroticism and voice originate simply from the

participation of the voice as such in a network of drives' (Ibid., p. 105).

Mladen Dolar also follows a Lacanian thread by tracing the prominent term of the *objet petit a*, and by bringing up the acousmatic dimension of the voice, that of ventriloquism: 'The source of the voice can never be seen, it stems from an undisclosed and structurally concealed interior, it cannot possibly match what we can see. [...] Every emission of the voice is by its very essence *ventriloquism*. Ventriloquism pertains to voice as such, to its inherent acousmatic character: the voice comes from inside the body, the belly, the stomach—from something incompatible with and irreducible to the activity of the mouth. The fact that we see the aperture does not demystify the voice; on the contrary, it enhances the enigma' (Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, p. 70). See also 'The Object Voice' in Dolar, *Gaze and Voice as Love Objects*, pp. 7-31.

Brendon LaBelle, on the other hand, rather opposes Dolar's approach as expressed in the above quote. At first LaBelle follows Dolar's argument: 'While it may come from my body, it never quite belongs to me; in short, it brings me into the world according to a fundamental separation from myself. This leads Dolar to map the voice as *object* whose essential condition is determined by a fundamental gap between what we see and what we hear, between this voice and this body' (LaBelle, p. 4). LaBelle raises a number of gripping questions from where he extrapolates his motivation for the book: 'In contrast, might the voice be thought of more as a tension—a tensed link, a flexed respiration, and equally, a struggle to *constitute* the body, rather than a disembodied sound? Not so much an object, but rather a primary production of a body? A body trying to be a subject? [...] As I present, it is my view that the mouth acts to mobilize an extended animate field, [...]. It is my interest to emphasize the voice as something expelled from the mouth, but which *never* leaves me behind—this is both the promise of the voice and its ultimate problematic' (Ibid., p. 5). Eventually, referring to Steven Connor, he concludes by saying: 'The voice does not move away from my body, but rather it carries it forward—the voice *stretches* me; it drags me along, as a body bound to its politics and poetics, its accents and dialectics, its grammars, as well as its handicaps' (Ibid., p. 5). See also Connor, 'The Strains of the Voice', p. 9.

²⁸ Compare LaBelle's chapter 'Subject' in which his reasoning on the voice, whether it should be considered as object or subject, becomes fully convincing which I can easily assent to: '[...] the "disembodied voice," the "voice object," and the primary ventriloquism of voicing often espoused is never the whole story: it is my view that the voice is also a *full body*, always already a *voice subject*, rich with intentions and meanings; sexed and gendered, classed and raced, accented, situated, and inflected by the intensities of numerous markings and their performance (inscriptions, erasures, recitals...). I would argue that the voice is always identified [...]; it is flexed by the body, by the subject in all its complicated vitality. Someone (or *something*) speaks to me, and it is not the voice I hear, but rather the body, the subject; not a disembodied intensity, a speech without body, but as *someone* that enters, intrudes, demands, or requests, and that also seeks. A voice, as I understand it, does not aspire to be an object' (LaBelle, pp. 5 – 6).

Adriana Cavarero argues in a similar way and criticises modern philosophy because of the supremacy of the gaze (eye) over the voice (ear) by pointing at the acoustic sphere and the uniqueness of the voice: 'The voice belongs to the living; it

communicates the presence of an existent in flesh and bone; it signals a throat, a particular body. For this reason, there is a certain wisdom on those modern languages that—breaking with ancient Greek, for example—distinguish “voice” and “sound” with two different words’ (Cavarero, p. 177). In ancient Greek *phone* means both voice and sound. Cavarero subsequently points out: ‘Every human is obviously a sound, an acoustic vibration among others, which is measurable like all other sounds; but it is only as human that the voice comes to be perceived as unique. This means that uniqueness resounds in the human voice; or, in the human voice, uniqueness makes itself sound. The ear, its natural destination, perceives this unique sound without any effort, no matter what words are spoken. No matter what you say, I know that the voice is yours. [...] The voice is always unique, and the ear recognizes it as such. Indeed, the ear perceives the voice’s uniqueness even when, never having heard it before, it cannot “recognize” this voice. | Unlike the gaze, the voice is always, irremediably relational. It does not allow a detached focus on the object because, properly speaking, it has no object. The voice vibrates in the air, striking the ear of the other, even when it does not mean to do so’ (Ibid., 177 – 178).

²⁹ And the same applies conversely – artists from the experimental and improvising scene, as a rule, don’t think much of belcanto singing, its aesthetics and inscribed sociocultural culture of representation.

³⁰ See Husler, p. 35 - 37.

³¹ Compare chapter 10 of *A Thousand Plateaus* in which, as its title ‘1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible...’ suggests, Deleuze and Guattari have introduced the notion of *becoming*. Referring to Dominique Fernandez, a French writer of novels and essays exploring homosexual experiences and creativity, they argue that, in music, the duality of man or woman has vanished: ‘Dominique Fernandez [...] shows, fortunately refraining from any psychoanalytic discussion of a link between music and castration, that the musical problem of the machinery of the voice necessarily implies the abolition of the overall dualism machine, in other words, the molar formation assigning voices to the “man or woman”. Being a man *or* a woman no longer exists in music’ (Deleuze/Guattari, p. 353 - 54). ‘Fernandez demonstrates the presence of becomings-woman, becomings-child in vocal music. Then he decries the rise of instrumental and orchestral music; he is particularly critical of Verdi and Wagner for having resexualised the voice, for having restored the binary machine in response to the requirements of capitalism, which wants a man to be a man and a woman a woman [...]’ (Ibid., p. 358).

Compare also with Sabine Till who, in *Die Stimme zwischen Immanenz und Transzendenz*, reflects on the same matter: ‘Gerade die “musikalische Stimme”, so Deleuze, ist in ein Werden eingebunden, das Dualitäten wie etwa die von männlich/weiblich hinter sich lässt, das keine Entscheidung für “Mann oder Frau” braucht. Eben dies wirft Deleuze in Bezug auf die verlautbare Stimme in der Oper Verdi und Wagner vor: Sie hätten die Stimmen wieder Geschlechtern zugeordnet, wo die Stimme sich doch vielmehr im Übergang zwischen den Geschlechtern befinde’ (Sabine Till, p. 130).

³² For all of those readers who may detect a postcolonial issue in applying harmonic low-tone singing techniques, I'd like to counter with a quote by composer and vocalist Michael Edward Edgerton who points out that 'harmonic singing has been reported to have originated around inner Asia, most notably from Tuva and Mongolia. However, harmonics are universal and are the physical basis behind the quality and strength of the sound produced by instruments (including voice). Although the original style may have originated in central Asia, no one should claim ownership of harmonic reinforcement [...]. [...] while elements of a codified tradition may be claimed by members of a particular society, an expression using harmonics disembodied from the culturally identified tradition should be seen for what it is—a musical resource available to all' (Edgerton, p. 60).

³³ When touring through Russia in 2002, together with pianist Vladimir Miller, I was told by several people I met along the way that some bass singers coming from Bulgarian and Russian singing traditions are able to blend between the two practices. Unfortunately, at the moment I don't have any examples of practitioners to confirm this assertion.

³⁴ The concept of and distinction between the other and the Other has its roots in psychoanalysis stemming from Sigmund Freud who uses 'the term other speaking of both *der Andere* (the other person) and *das Andere* (otherness)' (Evans, p. 135). Influenced also by Parmenides on the one hand and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel on the other, French psychoanalytic Jacques Lacan further developed this concept and drew a distinction between the little other and the big Other accordingly. (Ibid., pp. 135-136). See also the chapter 'Introduction of the big Other' in Lacan, pp. 235 – 47.

³⁵ And this could be easy since we are, in technological terms, more connected today than ever before. Living in the age of globalisation and digitisation, we are in fact living in a 'global village', as Marshall McLuhan predicted already in 1964. However, technological progress as we are about to discover doesn't necessarily always support an idea of shaking off fears. Even though one would assume that the global interconnectedness of people would reduce fear of the Other, quite the opposite is the case. Internet offers endless opportunities to propagate hatred and discord and to amplify anxiety while social media platforms have the power to seduce the user to live in a bubble cut off from real life which eventually fosters segregation and exclusion. McLuhan considered technology as extensions of man. The car (or bike) is an extension of the running legs, the computer (or pencil) an extension of the writing hands, glasses an extension of our eyes, the loudspeakers an extension of our ears, etc. In consequence, technology as available at the current time is an extension of our consciousness, that has changed to a remarkable degree within an incredibly short period of time. The internet addresses and thus concerns the main senses. We cannot tell at the moment what the effects, as enormous as they are, might entail. With regard to social media, technology has already conquered the social sphere, meaning both the public and private sphere, and therefore changed, at a tremendous speed, the behavioural standards. The ability to develop respect and empathy for others seems to decline when the face-to-face communication is abandoned for the sake of quick electronic comments and instant postings. In this regard, considering the technological

progress that we are engendering and at the same time confronted with, the utopian idea of a sustainable way of living together, a vision of genuine solidarity and the willingness for unconditional sharing seems to drift away from us. On top of all this, no matter how multifarious the reasons are, the gap between poor and rich become increasingly bigger, at an unchecked velocity, entailing hierarchical structures, imbalance and injustice on a global scale, all of which accelerate the planet's already severe situation ranging from climate change and its dramatic effects to the devastating impacts on the living conditions of people (those who survived!) in warzones from the Middle East, just to name a few...

³⁶ French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty expressed it bit differently but nevertheless pointed to the same direction saying 'our view of man will remain superficial so long as we do not return to this origin, so long as we do not rediscover the primordial silence beneath the noise of words, and so long as we do not describe the gesture that breaks this silence' (Merleau-Ponty, p. 190).

³⁷ This is not to be confused with the whistle register that denotes the highest possible register of the female voice according to the operatic singing tradition from the Western culture.

³⁸ See Alex Nowitz, *Searching the Magpie* (2015), für Stimme und potenzielle Vögel, Vimeo video "*Searching the Magpie*" (3:44) posted on 1 May 2018 by Alex Nowitz, <https://vimeo.com/267405030> [Last accessed 1 May 2018].

³⁹ See Sabine Vogel's website: <http://www.sabvog.de/en/index.html> [Last accessed 29 April 2018]. For further information on the concept of 'Tuning-in' as environmental arts practice see her article with the eponymous title (Vogel, pp. 327 - 34).

⁴⁰ Compare Walter Benjamin's notion of the *Hier und Jetzt* which, he says, is the characteristic element that renders a work of art authentic, something only its original can provide. The literal translation into *here and now* is often eschewed. See the chapter 'The Work of Art in the Age of the Mechanical Reproduction' in Benjamin, pp. 211 – 44: 'Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. [...] The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity' (p. 214). Benjamin then introduces the notion of *Aura* in order to explain, on the basis of its copy, authenticity of a work of art: 'One might subsume the eliminated element in the term 'aura' and go on to say: that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art' (Ibid., p. 215).

⁴¹ Translated by myself from 'im Fluß des Zeitbewußtseins', I'm drawing here on Edmund Husserl's meditations on a phenomenology of internal time-consciousness (Husserl, p. 239 – 41). In this regard, see also two chapters written by Jacques Derrida, 'Signs and the Blink of an Eye' (Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, pp. 60 – 69) and 'The Voice That Keeps Silence' (ibid. pp. 70 – 87). Derrida's reflections can be confusing to the reader. Therefore I'd like to recommend the article 'The Voice: a Diagnosis' by American

philosopher and electronic musician, Brian Kane, providing a concise and thus recommendable entryway into the vast discourse on the voice in the humanities. He sheds light on the history of the discourse, elucidates the terminological differences between the antique Greek terms *logos*, *echos*, *topos* and *phone* and unfolds their combination modes, that he calls 'crossings'. Eventually he introduces *techne* as missing link that supports the presumption that the humanities are currently 'undergoing a vocal turn': 'By *techne*, I do not mean tools or instruments *per se*, but something broader. *Techne* includes both technologies and techniques alike. Under this heading we must consider the astounding variety of bodily and cultural techniques that subjects apply to themselves as well as the technologies that they employ to shape, define, and alter their experience. [...] A vocal technology or vocal technique can draw attention to the source of the voice or away from it; it can efface or underscore the vocal proposition; it can amplify its meaning or alter its timbre. We *must* include *techne*, in our model, or neglect it at our peril' (Kane, p. 104). Kane summarises by saying: 'The model I propose is driven by a demand for an account of the voice sensitive to the interdetermination of *logos*, *topos*, and *echos*; a model that resists the forgetting of *techne*; a model that relentlessly pursues the crossings of crossings; [...]' (Ibid., p. 107). Kane concludes by raising a question that, at least to a certain degree, comes full circle in regards to this footnote: 'We diagnosed a case of musicological catalepsy, a fixed pose at the crossing of *echos* and *topos*. The prescription? Perhaps a bit of homeopathy. Imitate the voice. If the voice moves—circulating from crossing to crossing—how could we ever hope to find it when frozen in place?' (Ibid., p. 107).

⁴² Compare Dolar's subchapter 'His Master's Voice, His Master's Ear' in which he describes the *listening* act as one of *obeying* (Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, p. 74 – 81).

⁴³ Russolo, p. 28. Of course this is only one aspect to be mentioned from Russolo's manifesto, p. 23 – 30.

⁴⁴ A possible translation might be 'speech-song' as, for example, Brian Massumi suggests in Deleuze/Guattari, p. 113.

⁴⁵ The world premiere of Arnold Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, composed for a speaking voice (*Sprechstimme*) and small chamber orchestra, took place on 16 October 1912 at the Choralionsaal in Berlin. See Griffiths, pp. 138 – 57 (p. 140). Certainly, there are also other great works to mention that, in 1913, left tremendous aesthetic footprints for all following descendants, valid until the present day, e.g. the ballet music for orchestra *Le Sacre du Printemps* by Igor Strawinsky. For further historical insights on the year of 1913 and the enormous impacts that the arts from all disciplines at that time had created, I recommend to read Florian Illies' *1913: The year before the storm*.
THIS WHOLE PARAGRAPH on 1913 NEEDS TO BE ADJUSTED IN THE GERMAN VERSION...!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!...

⁴⁶ The most prominent male protagonists of DADA are Tristan Tzara, Richard Hülsenbeck, Hugo Ball, Raoul Hausmann, Kurt Schwitters, but also Marcel Duchamp, John Heartfield,

Man Ray, Alfred Jarry, and Erik Satie. No less in quantity, but less known are the female dadaists, such as Hannah Höch, Beatrice Wood, Sophie Taeuber, Emmy Hennings, Clara Tice, Frida Kahlo, Florine Stettheimer, Mina Loy, Clara Tice, Toyen, Suzanne Duchamp Juliette Roche, Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, Katherine Sophie Dreier. For further information on the dada movement see See Raoul Schrott's *Dada 15/25: Dokumentation und chronologischer Überblick zu Tzara & Co.*

⁴⁷ For further insights on the difference between supraglottal and subglottal sound productions as well as on throat singing, such as the *Kargyraa* style from Tuva and Mongolia, see Edgerton, p. 21 - 23.

⁴⁸ With regard to the mal voice, Michael Edward Edgerton identifies three registers: the 'vocal fry', the 'modal register (chest)' and the 'falsetto register (loft)'. 'During the vocal fry, the vocal folds are thick and lax' producing an 'extremely low fundamental frequency'. 'In modal register, the folds are less lax, more periodic and with a higher' frequency, whereas 'in falsetto register, the vocal folds are thin and stretched tightly, and rarely feature complete closure of the glottis' (Edgerton, pp. 25-26).

⁴⁹ Nowitz, *Searching the Magpie* (2015).

⁵⁰ 'No art is imitative, no art can be imitative or figurative. [...] One imitates only if one fails, when one fails. The painter and musician do not imitate the animal, they become-animal at the same time as the animal becomes what they willed, at the deepest level of their concord with Nature. [...] Becoming is never imitating. When Hitchcock does birds, he does not reproduce bird calls, he produces an electronic sound like a field of intensities or a wave of vibrations, a continuous variation, like a terrible threat welling up inside us' (Deleuze/Guattari, p. 354 - 55).

⁵¹ In order to gain a better understanding about the sonic range and the qualities of consonantal sounds and other 'noise-sound'-related objects, as opposed to those sounds that are purely vowel-related, see Nowitz, [Mundfundstücke](#) (2017) or [Panache](#) (2015).
!!! OR: instead of Panache, use impro piece from 2015 session at fabrik Potsdam which hasn't been edited yet!!!

⁵² For an investigation on *reenactments* in the realm of digital music creation see Norbert Schnell's PhD thesis *Playing (with) Sound* (2013).

⁵³ Nietzsche, p. 60.

⁵⁴ In 1990, by the time the internet started to launch commercially, the original essay in French with the title *L'inertie polaire* by Paul Virilio was published raising the question 'where am I if I'm everywhere?'. See Virilio, *Polar Inertia*, pp. 71 - 87 (p. 83). By referring to various writings from the 30s of the twentieth century written by Edmund Husserl, e.g. *Die Erde bewegt sich nicht*, Virilio ponders the impact of new technologies on the notion of the here and now redefining body, space and time, and makes the assertion that inertia is the determining condition for the man of modern times. He quotes himself

from an earlier book claiming that 'It is hard to imagine a society that denied the body in the way that the soul has been more and more denied - and yet, that is what we are heading towards.' See Virilio, *L'Insécurité du territoire*, pp. 93ff., as referred to in Virilio, *Polar Inertia*, p. 86. Note that the German translation of the original title *L'inertie polaire* renders an oxymoron: 'racing standstill' (my translation from German into English).

⁵⁵ To give an example, I'd like to point to the master classes of the famous German baritone, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, who certainly was a fantastic interpreter of German Lied and of the operatic repertoire. He also merits recognition due to a numerous, not to say countless, amount of new works that he premiered for both the opera stage and the concert hall. What is striking though is the moment listening to the voices of his disciples. He created a whole generation of baritones that sounded exactly like him. I'm inclined to call them clones as their goal was to erase every tiny little aspect that may have sounded like and reminded them of themselves. This is a good example how voice education can go wrong ways or, in other words, it proves the manipulative powers of vocal pedagogy.

⁵⁶ Compare paragraph 2 of chapter 12, 'Research or Craftsmanship? Nine theses on the future of an education for the performing arts' by German composer and director Heiner Goebbels: 'Every craft, every technique is ideological. Voice training can extinguish the sound of a personality, can make the biography, the accent, the uniqueness of one's own voice inaudible, in order to conform to a given aesthetic standard. Similar things may be true for singing lessons or other areas – working on roles in actor training and the staging strategies in directing schools, which still struggle artistically to deal with non-psychological, postdramatic texts without dialogue or without linear narrative' (Goebbels, p. 77).

⁵⁷ According to the online dictionary of Merriam-Webster, *demagogy* is borrowed from the Greek 'demagogos' composed of 'demos', meaning 'the people', and 'agogos', meaning 'leading, impelling'. See <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/demagogy> [Last accessed 30 April 2018].

⁵⁸ Compare Deleuze/Guattari who, in the opening of chapter 4 'Postulates of the Linguistics', dismantle the language as used by the schoolmistress in the classroom situation teaching arithmetic or grammar: '[...] and order always and already concerns prior orders, which is why ordering is redundancy. The compulsory education machine does not communicate information; it imposes upon the child semiotic coordinates possessing all of the dual foundations of grammar (masculine-feminine, singular-plural, noun-verb, subject of the statement-subject of the enunciation, etc.). The elementary unit of language—the statement—is the order-word' (Deleuze/Guattari, p. 88). Further on they confirm the assertion by saying that 'newspaper, news, proceed by redundancy, in that they tell us what we must think, retain, expect, etc. Language is neither informational nor communicational. It is not the communication of information but something quite different: the transmission of order-words' (Deleuze/Guattari, p. 92). See also the chapter 'Politiken der Stimme (Deleuze)' in Till, pp. 145 - 70 (p. 148).

⁵⁹ In this latest regard, I refer to French philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas who, according to Sabine Till, proposed to emphasise rather on exteriority or an 'exposedness' of the subject than rely on the classical conception of subjectivity as a unity of consciousness. Sabine Till formulates it like this: 'It's not *self*-control or *self*-determination that characterises the subject because it never completely finds to itself. It doesn't form any unit because it's the Other who at the first place establishes (*gründen*) the subject. But through the determination of the subject by the Other, the Other simultaneously creates a fundamental split in the subject, that is to say the impossibility of a profound identity. Quite literally understood, only the Other evokes the subject' (my translation from Till, p. 19).

⁶⁰ Compare the artistic research project *Extending Voices, Sampling the Other* by Alex Nowitz in collaboration with the vocal ensemble Auditivvokal Dresden, <https://vimeo.com/219480673> [Last accessed 19 February 2018].

⁶¹ Listen to <https://soundcloud.com/alexnowitz/labyrinth> [Last accessed 27 April 2018].

⁶² For further information on EMS, Elektronmusikstudion Stockholm, see the website <http://elektronmusikstudion.se/> [Last accessed 29 April 2018].

⁶³ See <http://www.sonjakloevekorn.de/> [Last accessed 1 May 2018].

⁶⁴ For further information see the online article *Voice and Live-Electronics using Remotes as Gestural Controllers*, retrievable at http://econtact.ca/10_4/nowitz_voicelive.html [Last accessed 27 April 2018]. Note that, at the time writing the article, I haven't yet given the instrument the name *stimmflieger*. This happened after the article was published.

⁶⁵ In the context of an adult-male producing an elaborate and artful countertenor voice, compare the discussion on the notion of *becoming* by Deleuze/Guattari, e.g. 'becoming-music,' 'becoming-child,' 'becoming-woman,' 'becoming-intense,' etc. (Deleuze/Guattari, p. 348 – 60).