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PhD Project in Artistic Research “Co-creating Virtuosity”

- Music as a shared co-creative activity



- Reassess notions inherent to hierarchies and power relations



Summary

This PhD project challenges the historically problematic notion of virtuosity in Western art music from a performer's perspective and proposes a new conceptual and methodological approach that redefines virtuosity as a co-creative and ethical practice. It explores the dynamic interactions between composer, performer, instrument, score, and space, foregrounding a relational and context-sensitive model of music-making that challenges hierarchical traditions. The methodology combines co-creative **collaborations** with composers, **performances** of the resulting works in concert settings, and work-, site-, and context-responsive **reflections** developed through my own artistic practice. Through this process, the project investigates how performative knowledge can generate new artistic and theoretical insights, opening ways toward more inclusive and responsive performance practices.



Motivation

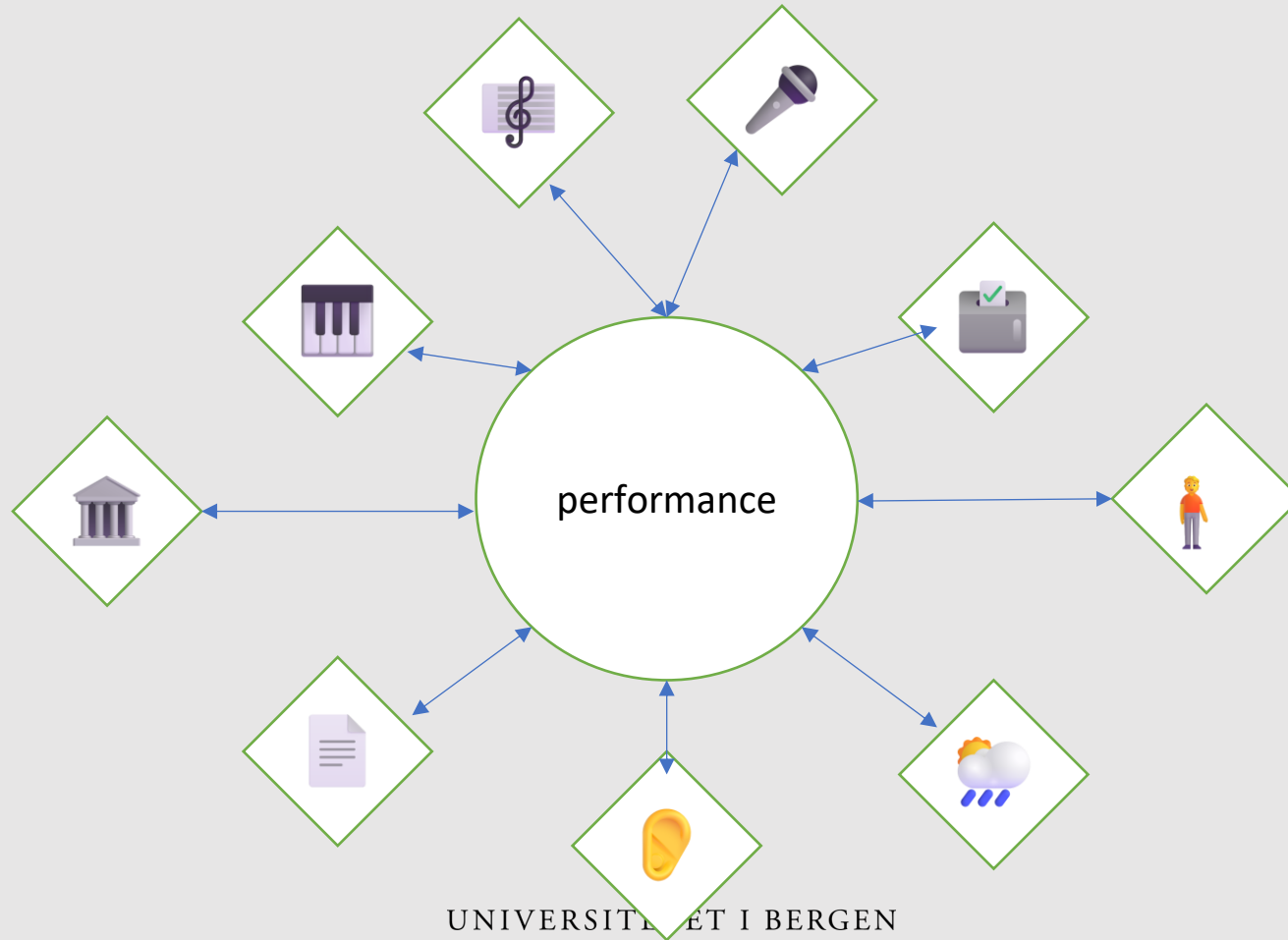
- Artistic practice
- Personal background
- Experience of collaborating with composers /theory



“Classical” model:

- [🎵 Composer] → [📄 Score] → [🎤 Performer] → [👂 Listener]

How it works in real time:



Hypothesis

Virtuosity can be seen not merely an indication of technical proficiency, but as a co-creative agency that allows the performer to develop their “music-instrumental knowledge” (Dogantan-Dack 2015, 171). It is implied by the structure of the composition and reveals itself in the act of performance. Thus, the notion of virtuosity is inherent in every performance.

Virtuosity is for the many – not for the few?

Research questions:

How does my embodied knowledge of my instrument affect the production of musical meaning at the moment of the performance?

To what extent is it relevant to talk about virtuosity as a co-creative agency which informs this knowledge and contributes to its transfer?



Choice of Methods

- Why artistic research?
- In which way I can use my practice?
- How to apply theory?



Methods

- **Literature review**
- **Co-creations with composers:** Arnt Håkon Ånesen, Francisco Corthey, Esajas Järnegaard, Annette Schmucki, Alfred Zimmerlin
- **Analytical discussions** with the composers
- **The Shared Space Concept**
- **Autoethnography:** Reflection through co-creative practice on my own practice.



Art or Research?

1. Artistic practice is central both to research process and research outcome.
2. “The artistic practice is to be accompanied by an explicit reflection, which, when the project is presented, grants others access into the working methods and insights that emerge from the artistic research” (Oslo National Acedemy of the Arts 11.1).



Way to PhD - Finding a Topic:

1. What questions/insights does your work touch upon that cannot be answered through theory alone?
2. Which aspects of your practice are underexplored or misunderstood?
3. Your curiosities? Tensions? Uncertainties?
4. What can only be understood from *within* the practice?



From Topic to Proposal:

1. Start with a clear *why* — what motivates the inquiry?
2. Put *why* in context — what has already been done in this direction?
3. Identify outcomes AND relevance.
4. Identify collaborations, contexts and methods (*how*)
5. Be honest about what is known and what is *uncertain*.



Proposal and more:

1. How feasible are the intentions?
2. Timeline and budget.
3. Short and long term “impact” (both for own practice and for the field)?
4. Ethics! (Not limited to legal requirements only).
5. Balance between clarity and flexibility!
6. Presentation format of the project and format of the reflections.



Risks and Failures:

1. Different types of risks: a) destructive b) constructive.
2. Uncertainty as a resource and inspiration.

Pitfalls:

1. Objectification of own practice. Descriptions instead of reflections.
2. “me-search.”



(Some) closing remarks

- Take inspiration and feedback whenever possible.
- Use interdisciplinary approaches (a.o. they may contribute to mapping out your methods).
- Document (and categorize) every stage of the process. Review and revisit.
- Experiment with different formats (notes, texts, blogs, videoessays). Try RC soon.
- Follow (and participate) in discussions around regulations and formal parts.
- Do not forget that your artistic work and reflective practice shapes the future of AR.



Thank you!



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Thank you!

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