

## PLACEMENT OF NARRATORS AND CHARACTERS IN A FABULA-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE

The question of character in illustration and what we may learn from sound and musicology is the overarching question in the work package *Sound as Illustration* and is treated as a separate text. Here, we only discuss aspects of character relevant for this performance, such as the employment of characters in our narrative:

In the performance Andino and I are presenters and artistic researchers. These positions are real but become part of the storytelling, and it could therefore be correct to place us as characters in this setting. Dressed in black we keep our bodies in poses that signify we hold an authority over the narration. With gestures we point to information on screen and towards the audience. With markers (in the video) and arrows (in the exposition) we draw attention to parts of information, and deliberately hide other parts. We control the audience's point of view and provide angles for assessing the narrative information, what Genette calls focalization (Genette, [1972] 1980). We act as narrator-focalizers.

According to narrative theory, the events in a fabula may either consist of a series of events that are either supposed to have taken place (the suspension of disbelief characteristic of fiction) or that really have taken place (historiographical or biographical narratives). Since narration entails focalization, the primary narrator of a narrative is always a primary narrator-focalizer (Jong, 2014). Different modes of telling should be identified and named, suggests Anniki Kaivola-Bregenhøj, [...] performance is determined not only by genre but by its context. (Kaivola-Bregenhøj, 2011). All this is relevant to the field of illustration; practitioners may find themselves in , for example when making auto-ethnographic graphic novels.

The prelude begins with the video of me (Kramer) walking in the open landscape in Siberia. There is a metadiegetic level here, where I act as as a narrator-character in “screen-reality-Siberia” and at the same time is present as narrator-focalizer in “reality-in-Bergen” in the room with the audience. Andino, on the other hand, is constant in her role as narrator-focalizer inside the room. Equally relevant is the position the researcher/illustrator takes to the role of the character in her plot.

## CHARACTER-DRIVEN OR PLOT DRIVEN NARRATION

According to Henry James theory, character and action is interconnected. In a much-quoted passage from *The Theory of Fiction* (1884/1972) (James, 1972) he writes: “What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?” James positions himself differently than Tzvetan Todorov, who describes the dynamics in character-driven narratives, beginning with equilibrium, which is broken, the protagonist realizes the disruption and attempts to resolve it, to return to a new equilibrium. The struggles have transformed the character to some degree.

This is of course a pattern that fits well in theory on fiction and problematic in context of a non-fiction narrative. There were several dramatic events that changed conditions in Z's life: Music introduced as a compulsory activity from an early age under strict control from his dominating father, who died when he was eighteen and probably left the family without economic support, his mothers return to Austria i 1938, the breakout of WWII, the sinking of the prisoner ship Palatia etc. But we cannot know anything about the actual impact these events had to his way of thinking, feeling or acting, nor to his character ie. his own thinking about ethics and conduct.