

MUUTTUVA SÄVELTÄJÄ / BECOMING COMPOSER

— kohti dialogista käytäntöä / towards dialogical practise

INTRODUCTION

The starting point of my postgraduate studies was to look closely at the relationship between a composer and an audience through my own artistic work. In other art fields, like in theatre, dance and visual arts, artists have increasingly begun to seek communal means for the artistic activity. Also, a new way of thinking and rephrasing the concept of 'performance' has effected considerably to different manifestations of meeting audiences. As a composer, I would like to bring these different approaches to my compositional agency.

During the process I have defined my research problem in the following way: *how the composer's practise could be opened from the point of view of shared authorship and communality.*

When we work as composers in traditional setting of art music, we do not often face the audience directly, but we need musicians to interpret our ideas. In my ongoing research I have tried to 're'position me, both theoretically and in practice, so that I could open the composing process at an earlier stage to collaborators, performers and public. All my projects have something to do with shared authorship and collaboration. In my thesis I have defined composition as a communal practise very broadly as an activity that is done together with different working groups and communities. In particular, I am interested in dialogical processes in which an art work is done by negotiating and interacting with other people.

In my research question, it is not essential that a composer would work exactly like a community artist, but that a composer is allowed to think of new kinds of author-positions in relation to a performance and audiences. As if a composer is released from the historical role as an individual creator. My research intention is emancipatory. I try to influence the institutional frame-work as well as collaborative partners. My goal is to make collaborative and dialogical processes possible in the future as one form of compositional activity.

There is also a general change in artist's work and practise in the society. According to my own experience, multidisciplinary art projects are increasingly taking place in the form of democratic group work. Occasionally composers' traditional working practise is not sufficient to carry out these new forms of communication. In addition to group work skills, multidisciplinary projects often involve productional knowlegde and needs that might vary considera-

bly in different art fields. In my artistic projects, I have tried to expand my working methods so that they could respond to challenges of today's changing society.

ARTISTIC PROJECTS

1. Radio-opera: *Kylmän maan kuningatar* – Queen of the Cold Land

Duration: 80'

Libretto: Tommi Kinnunen ja Riikka Talvitie

Dramaturge: Juha-Pekka Hotinen / YLE

Director: Anni Klein

Sound Designer: Heidi Soidinsalo

Producer: Pekka Savolainen / Yle Drama / Radio Theatre

More Information:

<https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2017/12/02/queen-of-the-cold-land>

<https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2017/11/15/kylman-maan-kuningatar-on-ainutlaatuinen-radiotavarten-tehty-ooppera>

The Finnish Broadcasting Company commissioned a radio-opera *The Queen of the Cold Land* which is based on the theatre play *Aino@Kalevala.fi* by writer Tommi Kinnunen. The libretto is a sort of rewriting of Kalevala – a present-day version of some abstract life situations. *The Queen of the Cold Land* is a story in which everyone wants their voice to be heard. It is built from dozens of national hymns, myths from the Finnish epic Kalevala, different norms and attempts to become liberated from them. The story spirals through various episodes and constantly changing times and places.

The aim of the working group was to look at Kalevala from a socio-historical point of view. Kalevala is not qualified as a source of Finnish mythology because the mythical images of folk poems have been transformed and merged into new entities by Elias Lönnrot. Lönnrot himself, in his preface to the first version of Kalevala, has stated that the entity he has designed is only one possible alternative. On the other hand, Lönnrot's goal was not only to collect poems and to propose them as a coherent epic, but the goals went together with the nationalist idea to create a common image of the past, customs and culture of Finnish people.

The opera is talking about diversity and dealing with several issues like sexual identity, nationality and naming. As a composer, I would state that the main theme of the opera is nationalism or rather the future of national states. This theme is presented by musical material. The music consists of orchestral music (RSO), chamber music (Trygg-Kuusijärvi-Lassila -trio), operatic and folk singing combined with radiophonic possibilities. The composition is based on a variety of materials. The most extensive material consists of national anthems by different states and peoples. In addition to these I use folk music, war songs, wedding anthems and lullabies. Music does not stop at one place or time, but circulates around the globe by borrowing material from independent states as well as from smaller local communities.

2. Experimental video: Omakuva – Self-portrait

Duration: 18'

Composing, performing, filming and editing by Riikka Talvitie

In this video work I want to expand my compositional thinking, – arranging elements in time – to visual and conceptual expression. The video material immediately refers to the history of performing arts, video art and body art from the 1960s to 70s and asks what it means when an artist uses herself as material.

The video consists of four different elements: fictional discussions between the composer and the oboist, the bodily improvisations by the oboist, the composer's reflections and the final composition, which is performed on the concert stage. The end result is some kind of documentary presentation about composing. The core issue in the work is the relationship between the composer and the performer, which is presented in a strange way: I perform both persons at the same time. Paradoxically, I do the video alone but I seek for shared authorship. How could the process be opened to a collaboration with a musician or with another composer?

It is also possible that I would continue this project into the direction of shared authorship by another video work.

3. Dance performance: "Hullut – Insane"

Duration: 90'-100'

Choreography: Sanna Kekäläinen

Performers: Sanna Kekäläinen and Janne Marja-aho

Production: K&C – Kekäläinen & Company
http://www.kekalainencompany.net/works_hullut.html

The dance performance *Hullut* was performed in Stoa in Helsinki between 24th of January and 4th of February 2018. There were six performances. The theme of the work was insanity.

Originally in my research plan my aim was to set a clearly different starting point for this project compared to the usual practise. I was supposed to be on the stage playing oboe with two dancers. The idea was to study what does it mean bodily to be a composer and a musician. I was planning the performance with Sanna Kekäläinen for a long time but suddenly (due to her personal reasons) she changed the whole concept. So my role as a performer was removed and compositional plans were transformed totally. Finally, I composed two separate things: 1) a 30-minutes-long tape which was played in lobby before and after the performance and 2) a 30-minute-long live-mixing-session which I carried out in each performance.

Due to this radical change of outcome I would like leave this project out of my doctoral studies and change it with another one. I will discuss about this change first with my pre-examiner and if he thinks it is necessary I will submit a new proposition to the Academic Council.

4. Composition Recital / Performance art: Mimesis, Metaphor, Modeling

— a cycle for 2 pianos, live-electronics and video

Duration: 60'

Performers: 2 pianists and a composer

Time: open (autumn 2019 or spring 2020)

In this project I play with the really fundamental concepts of art: *mimesis, metaphor and modeling*. How can a composer imitate nature or reality? My intuitive basic assumption is that modeling is a composer's *mimesis* today.

In the cycle I will return to the roots of modeling to look at the relationship between music and mathematical models as well as physical phenomena. The piano cycle consists of 12 movements, each of which is a kind of study on modeling and, on the other hand, a study about how I, as a composer, am modeling phenomena that are commonly perceived, together with the audience.

The piano cycle works as a method for reflecting on the following questions: Is modeling by means of art possible? What is the relationship between modeling and metaphor? What is the boundary between the modeling and the expression of the composer? And generally, is mimesis still a usable concept to describe what a composer expresses?

To get closer to the research phenomena I will "open" the work concept and allow performing and visual elements inside. The idea is that the contemporary music recital is constructed like a performance art project. I will compose a performance, or a performance script, along with piano music. Instead of hiding compositional way of thinking inside a score, I try demonstrate it to the audience through different means of presentation. The process is carried out by a working group which is still open.

Mimesis, Metaphor, Modeling (work-in-progress)

1.	<i>Etude I</i>	<i>Symmetry I</i>	<i>"Mirror Symmetry"</i>	<i>(pno)</i>	<i>10'</i>
2.	<i>Etude II</i>	<i>Symmetry II</i>	<i>"Rotation Symmetry"</i>	<i>(pno)</i>	
3.	<i>Etude III</i>	<i>Symmetry III</i>	<i>"Scale Symmetry"</i>	<i>(pno)</i>	
4.	<i>Matches I</i>	<i>"Solid-Gas"</i>		<i>(pno + CD)</i>	<i>5' 40</i>
5.	<i>Matches II</i>	<i>"Phase Transition"</i>		<i>(pno + CD)</i>	<i>5' 20</i>
6.	<i>Etude IV</i>	<i>Simulation of Nature I</i>	<i>"Rain"</i>	<i>(pno)</i>	<i>10'</i>
7.	<i>Etude V</i>	<i>Simulation of Nature II</i>	<i>"Clouds"</i>	<i>(pno)</i>	
8.	<i>Etude VI</i>	<i>Simulation of Nature III</i>	<i>"Swarming"</i>	<i>(pno)</i>	
					<i>(+ realtime video/multimedia projection)</i>
9.	<i>Etude VII</i>	<i>Acoustics I</i>	<i>"Masking"</i>	<i>(pno + live-electronics)</i>	<i>12'</i>
10.	<i>Etude VIII</i>	<i>Acoustics II</i>	<i>"Virtual Space"</i>	<i>(pno + live-electronics)</i>	
11.	<i>Etude IX</i>	<i>Acoustics III</i>	<i>"Underwater"</i>	<i>(pno + live-electronics)</i>	
12.	<i>Quantum Galop</i>	<i>"Quantum Mechanics"</i>		<i>(2 pnos + live-electronics)</i>	<i>15'</i>

5. Dialogical work for orchestra

Duration: 20'-25'

Time: open (autumn 2019 or spring 2020)

Collaborative partner: composer Lauri Supponen

What is a dialogical work for orchestra? I have written one possible working draft in my original research plan: it is a description of a pedagogical project where I would work with a class of pupils. At that time, when I applied to Art University, I had no knowledge of the theories of community art or shared authorship.

Gradually, however, I have been thinking that a composition process could be opened more discreetly starting with two composers. There are many opportunities to organise a frame-

work for this project, but one option could be a group of two composers and some orchestral musicians. The agency of the working group could partially take place in public, for example in the form of public meetings, articles, and orchestral workshops. My ongoing research could also be one platform for some kind of "fragmentation " of a work, for example in the form of a blog.

The end result could be a work or an event that is presented for an audience, and it could include all of these elements that had happened during the process as documentary material. The idea is that the process and its outcome could be in a same context to form a new kind of "musical work". This kind of practise is very common while documenting performance art happenings, where disappearing events are later displayed on a different platform as texts or video documentary.

In addition, my aim would be to develop working methods where two composers could interact. As if we were questioning the traditional idea of work-immanent musical logic of one composer by placing two different subconscious to negotiate with each other. I still can not say how it would happen, but perhaps this very question should be at the heart of the project's planning.

I have asked a composer Lauri Supponen to collaborate with me. The next step is to find an orchestra which is interested in this kind of experimental agency.

AN ARTISTIC THESIS

In my postgraduate study, the written and artistic part will blend into each other. The starting point for my thesis is both theoretical and experimental (artistic). Artistic projects are essentially related to the progress of the thesis and the theoretical set of problems in the art making. These questions are explored through artistic agency. The project is not limited to purely compositional issues, but looks for a broader set of questions around contemporary music.

As the thesis progresses, there are repeatedly raised many philosophical, musicological and aesthetic issues, which I can only deal by scratching the surface. I try to confine these theoretical concepts and discourses through the following auxiliary questions: what is the composer's point of view for that matter (for the concept of 'artwork' or 'performance'), what could artistic practice look like as a compositional agency (such as the practice of community and performance art) and what kind of unwritten rules contemporary music community has which could prevent certain collaborations (f. e. importance of a score).