Opera is Dead, Long Live APPERAs, Micro-Republics, LARPs and Voice Parties!

A Portfolio of Extended Music Theatre (EMT) Experiences

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Abstract

This practice-based research project explores the creation and development of novel forms of Extended Music Theatre (EMT) by investigating, integrating and reframing everyday structures, technologies, spaces, and vocalities. The research responds to the increasing hybridisation of contemporary performance practices and the extension of human experience across physical and digital realms through four interconnected investigative strategies: 1) interdisciplinary integration of seemingly diverse practices, including live action role-playing (LARP), theatre games, and film; 2) application of everyday digital technologies such as mobile applications, blockchain systems and social media platforms as fundamental compositional structures; 3) spatial experimentation with unconventional locations and digital environments to create distributed performance experiences; and 4) vocal exploration through multiple vocalities, oralities, and communicative modes in cross-arts contexts.

The portfolio comprises five interconnected projects documented through film, audio recordings, and digital artefacts: *VOXXCOIN* (blockchain-based vocal performance), *The Voice Party* (functioning simultaneously as a political party and EMT framework), *LETHE* (LARP-based site-specific piece), *SINGLR* (app-based vocal dating experience), and *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs* (micro-republic as performance architecture). Collectively, these works address the research questions through their diverse approaches to participation, site-specificity, and technological integration.

The research demonstrates how EMT can engage directly with the systems that shape contemporary experience, functioning not merely as aesthetic expressions but as critical apparatuses for examining social, economic, technological, and political frameworks. By developing methodologies that acknowledge our extended existence across physical and digital realms, the project reveals how EMT can create performances that span multiple domains simultaneously, challenging conventional understandings of presence, participation, and creative agency in the digital age.

Contents

Acknowledgements

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work, and I am the sole author. Republica Františšsšsšsšsš is a collaboration between me, Ferst Dadler, and the Franciscan Gardens Prague. This work has not previously been presented for a degree or other qualiCication at this university or elsewhere. All sources are acknowledged as references.

COVID-19 Statement: Participatory Projects in a Time of Pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for research that relies on participation, physical gatherings, and site-specific engagement. My projects exploring Extended Music Theatre, conceived initially as intimate encounters between strangers in shared physical spaces, faced existential obstacles when global lockdowns rendered such interactions impossible. The sudden shift to remote collaboration forced a radical reimagining of methodologies that had been fundamentally anchored in physical co-presence.

Works like *VOXXCOIN* and *SINGLR*, designed to probe the boundaries between digital and physical theatrical experiences, unexpectedly became testing grounds for virtual participation when their physical dimensions were forcibly removed. This crisis demanded not only practical adaptations but also conceptual reframing, compelling me to question whether the essence of participatory performance could survive when mediated exclusively through screens.

Paradoxically, this constraint ultimately enriched the research, revealing previously unforeseen dimensions of digitally extended performance and highlighting the resilience of participatory frameworks even when physically distanced. The pandemic thus became both an obstacle and a catalyst, transforming the very nature of the research while unexpectedly intensifying its central questions about presence, participation, and the increasingly porous boundaries between physical and virtual theatrical spaces.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Experimental or Extended Music Theatre?

As Nam June Paik once stated, "Art is often a bastard, the parents of which we do not know."[1] This research extends this notion into music theatre because it is a genre that defies easy categorisation, a quality reflected in the term "music theatre" itself.[2] The concept embodied in the word "extended" is deliberate, as it acknowledges how contemporary music theatre practices can stretch beyond traditional performance spaces and modalities into digital realms, online interactions, and AI-mediated experiences, reflecting our increasingly extended human existence, as will be discussed in Chapter 2. Extended Music Theatre can also be applied to the notion of "experimentation," but experimentation in very particular ways that will be made apparent as this commentary unfolds. Let us consider, for a moment, the label Experimental Music Theatre, which is often used as a catch-all term, encompassing a broad spectrum of practices that integrate music with theatrical elements in innovative ways. The term is often applied loosely, as a flag of convenience, because it includes such a vast array of composers, artists, and creative works, each bringing a unique approach to the fusion of music and theatre. This diversity makes music theatre a complex and multifaceted concept and form, as it often includes everything from contemporary small-scale operas to multimedia performances, site-specific installations, and improvisational and Live Art performances.[3]

Consequently, the term "music theatre" in itself presents challenges in definition and scope, as it must account for the varying intentions, styles, and contexts of the artists

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[1] Florence de Meredieu, *Digital and Video Art*, trans. Richard Elliot (Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd, 2005), 30.

[2] Thom Andrewes, "What is Music Theatre Actually? (A Theory of Musical Performance)," *The Biting Point* (blog), August 31, 2016, https://thebitingpoint.wordpress.com/2016/08/31/what-is-music-theatre-actually-a-theory-of-musical-performance/.

[3] The *Live Art Development Agency* define live or performance art as 'some combination of time, space, the body of the performer(s) and the interaction between the artist(s) and the audience,' also 'Rather than a description of an artform or discipline, Live Art is a way of thinking about what art is, what it can do, and where and how it can be experienced.' https://performcanceartresources.com/home/what-is-performance-art-live-art-action-art/.

involved. This inherent ambiguity can be both a strength and a weakness, fostering creative freedom while also complicating critical and academic discussions. The genre's fluid boundaries reflect its sometimes-innovative experimental nature, yet this same fluidity can make it difficult to delineate and analyse comprehensively. As Thom Andrewes states, "The category I'm trying to define is a very broad one indeed, potentially including around half of all 'theatre' and half of all 'music.'"[4] Indeed, it is the inherent ambiguity and resistance to precise definition that contribute to its allure, rendering it a rich domain of research for those pursuing innovative strategies and artistic adventures.

Björn Heile advocates for a reconceptualisation of the idea of music theatre by emphasising its fundamental elements of sound and movement. Heile posits, "Let us think about a theatre of sound and movement. Note the general nature of these terms: 'sound,' not 'music' ;'movement,' not 'action' or 'choreography' ;'theatre,' not 'opera' or 'music theatre,' [No mention of words, speech, meaning, plot, scenario, scenic illusion, the willing suspension of disbelief…] I believe that the complex relations between sound and movement underlie all forms of theatre, whether spoken, sung or mimicked,"[5] suggesting a return to these core components as the foundational basis for EMT. As this research examines the practices of artists from diverse backgrounds, exploring how concepts of "sound" and "movement" and their application to specific scenes or situations manifest in unexpected contexts, Heile's extensive scholarship on music theatre offers invaluable contributions to the field.

Heile also underscores the significance of embracing the inherent fluidity and hybridity of music theatre, advocating for a perspective that prioritises sound and movement as central to its practice. Heile asserts, "Experimental music theatre perfectly illustrates the kind of holistic understanding of music for which music studies on the whole seem to be

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[4] Thom Andrewes, "What is Music Theatre Actually? (A Theory of Musical Performance)," *The Biting Point* (blog), August 31, 2016, https://thebitingpoint.wordpress.com/2016/08/31/what-is-music-theatre-actually-a-theory-of-musical-performance/.

[5] Bjorn Heile, *A Theatre of Sound and Movement. Experimental Music Theatre and Theories of Embodied Cognition.* European Drama and Performance Studies 15 (2) 2020, pp. 217-237

striving".[6] Interestingly, Heile's seminal works on the EMT of Kagel, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, provides a comprehensive exploration of how experimental music theatre often aims to defy convention and encourage novel artistic expression.

So, while EMT can mean experimental music theatre, throughout this commentary I will be referring to EMT as meaning "extended" music theatre, as the projects contained here concern themselves with "extending" the form from daily structures as discussed in 1.2.

The objective is to examine these aspects in relation to the works within the portfolio, thereby expanding upon the strategies other artists can utilise as they pertain to both music theatre and practices outside the realm of music and music theatre entirely, thus contributing to the formulation or development of a strand of EMT in a participatory, site-specific, and durational context. This extension is not merely spatial but also conceptual; it acknowledges how contemporary performance practices exist simultaneously in physical and digital spaces, reflecting our daily oscillation between embodied and virtual experiences.

To this end, it is necessary to recognise that the EMT works in the submitted portfolio share a commonality with the investigations of composers such as Meredith Monk, Jennifer Walshe, Manos Tsangaris, Adam de la Cour, Neil Luck, and Alexander Schubert. I also consider that there is a metamodern trend in the work of composers, especially apparent in the Nordic countries, including Trond Reinholdtsen (with pieces in his project *The Norwegian Opra*), Simon Løffler (*Marionette Piece*, 2015), Kent Olofsson and Nina Jellsson (*ZONEN* project, 2021–2024), Niels Ronshøldt (*Ord for Ord*, 2013; *Shame*, 2017), and Simon Steen Anderson (*TRANSIT*, 2021, *Staged Night*, 2015). I will argue that these composers and their multifaceted strategies can be aligned under the banner of metamodernism, as metamodernistic works exemplify the integration of disparate artistic forms and a playful yet earnest engagement with contemporary themes.

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[6] Ibid.

1.2 Extending the Theatrical Space

Although "Extended Music Theatre" is not yet an established term within contemporary performance discourse, the concept of extension offers a valuable framework for understanding how music theatre practices might transcend traditional boundaries. The concept of "extended" music theatre offers a framework for understanding how contemporary performance practices might transcend traditional spatial, temporal, and medial boundaries in ways that parallel our increasingly extended human existence. Just as our daily lives span physical and digital realms through socialising via screens, working remotely, and developing relationships online, there exists significant potential for music theatre practices to reflect this hybridity by integrating everyday technologies not merely as tools but as extensions of the theatrical space itself.

This extension could manifest through several key dimensions. Spatially, performances migrate beyond conventional venues into digital landscapes, social media platforms, and mobile applications, creating works that exist simultaneously in both physical and virtual realms. Temporally, digital technologies enable performances that unfold asynchronously, allowing participants to engage across different time zones and schedules. Medially, the integration of apps, blockchain, and AI introduces new modes of audience participation and artistic creation that extend beyond what is possible in purely physical performances.

This oscillation between states—sincerity and irony, construction, and deconstruction—finds perfect expression in EMT's movement between physical and digital spaces, as well as between human and technological elements. This oscillation is not merely aesthetic but reflects the lived experience of contemporary audiences who already navigate this extended existence daily, making such works particularly resonant with current modes of being.

Technologies such as blockchain, dating apps, and social media platforms featured in the portfolio works are not simply novelties or tools but represent fundamental extensions of human interaction and communication. By incorporating these technologies into

EMT practice, artists create what might be termed "hybrid performance ecologies"[7] where the boundaries between digital and physical, performer and audience, creator and participant become increasingly fluid and permeable.

It is within this extended context that the research narrative embodied in the submitted portfolio lies, exploring how EMT can reflect, critique, and reimagine our extended human existence through works that themselves extend across multiple dimensions of experience.

This extended theatrical approach represents a contemporary manifestation of the Platonic principle:

> The newest song which the singers have, they will be afraid that he may be praising, not new songs, but a new kind of song; and this ought not to be praised, or conceived to be the meaning of the poet; for any musical innovation is full of danger to the whole State, and ought to be prohibited. So Daemon tells me, and I can quite believe him;—he says that when modes of music change, the workings of the State always change with them.[8]

Yet, unlike Plato's cautionary stance, the EMT of this portfolio embraces this transformative potential as essential to its practice.

The approach also embraces ideas of performance as seen by sociologist Erving Goffman, who understands social actions in relation to the "performance" of everyday life.[9] Metamodernist artists, therefore, incorporate everyday forms, activities, locations, interactions, and situations within their work, recognising the performative nature of contemporary existence.

Most significantly, this integration of the everyday with the theatrical echoes Guy Debord's observation that "in societies dominated by modern conditions of production, life is presented as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly

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[7] Chris Salter, *Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 21–48.

[8] Plato, *The Republic, Book IV,* trans. Benjamin Jowett (Oxford: OUP 375BC), 35.

[9] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Toronto: First Anchor Books, 1959).

lived has receded into a representation."[10] Where Debord saw alienation, the novel EMT strategies explored in the EMT experiments created for this research seek out the cracks in the pavement of our spectacle-driven existence—those liminal spaces between physical and digital, between representation and lived experience—where new artistic forms can grow, perhaps unseen, like strange weeds. These emergent practices thrive precisely in the interstices of established structures, finding fertile ground in the overlooked boundaries between disciplines, technologies, and modes of engagement. Rather than merely grumpily critiquing the spectacle as situationists might, contemporary EMT approaches can seek to exploit and navigate between these fissures to cultivate authentic moments of connection and critical engagement, acknowledging our embeddedness within technological frameworks while nurturing genuine encounters that sprout unpredictably from their margins. Indeed, this embrace of the chaotic, unstable regions between established orders becomes necessary for genuine innovation, pointing to connections with contemporary scientific theories of dissipative structures, as reflected in Deleuze's rhizomatic thought. In this context, creative potential emerges precisely from disorder and non-linearity at the edge of systems.

1.3. Metamodernism: A Useful Framework or Just Another "Ism"?

The notion of metamodernism provides a theoretical framework for understanding certain contemporary artistic practices, including those explored in this portfolio. In his book *Metamodernism: The Future of Theory*, Storm articulates metamodernism as a theoretical framework that synthesises modernist and postmodernist principles, proposing a novel pathway for understanding cultural and artistic practices. Storm posits, "Metamodernism is a daring attempt to counter ethical nihilism and epistemological paralysis troubling academic research and cultural institutions." This definition offers a starting point for understanding metamodernism as an attempt to move beyond postmodernism without reverting to the naive certainties of modernism.

Luke Turner elaborates on this oscillatory quality:

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[10] Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995), 12.

Ours is a generation raised in the '80s and '90s, on a diet of The Simpsons and South Park, for whom postmodern irony and cynicism is a default setting, something ingrained in us, however, despite—or rather because of this—a yearning for meaning—for sincere and constructive progression and expression—has come to shape today's dominant cultural mode. Whereas postmodernism was characterised by deconstruction, irony, pastiche, relativism, nihilism, and the rejection of grand narratives (to caricature it somewhat), the discourse surrounding metamodernism engages with the resurgence of sincerity, hope, romanticism, affect, and the potential for grand narratives and universal truths, whilst not forfeiting all that we've learnt from postmodernism.

This oscillation between opposing sensibilities is central to metamodernism, as Turner continues:

Thus, rather than simply signalling a return to naïve modernist ideological positions, metamodernism considers that our era is characterised by an oscillation between aspects of both modernism and postmodernism. We see this manifest as a kind of informed naivety, a pragmatic idealism, a moderate fanaticism, oscillating between sincerity and irony, deconstruction and construction, apathy and affect, as if attempting to attain some sort of transcendent position were within our grasp. The metamodern generation understands that we can be both ironic and sincere in the same moment; that one does not necessarily diminish the other.

This metamodern oscillation often manifests through a particular kind of neoromanticism. According to Vermeulen and van den Akker, if artists revisit Romanticism within a metamodern framework, it is neither to simply parody it nor nostalgically mourn its loss, but rather to "look back in order to perceive a new future that was lost from sight."

Metamodern neoromanticism, therefore, engages in the re-signification of "the commonplace with significance, the ordinary with mystery, the familiar with the seemliness of the unfamiliar, and the finite with the semblance of the infinite." As Novalis described, it involves "opening up new lands in situ of the old one."

Jennifer Walshe's concept of "The New Discipline" offers a practical manifestation of metamodernist principles in contemporary music. Walshe states, "The New Discipline is a way of working," and further elucidates the necessity of "the rigour of finding learning

and developing new compositional and performative tools… always working against the clock, because the disciplines which are drawn from always have the luxury of development and rehearsal periods far longer than those found in new music." Her approach "relishes this lack of luxury, of the opportunity to move fast and break things." Walshe's work embodies metamodernism through its simultaneous embrace of rigorous compositional techniques alongside performative elements that engage with popular culture, internet aesthetics, and everyday experiences, moving fluidly between ironic distance and sincere engagement.

This aspect of metamodernism as praxis, as explored by artists like Walshe, helps to make sense of the broader music theatre scene, and illuminates commonalities in the work of composers such as Manos Tsangaris, Adam de la Cour, Neil Luck, François Sarhan, Alexander Schubert, Trond Reinholdtsen, Simon Løffler, Niels Ronshøldt, and Simon Steen Anderson. I draw on this framework throughout this commentary to articulate aspects of my own practice and the underlying concerns of the portfolio works, which similarly negotiate between sincerity and irony, between high art traditions and everyday technologies, between individual expression and collective experience.

By positioning metamodernism as both a cultural condition and a set of artistic strategies, this framework helps to contextualise the works in this portfolio, which similarly oscillate between physical and digital realms, between traditional music theatre elements and contemporary technological interfaces, and between compositional rigour and participatory openness. The portfolio works reflect this metamodernist sensibility through their integration of seemingly disparate elements: blockchain technology and vocal performance (*VOXXCOIN*), dating app structures and operatic traditions (*SINGLR*), electoral politics and music theatre (*The Voice Party)*, and mythology and live action role-playing (LARPing in *LETHE*).

1.4 Critical Perspectives: Beyond Metamodernism

While metamodernism offers a productive framework for understanding certain aspects of contemporary EMT practices, it is not without significant limitations and conceptual

blind spots. The very elasticity that makes metamodernism appealing—its capacity to encompass seemingly contradictory impulses—also renders it potentially too diffuse to provide robust analytical purchase. As a critical framework, metamodernism risks becoming what cultural theorist Raymond Williams might call a "keyword," a term so broadly applied that it loses specific explanatory power.

Several specific critiques merit consideration. First, the emphasis on oscillation between modernist and postmodernist sensibilities in metamodernism may inadequately account for practices that emerge from non-Western traditions or those that deliberately position themselves outside the Western modern/postmodern historical trajectory. The framework risks reinforcing precisely the Eurocentric, linear historical narrative that many contemporary practitioners actively resist. Artists like El Khoury[11] or Rirkrit Tiravanija,[12] for instance, draw on cultural references and performance traditions that cannot be neatly categorised as either modernist or postmodernist in origin.

Second, the focus on narrative structures of feeling in metamodernism may understate the material and economic conditions that shape contemporary artistic production. The precarious nature of artistic labour, the impact of digital platforms on distribution and reception, and the institutional constraints within which experimental practices operate are not merely contextual factors but constitutive elements of contemporary experimental music theory. These material conditions demand analytical frameworks that foreground political economy alongside aesthetic considerations.

Third, the metamodernist oscillation between sincerity and irony potentially obscures other significant dialectics at work in EMT, such as the tension between individual and collective authorship, between institutional validation and grassroots legitimacy, or between aesthetic autonomy and social engagement. These tensions may prove more generative for understanding specific works than the broad modernist/postmodernist dichotomy.

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[11] More on El Khoury's influence on this portfilio in Chapter 2.

[12] Ibid.

Also, In the context of discussing EMT, metamodernism remains overwhelmingly human-centred and fails to adequately address recent scientific thought that infuses the brilliant entropy of contemporary life; notably absent are engagements with the paradigm-shifting ideas of scientists such as Ilya Prigogine,[13] Benoit Mandelbrot,[14] and Edward Lorenz,[15] whose work on dissipative structures, fractal geometry, and chaos theory respectively offers profound insights into the inherent unpredictability and self-organising complexity that characterises our daily existence reflected in the theories of Deleuze.

Alternative theoretical frameworks provide productive counterpoints and additions to the limitations of metamodernism. Theories of relationality and participatory aesthetics, as developed by Nicolas Bourriaud and Claire Bishop, provide tools for analysing how EMT practices create temporary communities and social interstices. Bourriaud's concept of "relational aesthetics" emphasises art that takes "as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space." This framework particularly illuminates works like *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*[16] and *The Voice Party,*[17] which explicitly create social microcosms. Bishop's penetrating critique of participatory art in "Artificial Hells" offers a necessary counterbalance to Bourriaud's sometimes uncritical celebration of relationality, insisting that "the best collaborative practices of the past ten years have not perceived participation as a smoothing agent but as something more disruptive, as a destabilising process that challenges the very binaries on which the 'new art' of the 1990s was predicated."[18] Her emphasis on antagonism as a productive force illuminates projects like *The Voice*

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[13] Ilya Prigogine, *The End of Certainty: Time, Chaos, and the New Laws of Nature* (New York: Free Press, 1997).

[14] Benoit Mandelbrot, *The Fractal Geometry of Nature* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1982).

[15] Edward N. Lorenz, *The Essence of Chaos* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993).

[16] See 3.2, 66.

[17] See 3.5, 145.

[18] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso Books, 2012), 277.

Party and *VOXXCOIN*, which deliberately engineer tensions between individual agency and collective structure to generate critical reflection. Rather than pursuing the utopian "micro-utopias" that Bourriaud champions, Bishop's framework helps recognise how EMT practices might productively maintain the friction between aesthetic autonomy and social engagement, between artistic intention and participant intervention. This perspective is particularly valuable for analysing works that refuse easy resolution or harmonious consensus, instead embracing the productive discomfort that emerges when participatory structures collide with institutional constraints.

Similarly, theories of technological mediation drawn from media archaeology[19] and post-digital aesthetics[20] offer alternative approaches to understanding how technologies function not merely as tools, but as active agents in artistic creation. These perspectives provide nuanced vocabularies for discussing works like *SINGLR* and *VOXXCOIN,* which examine how digital interfaces impact human interaction and artistic experience.

Feminist new materialisms, particularly as articulated by Karen Barad[21] and Jane Bennett,[22] offer another productive alternative through their emphasis on "intra-action" and distributed agency. These approaches decentre human intentionality and foreground the agency of materials, spaces, and non-human actors. These considerations are particularly relevant to site-specific and object-oriented aspects of the portfolio works.

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[19] Jussi Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012).

[20] Florian Cramer, *"What Is 'Post-digital'?"* APRJA 3, no. 1 (2014): 10–25.

[21] Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
"Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter." Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 28, no. 3 (2003): 801–31.

[22] Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).
"The Force of Things: Steps toward an Ecology of Matter." Political Theory 32, no. 3 (2004): 347–72.

Perhaps most promisingly, assemblage theory as developed by Deleuze and Guattari[23] and extended by, among others, Manuel DeLanda[24] provides a framework for understanding EMT practices as temporary constellations of heterogeneous elements—human bodies, digital interfaces, architectural spaces, cultural references, institutional contexts—without reducing this multiplicity to a single dominant logic or narrative. The flexibility of assemblage theory accommodates the inherent hybridity of EMT while avoiding the potentially reductive schema of metamodernism.

To reiterate the words of Nam June Paik, "Art is a bastard, the parents of which we do not know." We are not dealing with a pure entity here, but one with many strands of DNA, each of which has deep, intertwining roots. The works in this portfolio, therefore, invite not a singular theoretical framing but a methodological pluralism that reflects their multivalent nature and resists premature theoretical closure.

1.5 Between Entropy and Order

In this commentary, I am concerned with EMT as "Extended Music Theatre," where the extension arises from everyday structures. In a further attempt to demonstrate this and in an attempt to find alternative contemporary EMT strategies, but without turning this into an in depth exploration of theoretical trends in science, I want to address how in juggling some theoretical frameworks relevant to the research questions and aims outlined above, this research ultimately seeks ways of making coherent sense of, and finding its place in EMT as a whole in the late 20th and early 21st century, by briefly touching on some other ideas that are useful in making sense of the current landscape of EMT practices.

It is essential to recognise that these frameworks were not initially designed to analyse Extended Music Theatre. However, in a portfolio that seeks to extend itself partly through everyday structures, it is also pertinent to consider scientific thought and forms

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[23] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 88.

[24] Manuel DeLanda, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 259–62.

from other disciplines that, although often unseen, have underpinned daily life for many decades and therefore inevitably inform EMT. The scientific principles developed by Ilya Prigogine, for instance, offer an additional perspective that helps illuminate the organisational dynamics at work in contemporary EMT.

Prigogine's work on dissipative structures and self-organisation in non-equilibrium systems provides valuable insights into how order can emerge from apparent chaos—a process frequently mirrored in EMT works that incorporate disorder, chance operations, and audience participation as generative forces. Just as these scientific principles have quietly shaped our understanding of everyday phenomena, from weather patterns to urban development, they can also offer productive frameworks for conceptualising the complex interplay of elements in EMT that draws upon and transforms everyday structures and practices.[25]

Prigogine's Minimum Entropy Production Principle, which states that "in steady-state non-equilibrium systems the entropy generation rate is at a minimum," could provide a useful analytical model for understanding how EMT performances maintain coherence despite their deliberate destabilisation of theatrical conventions.[26] The compositional strategies employed by practitioners like Nam June Paik in *Symphony for 20 Rooms* or Manos Tsangaris in works like *Batsheba. Eat the History!* or *es geht voran* utilise spatial disorientation and overlapping sonic events, allowing audience members to experience different elements simultaneously. These works create performance systems that, while deliberately far from conventional stability, nonetheless achieve states of minimum entropy production relative to their complex conditions, balancing disorder with sufficient organisation to maintain communicative potential.

This framework helps explain why EMT works, particularly in its benefits from extension into digital environments, blockchain structures, and site-specific contexts, as explored

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[25] Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers, *Order Out of Chaos: Man's New Dialogue with Nature* (London: Flamingo, 1984), 12–27.

[26] Ilya Prigogine, *Introduction to Thermodynamics of Irreversible Processes* (New York: Interscience Publishers, 1967), 83.

in this portfolio. Just as Prigogine's dissipative structures require energy flow to maintain their organisation, the extension in EMT works thrives on the flow of information, participation, and mediation across different platforms and contexts.[27] The digital–physical integration methodologies employed throughout this research deliberately create the conditions for these productive non-equilibrium states.

The oscillatory qualities that characterise metamodernist EMT—between sincerity and irony, between digital and physical presence, and between individual and collective authorship—can be understood as manifestations of systems operating at critical thresholds. Works like Løffler's *Marionette Piece* (2015) or Reinholdtsen's project, *Norwegian Opra* utilise both conventional and experimental vocalities, both stable and unstable[28] technical platforms, both traditional and innovative narrative structures. They create the precise conditions for emergence and self-organisation that Prigogine identified in physical systems.[29]

This perspective particularly illuminates the five portfolio projects presented in this thesis. *VOXXCOIN*'s blockchain[30] architecture, *The Voice Party*'s[31] electoral frameworks,

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[27] Ilya Prigogine, *From Being to Becoming: Time and Complexity in the Physical Sciences* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1980), 105–123.

[28] The term 'unstable technical platform' In the context of Extended Music Theatre (EMT), refers to technological systems or media that are intentionally employed in ways that embrace unpredictability, malfunction, or inherent limitations as aesthetic elements. Unlike conventional theatrical technologies designed for reliability and transparency, unstable platforms highlight their own materiality and potential for failure. Examples of unstable technical platforms in EMT works include: 1) Deliberately glitchy or hacked electronics that produce unpredictable sounds or visuals, 2) Analogue technologies used beyond their intended parameters (overdriven circuits, feedback loops), 3) DIY or custom-built instruments with inconsistent behaviour.

[29] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 311–350.

[30] See 3.4 Blockchain is a decentralised digital ledger technology that records transactions across multiple computers in a way that ensures data cannot be altered retroactively. Each "block" contains a timestamp and transaction data, and is cryptographically linked to the previous block, creating a "chain" of chronologically connected information. This technology underlies cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, but has broader applications in secure record-keeping, supply chain management, digital identity verification and smart contracts. The distributed nature of blockchain eliminates the need for central authorities, as consensus mechanisms allow participants to collectively validate new entries, creating a transparent and tamper-resistant system of trust.

[31] See Section 3.5.

SINGLR's[32] dating app structure, *Republica Frantšsšsšsšsšs*'s[33] micro-political organisation, and *LETHE*'s LARPing[34] methodology all establish specific non-equilibrium conditions that generate emergent performance outcomes. Rather than imposing rigid compositional structures, these works create the conditions for self-organisation—what Prigogine might recognise as dissipative structures in the realm of performance practice. In other words, instead of viewing disorder as a problem to be solved, this framework suggests that operating at the edge of chaos is what can make EMT generative, allowing for new possibilities that could not emerge in more controlled, conventional performance contexts.

As already articulated, while the remainder of this commentary will not dwell extensively on these principles, this perspective offers valuable insight into why the extension of EMT across physical and digital realms proves particularly generative. As audiences and participants navigate the threshold between order and disorder (or between Apollo and Dionysius as discussed in the project *LETHE*[35]) in these works, they participate in the emergence of new performative possibilities that would be unattainable through more conventional, equilibrium-bound approaches to music theatre.[36]

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[32] See Section 3.3.

[33] See Section 3.1.

[34] LARP (Live Action Role-Playing) is an interactive form of role-playing where participants physically portray their characters in a fictional setting. Unlike tabletop role-playing games, where players describe their actions verbally, LARPers physically act out their characters' actions while interacting with others in a shared imaginary environment. The essence of LARP lies in physical embodiment, with players donning costumes and physically enacting their characters. These immersive experiences often unfold in themed locations such as forests, castles or purpose-built venues that enhance the fictional world. Various rules and systems govern the gameplay, determining the success or failure of actions, resolving combat situations and defining character capabilities. At its heart, LARP represents collaborative storytelling where players and organisers (sometimes called Game Masters) work together to create a narrative experience that unfolds in real time. The spectrum of LARP styles is remarkably diverse, ranging from combat-focused games featuring foam weapons to political intrigue scenarios with minimal physical action. These experiences can manifest as intimate gatherings lasting just a few hours or expand into massive events spanning multiple days with hundreds of enthusiastic participants. This versatility allows LARP to accommodate various storytelling preferences, creating unique interactive experiences that blur the boundaries between game and performance.

[35] See Section 3.2.

[36] Robin van den Akker, Alison Gibbons, and Timotheus Vermeulen, eds., *Metamodernism: Historicity, Affect and Depth After Postmodernism* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 25–38.

1.6 Research Framework.

1.6.1 Research Questions

The work presented in the submitted portfolio, along with the methods and insights examined in this written commentary, aims to create novel and cohesive creative frameworks for the development of extended experimental music theatre (EMT) by incorporating everyday activities, technologies, sites, and contexts. To reiterate, this research responds to the increasing hybridisation of contemporary performance practices and the extension of human experience across physical and digital realms. It does so by addressing the following research questions:

1. **Interdisciplinary Integration in Everyday Contexts:** How can diverse intersections between artistic disciplines (LARPing, theatre games, film, participatory art) reveal and utilise everyday structures to create extended experimental music theatre that connects with contemporary life in both virtual and analogue spaces?

2. **Technological Applications for Democratic Performance:** How can everyday digital technologies (mobile applications, blockchain systems, social media) be applied to design and develop novel EMT experiences that foster decentralised, democratic, and communal approaches to contemporary performance practice?

3. **Spatial Experimentation Across Everyday Environments:** How can unconventional and quotidian locations, including digital spaces, extend the practices of music theatre into everyday public, political, and online spaces, creating performances that transcend traditional boundaries between art and daily life?

4. **Vocal Exploration as Communal Expression:** How can multiple vocalities, oralities and modes of communication be applied within cross-arts and site-specific practices to cultivate new aesthetic possibilities in EMT that reflect our everyday mediated communication and embrace democratic expression?

1.6.2 Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to develop distinctive, novel forms of EMT by exploring everyday structures not typically associated with this form of expression, thereby revealing the potential of these quotidian frameworks within music theatre. By integrating methodologies from multiple artistic disciplines, particularly participatory practice and site-specificity, the project seeks to experiment with how far these everyday structures can be embedded to produce innovative forms of EMT that reflect our extended contemporary existence.

This exploration encompassed:

- Diverse intersections between artistic disciplines, such as LARPing, theatre games, film and participatory art, to contribute to the creation and presentation of new forms of EMT

- The harnessing of digital technologies, including apps, blockchain and social media, to design and develop novel experiences in EMT

- The expansion of expressive possibilities through the use of unconventional locations and digital spaces that extend beyond traditional performance venues

- The exploration of multiple vocalities, oralities and modes of communication within the context of cross-arts, digital media and site-specific practices

Ultimately, the project aimed to create a body of work that utilises these multiple disciplines, collaborations and formats to generate performances that exist simultaneously across physical and digital realms, documenting the outcomes and processes through film, radio pieces and photographic documentation.

Specific Objectives

The aims of this research were examined through the following objectives:

1. To survey and critically engage with literature in contemporary participatory, multimedia and site-specific art practices that pertain to the works in the submitted portfolio, establishing a robust theoretical framework for the creative practice.

2. To create frameworks for devising EMT by combining LARPing, text-score devising, theatre workshop techniques, extended-voice pedagogy, film, and radiophonics, with particular attention to how these diverse practices can illuminate one another.

3. To develop methods of exploring EMT via app and blockchain development, treating these technologies not merely as tools but as fundamental structures that shape both form and content.

4. To establish a new political party, *The Voice Party,* which functions simultaneously as a site-specific and participatory piece of EMT, with multiple outputs: a Twitter bot, disseminated as a hörspiel; a radiophonic piece; a live performance; a community live-action and documentation film; and party political broadcasts.

5. To design and implement an extended voice dating app, *SINGLR the APPERA*, as a new piece of EMT that explores the intersection of intimacy, technology and vocality.

6. To experiment with blockchain technology as a novel form of EMT, utilising the structure of cryptocurrency to create an installation event called *VOXXCOIN* that examines questions of value, exchange and voice.

7. To establish a new artistic micro-republic, *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs*, and host a conference on music, extended voice, and movement about the Republic, creating a piece that is both site-specific and participatory as a form of EMT.

8. To create an EMT piece, *LETHE*, through LARPing, text score and workshop methods on the island of Kythira, preparing the participants for the process via theatrical workshop techniques and producing a film as creative documentation.

9. To establish close collaborations with both professional and amateur musicians and singers, technicians, dancers, and members of the public in the creation of the pieces that form part of the submitted portfolio, focusing particularly on interdisciplinary exchange.

10. To examine the interdisciplinary approaches and artistic practices utilised in these experiments by analysing the portfolio examples of interdisciplinary EMT

presented here, documenting the disciplines involved, the methods used and the outcomes of these collaborations.

11. To write a critical commentary that clarifies the research narrative embodied in the submitted portfolio, including articulating the research questions, aims, objectives and contexts that emerge from the creative practice, and providing insights about the artistic work and its contribution to the field of EMT.

1.7 Methodology

1.7.1 Research Approach and Rationale

This practice research employed a methodological framework founded on creative practice as the primary mode of inquiry, supported by critical reflection and documentation. Following Nelson's[37] 2013 model of practice as research, this project positions artistic processes not merely as outcomes but as rigorous investigative methods that generate new knowledge through their enactment. The methodology is grounded in what Haseman[38] terms "performative research," whereby the symbolic data constituting the creative work itself function as the primary research evidence.

The central methodological approach involved composing and developing extended music theatre experiences that deliberately blur traditional boundaries between digital and physical spaces, professional and non-professional participation, and conventional and unconventional performance contexts. This approach is particularly appropriate for investigating the research questions posed, as it enables direct experimentation with interdisciplinary integration, technological application, spatial experimentation, and vocal exploration.

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[37] Brad Haseman, "A Manifesto for Performative Research," *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy* 118, no. 1 (2006): 98–106.

[38] Brad Haseman, "A Manifesto for Performative Research," *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy* 118, no. 1 (2006): 100.

1.7.2 Methods and Processes

Several interconnected methods formed the foundation of this practice research:

Text-Score Development and Workshop Facilitation: The research utilised text scores and guided workshops delivered both in person and online to harness the unique physical and acoustic properties of various sites, including urban parks, architectural spaces, and digital platforms. These techniques draw methodologically from established practitioners such as Trevor Wishart (extended vocal techniques), Meredith Monk (interdisciplinary vocal performance), John Cage (indeterminacy and chance operations), and François Matarasso (participatory arts practice). While these influences inform the work, the methodology developed distinct approaches through their novel combination and application to extended digital contexts.

Guided Improvisation and Collaborative Practice: Structured improvisational frameworks were employed across all projects to generate material while simultaneously investigating research questions. This method involved establishing clear parameters for exploration while allowing for emergent discoveries through collaborative engagement. Following Small's[39] concept of "musicking" as a social process, collaboration with both professional practitioners and non-specialists was methodologically central to investigating how participatory approaches might extend the expressive possibilities of EMT.

Digital–Physical Integration A distinctive methodological feature of this research was the deliberate development of digital and physical integration as structural components of the work itself.

Site-Responsive Practice: The research methodology employed a site-specific approach, both as a practical method and a theoretical framework. Following Pearson's[40] understanding of site-specific performance as a dialogue between performer and place, each project developed methods responsive to the unique characteristics of its location,

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[39] Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1998), 9.

[40] Mike Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 8.

whether physical or virtual, thereby investigating how unconventional spaces might expand EMT's expressive potential.

1.7.3 Project-Specific Methodologies

Each project within the portfolio employed specific methodological approaches tailored to its particular research focus:

1. Republica Františsšsšsšsšs and Konfɛrɛnt͡sɛ

- **Objective**: To transform public spaces into stages for music theatre while investigating the potential of micro-political structures as compositional frameworks

- **Method**: Development of a performative micro-republic within a park in Prague, establishing governance structures, participatory decision-making processes, and culminating in a conference presentation of findings

- **Participants**: Public space users, community members, and interdisciplinary artists

- **Data Collection**: Film and photographic documentation, conference proceedings, and critical reflection

2. LETHE

- **Objective**: To investigate immersive theatrical frameworks through the integration of LARPing with EMT practices

- **Method**: Structured workshops incorporating theatrical techniques (Ras Box methodology), text-score implementation, and LARPing within site-responsive contexts drawing on Greek mythological narratives

- **Participants**: Workshop attendees, including both professional performers and community participants

- **Data Collection**: Film documentation capturing process and outcomes, post-participation reflective interviews, and practice journals

3. *SINGLR* the APPERA

- **Objective**: To explore the integration of digital platforms with physical performance spaces through the détournement of dating app structures

- **Method**: Development of a bespoke web-based voice dating application combined with physical venue performance, incorporating acousmatic sound techniques and participatory elements

- **Participants**: Professional vocalists and non-professional participants engaged through digital interfaces

- **Data Collection**: Application usage data, film and photographic documentation of performances, participant feedback, and critical reflection

4. VOXXCOIN

- **Objective**: To investigate the intersection of blockchain technology, value systems, and vocal performance in extended EMT contexts

- **Method**: Development of W3 blockchain technology applications encoding vocal gestures, voice synthesis implementation, and machine learning integration within participatory gallery installation contexts

- **Participants**: Gallery visitors engaging in voice "mining" processes

- **Data Collection**: Filmed blockchain transaction records, NFT gallery documentation, participants and critical reflection on technological-artistic integration

5. THE VOICE PARTY with theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm[myMuseIsMyFury]

- **Objective**: To investigate the music theatre potential of electoral processes through the integration of performance with political engagement

- **Method**: Creation of a registered political party functioning simultaneously as an EMT framework, development of participatory operatic structures within electoral contexts, and documentation of intervention in the 2019 UK general election

- **Participants**: Community members, voters, and artists engaging with electoral processes

- **Data Collection**: Electoral documentation, film documentation, and acousmatic compositional outcomes

5a. theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm[myMuseIsMyFury]

- **Objective**: To utilise social media platforms and radio broadcasting as interconnected performance spaces for EMT

- **Method**: Development of algorithmic Twitter bot interventions, creation of radio show content, establishment of SoundCloud distribution channels, and composition of acousmatic works for real-time audience interaction

- **Participants**: Online audience, radio listeners, and algorithm-mediated participants

- **Data Collection**: Digital interaction metrics, audience feedback analysis, and documentation of algorithmic performance outcomes

1.7.4 Data Analysis and Critical Framework

The research methodology incorporated critical reflection throughout its processes, not merely as a retrospective evaluation, but as an active component of the research itself. Following Schön's concept of reflection-in-action,[41] this methodology employs cyclical processes of making, documenting, reflecting, and refining.

Analysis of the collected data—including audiovisual documentation, participant feedback, and performance outcomes—employs a hybrid approach combining:

- Autoethnographic reflection on artistic processes and decisions

- Critical contextualisation within relevant theoretical frameworks

- Comparative analysis across portfolio projects to identify emergent themes and approaches

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[41] Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

- Evaluation of audience/participant engagement and reception

The critical framework primarily draws from metamodernist perspectives, while acknowledging their limitations, and is supplemented by assemblage theory, relational aesthetics, and post-digital performance theory, as discussed in section 1.3.

1.7.5 Ethical Considerations

The research methodology prioritised ethical considerations throughout, particularly regarding participant involvement and data collection. All projects involving public participation operated with transparency regarding their research context, with appropriate consent procedures for documentation. Where projects engaged with political structures (as in *THE VOICE PARTY*) or public spaces (as in *Republica Františešsšsšsšs*), careful attention was paid to legal frameworks and community impact.

The methodology deliberately aimed to challenge traditional power hierarchies between composers, performers, and audiences through its participatory structures, recognising the ethical dimensions of such interventions. This approach aligns with Bishop's[42] critical examination of participation in contemporary art, acknowledging both its emancipatory potential and inherent tensions.

1.7.6 Limitations and Reflexivity

This methodological approach acknowledges certain limitations, including the challenges of documenting ephemeral performance experiences, the subjective nature of artistic research, and the potential for participant self-selection to influence outcomes. The research adopts a reflexive stance that recognises the researcher's dual role as both creator and analyst, employing strategies such as peer review, external documentation, and theoretical triangulation to mitigate potential biases.

The methodology section concludes by asserting that these interwoven approaches collectively constitute a rigorous investigative framework appropriate to the research ques-

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[42] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso Books, 2012).

tions posed, generating new knowledge through artistic practice that contributes meaningfully to the field of extended experimental music theatre.

1.8 Significance of Research

This practice research makes several distinct contributions to the field of EMT through its novel integration of everyday structures, digital interfaces, site-specific methodologies, and participatory practices. The research significance manifests across theoretical, methodological, and practical dimensions.

1.8.1 Reconceptualising EMT Through Everyday Structures

This research aims to make a significant contribution to EMT by identifying and repurposing various everyday structures that underpin contemporary life in both virtual and real spaces. These structures—from dating applications to electoral systems to blockchain technologies—are not immediately associated with EMT, yet through their strategic détournement, they yield novel music theatre experiences and interactions. This approach extends EMT beyond conventional performance paradigms into realms of everyday practice, challenging the boundaries between artistic expression and quotidian experience.

The research demonstrates how seemingly non-theatrical or musical systems can be transformed into rich compositional frameworks when approached through an EMT lens. By treating dating algorithms, political processes, and virtual currencies as artistic materials rather than mere contexts or themes, the work reveals unexpected creative potential within these everyday technologies. This represents a significant contribution to EMT practice, opening new avenues for artistic exploration beyond traditional compositional and performative approaches.

1.8.2 Integration of Physical and Digital Performance Spaces

The ambition of the five creative projects in the portfolio is to generate distinctive forms of site-specific EMT that not only redefine the interaction between the performer and the space but also actively bridge the physical and digital realms. This integration repre-

sents a significant evolution in site-specific practice, acknowledging how contemporary experience increasingly spans both physical and virtual dimensions.

By selecting unconventional and resonant locations, the creative work in this project seeks to utilise the unique acoustical and architectural characteristics of each space (including "virtual" and "real" spaces) to influence and leave an imprint on the EMT experiences themselves. The qualities of a busy city park in the afternoon, as well as the sonic and visual atmosphere of a cave or an inner-city marketplace, are pivotal to the narrative of these EMT experiences. This deliberate interplay between location, action, time, and sound aims to create experiences where these elements are combined as key and active components of the "performance."

Significantly, the research extends this site-responsive approach to digital environments, treating virtual spaces not as neutral platforms but as sites with their distinctive characteristics and affordances. This dual engagement with physical and digital spatiality offers a timely contribution to EMT practice in an era increasingly characterised by hybrid modes of presence and interaction.

1.8.3 Advancing Participatory Approaches in EMT

The research makes a substantial contribution to participatory methodologies within EMT through its innovative engagement with both professional and non-professional participants. This approach moves beyond conventional models of community participation to position non-specialists as essential co-creators whose contributions fundamentally shape the work's development and realisation.

The combination of site-specific performance and participatory practices offers new and exciting possibilities to EMT. Matarasso underscores the transformative potential of such collaborations, where "the creative input of non-professionals contributes not merely as an additive but as a fundamental component that redefines the artistic output."[43] By documenting these performances as suggested by Kayes's emphasis on

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[43] François Matarasso, *A Restless Art; How Participation Won and Why it Matters* (London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, London Branch, 2019), 49.

"documenting the ephemeral,"[44] it is possible to capture and examine the nuances of how specific sites and participatory elements influence the performance, thus contributing to a broader understanding of this approach within EMT.

The significance of this participatory approach lies in its capacity to generate EMT works that reflect a multiplicity of voices and perspectives, challenging traditional hierarchies of expertise and authorship. This research aims to contribute to the field of EMT by showing that participatory and site-specific strategies can produce co-authored and socially engaged practices yielding novel EMT experiences that would be unattainable through conventional compositional methods.

1.8.4 Vocal Diversity and Authenticity

Furthermore, this project also aims to make a significant contribution to the field of EMT by integrating the voices and sounds of non-professional participants into the visual and sonic landscape. This represents a critical artistic strategy for introducing authentic, diverse vocal, musical, and dramatic expression into EMT experiences. The research demonstrates how untrained voices, with their distinctive timbral qualities and performative approaches, can expand the expressive palette of EMT beyond the conventions of classically trained vocal production.

This approach to vocal practice aligns with contemporary concerns regarding representation and authenticity in performance, offering a significant contribution to discussions about whose voices are heard and valued within experimental music practices. By incorporating diverse vocal expressions—ranging from extended techniques to everyday utterances—the research challenges established hierarchies of vocal production and champions a more inclusive understanding of vocality within EMT.

1.8.5 Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to theoretical discussions within EMT through a practical investigation of metamodernist principles. Through works that oscillate between sincerity

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[44] Nick Kaye, *Performance, Place and Documentation* (London: Routledge, 2000).

and irony, between digital and physical realities, the portfolio demonstrates how meta-modernist sensibilities manifest in specific compositional strategies, offering valuable case studies for how contemporary EMT might negotiate between modernist and post-modernist impulses.

Scientific principles that underpin our current understanding of reality, such as Prigogine's, provide a framework for understanding how these EMT practices maintain coherence despite their deliberate destabilisation.[45] His Minimum Entropy Production Principle can be appropriated to explain how EMT works to achieve states that balance disorder with sufficient organisation to maintain communicative potential.[46] This concept resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the rhizome, where non-hierarchical networks create emergent structure through their connections.[47]

The portfolio projects establish specific non-equilibrium conditions that generate emergent performance outcomes. Rather than imposing rigid compositional structures, these works create the conditions for self-organisation—what Prigogine might recognise as dissipative structures in performance practice.[48] These approaches align with Debord's concept of détournement, repurposing everyday structures (dating apps, electoral systems, blockchain) to create new contexts for artistic expression.[49]

By positioning EMT as an "extended" practice spanning physical and digital environments, the research contributes to discussions about performance in post-digital contexts. This perspective engages with Kwon's critique of site-specificity as a mobile, no-

[45] Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers, *Order Out of Chaos: Man's New Dialogue with Nature* (London: Flamingo, 1984), 12–27.

[46] Ilya Prigogine, *Introduction to Thermodynamics of Irreversible Processes* (New York: Interscience Publishers, 1967), 83.

[47] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 7–25.

[48] Ilya Prigogine, *From Being to Becoming: Time and Complexity in the Physical Sciences* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1980), 105–123.

[49] Guy Debord and Gil J. Wolman, "A User's Guide to Détournement," in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006), 14–21.

madic practice[50] while exploring Bishop's analysis of participation as a form of socio-political engagement.[51] Together, these frameworks offer significant new ways of conceptualising EMT not merely as a genre combining music and theatrical elements, but as an expanded field of practice that reflects our increasingly hybrid modes of existence.

1.9 Overview of Contents

The submitted portfolio comprises five significant extended experimental music theatre (EMT) projects, each exploring different aspects of the research questions through diverse methodological approaches and presentational formats.

Portfolio Works

1. Republica Františsšsšsšsšs and Konfɛrɛn͡t sɛ

- A documentary film presenting the republic's installations in Prague over six months, capturing the development of this micro-political performance structure.

- A documentary film of the republic's conference, documenting interdisciplinary exchange and theoretical reflection.

2. LETHE

- A documentary-style film where initial documentation is deliberately woven into the fabric of the film itself as EMT, challenging and blurring the boundaries between documentation and creative work.

3. *SINGLR* the APPERA

- A documentary film of the *SINGLR* Salon, capturing the physical manifestation of this digitally initiated project.

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[50] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 29–31.

[51] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012), 18–32.

- Documentation of promotional materials for *SINGLR*, demonstrating the project's engagement with contemporary media formats.

4. VOXXCOIN

- A documentary film of the blockchain in action, with photographic documentation and the graphic score (located in the Appendix).

- A collection of OpenSea *VOXXCOIN* NFTs, showcasing the digital artefacts created through the project's engagement with blockchain technology.

5. The Voice Party and theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm

- Audio*: theVoice PartyOperaBot Farm* acousmatic medley of selected Twitter bot interventions for radio diffusion.

- Audio*: Requiem for Coffee Corner*—an acoustic memorial for The Voice Party headquarters from the 2019 election, which closed due to the pandemic.

- Audio: *The Voice Party Anthem*.

- Films: A documentary film about the 2019 election campaign, contextualising the project within actual political processes, party political broadcasts and an example of *The Voice Party News Channel* on TikTok, demonstrating the project's extension into social media.

Written Commentary Structure

This written commentary articulates the research narrative across the five EMT projects in the submitted portfolio, explaining their conceptual foundations, methodological approaches, and contributions to knowledge.

Chapter One: Introduction and Research Framework

Chapter One provides an overview of the project, including research questions, aims and objectives, methodology, and significance. It presents "extended experimental music theatre" (EMT) as a comprehensive concept combining elements of opera, theatre, site-specific art, and performance art, positioning it beyond traditional boundaries, also

into digital realms and AI-mediated experiences. The flexibility of this concept allows for the examination of innovative approaches to sound and movement. It explores Björn Heile's concept of "a theatre of sound and movement"[52] as foundational to EMT. The chapter discusses key practitioners, including Jennifer Walshe and Trond Reinholdtsen, and introduces my portfolio projects, such as *VOXXCOIN* and *SINGLR*, which incorporate everyday technologies as extensions of theatrical experience. It acknowledges the limitations of metamodernism and proposes alternative theoretical perspectives, including Deleuze's assemblage theory and principles of entropy and non-equilibrium states, alongside the site-specific concepts of Kwon, Bishop's participatory frameworks, and other critical approaches that underpin the research methodology. It establishes the concept of "extension" as central to understanding how contemporary EMT practices transcend traditional boundaries between physical and digital spaces, reflecting our increasingly hybrid existence.

Chapter Two: Artistic and Research Contexts

Chapter Two examines the artistic and research contexts of the creative work, investigating the potential of employing non-musical methods within EMT. This section explores techniques based on works by artists such as Meredith Monk[53] and Trevor Wishart,[54] as well as theatre companies like Forced Entertainment.[55]

The chapter examines how the boundaries between artist and audience become increasingly permeable, the integration of artistic expression into everyday life, and the application of workshop methodologies. It examines site-specific practices that utilise

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[52] Bjorn Heile, *A Theatre of Sound and Movement: Experimental Music Theatre and Theories of Embodied Cognition* (Glasgow: Enlighten - Research Publications, 2020), 217–237.

[53] Deborah Jowett, *Meredith Monk* (New York: John Hopkins University Press, 1997).

[54] Trevor Wishart, *Sounds Fun: Books 1 & 2* (York and London: Schools Council Publication, Universal Edition, 1977).

[55] Forced Entertainment is a Sheffield-based experimental theatre company founded in 1984. Known for their innovative and challenging performances that often break theatrical conventions, they create work ranging from durational pieces lasting 24 hours to intimate theatrical events. Their productions typically explore themes of contemporary urban life, questioning traditional narrative structures and the relationship between performers and audience. The company has gained international recognition for its significant contributions to avant-garde theatre.

non-traditional locations, drawing on Miwon Kwon's critique of site-specific practice about artworks that directly respond to particular sites.[56]

The concept of "Locational Music Theatre" is introduced, focusing on the exploration of distinctive surroundings for experimental purposes. Notable examples include Trevor Wishart's "Beach Singularity" and Meredith Monk's site-specific approach, which emphasises the relationship between physical environment, human activity, and sound.

Additionally, the chapter examines digital technologies and virtual environments, considering the work of blockchain artist Rhea Myers[57] and music theatre organisation Virtually Opera (led by Leo Doulton).[58] The chapter concludes by examining participatory aspects of EMT, analysing perspectives from Claire Bishop's *Artificial Hells* and Jason Ānanda Josephson Storm's metamodernism, establishing the theoretical foundations for the portfolio's participatory strategies.

Chapter Three: Portfolio Analysis

Chapter Three analyses the portfolio through the strategies outlined in Chapter Two, examining how the creative works address the research questions, aims and objectives.

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[56] The sites referred to here are The Franciscan Gardens in Prague and the island of Kythira in Greece. Although all the projects presented here are site-specific or location specific.

[57] Rhea Myers, *Proof of Work: Blockchain Provocations* (Falmouth: Urbanomic Media Ltd, 2022).

[58] Claudia Pritchard, "Come Bargain with Uncanny Things," *Virtually Opera*, October 20, 2022, https://culturewhisper.com/r/immersive/virtually_opera_come_bargain_with_uncanny_things/17204.

It investigates approaches to site-specificity, participatory practices, vocal strategies, and references to live action role-playing found in Nordic LARP traditions.[59]

Each of the five EMT projects is examined in detail:

Republica Františsšsšsšsšsšs[60] is analysed as an innovative micro-republic that integrates EMT techniques with site-specific and participatory activities. The chapter outlines the process of creating the republic, including defining its purpose, establishing a specific region, and developing cultural traditions through creative practice.

LETHE [61] is examined as a project utilising live action role-playing (LARPing) and interactive approaches to investigate concepts of memory and transformation. Drawing inspiration from Trevor Wishart's theatrical exercises and Miwon Kwon's concepts of site-specificity, this composition is designed to be adaptable to different locations, demonstrating how EMT can respond to specific environmental contexts.

SINGLR[62] is analysed as a project combining music theatre with contemporary online dating through an app-based framework. The chapter outlines the project's three stages: participants generate voice-based profiles, engage in vocal exchanges, and finally meet at *SINGLR* Salons. The analysis examines how the app prioritises verbal exchanges, encourages authentic connections, and investigates algorithmic mediation in

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[59] Eleanor Saitta, Marie Holm-Anderson, and Jon Bock, *The Foundation Stone of Nordic LARP* (Copenhagen: KnutPunkt, 2014). This book comprises a collection of texts that explain how Nordic LARP differs significantly from other forms of LARP, often referred to as "traditional" or "mainstream" LARP, in several key aspects: Nordic LARP tends to emphasise character development and emotional narratives. It often seeks to explore complex themes and personal storytelling. While traditional LARPs might have a competitive element, Nordic LARP is more about collaborative storytelling. The goal is often to create a story together, rather than winning the game. Nordic LARP usually minimises the use of complex rule systems. Traditional LARPs often have elaborate mechanics for combat, magic, and character progression. Nordic LARPs often strive for a high level of realism and immersion. This can involve playing in environments that closely match the setting of the narrative (like using an actual forest for a medieval story) and using props and costumes. The duration of Nordic LARPs can vary greatly, but they often run continuously over several days, with players staying in character throughout. This intensity can lead to a more profound experience but also demands a lot from the participants in terms of emotional and physical investment. Many Nordic LARPs are designed to explore social issues, ethical dilemmas, and human emotions. These distinctions are important as it is Nordic LARP that has been utilised in this research.

[60] See 3.2

[61] See 3.2

[62] See 3.3

music theatre. The project connects Miwon Kwon's theories on spatiality with Claire Bishop's participatory frameworks, establishing a communal ethos that spans both digital and physical spaces.

The Voice Party [63] (including *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* and *Requiem for Coffee Corner*) and *VOXXCOIN* [64] are investigated through participation and site-specificity, with particular attention to how blockchain technologies can function as site-responsive infrastructures that both document and transform social and musical interactions in physical and virtual spaces.

Furthermore, this chapter addresses challenges and limitations encountered during the research, highlighting unresolved questions and identifying future research directions. The conclusion reflects on how extended experimental music theatre might continue to evolve in response to our increasingly hybrid existence across physical and digital realms, positioning the research within broader conversations about performance practice in post-digital contexts, of frameworks that bridge digital and physical performance spaces. This approach recognises the increasingly hybrid nature of contemporary experience and positions EMT as uniquely suited to explore this hybridity, by utilising these specific contexts for performance. This analysis examines how digital infrastructures serve not merely as platforms but as distinctive sites with their own performative qualities.

Chapter 4: Conclusion and Apology

The conclusion presents the research outcomes, including both successful and unsuccessful elements of the portfolio projects. It provides a reflective analysis of the interdisciplinary methodologies employed and articulates how the portfolio collectively addresses the initial research questions.

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[63] See section 3.5

[64] See section 3.4

Chapter 2: Research and Artistic Context

Exploring the web of practices that might constitute what this research terms "Extended Music Theatre" is akin to a biologist examining a complex ecosystem. Like the naturalist who must first survey the entire habitat before focusing on specific quadrants for detailed analysis, this research initially considers EMT practices across diverse artistic domains. This panoramic view reveals rich interconnections, overlaps, and dialogues between seemingly disparate practices, which is a necessary perspective, as the pattern itself—the ecosystem as a whole—is the primary subject of inquiry. By first examining the field's vast expanse, encompassing musical composition, theatre, visual art, digital technologies, and social engagement, we can then meaningfully isolate specific research questions while maintaining awareness of how they connect to broader artistic ecosystems and how they relate to the research questions.

The idea of mapping this sprawling territory might appear daunting, rather like being handed a pencil and asked to sketch the Amazon rainforest from memory. Nevertheless, this chapter attempts precisely such a cartographical feat, examining the research and artistic context of the five creative extended experimental music theatre (EMT) projects that form part of the submitted portfolio. It begins by discussing the musical and non-musical influences on the creative work, including EMT practices by composers, vocalists, and music collectives, as well as practices outside of music theatre by visual artists and filmmakers. These practices are discussed in relation to the identified artistic concerns that shaped the creative work in the portfolio. Then discussions associated with participatory, site-specific, and situationist art are examined in the context of how these ideas were applied and critiqued in the EMT pieces in the portfolio. Throughout this chapter, the methodological framework established in Chapter 1 is built upon, demonstrating how the portfolio projects, *Republica Františšsšsššsšsšsšsš, LETHE, SINGLR, The APPERA, VOXXCOIN*, and *The Voice Party*, extend traditional EMT practices through their engagement with everyday technologies, unconventional spaces, and participatory frameworks.

2.1 Musical and Non-Musical Influences

The five projects in the submitted portfolio draw upon a diverse range of musical and non-musical influences. These influences are organised according to key artistic concerns that guided the creative process and development of each work. Beyond composers, vocalists, and music collectives, this research draws significant inspiration from visual artists and filmmakers whose work resonates with the methodological approaches outlined in section 1.4, demonstrating how these portfolio projects extend traditional music theatre practices through their engagement with everyday technologies, unconventional spaces, and the dynamic interplay between digital and physical realms. What follows is not merely a taxonomical listing of influences—a sort of artistic family tree—but rather an exploration of how these varied practices informed, challenged, and ultimately transformed the creation of the portfolio works.

2.1.1 Blurring Boundaries Between Participant and Audience

The dissolution of traditional boundaries between participants and audiences represents a fundamental concern throughout this portfolio. Several artists have pioneered approaches that inform this aspect of the research, each employing distinct strategies to reconfigure audience-performer relationships. These boundary-blurring practices range from the confrontational to the conversational, the political to the participatory, creating a spectrum of approaches that this portfolio draws upon and extends.

Artist and filmmaker Christoph Schlingensief and artist and writer Tim Etchells employ contrasting yet complementary approaches to audience engagement. Schlingensief's *Please Love Austria* (2000) directly implicates audiences in provocative political discourse,[65] creating a confrontational framework that demands active participation. This work, which involved placing asylum seekers in a container outside the Vienna State Opera and allowing the public to vote on their deportation, exemplifies how performance can dissolve the comfortable distance between spectator and participant, forcing ethical

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[65] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2000) 279–280.

engagement with contentious social issues. In contrast, Etchells' *Quizoola!* (1996) [66] establishes a more collaborative dynamic through improvised question-and-answer exchanges, creating a conversational space where traditional spectator roles gradually dissolve. The work, which involves performers asking and answering questions for up to six hours, creates an intimate and unpredictable environment where audience members become increasingly invested in the unfolding dialogue.

Both artists' approaches reflect the influence of Brechtian alienation techniques [67] and Dadaist [68] disruption of artistic conventions, though they deploy these influences toward different ends—one might say Schlingensief takes Brecht's alienation effect and amplifies it to the point of provocation, while Etchells transforms it into a tool for unexpected intimacy. Schlingensief's direct political provocation in works like *Chance 2000* (1998) [69]—which established a political party as an artwork—provided a crucial conceptual foundation for *The Voice Party*, [70] demonstrating how political structures could be repurposed as experimental music theatre frameworks. That a political party might be considered a compositional structure was a revelation, suggesting that civic processes themselves might be treated as artistic material—a proposition that The Voice Party explores to its logical, and occasionally absurd, conclusion.

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[66] See www.forcedentertainment.com. *Quizoola!* Is devised by the company called Forced Entertainment.

[67] Berthold Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre: Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting* (London: Macmillan, 1933–1947), 91.

[68] Dadaism emerged as a radical artistic and literary movement during World War I, deliberately disrupting conventional aesthetic values through chaos, irrationality, and anti-bourgeois protest. The Dadaists rejected reason and logic, instead embracing nonsense, irrationality, and intuition. Their disruptive techniques included collage, photomontage, readymades, sound poetry, and cut-up writing—all designed to challenge traditional artistic values, shock audiences, and protest the nationalist and bourgeois cultural values that many Dadaists believed had led to World War I. Hans Richter*, Dada: Art and Anti-Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 35–47; Stephen C. Foster, ed., *Crisis and the Arts: The History of Dada*, vol. 1 (New York: G.K. Hall, 1996), 83–92.

[69] Norbert Weinrowsky, *Scheitern als Chance-Filmdoku über Chance 2000 und die APPD 1998* (1998; Wuppertal: MedienProjekt, 1998), film.

[70] See section 3.5

Rirkrit Tiravanija's works *Untitled (Free/Still)* (1992) and *Flädlesuppe* (1993) transform gallery spaces into communal environments centred around shared meals.[71] These works emphasise hospitality as an artistic medium, breaking down traditional audience–artist boundaries through cultural practices of commensality. The simple yet profound act of sharing food creates immediate connections among strangers, establishing temporary communities within institutional spaces. Tiravanija's approach significantly influenced Republika *Františsššsšsšs* and *Konfɛrɛn͡tsɛ*, particularly in their exploration of how everyday social practices can be recontextualised as experimental performance. This influence is notably evident in the inclusion of *Le Picnic Suspendu* and in the *Coffee Break* section of *Konfɛrɛn͡tsɛ*,[72] where conventions of hospitality and conviviality are deliberately inverted. By transforming the promise of refreshment into an act of prohibition, these works create a critical commentary on social stratification—a reflection on the dichotomy between the "haves" and "have-nots." Through this subversion of expected social rituals, the works extend Tiravanija's relational aesthetics into more politically charged territory, challenging participants to reconsider the power dynamics inherent in seemingly neutral acts of communal gathering. After all, there's nothing quite like the disappointment of a suspended picnic to remind us how deeply our social expectations are embedded in everyday rituals.

Tania El Khoury's *Gardens Speak* (2014)[73] offers yet another approach to boundary dissolution through intimate, individualised audience experiences. El Khoury's work is characterised by its emphasis on storytelling and self-reflection, which invites the audience to actively participate and creates a sense of immersion, as if they were experiencing a specific moment from her cultural heritage first-hand.[74]

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[71] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012), 209–210.

[72] See section 3.1

[73] Tania El Khoury, *Gardens Speak* (London; Beirut: Tadween Publishing, 2014).

[74] Tania El Khoury, "10 Minutes with Tania El Khoury/Gardens Speak & As Far as Isolation Goes/SIFA 2021," YouTube video, 14:30, published on May 21, 2021, https://youtu.be/o8G-NGTnl2Q?si=BQXX82q-Tpmw0_U92.

This work, in particular, invites participants to listen to oral histories of people buried in Syrian gardens during the conflict, creating deeply personal encounters with political realities. While acknowledging the profound difference in immediate gravity between El Khoury's engagement with Syrian trauma and the comparatively less urgent context of Brexit that informed the *VoicePartyOperaBotFarm*, El Khoury's influence manifests primarily at the technical level. Her sophisticated approach to individualised listening experiences and embodied engagement with narratives provided technical inspiration for both *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* and *Phonetic Requiem for Coffee Corner*, particularly in their use of binaural recording techniques[75] to create immersive sonic environments where narrative elements emerge organically from textural soundscapes. This technical approach to immersive aural experience also parallels Simon McBurney's work in *Mnemonic*,[76] which explores collective and personal memory through innovative sonic techniques that collapse the distance between the audience and the performed narrative. Both El Khoury and McBurney understand that the ear offers pathways to experience that bypass intellectual defences—a principle that *theVoicePartyOperaBot-Farm* deployed in its sonic interventions into political discourse.

2.1.2 Fusion of Art and Life

The integration of artistic practice with everyday life represents another central concern throughout this portfolio. Several artists have developed approaches that dissolve con-

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[75] Binaural recording is an audio capture method that creates three-dimensional soundscapes by using two microphones positioned to replicate human ears, typically within a dummy head or specialized headset. Unlike conventional stereo recording, binaural techniques capture the subtle timing, volume, and tonal differences that occur as sound reaches each ear, including the acoustic effects of the head, outer ear, and ear canal. When played back through headphones, these recordings reproduce spatial cues that allow listeners to perceive sound direction, distance, and environmental characteristics with remarkable accuracy, creating an immersive "you are there" listening experience. Hammershøi, Dorte, and Henrik Møller, "Methods for Binaural Recording and Reproduction." Acta Acustica United with Acustica 88, no. 3 (May 2002): 303–311.

[76] "Mnemonic," created by Simon McBurney and Théâtre de Complicité in 1999, explores the interconnectedness of memory, identity, and history through parallel narratives: one following a man searching for his absent father, and another tracing the journey of Ötzi, a 5,300-year-old iceman discovered in the Alps. The production pioneered innovative theatrical techniques including multimedia elements, physical theatre, and direct audience participation (viewers were even given blindfolds and leaves to engage tactile memory) to embody how memory functions as both deeply personal and collectively constructed. Simon McBurney, *"Mnemonic." In Theatre and Memory,* edited by Karen Jürs-Munby and Jerome Fletcher, (London: Methuen Drama, 2003). 127–149.

ventional boundaries between art and quotidian experience, informing the methodological foundations of this research. However, while these practitioners primarily seek to integrate art into life, often with explicit socio-political intentions, this portfolio pursues a fundamentally different trajectory. Rather than attempting to aestheticise the everyday or harness art for world-changing ambitions, this research reveals how life, scientific paradigms, and digital structures already possess inherent artistic qualities that can be composed into EMT pieces. As Claire Bishop astutely observes, if one's primary goal is social change, it is better to join an NGO. This portfolio's concern is instead with creating an EMT that functions as an authentic reflection of our contemporary moment and anticipates emergent futures. The distinction is subtle but profound: instead of imposing artistic frameworks onto life, these works identify and amplify the compositional patterns already embedded within technological, scientific, and social systems. This approach positions EMT not as a vehicle for utopian transformation but as a nontopian critical apparatus through which we might better comprehend the complex systems that increasingly define our existence. Nonetheless, the artists discussed in this section provide essential inspiration, methodological tools, and research foundations that significantly informed the practice in this portfolio, which is why it remains important to include them here despite the divergent philosophical trajectory.

Meredith Monk's holistic approach to voice and composition exemplifies this fusion of art and lived experience. Her work *Quarry* (1976)[77] weaves together musical composition, theatrical performance, and dance to create a multidimensional reflection on historical trauma and memory. By integrating these diverse elements, Monk creates performance compositions that resist conventional categorisation, instead reflecting the complex, overlapping nature of lived experience. Her approach demonstrates how artistic disciplines can merge to create integrated expressions that more accurately reflect the multifaceted nature of human experience. Monk's refusal to separate voice from movement, composition from performance, offers a model for the kind of integrated practice that this portfolio pursues across digital and physical domains.

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[77] Bonnie Marranca, *Conversations with Meredith Monk* (New York: PAJ Publications, 2014), 135–137.

Like Monk, Trevor Wishart similarly explores this fusion through different means, primarily through electroacoustic works that combine musical and dramatic strategies. His *Red Bird* (1977) exemplifies this approach, utilising field recordings and vocal manipulations to explore political and social issues. As Wishart himself states, "*Red Bird* is both a piece of music and an allegory of political expression," using sound to transport listeners between contrasting environments, from confined prison cells to open natural settings. As with most of Wishart's pieces, listening is a tool that instantly transports the audience or participant to diverse environments. Wishart's work influenced, in particular, *LETHE* and the sound pieces *Requiem for Coffee Corner* and *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* because unlike traditional site-specific art that requires experiencing a work in its original location, Wishart develops what might be termed "site-derived composition," where the sonic essence of specific environments becomes both raw material and conceptual foundation for his works. This approach is particularly evident in pieces like *Beach Singularity*, where coastal recordings serve as the primary sound source, creating an artistic transformation that maintains a connection to its geographical origin while transcending mere documentation. Wishart's pioneering concept of 'sonic landscape' further develops this relationship, treating the acoustic properties of specific environments as fundamental compositional elements that carry the signature of real places while undergoing artistic metamorphosis through electronic manipulation.

What informed specifically the soundtrack to LETHE, *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* and *Requiem for Coffee Corner* so much, was Wishart's engagement with site particularly and how this operates simultaneously on multiple levels, physical, psychological, and conceptual as a "psychological site-specificity," where listeners are transported to imagined or transformed versions of original locations through sound alone. When *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* was only a series of short sonic tweets, these sonic snapshots needed to work very quickly on the listener. So, rather than insisting on the primacy of physical presence in a specific location, Wishart extracts the essence of place, transforms it through his compositional techniques of sound metamorphosis, and creates portable sonic experiences that retain their connection to geographical origins

while becoming something new—a sort of sonic teleportation device that transports the listener to transformed environments without requiring physical relocation. One might say that Wishart taught us how to pack an entire landscape into a sonic suitcase—a skill particularly valuable when working within Twitter's limits.

Stylistically distinct from Wishart yet similarly committed to political critique through vocality and orality, Jennifer Walshe's *ALL THE MANY PEOPLS* (2013)[78] offers a contemporary perspective on art–life fusion through its engagement with digital culture, weaving together components of online everyday life into multimedia performances, constructing a fragmentary chorus vocally embodied by Walshe, creating a fragmentary sonic representation of contemporary living. The work utilises elements of online life, including YouTube clips filmed by soldiers on mobile phones, gaming fragments, and mid-20th-century American archival footage, into multimedia performances vocally embodied by Walshe herself. This creates a fragmentary sonic representation of contemporary existence, using artistic frameworks to reflect the disjointed, information-saturated nature of modern digital experience. Walshe's approach utilises this framework as a mirror, establishing connections between internet culture and the chaotic nature of contemporary life. Her work captures the frenetic quality of online existence, translating digital fragmentation into vocal performance that embodies the particular rhythms and ruptures of life mediated through screens and networks.

Brandon LaBelle's *The Sonic Body* (2008)[79] examines the social dimensions of sound in public spaces, investigating how sonic environments influence human interactions and social relations. LaBelle's research-based practice explores the intricate relationships between sound, space, and sociality, revealing how auditory experience fundamentally shapes our engagement with both physical environments and social structures.[80] His attention to how sound creates invisible architectures within public space provides valu-

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[78] Jennifer Walshe, "Jennifer Walshe: ALL THE MANY PEOPLES," May 19, 2021, http://milker.org/all-the-many-peoples.

[79] Brandon LaBelle, *The Sonic Body* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2008), 45–47.

[80] Brandon LaBelle, *The Sonic Body* (Paris: Errant Bodies, 2011), 2.

able frameworks for understanding how vocal and sonic elements structure social interactions in portfolio works like *The Voice Party* and *Republika Františsšsšsšsšs*.

This fusion of art and life directly connects to the concept of the notion of "extended" in EMT, introduced in Section 1.1, where contemporary performance practices extend beyond traditional boundaries to reflect our increasingly hybrid existence. The portfolio projects, particularly *SINGLR* and *VOXXCOIN*, exemplify this extension by incorporating everyday technologies, such as dating apps and blockchain, into EMT frameworks, as outlined in the methodological approach described in Section 1.4.3. These works do not simply use technology as a subject matter but as fundamental compositional structures, treating the functional logic of dating algorithms and blockchain protocols as frameworks for artistic exploration.

2.1.3 Political Engagement and Social Critique

Political engagement and social critique form the essential foundations for this research, informed by artists who utilise performance as a means of addressing socio-political realities. The portfolio draws upon diverse approaches to political art that incorporate both direct activism and more nuanced forms of critique. Given the increasingly fractured political landscape of post-Brexit Britain and the wider global context of rising nationalism, these approaches provide crucial methodologies for engaging with political structures through artistic means.

Tania Bruguera and Guillermo Gómez-Peña represent contrasting yet complementary approaches to political performance. Bruguera, a Cuban practitioner, engages directly with political power structures through her concept of "arte útil" (useful art) and "political timing specific" performances. Her work frequently functions as a form of civic activism, blurring traditional boundaries between artistic expression and political intervention. Notable examples include her 2018–2019 Tate Modern Turbine Hall installation featuring a heat-sensitive floor revealing a hidden portrait of a Syrian refugee only when sufficient visitors gathered. However, the piece that had a direct impact on the portfolio works is *Tatlin's Whisper #6* (2009), which challenged Cuban political suppression by

providing an open microphone for free speech. Although in *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* the *Speakers' Corner* is a direct transplant from Hyde Park Corner, London, transporting it to a park in Prague resonated with Brugera's approach here. She further established the Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (INSTAR) in Havana, creating spaces for civic engagement through artistic practice, which hugely impacted on The Voice Party even though it used different tools and for different artistic outcomes. Where Bruguera creates platforms for direct political speech, *The Voice Party* explored how non-semantic vocalisation might function within electoral contexts, suggesting that political expression might exist beyond conventional language.

Gómez-Peña's *The Couple in the Cage* (1993)[81], created in collaboration with Coco Fusco,[82] was inspirational as an artwork challenging the idea of borders. Gómez-Peña approaches political discourse through cultural critique, with particular emphasis on borders, identity, and cross-cultural exchange. Working with his La Pocha Nostra performance troupe, he interrogates the US–Mexico border as both physical territory and psychological construct, challenging nationalist narratives, critiquing cultural perceptions by displaying performers as fictional indigenous people in a cage, prompting viewers to confront their assumptions and prejudices. This work operates through provocation and discomfort, revealing cultural biases through the audience's reactions to the performance. Brexit came as a huge shock to the artistic community and, as a UK practitioner used to freedom of movement, it was really the first time I had to think about the idea of border. *The Voice Party* utilised this discomfort as a starting point for such investigation, and this piece too had an impact on *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*, in particular *Passport Control*, where, by contrast, the only caveat to citizenship was that you had to exist as an entity in space. Even a sound could be issued with a passport. This playful inversion of border logic—where even ephemeral sounds could be granted citizenship—provided

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[81] Rachell Sanicharan, "Analysis of Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez Peña's 'The Couple in the Cage: A Guantinui Odyssey,'" *Indigeneity in the Caribbean* 6, no. 1 (February 4, 2022), https://doi.org/10.33137/cq.v6i1.36921.

[82] Coco Fusco is a Cuban-American interdisciplinary artist, writer, and curator. Born in 1960 in New York City to Cuban parents, she has established herself as a significant figure in performance art and cultural criticism since the 1980s.

a critical counterpoint to the increasingly restrictive border policies emerging across Europe and beyond.

While Bruguera and Gómez-Peña interrogate contemporary political dynamics through confrontational methods that challenge audience complacency, Jeremy Deller's practice extends this political engagement along a temporal axis, harnessing collective memory and historical consciousness as vehicles for participatory critique. Both approaches significantly informed *The Voice Party* and *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm*. Bruguera and Gómez-Peña's confrontational strategies inspired the work's provocative inversion of political discourse through non-semantic vocalisation, while Deller's method of participations and temporal interconnection influenced how the work established dialogues between past electoral rhetoric and contemporary digital campaigning.

Deller's work establishes connections between past and present through participatory historical engagement. *We're Here Because We're Here* (2016)[83] involved people across the United Kingdom in a living memorial to World War I, with participants appearing in public spaces dressed as soldiers who died in the conflict. Similarly, *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001)[84] reenacted a violent confrontation from the UK miners' strike, transforming historical events into interactive performances. Both works aim to merge art with social reality, addressing audiences directly by connecting historical narratives with contemporary reflection. Significantly, Deller describes *We're Here Because We're Here* as creating something "ephemeral" that "lives in people's memories," which he considers a form of space.[85] He also acknowledges that the installation would continue to exist in the digital space, which is an insight that resonates with the portfolio's exploration of physical–digital continuums. Deller demonstrates how political art might engage with history not as a fixed past but as a living presence that continues to shape contem-

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83 Kate Church and Jeremy Deller, *We're Here Because We're Here*, 2016, BBC & 14-18 NOW WW1 Centenary Art Commissions, YouTube video, https://youtu.be/uXnr3w74TJs?si=W2vzhyMIXi41IYFr.

84 Mike Figgis, *The Battle of Orgreave,* 2001, ArtAngel Media/Channel 4, film.

85 Kate Church and Jeremy Deller, *We're Here Because We're Here*, 2016, BBC & 14–18 NOW WW1 Centenary Art Commissions, YouTube video, https://youtu.be/uXnr3w74TJs?si=W2vzhyMIXi41IYFr.

porary experience, an approach that informs how The Voice Party engaged with elect-oral histories and Brexit contexts.

Otto Muehls's *Back to Fucking Cambridge*[86] has a place on the list of works that have inspired this portfolio because it is a powerful example of the avant-garde, rebellious spirit of the '60s and '70s (although it was filmed in the '80s and released in '87), as de-picted in film. As the creator of his own commune, Muehl's interest in community life and shared experiences was evident in his work, which often featured group action and in-volvement. This is on full display in *Back to Fucking Cambridge*, in which commune members masquerade as artists from early 20th-century Vienna, which, given the com-munal living founded by Muehl, could possibly be considered as a form of Viennese 'LARP' (though Muehl himself would not have called it that).

At its core, *Back to Fucking Cambridge* is a satire of academic pretences and the intel-lectual elite's disconnection from everyday life. Despite Muehl's background as a visual artist, it is his performances, such as *Back to Fucking Cambridge*, that, in common with Schlingensief's work, often challenged ideas of permissible content and form, causing controversy and polarisation. This film's LARP style influenced *LETHE*,[87] *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*,[88] and *The Voice Party*,[89] particularly in their willingness to employ ab-surdity and provocation as critical strategies. Muehl's work reminds us that sometimes the most effective political critique comes wrapped in absurdity—a principle that *The Voice Party* embraced by introducing non-semantic vocalisation into the thoroughly se-mantic context of electoral politics.

These approaches to political engagement directly inform the metamodernist framework introduced in section 1.3, particularly the oscillation between sincerity and irony that

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[86] Therese Panoutsopoulos and Otto Muehl, *Back to Fucking Cambridge*, 1987, Österreichicher Medi-atek, film.

[87] See section 3.2.

[88] See section 3.1

[89] See section 3.5.

characterises contemporary EMT practices. *The Voice Party* specifically employed polit-ical engagement as a methodological strategy by creating a registered political party that participated in the 2019 UK general election, thereby extending EMT into real-world political processes, as detailed in section 1.4.3. This oscillation between earnest political participation and ironic performative gesture exemplifies the metamodernist approach, suggesting that contemporary political engagement might require both sincere commit-ment and critical distance.

2.1.4 Methods for Workshop-Based Creation

Workshop-based creative processes represent a crucial methodological dimension of this research, drawing upon established approaches from both experimental music and theatre practice. Several composers and ensembles have developed workshop meth-ods that inform the portfolio's approach to collaborative creation. These approaches share a commitment to developing work through practical experimentation rather than predetermined composition, allowing structures to emerge through collaborative explo-ration.

Heiner Goebbels frequently utilises workshops to experiment with staging and perform-ance elements, developing works through iterative collaborative processes.[90] His ap-proach involves gathering collaborators in laboratory-like settings where staging con-cepts, sound design and performance techniques evolve organically. Rather than be-ginning with a complete score or script, Goebbels uses workshops as investigative spaces where performers actively contribute to the work's development. His process often involves creating environments where performers can respond to textual, sonic and visual stimuli; documenting and analysing workshop experiments to refine composi-tional structures; and developing what he calls "polyphonic theatre" where different ele-ments maintain independence while creating coherent theatrical experiences. In works like *Eraritjaritjaka* and *Stifters Dinge*, the workshop process allowed Goebbels to ex-plore relationships between performers, multimedia elements and mechanical apparat-

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[90] Mark Thomas, *Documentary: Heiner Goebbels, Everything that Happened and that Would Happen*, May 10, 2019, ArtAngel, film.

uses before finalising the pieces. This resonates with the way Simon McBurney and Complicité work, and this very curious investigative way of working with a cast had an impact on *LETHE*. Although there were fixed elements to explore, such as a storyboard, the workshops shown in an Oto Meuhlian documentary style, leading to the part 2 LARPs, strongly utilised Goebbels' structure of workshop as laboratory. The workshop becomes not merely a space for rehearsing predetermined material but a site of genuine investigation and discovery.

Robert Ashley's *Perfect Lives*[91] emerged through extensive workshop explorations with his regular collaborators. Ashley's practice involved developing vocal techniques and speech patterns through improvisational exercises; allowing performers to shape their characters through repeated workshop interactions; and building electronic soundscapes that responded to and evolved alongside the performers' contributions. Meredith Monk's *Juice: A Theatre Cantata in Three Movements* similarly evolved through workshop practices centred on her extended vocal technique. Her workshops typically involve physical movement exercises that generate vocal responses; developing "vocal choreography" where sound and movement are inseparable; creating ensemble dynamics through sustained practice of specific techniques; and building architectural relationships between performers and performance spaces. This was informative for all the pieces, even in projects *VOXXCOIN* and *SINGLR* where the structural relationships were half digital, half analogue. In *SINGLR* my alter-ego, the friendly "Singing Teacher Bot," was extending these ideas and the voices of the participants into the digital realm, then turning into analogue again in the *SINGLR* Salon. This movement between digital and physical domains transforms the traditional workshop space, suggesting that contemporary creation might involve oscillation between virtual and embodied modes of experimentation.

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[91] Robert Ashley, *Perfect Lives: An Opera* (New York: Burning Books, 1991).

Pauline Oliveros and IONE's opera, *The Nubian Word for Flowers*,[92] and Anne Le-
Baron's *LSD: The Opera*[93] demonstrate how workshops can generate intricate, mul-
tilayered, and participatory pieces that explore diverse performance styles and sonic
possibilities. These works employ workshop methods to explore complex subject matter
through multiple performance modalities, creating richly layered experiences that could
not emerge from conventional compositional approaches. Their methods suggest that
certain types of complexity can only emerge through practical exploration—a principle
that informs the workshop-based development of *LETHE* and other portfolio works.

Ensemble approaches to workshop creation are exemplified by groups such as The
Wooster Group[94] and the British ensemble Bastard Assignments, which utilise collabor-
ative processes to integrate music, text, and performance elements. These groups
demonstrate how new EMTs can emerge through iterative workshop approaches that
draw upon diverse disciplinary perspectives. Their emphasis on collective creation chal-
lenges traditional models of individual authorship, suggesting that contemporary per-
formance might emerge from dialogic processes rather than singular vision—an ap-
proach that informs the collaborative development of *LETHE*.

The Leeds-based theatre group Interplay, had a significant influence on Trevor Wis-
hart's early workshop practice extending into his *Sounds Fun* books[95], which compile
musical games designed for workshop realisation. Similarly, theatre directors Peter
Brook with his Theatre des Bouffes du Nord,[96] and Simon McBurney, through his com-
pany Complicité, intensively employ workshop devising and physical theatre techniques

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[92] Ione, *The Nubian Word for Flowers, A Phantom Opera*, May 28, 2021, Ministry of MAAT Experiments in Opera, film.

[93] Anne LeBaron, *FIRST TAKE '15 - LSD: The Opera*, YouTube video, https://youtu.b e/a5geKjdCUNE? si=oCEWj8nhw7M5Mok3, film.

[94] Andrew Quick, *The Wooster Group Workbook* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007).

[95] Trevor Wishart, *Sounds Fun: A Book of Musical Games, Books 1 & 2* (York and London. School Coun-cils Publication and Universal Edition, 1977).

[96] Brook founded The International Centre for Theatre Research in 1970. Part of his theory of theatre was that the actors should bring their "world of imagination" to meet with the audience's "world of the every-day" creating a space where the boundaries between stage and spectator dissolve.

in a process where "movement and space" take priority. In the submitted portfolio, the workshop element is most apparent in *LETHE*, although it may be observed throughout the portfolio. These theatre practitioners demonstrate how physical exploration can generate performance structures that would not emerge from textual or compositional planning alone, emphasising the generative potential of embodied investigation.

Interdisciplinary performance approaches are evident in Meredith Monk's *Education of the Girlchild* (1972) and Tim Etchells' work with Forced Entertainment, including *Quizoola!* (1996).[97] Monk's workshops combine music, dance, and theatre, while Etchells employs devised theatre techniques to generate performances through group improvisation, emphasising narrative development and audience participation. Monk's approach encourages interdisciplinary fusion, while Etchells focuses on collective creation and collaborative storytelling.[98] Both approaches inform the workshop methodologies employed in developing *LETHE* and other portfolio works, suggesting that contemporary performance requires methods that can integrate diverse disciplinary perspectives.[99]

Following on from Etchells, Neil Luck's *The Melting Ceremony* highlights the importance of interdisciplinary community collaboration through its fusion of live music, theatre, and performance art.[100] Similarly, Robert Ashley's works like *Perfect Lives* and *Atalanta (Acts of God)* combine spoken word, electronic music, and distinctive narratives developed through workshop processes.[101] [102] These works demonstrate how workshops can generate complex interdisciplinary performances that integrate multiple expressive modes into coherent artistic experiences.

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[97] Colin Thomas, "No Wrong Answers to Questions in Quizoola," *The Georgia Straight*, January 3, 2007, https://straight.com/article/no-wrong-answers-to-questions-in-quizoola.

[98] Tim Etchells, 1999 *Certain Fragments: Contemporary Performance and Forced Entertainment* (London and New York: , 1999).

[99] See section 3.3.

[100] Robert Barry, "*Corporeal Engagement: An Interview with Neil Luck*," *The Quietus*, July 27, 2016.

[101] Robert Ashley, *Perfect Lives*, Boomkat, June 14, 1991, https://boomcat.com/perfect_lives. It is described here as "a comic opera about reincarnation."

[102] Robert Ashley, *Perfect Lives* (New York: Dalkey Archive Press, 2011).

In the submitted portfolio, workshop methodologies are most evident in LETHE, though they inform the development process across all five projects. These workshop-based approaches directly connect to the methodological framework described in section 1.4.2, particularly the guided improvisation and collaborative practice methods. LETHE specifically employed workshop-based methods, incorporating theatrical techniques (Ras Box methodology), text-score implementation, and live action role-playing, thereby extending EMT into collaborative and improvisational domains, as detailed in Section 1.4.3. The workshop becomes not merely a developmental stage but a compositional methodology in itself, generating structures and relationships that could not emerge from conventional compositional approaches.

2.1.5 Site Specificity

Site specificity of all kinds, both analogue and digital, and especially the melding of these two worlds, represents a fundamental methodological concern throughout this portfolio, informed by artists who have developed distinctive approaches to location-based performance. Several key works demonstrate how site-specific practices can transform performance experiences, generating new artistic possibilities. If traditional venues create artificial neutrality, site-specific approaches embrace the rich complexity of existing environments, allowing their particular characteristics to shape the performance itself.

Trevor Wishart's *Beach Singularity* (1977)[103] exemplifies how coastal environments can be integrated into performance structures. Created for the British seaside, specifically the beaches of Morecambe, Cleveleys, St. Annes, and Southport in summer 1977, the work incorporates location as an essential compositional element. *Beach Singularity* uses site-specificity to integrate cultural memory, location, pre-recorded sound, and environmental acoustics into a reflective and dynamic EMT experience. Wishart demonstrates how performance might respond to the particular qualities of a location—its sounds, spatial configurations, cultural associations, and environmental conditions—creating works that could not exist in the abstract space of traditional venues.

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[103] Trevor Wishart, *SUN* (York: Universal Edition, 1974).

Trond Reinholdtsen's works, *Narcissus* (2013) and *Ø* (2021)[104] create immersive envir-
onments by transforming stark industrial spaces into opera venues. This approach es-
tablishes deliberate parallels with Wagner's Bayreuth Festspielhaus, utilising site-spe-
cificity to comment on operatic institutions and "The Grand Narrative" of Western art
music. In contrast, Punchdrunk's *Sleep No More* (2003)[105] transforms entire buildings
into interactive performance spaces where audience members physically explore narrat-
ive environments. Both Trond Reinholdtsen's Norwegian Opra and Punchdrunk's im-
mersive productions draw upon Dadaist traditions of unexpected spatial intervention,
though they deploy these influences toward different ends—Reinholdtsen toward institu-
tional critique, Punchdrunk toward narrative immersion. What unites them is an under-
standing that architectural space itself can be compositional material, shaping both per-
formance and reception through its particular characteristics.

Another ArtAngel[106] commission, Janet Cardiff's monumental *The Missing Voice (Case
Study B)* (1999),[107] guides listeners through urban environments via an audio narrative
that integrates visual and sonic elements through site-specific audio walks that merge
fiction and reality, guiding participants through urban and natural environments with

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[104] Trond Reindholdtsen, *The Norwegian Opra 2009–2021*, The Official Website for the Norwegian Opra,
2021, https://thenorwegianopra.no.

[105] "Beyond The Lines. Sleep No More—Character Loops," Wordpress, February 1, 2016, https://be-
yondthelines2016.wordpress.com/2016/01/02/snm/.

[106] James Lingwood and Michael Morris. "Artangel: Commissioning, Producing and Presenting Contem-
porary Art That Wouldn't Be Made or Experienced Without Us." In *Public Art (Now): Out of Time, Out of
Place*, edited by Claire Doherty, 29–35. London: Art Books Publishing, 2015.

Artangel is a London-based arts organisation founded in 1985 that has become internationally renowned
for commissioning and producing site-specific art projects that challenge conventional exhibition formats.
Led by co-directors James Lingwood and Michael Morris since 1991, Artangel specialises in creating am-
bitious works in unexpected locations throughout London and beyond, often transforming urban spaces,
historic buildings, and natural environments into temporary art installations. Their mission explicitly focus-
es on enabling "extraordinary art to take root in unexpected places." The organisation has commissioned
landmark works by artists including Rachel Whiteread, Michael Landy, Jeremy Deller, and Janet Cardiff,
whose audio walk "The Missing Voice (Case Study B)" (1999) was produced by Artangel in collaboration
with the Whitechapel Library in East London. Their commissioning model emphasises long-term devel-
opment processes, often taking years to realise complex projects that might otherwise remain unrealised
due to institutional constraints.

[107] Janet Cardiff, "The Missing Voice (Case Study B)," 1999, audio walk, Artangel and Whitechapel Li-
brary, London, https://www.cardiffmiller.com/artworks/walks/missing_voice.html.

sophisticated binaural recording technology. While the concept of the soundwalk itself is not utilised in the pieces in this portfolio, these works exemplify how site-specific practices can transform everyday environments into performance spaces, reframing familiar locations through artistic intervention. Cardiff's approach resonates with Richard Schechner's[108] environmental theatre techniques and Dadaist spatial interventions,[109] creating experiences that blur boundaries between artistic and everyday contexts.[110] Her work demonstrates how performance might not require designated artistic spaces but can emerge through interventions into everyday environments, transforming ordinary locations into extraordinary experiences.

These site-specific approaches directly inform the concept of the "extended" in EMT introduced in section 1.1, where performance practices extend beyond traditional venues into unconventional physical and digital spaces. The site-responsive methodology outlined in section 1.4.2 draws directly from these influences, with projects such as *Republica Františsšsšsšsšsšs* and *Konfɛrɛ̂ntsɛblica* and *LETHE* developing methods responsive to the unique characteristics of their locations, extending EMT into site-specific contexts as detailed in Section 1.4.3. This extension suggests that contemporary performance might emerge not from the abstract space of the traditional venue but from engagement with the particular qualities of existing environments, whether physical or digital.

2.1.6 Memory and History

The exploration of memory and historical consciousness forms another significant dimension of this research, particularly evident in the project *LETHE*. If memory functions as both individual faculty and collective process, then performance offers unique possibilities for exploring its reconstructive and transformative nature. Various artists have developed approaches to memory and history that inform the portfolio's engagement with

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[108] Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

[109] Tristan Tzara, *Dadaglobe* (Zürich: Scheidegger and Spiess, 1921).

[110] Rudolf Kuenzli, *Dada* (Iowa: Phaidon, 1985).

these themes, particularly in *LETHE's* exploration of mythological consciousness and memory transformation.

Trevor Wishart's electroacoustic works engage with memory through diverse approaches. *Globalalia* investigates collective memory through vocal fragments gathered from multiple languages and cultures, creating a sonic representation of shared human experience. This was the intentionality behind *The Voice Party Anthem*, an audio work that achieves layers over time and that can be performed by speakers of any language. Similarly, *VOX 5*[111], explores sonic memory by utilising the "auditory morphology of the voice"[112] to create a "superhuman voice that metamorphoses into many recognisable sonic images," demonstrating how vocal transformation can function as a metaphor for memory's reconstructive processes. Wishart's work suggests that sound itself might function as a form of memory, carrying traces of its origins even as it undergoes transformation—a principle that informs *LETHE's* exploration of memory as a transformative rather than preservative process.

By contrast, Meredith Monk's *Impermanence* (2008)[113] incorporates personal recollections and historical allusions into abstract yet lyrical performance, creating a contemplative exploration of transience and persistence. The work reflects on loss and continuity through integrated vocal, movement, and visual elements, demonstrating how deeply personal reflection can achieve universal resonance. Both Monk's intimate, contemplative approach and Wishart's more collective, socially oriented practice inform *LETHE*'s exploration of the transformative potential of memory (and the loss of memory). Where Monk finds universal resonance in personal reflection, *LETHE* sought to create shared

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[111] Trevor Wishart, "The Composition of VOX 5," *Computer Music Journal* 12, no. 4 (Winter 1988): Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

[112] Trevor Wishart, *Sound Composition* (York: Orpheus the Pantomime, 2012), 62–68.

[113] Meredith Monk, "*Impermanence*," 2008, music/dance performance work, premiered at Stanford Lively Arts, Stanford University. Meredith Monk, "*Impermanence*," ECM Records ECM 2026, 2008, compact disc.

experiences of memory transformation through structured interactions with mythological frameworks.

Jennifer Walshe's *Historical Documents of the Irish Avant-Garde*[114] takes a different approach, reimagining historical narratives through fictional avant-garde performances. This project creates an invented past that questions canonical historical accounts, demonstrating how artistic practice can interrogate the construction of historical knowledge and collective memory. This strategy of temporal and narrative reconstruction can also be observed in *Republica Františššššššššš* and *Konfɛrɛntsɛ*, reflecting the pivotal role of storytelling and communal mythmaking in the creation of national identity, where the carefully curated historical narratives that circulate within different communities become essential foundations in the performative establishment of a republic. Walshe's playful yet profound engagement with historical fiction offers a model for how performance and exhibitions can reconfigure relationships to the past. Her work suggests that history itself might be understood not as fixed record but as malleable material, subject to creative intervention and reimagination.

Alexander Schubert's *Black Mirror* (2016)[115] creates an immersive installation in an abandoned Luxembourg hotel, where audience members wearing headphones, capes, and cat masks interact with performers according to audio instructions. The hotel, transformed through sound, light, and video projections, becomes a dreamlike environment that confronts participants with questions of identity and collective experience. The work functions as a metaphor for confronting past traumas, vulnerability, and grief, sharing conceptual territory with Blast Theory's mixed-reality performance *Desert Rain* (1999)[116] and Tadeusz Kantor's earlier theatrical film *The Dead Class*.[117] Schubert's work demon-

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[114] Jennifer Walshe, "Historical Documents of the Irish Avant-Garde," 2015, conceptual project/archive, Aisteach Foundation, http://www.aisteach.org/.

[115] Alexander Schubert, "Black Mirror," 2022, immersive installation performance, Rainy Days Festival, Philharmonie Luxembourg.

[116] Blast Theory, "*Desert Rain*," 1999, mixed-reality performance, premiered at the NOW Festival, Nottingham, UK. Co-commissioned by the National Museum of Science and Industry (London), the ZKM (Karlsruhe), and KTH (Stockholm).

[117] Tadeusz Kantor, "*The Dead Class*," 1975, theatrical production filmed in 1976 by Andrzej Wajda.

strates how immersive environments can create spaces for confronting difficult memories and experiences, offering models for LETHE's exploration of mythological memory structures through immersive performance frameworks.

The Los Angeles-based experimental group The Industry presents another approach to memory and history in Raven Chacon and Du Yun's *Sweet Land* (2020).[118] This multimedia opera revisits North American colonialism through a site-specific experience that physically guides audiences through changing environments. As the narrative unfolds, previous scenes are erased and replaced with whitewashed versions, mimicking how dominant historical narratives suppress contradictory accounts. This spatial reenactment of historical erasure offers a powerful model for how performance can embody historiographical critique. Du Yun's more recent work *Apparition* (2020–2022)[119] further explores these themes by examining diasporic identities through multiple vocal styles, from traditional Chinese techniques to experimental contemporary approaches, creating a multilayered exploration of cultural memory and displacement. These works demonstrate how performance might not merely represent historical narratives but embody their contested nature through spatial and temporal structures.

These approaches to memory and history are directly connected to *LETHE*, which, as outlined in section 1.4.3, investigates concepts of memory and transformation through live action role-playing and interactive approaches. This extends EMT into experiential explorations of memory and forgetting, connecting to the Greek mythological themes of the river Lethe as described in the methodology section. *LETHE* adapts these diverse approaches to memory and history, creating frameworks where participants can physically engage with metaphorical representations of memory and forgetting, transforming abstract concepts into embodied experiences.

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[118] Yuval Sharon, "*Sweet Land*," www.yuvalsharon.com, February 29, 2000, https://www.yuvalsharon.com/sweet-land (accessed March 15, 2020). As with many works in this section of the commentary, *Sweet Land* is multifaceted and can fit into many categories. What is fascinating about his work is how it utlises space, the revisiting and disappearance of space as one of its narrative strategies.

[119] Du Yun, "*Apparition*," 2020–2022, multimedia performance work, commissioned by the Guggenheim Museum Works & Process series and National Sawdust, premiered at the Guggenheim Museum, New York.

2.1.7 Online Communities and New Media

Engagement with digital technologies and online communities as new societies and spaces, accompanied by the associated EMT possibilities, represents a crucial dimension of this research, reflecting the contemporary extension of performance into virtual environments. As digital technologies increasingly structure our social interactions and cultural experiences, performance practices must evolve to engage with these new domains. Several artists have developed approaches that inform the portfolio's engagement with digital environments, particularly in *SINGLR* and *VOXXCOIN*.

Leo Doulton's works *Come Bargain with Uncanny Things* (Virtually Opera, 2022)[120] and *We Sang/I Sing* (2020)[121] utilise digital platforms to create EMT experiences that extend beyond physical locations. These works can be accessed in real time through platforms like Slack or Twitch, allowing online audiences to influence narrative development and musical choices. This approach demonstrates how digital technologies can expand performance beyond spatial limitations while enabling new forms of audience participation. The use of real-time digital interactions is central to *SINGLR* the *APPERA* where participants are encouraged to message each other online prior to their eagerly anticipated "real-world" meeting at the *SINGLR Salon*. Doulton's work suggests that digital platforms might function not merely as distribution channels but as performance environments with their own particular affordances and limitations.

Annie Dorsen's *Hello Hi There* (2010)[122] explores human-computer interaction through algorithmic performance, using automated processes to generate a unique theatrical

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[120] Leo Doulton, "*Come Bargain with Uncanny Things*," directed by Leo Doulton, 2022, digital performance, Virtually Opera, https://www.virtuallyopera.co.uk/uncanny-things.

[121] Leo Doulton, *"We Sang/I Sing*," 2020*, digital interactive performance, Virtually Opera.

[122] Annie Dorsen's "*Hello Hi There*" (2010) represents a pioneering work of algorithmic theatre in which two chatbots engage in a spontaneous conversation inspired by the famous 1971 television debate between philosophers Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky. The performance explores questions of human nature, artificial intelligence, and linguistic construction as the bots—drawing from an extensive database of philosophical texts, novels, and pop culture references—create unique, unrehearsed dialogues for each performance that blur the boundaries between human and machine creativity. Annie Dorsen, "Hello Hi There." In Digital Theatre: A Casebook, edited by Sarah Bay-Cheng and David Z. Saltz, 157–172. New York: Routledge, 2010.

experience for which Dorsen coined the term "Algorithmic Theatre." This work examines how computational systems can serve as performance partners, prompting questions about creativity, agency, and the evolving nature of artistic expression in digital contexts. It almost carries on where Monk left off in generating theatrical structure through voice by taking this concept into the digital algorithmic era. Interestingly, it was created only two years after Monk's *Impermanence*. This level of algorithmic investigation and humour is what was aimed at in *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm*. When the bot was active on Twitter, the arguments were with real-world bots and some of the interactions were quite "fruity." The bot-to-bot interactions revealed something about the nature of digital communication that more controlled experiments might miss—that even algorithms can be unexpectedly confrontational when their protocols intersect in unplanned ways.

Amalia Ulman's *Excellences & Perfections* (2014)[123] and Rhea Myers' *Is Art* (2014)[124] employ social media and blockchain technologies to investigate digital identity and ownership. Ulman's project uses Instagram as a performance platform, creating a fictional narrative of self-transformation that blurs boundaries between artistic performance and social media presentation. In contrast, Myers' blockchain work wittily challenges conventional definitions of art and artistic authority by transferring naming rights from artist to owner. Myers' additional projects *Facecoin*[125] and *Monkeycoin*[126] cleverly utilise

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[123] Amalia Ulman, "*Excellences & Perfections*," 2014, performance on Instagram, commissioned by New Museum/Rhizome, https://rhizome.org/editorial/2014/oct/20/first-look-amalia-ulmanexcellences-perfections/.

[124] Rhea Myers, *Blockchain Provocations* (Falmouth: Urbanomic Media Ltd, 2022), 269.

[125] Rhea Myers, "*Facecoin*," 2014, blockchain-based conceptual artwork, https://rhea.art/facecoin.

[126] Rhea Myers, "*Monkeycoin*," 2013–2014, web-based conceptual artwork, https://rhea.art/monkeycoin.

blockchain structures and "memecoin"[127] [128] concepts to create conceptual intersections between cryptocurrency systems and artistic production. *Facecoin* generates pixelated portraits using machine pareidolia as its proof-of-work mechanism, while *Monkeycoin* implements a web-based proof-of-work algorithm that attempts to write Shakespeare's complete works. These projects inspired VOXXCOIN, which aims to integrate Debordian détournement[129] with blockchain and cryptocurrency technologies into an EMT experience. Both Ulman and Myers demonstrate how digital platforms and protocols might be engaged not merely as technical systems but as conceptual frameworks with particular social, economic, and aesthetic implications.

These approaches to online communities and new media directly connect to the digital-physical integration methodology described in section 1.4.2, particularly in projects like *SINGLR* and *VOXXCOIN*. As detailed in section 1.4.3, these projects specifically developed methods for bridging digital and physical performance spaces, extending EMT into digital realms through app development and blockchain technology. This extension reflects an understanding that contemporary experience increasingly spans physical and digital domains, requiring performance practices that can navigate both realms and the relationships between them.

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[127] "Memecoin" refers to a category of cryptocurrency tokens that originated from internet memes, jokes, or popular culture references rather than being developed with a specific technical innovation or utility purpose. The term combines "meme" (a cultural element that spreads virally across internet communities) with "coin" (referencing cryptocurrency tokens). Notable examples include Dogecoin (created in 2013 as a joke based on the popular Shiba Inu "Doge" meme) and more recent iterations like Shiba Inu (SHIB). Despite their humorous or satirical origins, some memecoins have achieved significant market capitalisations and cultural impact in the cryptocurrency ecosystem. In the context of Rhea Myers' artistic work "Monkeycoin," the artist appropriates this concept as an artistic framework, using the structure of cryptocurrency to create a conceptual artwork that comments on value creation, digital culture, and the intersection of technology with artistic production. Myers' piece playfully implements a proof-of-work algorithm that attempts to generate Shakespeare's works through random processes, creating a witty commentary on cryptocurrency mining and cultural production.

[128] Molly Jane Zuckerman, "What Are Meme Coins and How Do They Work?" CoinMarketCap Alexandria, last modified January 15, 2023, https://coinmarketcap.com/alexandria/article/what-are-meme-coins.

[129] Guy Debord and G.J. Wolman, "Methods of Detournement," *Les Lèvres Nues* no. 8 (Paris, 1956).

According to the Situationist International, détournement is a way of turning around virtually anything: clothes, poetry, music. It is a fragment of one thing or another that has been taken out of its context to create a unique artwork, piece of writing, song, etc., that is meant to be viewed from a new perspective.

2.1.8 Multiple Vocalities and Communication Modes

Vocal exploration and diverse communicative approaches form essential dimensions of this research, drawing upon artists who have developed innovative vocal practices and performance methodologies. The artists mentioned here utilise their own voices as compositional material, also collaborating with voices other than their own, including both trained and non-professional voices. These diverse approaches to vocality inform the portfolio's engagement with voice as a multidimensional medium that spans semantic and non-semantic expression, individual and collective utterance, physical and digital domains.

Trond Reinholdtsen's Norwegian Opra, previously mentioned, functions as an ironic reflection of Wagner's Bayreuth Festspielhaus,[130] with its distinctive vocal approach significantly influencing the project's artistic outcomes. This self-conscious engagement with operatic tradition through unconventional vocal practices demonstrates how institutional critique can be embodied through vocal performance. By reconfiguring the relationship between voice and operatic tradition, The Norwegian Opra suggests that vocal performance might function not merely as artistic expression but as critical intervention into established cultural forms.

Meredith Monk's *Songs of Ascension* (2008)[131] incorporates multiple vocal modalities, including singing, speaking and extended vocal techniques, to create emotionally complex, layered performances. Monk's holistic approach to vocalisation transcends conventional distinctions between speech and song, creating integrated vocal expressions

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[130] The Bayreuth Festspielhaus, completed in 1876, is a purpose-built opera house in Bayreuth, Germany, designed to Richard Wagner's specifications for the exclusive performance of his works. Notable for its revolutionary architectural features, including a sunken, hooded orchestra pit that renders the musicians invisible to the audience, fan-shaped seating providing unobstructed views, and exceptional acoustics, the venue embodies Wagner's Gesamtkunstwerk ("total artwork") philosophy and is radical for its time. The Festspielhaus continues to host the annual Bayreuth Festival, maintaining strict performance traditions while representing a pivotal landmark in theatrical design that influenced subsequent performing arts venues worldwide. Frederic Spotts, *Bayreuth: A History of the Wagner Festival*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

[131] Meredith Monk,, "Songs of Ascension," 2008. Music/dance work for vocal ensemble, string quartet, and percussion. Workshopped at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, premiered at Stanford University earlier this month and intended for the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival in 2009.

that reflect the multidimensional nature of human communication. Her work demonstrates how voice might function not merely as a vehicle for semantic expression but as a complex, multifaceted medium that engages the entire body and connects with listeners on multiple levels simultaneously.

Trevor Wishart utilises environmental contexts as foundations for his vocal compositions, incorporating improvisation as an essential creative method. His works *Vocalise* (1974), *Red Bird* (1977), and *Anticredos* (1982)[132] extensively explore extended vocal techniques, with *Anticredos* featuring detailed notational systems that capture Wishart's highly personalised vocal style. His compositions prioritise the generation and transformation of intricate vocal soundscapes through electronic processing, often incorporating regional accents to establish cultural and geographical specificity, as demonstrated in *Globalalia*[133] and *Encounters in the Republic of Heaven* mentioned earlier. Wishart demonstrates how voice might be understood not merely as individual expression but as culturally and geographically situated practice that carries traces of its origins even as it undergoes electronic transformation.

Jennifer Walshe's *ALL THE MANY PEOPLS* (2011)[134] employs advanced vocal production methods embedded within multimedia contexts to create complex experiential effects. Walshe's work effectively captures the chaotic essence of early internet culture through fragmented, disjointed vocalisation. Her Duchampian *Folk Songs* (2016)[135] represent another approach to vocality, translating overheard "found" conversations into sonic readymades with pop-influenced vocal lines reminiscent of advertising jingles, de-

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[132] Trevor Wishart, "*Anticredos*," 1982. Electroacoustic work for processed voice. Released on "Red Bird/Anticredos," EMF, 1992. "*Red Bird*," 1977. Electroacoustic composition. Released on "Red Bird/Anticredos," EMF, 1992. "*Vocalise*," 1974. Improvisational vocal work. Recorded on "Voice." Virgin Records, 1982.

[133] Trevor Wishart, "*Globalalia*." 2004. Electroacoustic composition using vocal samples. Released on "Globalalia/Imago." Electronic Music Foundation, 2005.

[134] Jennifer Walshe. "ALL THE MANY PEOPLS." 2011–ongoing. Multimedia vocal performance work. First performed at the Donaueschinger Musiktage, Germany, 2011.

[135] Jennifer Walshe, "*Folk Songs*," 2016, vocal composition, premiered at the Borealis Festival, Bergen, Norway.

signed for unaccompanied solo performance. Walshe's work demonstrates how voice might function as a medium for engaging with contemporary digital culture, incorporating its fragmentary, disjointed rhythms into vocal expression that reflects our increasingly mediated modes of communication.

Pamela Z's *Baggage Allowance* (2010)[136] combines layered vocals with electronic processing to explore hidden histories and migration narratives. Her approach extends vocal expressivity through technological means, integrating personal storytelling with electronically triggered soundscapes. Stylistically distinct from Z, Maja S. K. Ratkje advocates for extended vocal composition as an accomplished improviser, creating works such as her first album, *Voice* (2002),[137] that combine her vocalisations with electronic elements to generate transformed vocal landscapes, a methodologically similar approach to Wishart's vocal improvisation practice. Both Z and Ratkje demonstrate how voice might be extended through technological means without losing its embodied, personal qualities—a balance that informs the portfolio's approach to vocal exploration across physical and digital domains.

Both Pamela Z and Ratkje influenced the EMT experiences in this portfolio, particularly *Phonetic Requiem for Coffee Corner* and *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm*. Their influence extends beyond specific vocal techniques to encompass approaches to looping and layering recorded voices, creating tracks that function both as standalone compositions and as sonic environments for live vocal performance. This approach to creating complex vocal architectures through technological means informs how the portfolio works engage with voice as both individual expression and collective soundscape.

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[136] https://archive.pamelaz.com/baggageallowance.html

The performance of Baggage Allowance had a bi-coastal premiere. The world premiere was at Z Space at Theater Artaud, San Francisco in May 2010 and the New York premiere at The Kitchen in September 2010. Scored for voice with electronic processing, found text, fragments of recorded interviews, sampled sounds triggered via a gesture-activated MIDI controller, and multiple channels of interactive video, Baggage Allowance takes place on a set of non-conventional projection surfaces, and found props including antique luggage and vintage technology.

[137] Maja S. K. Ratkje, "Voice," 2002, album of experimental vocal compositions, Rune Grammofon RCD 2002.

These approaches to multiple vocalities directly connect to the research question about vocal exploration outlined in section 1.2, examining how diverse vocal approaches reflect our increasingly mediated modes of communication. Projects *SINGLR* and *The Voice Party* specifically employed vocal exploration methods, extending EMT into diverse vocal territories through app-based voice dating and political vocalities as detailed in sections 1.4.2 and 1.4.3. These projects investigate how voice might function within contemporary technological and political contexts, exploring its potential as a medium for connection, expression, and critique within increasingly mediated environments.

2.1.9 John Cage, Nam June Paik, Marcel Duchamp

This research draws significantly upon the pioneering work of John Cage, Nam June Paik, and Marcel Duchamp, whose artistic innovations established foundational concepts that permeate not only the projects in this portfolio but also all the artists and works mentioned in Chapter 2. Their radical approaches to artistic creation inform numerous aspects of the five projects presented here. These three figures might be understood as ancestral influences whose DNA appears throughout the portfolio, manifesting in different ways across the five projects but providing essential conceptual foundations for all of them.

John Cage's *Roaratorio* (1979)[138] combines field recordings, spoken text, and musical elements to create complex sonic environments. His *Europeras* (1987) dismantle conventional operatic structures by incorporating aleatory and found elements, allowing audiences to determine their viewing positions. Both works demonstrate Cage's commitment to chance operations and distinctive listening practices that embrace "found sound" as compositional material. This approach to recontextualising everyday sonic experiences directly informs several works in the portfolio, particularly in how they incorporate environmental sounds, chance operations,[139] and audience agency. Cage's famous dictum that "everything we do is music" finds new applications in projects that

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138 John Cage, "Roaratorio, an Irish Circus on Finnegans Wake," 1979, electroacoustic composition, commissioned by Klaus Schöning for the West German Radio (WDR).

139 John Cage, *Music of Changes* (New York. Peters Edition, 1951).

treat political campaigns, dating apps, and blockchain transactions as compositional materials.

Nam June Paik's *Symphony for 20 Rooms* (1961)[140] similarly employs spatial distribution of distinct audiovisual experiences, allowing audiences to navigate freely through the performance environment. This approach to audience agency and environmental composition resonates with the portfolio's emphasis on participant autonomy and spatial exploration. Paik understood that electronic media could create new forms of artistic experience that transcended traditional spatial and temporal limitations—an insight that anticipates the portfolio's exploration of digital-physical hybridity. His work suggests that performance might be understood not as fixed temporal sequence but as distributed environment that participants navigate according to their own interests and inclinations.

Marcel Duchamp's readymades[141] align conceptually with the portfolio's methodological approach to framing and examining everyday elements as artistic material. By repositioning common objects within artistic contexts, Duchamp demonstrated how conceptual reframing could transform ordinary experiences into aesthetic encounters, a strategy central to projects *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs* and *Konfɛrɛn͡tsɛ* and The Voice Party, which repurpose existing environmental elements as compositional resources. Duchamp's insight that art exists not in the object itself but in the conceptual frame we place around it provides a crucial foundation for work that reimagines political structures, dating platforms, and blockchain technologies as artistic frameworks.

These foundational influences directly connect to the concept of the "extended" in EMT, introduced in section 1.1, particularly in their approaches to reframing everyday experiences as artistic material. The methodological approaches outlined in Section 1.4 draw

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[140] Nam June Paik, "Symphony for 20 Rooms," 1961, event score, published in "Source: Music of the Avant Garde" 1, no. 1 (January 1967): 39–41.

[141] Marcel Duchamp, "*Fountain*," 1917, porcelain urinal, original lost; replicas authorised by Duchamp in 1964 in collections of various museums.

Thierry de Duve, "*Echoes of the Readymade: Critique of Pure Modernism,*" trans. Rosalind Krauss, *October* 70 (Autumn 1994): 63.

from these influences, especially in the repurposing of everyday structures (such as electoral systems, dating apps, and blockchain) as compositional frameworks for extended EMT experiences. These three figures remind us that experimental performance has always involved reframing everyday experiences and technologies as artistic materials. What changes is not the basic approach but the specific technologies, social structures, and cultural contexts being reframed.

2.2 The Holy Trinity of the EMT Apocalypse: Location, Situation, Participation

The participatory dimensions of the projects within this portfolio attempt to engage with the challenges delineated in Claire Bishop's *Artificial Hells*, albeit through the somewhat unorthodox mediums of musical extended voice dating apps, blockchains, and an audition in front of a herd of goats. One might question the rationale behind applying a seemingly 1990s Bourriaudian style of relational aesthetics to music theatre, especially when both concepts are perceived as stagnant, as this approach risks reinforcing an inherent redundancy, rather like attempting to revive a deceased equine through particularly vigorous flagellation.

Bourriaud suggests an approach as being: "a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space"[142] providing a relational framework that is evident in the portfolio's projects, which seek to foster communal interactions and engagements. However, the concern arises that these interactions might fall into what Bishop criticises as a "reductive framework underpinned by moral indignation"—a critique that raises uncomfortable questions for participatory performance: is the work valuable because it creates meaningful artistic experiences or because it serves some external social function?[143]

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[142] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Paris: Les Presses du Réel, 2002), 98.

[143] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells. Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship (*Verso*, 2012),25.

Jason Ānanda Josephson Storm's concept of metamodernism[144] offers a nuanced perspective that could inform this discourse. Storm suggests that metamodernism oscillates between modernist and postmodernist ideals, aiming to reconcile sincerity and irony, hope and doubt. The more dynamic approach suggested here could provide a way to navigate the perceived "double-stuckness" by embracing both the aesthetic and social dimensions of participatory art. This oscillation between earnest engagement and ironic distance characterises several portfolio works, particularly *The Voice Party*, which simultaneously participates in electoral politics while critically examining its structures through non-semantic vocalisation.

Bishop contends that participatory art, a key aspect of most projects in this portfolio, aims to democratise contemporary artistic experience and explore new utopian modes of social interaction, thus manifesting a desire for social reform that often sidelines aesthetic considerations. Due to its intrinsic connection with social struggle, leftist culture, and a desire to reform a fractured world, participatory art tends to prioritise social impact over artistic potential. This creates a false binary where either producing something that offers community benefits is deemed superior at the expense of artistic merit, or conversely, where aesthetic "quality" alone is privileged over social engagement. The portfolio works attempt to navigate between these extremes, recognising that neither position in isolation adequately addresses the complex potential of contemporary performance practices.

The projects in this portfolio occasionally parody this form of participation, adopting a metamodern stance. For instance, *Le Picnic Suspendu*, part of *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*, references participatory artworks involving culinary activities, akin to Rirkrit Tiravanija's *Fear Eats the Soul*.[145] By transforming the promise of refreshment

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[144] Jason A. R. Storm, *Metamodernism: The Future of Theory* (University of Chicago Press, 2024).

[145] "Fear Eats the Soul" references Rainer Werner Fassbinder's 1974 film while exemplifying the artist's relational aesthetic approach. The installation transforms gallery spaces into functional environments—often including cooking and communal dining areas—that blur boundaries between art and everyday life. By creating situations for social interaction rather than static objects for contemplation, Tiravanija challenges traditional modes of artistic consumption, emphasizing the ephemeral experiences and human connections that emerge within these constructed social spaces. Tiravanija, Rirkrit. "Fear Eats the Soul." In Participation, edited by Claire Bishop. (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2006.) 150–153.

into an act of prohibition, the work creates a critical commentary on social stratification while simultaneously engaging with and subverting participatory conventions. This playful engagement with participatory frameworks allows the work to acknowledge the valid insights of relational aesthetics while avoiding what Bishop calls a "reductive framework underpinned by moral indignation."

Another fundamental aspect of this creative portfolio is the emphasis on aesthetic concerns. This is evident in the effort to capture participatory works in tangible, presentable forms and through documentation videos of performances and actions that were mounted for this portfolio presentation, thereby avoiding the "you had to be there" critique noted by Bishop. For example, *The VoicePartyOperaBotFarm* and *The Voice Party Anthem* are audio pieces that employ complex vocal layering, studio techniques, and vocal transformations. These pieces originated from *The Voice Party*, a participatory structure, and LETHE, a repeatable EMT experiment, both presented as films with soundtracks derived from participants' engagements and musique concrète and sound collage techniques. These pieces and documentation aim to craft multilayered, complex music theatre works that seek to capture moments from their participatory origins by encapsulating them into composed EMT pieces. This approach seeks to balance the works' artistic potential with their participatory roots, suggesting that the dichotomy Bishop identifies might be navigated through careful attention to both participatory process and aesthetic outcome.

2.3 Location

Miwon Kwon has done for the critique of "site-specific" practice what Claire Bishop did for participatory strategies. Although this writing is not solely an art criticism project, the idea of "place" and how participants relate to it is crucial to creating the pieces in this portfolio. Each project was developed in response to, and owes its genesis to, the place in which it was conceived. Thus, rather than "site-specific music theatre," a more accurate term would be "locational music theatre." This term more effectively encapsulates the intention to experiment with and be informed by a specific type of location. For ex-

ample, Trevor Wishart's *Beach Singularity* could be performed in various seaside loca-tions beyond its original site, and several examples of this locational approach are in-vestigated by Kwon.

If Kwon were a musicologist, it would be interesting if she were to apply her critique to John Luther Adams' *Inuksuit*,[146] which is a percussion-based outdoor work originally de-signed for Alaskan wilderness settings but explicitly created to be adaptable to different natural environments, from forests to parks. Pauline Oliveros' *Sonic Meditations*[147] in-cludes site-specific outdoor performance pieces adaptable to various natural settings, focusing on deep listening practices that respond to environmental acoustics. Stock-hausen too utilises this approach in his music theatre work "Sternklang," premiered on June 5, 1971, in the Tiergarten park in Berlin as part of the Berliner Festwochen, which has also been adapted for indoor environments, albeit for maybe more practical rather than artistic reasons. These works establish specific relationships to environmental conditions rather than specific geographical coordinates, suggesting that contemporary locational practice might engage with types of spaces rather than unique locations.

LETHE, for instance, was developed in response to the physical characteristics and sounds of the island of Kythira and along the banks of the River Thames. Although ex-tensive research was conducted into the island's history and Greek mythology, theatre, music, and death rituals, the piece itself is a set of instructions adaptable to multiple lo-

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[146] "Inuksuit" (2009) is a large-scale outdoor percussion work inspired by the stone sentinels built by Arctic indigenous peoples. Composed for 9 to 99 percussionists spatially dispersed across natural landscapes or urban environments, the piece creates an immersive sonic geography that evolves as performers move through prescribed phases of instrumentation—from paper, breathing, and voice to drums, gongs, and sirens. As listeners wander freely among the musicians, they experience constantly shifting acoustic perspectives that blur distinctions between human-made sounds and natural environments, embodying Adams' ecological philosophy of music as a means to deepen awareness of place. Second Inversion. "Live Concert Spotlight: John Luther Adams' Inuksuit." September 18, 2015. https://www.secondinver-sion.org/2015/09/18/live-concert-spotlight-john-luther-adams-inuksuit/.

[147] "Sonic Meditations" represents a pioneering approach to experimental composition that transcends traditional musical boundaries through site-specific outdoor performance pieces adaptable to various nat-ural settings. These text-based instruction works guide participants through practices of "Deep Listening"—Oliveros' systematic approach to sonic awareness that integrates focused attention, expand-ed consciousness, and environmental sensitivity. By emphasising inclusive participation over technical expertise and encouraging heightened awareness of acoustic environments, these meditations foster a radical reimagining of musical experience as embodied, ecological practice rather than discrete product. Pauline Oliveros, *Sonic Meditations* (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 1974).

cations, with specific commonalities that establish a praxis: proximity to water, representations of Tartarus and the Elysian Fields, etc. Similarly, *The Voice Party* was set in the constituency of Stoke Newington and North Hackney, but its essence is to be repeated in other constituencies, far from conventional theatrical venues. Indeed, the experiment is scheduled to be repeated soon in the 2024 UK election in the constituencies of Stoke Newington and Hackney North, South Cornwall, Cambridge, and York. This approach to location acknowledges the importance of place while avoiding the practical and conceptual limitations of works that are limited to a single location.

Meredith Monk encapsulates this approach: "I liked the idea of the absence of figure and the awareness of the space itself within a piece." Monk carefully chooses her sites, likening her role to that of an archaeologist who "excavates a space and lets it speak," as Siri Engberg notes in the informational placards from the exhibit, *Art Performs Life* at the Walker Art Centre.[148] This evocative description suggests that locational practice involves not imposing artistic vision onto space but revealing and amplifying its inherent qualities—a principle that informs how the portfolio works engage with their various locations.

The development of these pieces in relation to their locations is vital because it contrasts with the emptiness of traditional music theatre venues. The "excess of information" inherent in these sites yields interesting results in the participants' performances. Moreover, grappling with external forces becomes part of the narrative and physicality of the piece. Different acoustics in various locations also play a significant role, as addressed in several items included in the *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs*, which are mounted in several locations, each informed by the original. If traditional venues create artificial neutrality, locational approaches embrace the rich complexity of existing environments, allowing their particular characteristics to shape the performance itself.

In typical discussions around music theatre within an academic context, it is unusual to draw on insights from everyday experiences. However, the essence of the projects in

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[148] Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art. Performance, Place and Documentation.* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 203.

question necessitates such references, as they aim to tap into the musical and theatrical potential embedded within daily structures and activities. This approach underscores the project's innovative exploration of common elements to enhance and inform music theatre practice. One such reference point is Michel de Certeau, who recognised the relationship between practice and place, where "things extra and other (details and excesses coming from elsewhere) insert themselves into the accepted framework, the imposed order. The surface of this order is everywhere punched and torn open by ellipses, drifts, and leaks of meaning: it is a sieve-order."[149] Defined by these relationships between spaces and spatial practices, site-specific work tests the stability and limits of the places it inhabits, relying on and questioning the order of these locations. Site-specific or rather location-specific art is articulated through these ellipses, drifts, and leaks of meaning, where the artwork and its place momentarily intertwine. This poetic description captures how locational performance might engage with the complex, layered nature of existing environments, allowing meaning to emerge through the interaction between structured performance and unstructured place.

2.4 Situation

Debord's theories of situationism[150] integrate into the EMT experiences developed as part of this research. At its core, situationism involves creating environments that encourage participants to engage with the present moment, thereby constructing new "situations." The intention in these pieces embodies this directive through immersive projects, such as *Republica Františšsšsššsššsšsšs* and *LETHE*, which aim to transform ordinary spaces into interactive, participatory environments. These projects create unique experiences that stimulate spontaneous interaction and engagement, with the goal of experimenting with Debord's ideal of constructing situations that disrupt everyday life and encourage new forms of social relations.

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[149] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984), 107.

[150] Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Ken Knabb (Paris: Rebel Press, 1967).

The "derive" or "drift" is another situationist technique where individuals traverse urban environments to experience them outside their typical economic or social contexts.[151] In this research, this concept is mirrored through the utilisation of alternative, often digital, spaces that participants explore in an unstructured manner. For instance, in *SINGLR*, participants navigate through digital and physical spaces, "drifting" through a landscape of voices rather than following predetermined pathways to connection. Similarly, The Voice Party creates political "drifts" through electoral systems, allowing participants to experience these structures outside their conventional contexts. This approach to the dérive suggests that contemporary performance might create opportunities for experiencing existing structures in new ways, revealing aspects that conventional engagement might obscure.

Finally, Debord's vision of integrating art with life resonates profoundly with the interdisciplinary nature of EMT experiences developed in this research. This integration is evident in how everyday technologies and settings are repurposed for artistic expression, blurring the lines between art and life. Projects like *SINGLR*, which utilises voice dating apps, or *The Voice Party*, which engages with municipal structures, not only utilise these strategies within artistic mediums but also transform everyday interactions into performative events. This approach seeks to experiment with Debord's notion of breaking down the barriers between art and life, making everyday life a space of artistic inquiry and expression. Rather than creating separate artistic spaces, these projects reconfigure existing social and technological frameworks through performative intervention, suggesting that contemporary performance might operate not by withdrawing from everyday life but by engaging with it in transformative ways.

2.5 Extended EMT: Bridging Physical and Digital Realms

Building upon the artistic and theoretical contexts examined thus far, this section explores how the concept of "extended" EMT provides a framework for understanding the

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[151] Guy Debord, "Theory of the Dérive," *Internationale Situationiste* no. 2 (Paris: Internationale Situationiste, 1958).

portfolio works' engagement with both physical and digital domains. The extension of EMT practices beyond traditional performance boundaries reflects our increasingly hybrid existence, where everyday experiences simultaneously span physical and virtual dimensions. In contemporary society, boundaries between physical and virtual experience have become increasingly permeable, creating new territories for artistic exploration. The five portfolio projects deliberately operate across these boundaries, treating digital spaces not merely as platforms for documentation or distribution but as essential performance environments with distinctive characteristics.

SINGLR, the APPERA, exemplifies this extension by creating a performance framework that begins in the digital space (through a voice-based dating application) but culminates in physical gatherings (*SINGLR* Salons). This deliberate bridging of digital and physical realms creates a hybrid performance ecology where participants navigate between virtual and embodied experiences. The movement between online voice sharing and in-person encounters creates continuity between digital and physical domains, suggesting that contemporary performance might operate across multiple experiential registers simultaneously.

Similarly, VOXXCOIN investigates blockchain technology not only as a subject matter but also as a performative infrastructure—a distributed, participatory system with distinctive spatial and temporal dynamics. By encoding vocal gestures into blockchain transactions, the project extends EMT into digital architectures while simultaneously materialising these virtual processes through gallery installation. This simultaneous existence across domains reflects our increasingly hybrid reality, where experiences rarely exist entirely in physical or digital space but constantly move between these interconnected realms.

The Voice Party extends EMT into both institutional political frameworks and social media environments, creating a multifaceted performance that spans electoral processes, physical campaigning, Twitter algorithms, and radio broadcasting. This multilayered extension illustrates how contemporary EMT can simultaneously engage with traditional

political structures and emerging digital platforms. The work operates across multiple domains simultaneously, creating different but interconnected experiences in each.

By positioning EMT as an extended practice that traverses physical and digital territories, the portfolio works respond to our increasingly hybrid existence, where boundaries between online and offline, virtual and material, have become progressively blurred. This extension represents not merely a technological update to traditional EMT practices but a fundamental reconceptualisation of performance itself as a multidimensional experience that reflects the complex, layered nature of contemporary life. If traditional performance assumes co-presence in physical space as its fundamental condition, these projects suggest that contemporary performance might need to accommodate multiple forms of presence across physical and digital domains. After all, in a world where we might be simultaneously present in a physical room and in multiple digital spaces, performance practices must evolve to reflect this distributed mode of existence.

2.6 Conclusion: The Broader Ecosystem and Focused Investigation

This chapter has surveyed the diverse artistic influences and contexts that inform the five projects in this research portfolio. Like examining a complex ecosystem with multiple interacting elements, this approach reveals how EMT practices combine influences from musical, theatrical, digital, social, and political domains to generate new expressive possibilities. The five portfolio projects each investigate specific intersections of voice, technology, participation, and space, while remaining conscious of their connections to broader artistic and theoretical contexts. This dual perspective, encompassing both the broader field and the focused area of study, enables research that is both detailed and contextually aware.

By developing methods for extending EMT practices into everyday technologies, unconventional spaces, and participatory frameworks, this research contributes new knowledge while acknowledging its foundations in a rich artistic ecosystem. The methodological approaches outlined in Chapter 1, contextualised here, demonstrate how contemporary EMT can respond to our increasingly hybrid existence, offering new

frameworks for understanding performance as a multidimensional experience that reflects the interconnected nature of contemporary life.

The unifying thread that connects these projects is found in their shared commitment to exploring EMT as a mode of inquiry into new artistic structures and formats, utilising what we do not see, but in plain sight. These works do not simply present pre-existing ideas in performative form but use performance as a means of investigating questions about technology, sociality, politics, and communication that might otherwise remain abstract or theoretical. In this sense, they continue the experimental tradition established by figures like Cage, Paik, and Duchamp, while extending this tradition into new domains that reflect our contemporary condition.

As we conclude this taxonomic adventure through the EMT ecosystem, we may appreciate both the diversity of practices we have encountered and the complex web of relationships that connect them. Like any thriving ecosystem, the field of experimental performance thrives not through uniformity but through productive diversity—a multiplicity of approaches that collectively generate new possibilities for artistic expression and inquiry. The five projects examined here represent not endpoints but ongoing explorations within this ecosystem, contributing to its continuing evolution and adaptation to changing environmental conditions.

Chapter 3: Analysis of an EMT Portfolio

3.1 Republica Františsšsšsšsšs & Konfɛrɛnt͡sɛ: An Analysis of an Experimental Music Theatre Installation

Location: The Franciscan Gardens and Akropolis, Prague.

Team: Loré Lixenberg; Ferst Dadler members: Isabelle Cattie, Elia Moretti, Inga Zotov-Mikshin, Roman Zotov-Mikshin; Members of the public in the Franciscan Garden, Prague.

Dates: The Republic took place on May 11, 2023 and May 12, 2023, the Konfɛrɛnt͡sɛ on October 29, 2023 and October 30, 2023.

3.1.1 Contextualising the Micro-Republic as Extended EMT

The experiment of founding a micro-republic as an EMT structure has its roots in an eccentric tradition of autonomous micro-republics where a founder or community seeks to create a space in which they can define themselves in relation to their surroundings. Several artists have founded their own republics, such as the artist Edwin Lipburger's *Republic of KugelMugel* in Vienna,[152] Paddy Roy Bates' *Sealand*,[153] and John Lennon's *Nutopia*.[154] [155]

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[152] Simon Sellars, "Republic of Kugelmugel," May 1, 2016, https://simonsellers.com/republic-of-kugel-mugel.

[153] Ed Sheeran, Nuseir Nassir, and Ed Stikes, "Sealand," May 23, 2024, https://sealandgov.org/blogs/news/the-evolving-concept-of-statehood-insights-from-palestines-upcoming-recognitions.

[154] John Lennon and Yoko Ono, "Declaration of Nutopia," Nutopia Press Conference, interview with Daniel Schechter, Harvard University, 1973.

[155] See: https://Citizenofnutopia.com/about.

The motivations for artists establishing a micro-republic exhibit similarities with Christoph Schlingensief's *OpernDorf*[156] and Otto Muehl's Burgenland commune[157]. These artists sought autonomy by creating spaces where their unique artistic rules, systems of education and aesthetics could be implemented. This concept also parallels the idea behind Wagner's Bayreuth Opera House, as previously discussed in relation to Reinholdtsen's *Norwegian Opera* project.

Of particular relevance to *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* are the microstates of NSK (Neue Slowenische Kunst)[158] that presented their shows under the guise of an embassy, and Ladonia, whose anthem was to be sung while a participant threw a stone into water, listening to the resultant sound of its impact.

The concept of a micro-republic aligns directly with the notion of "extended" EMT introduced in Chapter 1, as it creates a framework that extends performance beyond traditional theatrical boundaries into public space, everyday activities, and civic structures. By reimagining a public garden as a republic with its own customs, traditions, and participatory frameworks, the project exemplifies how EMT can be extended to incorporate

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[156] Christoph Schlingensief's "Operndorf Afrika" (Opera Village Africa), initiated in 2009 in Burkina Faso, represents the late German artist's most ambitious social sculpture—a cultural exchange project combining elements of performance, architecture, and community development. Conceptualised as neither traditional development aid nor conventional artistic installation, the ongoing project establishes infrastructure for artistic production through schools, medical facilities, and performance spaces while challenging Eurocentric cultural hierarchies. Through its collective creative processes, Operndorf embodies Schlingensief's vision of art as transformative social practice capable of generating sustainable cultural exchange beyond colonial paradigms. It is arguable whether this aspect of the project succeeds and there is a distinct whiff of 'white saviour' about it.

Christoph Schlingensief, "Operndorf Afrika," in *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader*, edited by Will Bradley and Charles Esche, 287–301. (London: Tate Publishing, 2007).

[157] Otto Muehl's Friedrichshof Commune (1972–1990), established in Burgenland, Austria, began as an experimental social project emerging from the radical Viennese Actionist movement. Initially founded on principles of collective property, sexual liberation, and the dissolution of nuclear family structures, the commune operated as both an alternative social experiment and artistic enterprise. However, the project devolved into an authoritarian structure centred around Muehl's increasingly controlling leadership. The commune ultimately collapsed following Muehl's 1991 conviction for sexual offenses involving minors, complicating its legacy as both a significant post-war artistic commune and a cautionary example of the potential for abuse in charismatic, isolated social formations.

Danièle Roussel, *Der Wiener Aktionismus und die Österreicher.* (Vienna: Ritter Verlag, 1995).

[158] NSK Citizens, "Citizen Valnoir in the Land of Absolute Freedom and Total Control," 2024, https://nskstate.com/articles/ideas.

entire social ecosystems. This approach resonates with the metamodernist oscillation between sincerity and irony discussed in section 1.3, creating a performance structure that simultaneously embraces political forms (with genuine engagement) while playfully subverting them.

3.1.2 Republica Františsšsšsšsšs as Total Collaboration

Republica Františsšsšsšsšs and Konfɛrɛntsɛ is a collaboration and an ongoing joint endeavour between me and Prague-based performance group Ferst Dadler, comprising Elia Moretti[159], Roman Zotov-Mikshin, Inga Zotova-Mikshina, and initially, Isabelle Cattie. Contrary to the micro-republics referenced in the previous section, our objective was not to dominate or steer the space, but rather to investigate the location and then to integrate and infuse our presence within it, subtly influencing both the area and the movement of its occupants. In this sense, we were also collaborating with everything present in the Franciscan Garden at the time the Republic took place.

Although I proposed the concept and structure of the Republic and the conference to Ferst Dadler, what followed was a genuine collaboration. Ferst Dadler is a collective that works in a non-hierarchical, horizontal structure where things emerge organically rather than being dictated. No one person directs; instead, the organism, i.e. the EMT, that we uncover should reveal itself. We extended this horizontal thinking to the entire Franciscan Garden. The experiment was therefore not only between ourselves but with every entity found in the garden—the fountains, the small creatures, the itinerant population, the sounds—everything. From this point of view, the sound of children playing, one of the ants from the Ant Ballet, a drunk person sitting on a bench, a tree, and the ambient sounds of the gardens, had as much agency and importance to transform the republic as we did. By embedding ourselves in this way and not directing, dictating or imposing, the experiment was to see what EMT aesthetic would emerge rather than be imposed.

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[159] I had the good fortune to meet Elia Moretti during the International Brecht Symposium at Oxford University, organised by Tom Kuhn, in summer 2016, just after the Brexit referendum. Following this, Elia invited me to present at his festival at The Plum Yard in Ceske Budjovice, in 2017, where I met Inga and Roman, the other two core members of Ferst Dadler. It was my introduction to the Czech experimental scene, which will need a separate paper to describe.

This non-imposition approach was crucially important and part of the experiment—that this horizontal relationship extends into the space and every single entity within it.

We all approached the project from different angles and cultural backgrounds: Elia Moretti, an Italian percussionist concerned with the agency of sound; Roman and Inga Zotov-Mikshin, Russian dancers/movement artists concerned with the dynamics and agency of movement; and me, an English artist concerned with EMT structures and voice. On a personal note, the republic became, perhaps unconsciously, a way of sub-limating the political turmoil we were experiencing in our respective countries of origin—Italy with its populist government, Putin's war on Ukraine affecting the Russians, and for me, Brexit, which really started to bite at the commencement of the republic, fostering a kind of claustrophobia and particular attitude to borders that felt like strangulation. We complemented each other's skills and took turns leading workshops both online during the pandemic and in person when restrictions relaxed.

This collaborative approach reflects the participatory methodology outlined in section 1.4.2, positioning collaboration not merely as a strategy for creating the work but as the fundamental structure of the work itself. By extending the notion of collaboration beyond human participants to include plants, insects, and the built environment, *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs* embodies the research question posed in section 1.2 regarding how interdisciplinary approaches can contribute to novel forms of EMT. The project chal-lenges conventional hierarchies between artists and audience, humans and non-hu-mans, and intentional and incidental performances.

The Franciscan Garden is situated in the centre of Prague and features a rose garden, a box hedge, and bench-lined pathways where people can sit and enjoy their lunch, as well as a kitchen garden area with herbs and flowers. Additionally, although the gardens are expansive, they are bounded by walls and entry gateways. It is this unique layout

that made the gardens a perfect enlarged quadrant[160] for this EMT experiment. Selected for its unique layout, the Franciscan Garden served as our experimental venue to explore the creation of a republic characterised by integrating art and life, listening, and embedding ourselves into the social, sonic, and natural ecology of the venue. We organised two research and development phases during winter and spring to immerse ourselves in the garden's rhythm, its inhabitants, flora, and existing ecologies. Our team devised exercises within the garden, experimenting with various movement modalities. Given our small number, strategic considerations were necessary to ensure our presence could subtly influence the environment without resorting to conventional performance techniques.

This site-responsive methodology is directly connected to the theoretical framework of "locational music theatre" discussed in Section 2.3, where the specific characteristics of a place become fundamental to the work's development. The Franciscan Garden was not merely a backdrop for performance, but a complex ecosystem with its own rhythms, social patterns, and acoustic properties that the project sought to reveal and engage with. This approach exemplifies the site-responsive methods outlined in section 1.4.2, developing creative strategies that emerge from a deep engagement with place rather than imposing predetermined forms.

Our goal was to reveal the inherent motions and sounds of the space rather than imposing our artistic will. The collaboration continued online when we were geographically dispersed. These sessions, led alternately by each member, covered diverse topics; for instance, Isabelle Cattie conducted a practical session on costume concerns, another session involved a cosplay, an online LARP themed around gardeners, and Elia Moretti facilitated a listening exercise.

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[160] J. Tansley, *Practical Plant Ecology: A Guide for Beginners in Field Study of Plant Communities* (London: George Allen & Unwin Limited, 1923).

In this book, Tansley provides detailed guidance on field study techniques, including the use of quadrats. He explains how to set up and use quadrats to study plant communities, offering practical advice on sampling methods, data collection, and analysis. This work aimed to make ecological research methods more accessible to students and beginners, and it includes practical examples and instructions on using quadrats effectively in the field. Additionally, Tansley's broader contributions to ecological methodology and plant ecology often reference and build upon techniques such as the quadrat method, emphasizing its importance in systematic and scientific study of plant communities.

The integration of online collaboration here aligns with the digital-physical framework discussed in Section 2.5, demonstrating how contemporary EMT practices can extend across both physical and virtual spaces. This hybrid approach to collaboration anticipates the physical performance while using digital tools to develop conceptual foundations, exemplifying how extended EMT can bridge different experiential realms.

Our overarching aim was to extend this collaborative ethos to every aspect of the garden. We endeavoured to observe all elements—its rhythms, timings, population, sounds, and the life of its plants and animals. All installations and activities of the Republic were designed not to overshadow these elements, but to highlight and engage in dialogue with them, with the intention of revealing the inherent dramaturgy and musicality that are present.

This approach resonates with the fusion of art and life discussed in section 2.1.2, particularly Meredith Monk's holistic performance compositions and Trevor Wishart's integration of environmental sounds into compositional frameworks. By framing the garden's existing activities and sounds as musical and theatrical elements, *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* follows Cage's principle of allowing sounds to be themselves while creating contexts that invite attentive listening and witnessing.

3.1.3 Planning a Micro-Republic as an EMT Experience

The founding of a micro-republic can be distilled into the following steps, which we adopted as the basis for our experiment in creating a micro-republic as a new EMT experience.[161] This methodological approach is directly connected to the workshop-based creation methods discussed in Section 2.1.4, where compositional frameworks emerge through collaborative exploration rather than predetermined scores.

1. **Definition of Vision and Objective:** The overall objective is to discover a new organic form of EMT to work with. To achieve this, we defined our republic as: *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* is a place where insects, plants, flowers, humans and ob-

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[161] Thomas Risse, Tanja A. Börzel, and Anke Draude, *The Oxford Handbook of Governance and Limited Statehood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

jects are all equal and interrelated. You must attend with an open body and bring your whole mind to the party! Do not expect to be entertained. Do not ask what the Republic can do for you; ask what you can do for the Republic.[162]

The Republic's citizens can expect the following:

The performances will explore situated creative relationships that allow us to reflect on social practices. In a world torn between easy opinions and oppressive categorisations, performance is a space for deep thinking, thinking with others, thinking through practice and performative thinking that goes beyond language and definitions.[163]

This vision statement embodies the metamodernist framework outlined in section 1.3, oscillating between earnest ecological consciousness and playful political parody. The reference to "not expecting to be entertained" echoes Duchamp's assertion about the value of artistic boredom while simultaneously inviting genuine engagement with the environment. This approach exemplifies the extension of EMT beyond conventional entertainment paradigms into territories of social practice and ecological awareness.

2. **Create a Government:** We decided that, in keeping with the mission statement of the Republic, where "insects, plants, flowers, humans, and objects are all equal and interrelated," we should not be a traditional government, but rather more caretakers or custodians. After all, if all things are equal and interrelated, how can you govern them, how can you govern an ant? We created a role for ourselves as gardeners of the Republic, whose job it is to oversee the daily running of the place by "sonic watering and nutrifying."

This reconceptualisation of governance connects to the political engagement and social critique discussed in section 2.1.3, particularly the way artists like Bruguera and Schlingensief use performance to reimagine political structures. By positioning themselves as "gardeners" rather than rulers, the performers create a non-hierarchical approach to spatial organisation that challenges conventional power dynamics while embracing re-

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[162] Lore Lixenberg, Elia Moretti, Roman Zotov-Mikshin, Inga Zotova-Mikshina, 2023, *Statement of the Aims of Republica Františsšsšsšsšs.* Passport Statement of Citizenship 2023.

[163] Ibid.

sponsibility for nurturing the space. This approach extends EMT into the realm of political performance without reducing it to didactic messaging.

3. **Design Symbols, Flags, and Currency:** We designed a passport that was handed out to anyone entering the space, as citizenship of this republic is contingent on simply being born as a noise-making entity. There are no citizenship tests. The passport explained the holder's status and obligations to the republic and included a map of the republic and its neighbourhoods.

The passport serves as both a theatrical prop and a conceptual frame, extending the performance into the realm of civic identity while playfully subverting nationalist exclusivity. This aligns with the concept of situationist détournement discussed in Section 2.4, where bureaucratic structures such as citizenship, passports, and visas are repurposed as vehicles for artistic expression and community building. The emphasis on being "born as a noise-making entity" extends citizenship beyond human participants to include birds, insects, and even rustling leaves, creating a more-than-human performance community.

4. **Establish a Territory**: The Franciscan Garden in the centre of Prague was ideal as a location for this project due to its enclosed structure, clearly delineated by walls, maintained arbours, hedges, rose gardens, and pathways. This results in a modular style space with a good variety of contrasting environments and structure that we could use as sonic "readymades." Additionally, it was essential to have a space with clearly defined entry and exit points to ensure that we could efficiently hand out the passports.

The concept of sonic "readymades" directly connects to the Duchampian influence discussed in Section 2.1.9, as it applies his strategy of framing existing objects as art to the sonic environment of the garden. This approach exemplifies the locational music theatre framework outlined in section 2.3, treating the garden's distinctive acoustic zones as compositional elements rather than neutral backgrounds. By mapping these sonic territ-

ories, the project extends EMT into environmental sound art while maintaining theatrical framing devices.

5. **Build a Community and Actively Engage with Supporters:** Although we had some help from students and colleagues of Ferst Dadler, also the support of the Franciscan Garden, in terms of building a community of citizens, we were more focused on putting a sonic frame around the nomadic, changing community of office workers looking for a place to eat lunch, tourists, dating couples, drunks, drug takers and general public who were already present. This is a crucial difference for *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs*, as we sought to co-opt the sounds and actions of the existing entities into a music theatre piece.

This approach to community engagement resonates with the blurring of boundaries between participant and audience discussed in section 2.1.1, particularly Rirkrit Tiravanija's transformation of galleries into community spaces. By framing existing social activities rather than creating separate performances, *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs* extends EMT into the realm of social choreography, treating everyday movements and interactions as compositional material. This strategy aligns with the research question posed in Section, 1.2 regarding how participatory practices can contribute to novel forms of EMT.

6. **Develop Cultural Traditions and Customs:** The following strategies outline the development of cultural practices in the *Republica of Františšsšsšsšsšsšs*, as a set of installations and actions that citizens can either seek out or encounter. They can then choose to engage in the practice or ignore it.

a) **Speakers' Corner.** In this installation, the act of public speaking is transformed into a form of performance art. It is also an act of "locational displacement" as the original Speakers' Corner, located in Hyde Park, London, can already be considered a readymade example of sonified democracy. Participants are invited to use crates and loudspeakers to deliver speeches, transforming oratory into a live theatrical event. This setting invites spontaneous and dynamic interaction, echoing the improvisational aspects of experimental music theatre.

This installation connects to the multiple vocalities and communication modes discussed in section 2.1.8, creating a framework for diverse vocal expressions within a public context. By transplanting the concept of Speakers' Corner to Prague, the project engages in a form of cultural détournement that simultaneously honours and reimagines democratic traditions of public speech. The amplification of voices extends the traditional EMT focus on vocality into the realm of political oratory and public address.

b) The Little Shop of Complaints. Here, the simple act of writing and exchanging grievances is reimagined as a collaborative performance. Participants engage in a ritualistic exchange, where personal complaints become shared narratives, turning the mundane into a collective theatrical experience. The notebook acts as a script, with each entry contributing to an evolving dialogue. The invitation to swap complaints encourages the participant to try on someone else's subjectivity.

This installation exemplifies the participatory strategies discussed in section 2.2, creating a framework for collaborative meaning-making that avoids the pitfalls of what Bishop terms "reductive" participation. By focusing on complaints—expressions of dissatisfaction or critique—the installation creates space for genuine social tension rather than forced consensus, addressing the political dimensions of participation while maintaining aesthetic complexity. The exchange of complaints creates an intersubjective performance text that extends EMT into the realm of collective authorship.

c) Theratree. Theratree combines elements of chance and performance. Participants select slips of paper offered to them from a beautiful tree, which contain sayings, advice, or lyrics, and read them aloud or sing them. This random selection process and vocalisation create an impromptu performance, exploring the intersections of text, voice, and theatre in a public space.

This installation draws on the chance operations pioneered by Cage (discussed in section 2.1.9) while incorporating the extended vocal approaches outlined in section 2.1.8. By inviting participants to vocalise found text in public space, Theratree creates a framework for spontaneous vocal performance that does not require specialised training

or predetermined composition. This approach extends EMT's vocal dimensions beyond conventional musicality into the realm of everyday speech acts and improvisational text-sound composition.

d) Le Picnic Suspendu. This installation transforms a picnic into a performative act and commentary, utilising a basket of food and wine suspended over a restricted area, inaccessible and visible only from a distance, allowing for viewing and listening.

Le Picnic Suspendu exemplifies the metamodernist oscillation between sincerity and irony discussed in Section 1.3, creating an installation that simultaneously references and subverts participatory art traditions involving food sharing, such as the work of Tiravanija mentioned in Section 2.2. By suspending the picnic beyond reach, the installation creates a tension between invitation and denial, abundance and inaccessibility, that comments on the complexities of participation itself. This approach extends EMT into the realm of conceptual art while maintaining theatrical framing.

e) The National Theatre. This open stage invites participants to perform in any manner they choose, from speeches and dance to music, actions, and interactions with sound-making objects.

The National Theatre installation aligns with the workshop-based creation methods discussed in Section 2.1.4, establishing an infrastructure that facilitates improvisation and spontaneous performance, rather than relying on predetermined scores. By designating a space as a "national theatre" within the micro-republic, the installation playfully appropriates institutional frameworks while democratising access to performance space. This approach extends EMT beyond professional performance contexts into the realm of grassroots cultural production.

f) The Galleries of Sound. The gardens feature two identical arches, positioned opposite each other, both of which possess a unique acoustic quality, transforming the sound into a kind of sonic "camera obscura." Participants are encouraged to interact with the sounds of the park by utilising this sound sculpture as a "readymade" piece. This install-

ation explores sound as a medium of performance, inviting participants to listen, create, and manipulate their auditory experiences.

This installation directly engages with the site-specific approaches discussed in section 2.1.5, particularly Janet Cardiff's audio walks and Trevor Wishart's *Beach Singularity.* By highlighting the garden's unique acoustic properties, The Galleries of Sound invites participants to experience familiar spaces through attentive listening, transforming passive hearing into active sonic engagement. This approach extends EMT's sonic dimensions beyond conventional musicality into the realm of acoustic ecology and environmental sound art.

g) The Shrine to Santa Isabelle Di Cattie. This commemorative shrine, comprised of white, helium-filled weather balloons, honours a dancer who contributed to the Republic's early workshop days. It serves as a space for an act of homage, remembrance and ethics. Isabelle Cattie was involved in the early stages of exploring the Franciscan Gardens but was unable to continue the project due to unforeseen circumstances. Participants can engage in reflective acts, paying homage through movement or spoken word, thereby integrating personal history into the fabric of public theatre.

The shrine connects to the memory and history approaches discussed in section 2.1.6, creating a performance structure that acknowledges absence and transforms personal history into public commemoration. By elevating a collaborator to "saint" status, the installation playfully appropriates religious frameworks while sincerely honouring artistic contribution. This approach extends EMT into ritual dimensions while maintaining a connection to the project's actual development process.

h) Slow Walking. Initiated by the chimes of a church clock, slow walking becomes a collective performance. This practice draws attention to aspects of everyday movement, inviting participants to experience time and space in a different way. It is designed to create a meditative, shared experience that blurs the lines between audience and performer.

This practice is connected to the situationist dérive discussed in Section 2.4, transforming ordinary movement through urban space into a conscious performance practice. By drastically altering the pace of movement, Slow Walking creates a temporal disruption that heightens awareness of both the environment and one's own embodied presence within it. This approach extends EMT beyond conventional theatrical temporality into durational performance and embodied meditation.

i) The Gallery of Taste. This installation explores the act of eating as a phenomenological, detailed sensory performance. By consuming ice cream in specific, codified manners, participants explore how different strategies affect perception. The ritualised act of eating becomes an experiment in perception. Do these different strategies make the same item taste different?

The Gallery of Taste exemplifies the fusion of art and life discussed in section 2.1.2, transforming ordinary consumption into a structured performance practice. By codifying eating methods, the installation creates a framework for heightened sensory awareness that extends performance beyond visual and auditory dimensions into taste, smell, and proprioception. This multisensory approach extends EMT beyond conventional theatrical sensibilities into the realm of everyday sensory experience.

j) Shuffling. The gardeners adopted a unique mode of movement, shuffling from one task to another in unison. The company utilised this strategy to draw the citizens' attention to something that was about to happen or to a particular installation. It also turned an "in-between" task into a choreographed ritualistic movement, highlighting the patterns and repetition inherent in everyday actions.

This movement practice aligns with the workshop-based creation methods discussed in Section 2.1.4, particularly the physical theatre techniques employed by companies such as Complicité. By developing a distinctive movement vocabulary that serves both practical functions (directing attention) and aesthetic ones (creating visual rhythm), Shuffling extends EMT's choreographic dimensions beyond conventional dance or theatrical movement into the realm of functional performance and embodied communication.

k) Sonic Watering. Using watering cans equipped with speakers, the gardeners water plants with sound instead of water. This installation reinterprets the act of nurturing plants as an auditory action, extending the concept of talking to plants into an experimental sound theatre piece that merges horticulture and performance art.

Sonic Watering exemplifies the multiple vocalities and communication modes discussed in section 2.1.8, creating an interspecies communication framework that extends human voice beyond conventional addressees. By "watering" plants with sound, the installation playfully reimagines care practices while raising serious questions about how humans relate to non-human entities. This approach extends EMT beyond human-centred performance into more-than-human theatrical ecologies.

l) Citizenship and Passports. The act of automatically granting citizenship upon entry challenges traditional notions of belonging and identity. Participants receive passports, symbolising their inclusion in the Republic.

This practice is connected to the political engagement and social critique discussed in Section 2.1.3, particularly Bruguera's engagement with institutional politics. By reimagining citizenship as universal and automatic rather than restrictive and earned, the distribution of passports creates a performative critique of nationalist exclusion while fostering a sense of belonging within the garden space. This approach extends EMT into the realm of institutional critique and social practice.

m) The Great Poem of Consequences. This collaborative poem, created by proposing to the public, that they each add one line of text without seeing what has been written on the line previous to their contribution, is performed at the music theatre *KON-FERENT͡SE*. This fluid and connecting action was intended to encapsulate the collective inner voice of the Republic's participants, turning written reflections into a shared performative narrative.

The Great Poem aligns with the participatory approaches discussed in section 2.2, providing a framework for collective authorship that transforms individual contributions into a unified performance text. By gathering and reconfiguring public responses, the poem

creates a form of social documentation that extends the textual dimensions of EMT beyond predetermined scripts into emergent, collaborative composition.

n) The Ant Ballet.[164] This installation integrates natural phenomena into performance art by framing an existing ant colony. The ants' activities become a continuous, live ballet, highlighting the performative aspects of nature. It challenges the boundaries between human and non-human performance.

The Ant Ballet exemplifies the extension of EMT beyond human performers discussed in the introduction to *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs*, creating a frame for witnessing non-human movement as choreography. By directing attention to insect activity, the installation invites a decentring of human performance that connects to broader ecological awareness. This approach extends EMT into more-than-human performance ecologies while challenging anthropocentric notions of theatrical intention.

o) Micro-galleries. Tiny galleries were set up throughout the Republic, serving as contemplative aesthetic artefacts designed to evoke a feeling of wonder in those who came across them. The Franciscan Garden boasts its own unique history, encapsulated in these micro-galleries.

These micro-galleries connect to the memory and history approaches discussed in section 2.1.6, creating miniature frames for historical contemplation within the garden space. By scaling down the gallery format to intimate, unexpected encounters, the micro-galleries extend EMT's spatial dimensions beyond the conventional theatrical scale into micro-performance and found-object installation.

p) Listening and Walking. This installation and action play a crucial role in shaping the Republic. One person holds a closed umbrella aloft, much like a tour guide. When this happens, the rest of the group gathers around the person with the umbrella, who then leads them to areas of the Republic that they believe should be focused on, engaging in

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[164] Ollie Palmer, "Ant Ballet: Phase 1," *Opticon1826* 16 (2014): 1–7, https://doi.org/10.5334/opt.ce.

Of note here is Ollie Palmer's fascinating project "Ant Ballet: Phase 1.*"* An experiment in biology and choreography where through the use of artificial pheromones, the movement of ants are controlled into a controlled movement choreography.

intense listening for as long as they wish. People in the Republic are free to join or not as they prefer.

This practice aligns with the site-specific approaches discussed in section 2.1.5, particularly Janet Cardiff's audio walks, while incorporating the collective listening practices championed by Pauline Oliveros. By creating a mobile framework for shared acoustic attention, Listening and Walking extends EMT's sonic dimensions beyond fixed composition into ambulatory sound art and collective environmental listening.

q) Opening and Closing Bells. The entire event, spanning three hours, is synchronised with the clock in the Franciscan church adjacent to the garden. The concluding action of the Republic is auditory. At the appointed time marked by the clock's chime, all members of the company gather at the gate where the area's actual gardeners are based. The Franciscan bells, known for their distinctive sonority, are accompanied by Elia Moretti throughout the ringing. This is followed by a moment of relative silence, during which we display signs expressing "Thank You" to the gardeners in various languages.

This framing device connects to John Cage's use of time structures, as discussed in Section 2.1.9, creating a temporal container for the entire performance that integrates existing environmental sounds (such as church bells) with responsive accompaniment led by Moretti. By synchronising with the church clock rather than imposing an arbitrary time frame, the opening and closing bells extend EMT's temporal dimensions beyond conventional theatrical timing into site-responsive durational performance.

7. **Document the Micro-Republic's History and Achievements.** Throughout the republic, we employed two documenters who joined in as far as possible with Republic activities and utilised mobile phones as tools rather than more obvious camera apparatus to draw as little attention to themselves as possible. Short films of the installations and interactions were captured in this way.

This documentation approach aligns with the digital-physical integration discussed in Section 2.5, providing a framework for extending the ephemeral performance into a digital afterlife without disrupting its immediate physical presence. By embedding documentation within the performance itself rather than positioning it outside, the project extends EMT beyond the temporal boundaries of live performance into mediated representation and digital distribution.

3.1.4 Republica Františsšsšsšsšs as EMT

Republica Františsšsšsšsšs functions as a dynamic, interactive interspecies environment where participants are invited to engage in a variety of EMT installations that serve as triggers for contributing to an ever-evolving narrative that blends art, community, and public space. However, as stated in the passport, "Do not ask what the Republic can do for you, ask what you can do for it. 'Do not expect to be entertained.'" Or as Duchamp says, "The public comes to a happening not to be amused but to be bored, and that's quite an invention, quite a contribution to new ideas, isn't it."[165]

This Duchampian embrace of "boredom" as artistic strategy connects to the metamodernist framework discussed in section 1.3, oscillating between sincere engagement and ironic distance. By refusing entertainment value while inviting genuine participation, *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* creates a performance environment that extends beyond conventional theatrical pleasure into territories of civic engagement, ecological awareness, and social practice.

As an example of extended EMT, *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* demonstrates how performance can transcend traditional boundaries between art forms, between human and non-human participants, and between artistic and everyday activities. The project embodies the research questions posed in section 1.2, particularly regarding how interdisciplinary approaches and unconventional locations can expand EMT's expressive possibilities. By creating a framework that accommodates both structured installations and

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[165] Mick Gold, *Dada and Surrealism: Europe After the Rain*, YouTube video, 1:21:31, January 18, 2018, https://youtu.be/sdBaS8fgwNs?si=6mArMOTuh3Bl0Fi7.

spontaneous interactions, *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* extends EMT beyond predetermined composition into emergence and co-creation.

The micro-republic format offers a particularly rich structure for extended EMT, as it creates a coherent framework for diverse activities while maintaining a connection to everyday life. Unlike conventional music theatre forms that require audience members to enter specialised venues and adopt specialised behaviours, *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* infiltrates existing public space, inviting participants to discover performance and at the same time, have their performance within their ordinary environment. This approach extends EMT beyond theatrical exceptionality into the fabric of everyday experience.

The emphasis on equality between humans, plants, insects, and objects connects *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* to contemporary ecological performance practices that seek to decentralise human experience. By creating performance structures that acknowledge and engage with more-than-human entities, the project extends EMT beyond anthropocentric expressivity into multispecies collaboration and ecological awareness. This extension aligns with the concept of "extended" EMT introduced in Chapter 1, where performance practices extend beyond traditional boundaries to reflect our increasingly hybrid existence across physical, digital, and ecological realms.

3.1.5 Performance Structure of KONFƐRƐNT͡SƐ

3.1.5.1 The KONFƐRƐNT͡SƐ Structure as EMT Composition

The *KONFƐRƐNT͡SƐ* structure deliberately appropriates and subverts traditional academic conference formats, transforming standard agenda items into opportunities for experimental performance. This approach aligns with the situationist détournement discussed in Section 2.4, repurposing institutional structures as vehicles for artistic expression and social critique. By maintaining the superficial form of academic discourse while replacing content with experimental sound, movement, and interaction, *KONFƐRƐNT͡SƐ* creates a metamodernist oscillation between institutional formality and playful subversion.

KONFƐRƐNȊSƐ Proceedings

1. **Introduction:** An impactful and loud introduction unfolds, with conference leaders utilising sound or movement to present the conference theme according to their expertise. The table itself is introduced, symbolising the egalitarian philosophy of the *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*, where all beings are considered equal. This opening disrupts expectations of academic decorum through volume and embodied expression, immediately signalling that this conference operates according to different rules than conventional academic gatherings. The formal introduction of the table as a symbol of equality is connected to the political engagement and social critique discussed in Section 2.1.3, where physical objects serve as vehicles for philosophical concepts. This approach extends EMT beyond abstraction into material metaphor, treating furniture as both practical support and conceptual framework.

2. **Apologies for Absence:** A text/instruction balloon titled *Lamento di Santa Isabella di Cattie* is found in a small envelope with a balloon matching those used for the shrine. Participants are instructed to begin in unison, take one breath, fill the balloon with this breath, and release the air in imaginative ways, repeating this process three times. This segment is delicate, refined, and humorous. This ritualised acknowledgement of absence connects to the memory and history approaches discussed in Section 2.1.6, creating a performance structure that honours absence through embodied breathwork. By using balloons as vessels for participants' breath, the activity creates a material manifestation of the ephemeral, extending EMT into ritualised commemoration while maintaining playful interaction. The collective breathing exercise creates a moment of shared physical experience that builds community through synchronised respiration, extending EMT beyond individual expression into collective embodiment.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** A performance of the Great Poem of Consequences from *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs,* featuring a trio for drum kit, voice, and trumpet. During the performance, additional contributions to the poem are collected from participants, making this segment refined, detailed, and elegiac.

This reimagining of administrative record-keeping as poetic performance aligns with the multiple vocalities and communication modes discussed in Section 2.1.8, transforming the documentary function into an expressive opportunity. By performing the "minutes" as music and poetry rather than reading a text, *KON-FERENT͡SE* extends EMT's approach to documentation beyond textual record into embodied memory and artistic transformation. The collection of additional contributions during the performance creates a real-time evolution of the material, extending EMT beyond fixed composition into emergent co-creation.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** The treasurer performs the report on the table by moving it while simultaneously maintaining an orchestra of ten spinning tops at each end of the table. Participants are invited to assist in keeping the tops spinning, accompanied by the sounds of breathing and percussion. This creates a concentrated and participatory atmosphere. This kinaesthetic rendering of financial information aligns with the workshop-based creation methods discussed in Section 2.1.4, translating abstract data into embodied expression. The use of spinning tops creates a precarious system requiring constant attention and cooperation, extending EMT beyond controlled performance into the realm of emergent systems and collaborative maintenance. The invitation for participants to assist creates a moment of shared responsibility for the performance's continuation, extending EMT beyond the traditional performer/audience divisions into a collective stewardship.

5. **Subcommittee Report:** A movement piece involving a paper cloud, vibraphone, voice, and a large wind machine, illustrating the challenges of conducting research in the *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs* during a cold Prague winter. This meteorological rendering of research conditions aligns with the site-specific approaches discussed in Section 2.1.5, translating environmental factors into performative elements. The use of a wind machine creates an interior weather system that extends EMT beyond visual and sonic elements into tactile, atmospheric dimensions. The paper cloud provides a visual metaphor for thought and

ideation, extending EMT's representational strategies beyond literal documentation into poetic visualisation.

6. **Presentation No. 1:** A presentation of *Ant Ballet* with video projection, extended voice, and movement. The listening act involves a device made of two long polycarbonate pipes, signalling the transition to *Speakers' Corner* when used by the percussionist. The treasurer measures various items with a measuring tape, and a model box of the *Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs* is rolled down the middle of the table, contributing to the anarchic quality of this segment. This multimedia presentation of the Ant Ballet aligns with the extension of EMT beyond human performers discussed in Section 3.1.4, utilising video projection to introduce non-human choreography into the conference space. The polycarbonate listening device extends EMT's sonic explorations into acoustic amplification and directed hearing, creating new relationships between sound sources and listeners. The measuring activities and model box create a play of scale that extends EMT's spatial engagement from life-size environments to miniature representations, creating a recursive relationship between the garden republic and its theatrical double.

7. **Presentation No. 2:** Terracotta flowerpots, porcelain mugs, and metal cymbals are attached to a string and dragged along the floor. This exercise in listening involves interpreting the sound of the conference venue floor surfaces. This acoustic exploration of material interaction is connected to John Cage's approach to found sound, as discussed in section 2.1.9, where ordinary objects are treated as musical instruments, and surfaces are given agency as collaborative sound producers. By framing the act of "dragging" as "objects interpreting surfaces," the presentation extends EMT's conceptual framework beyond human intentionality into object-oriented ontology, where materials themselves become protagonists in sonic creation. This approach connects to the republic's emphasis on equality between humans and objects, extending EMT's philosophical underpinnings into material engagement.

8. **Presentation No. 3:** This is a reenactment of *Speakers' Corner* from the *Republica Františšššššššš*, characterised by its bright, loud, and confrontational nature. Each gardener must speak at the same time on any subject of their choosing in any language they like. This cacophonous reenactment is connected to the multiple vocalities discussed in Section 2.1.8, creating a sonic environment where semantic meaning is overwhelmed by the physicality of competing voices. The simultaneous speaking in multiple languages creates a Tower of Babel effect that extends EMT beyond linguistic coherence into sonic texture and vocal materiality. This approach aligns with the research question in Section 1.2, which explores how multiple vocalities and modes of communication can be applied within EMT contexts.

9. **Coffee Break:** The iron safety curtain descends, seemingly trapping participants on stage. The lights go out, and the subsequent action, involving ordinary backstage dialogue and foley, occurs offstage and is broadcast through speakers. Participants only hear the sounds of coffee being slurped and the crunching of crisps and biscuits, creating an unsettling and uncanny experience. This disruptive reimagining of the standard conference coffee break aligns with the situationist strategies discussed in Section 2.4, transforming ordinary social rituals into disorienting performances. The physical separation created by the safety curtain, while maintaining an auditory connection, creates a sensory disjunction that extends EMT beyond visual performance into an acousmatic experience. The amplification of ordinary consumption sounds creates a hyperreality that extends EMT's sonic palette into microsonic territory, rendering everyday activities as compositional material.

10. **Guest Speaker:** The invited speaker arrives immediately after the coffee break and proceeds independently to the head of the conference table, presenting a short lecture on a subject of their choosing in a very adult and professional manner. In the performances so far, lectures have been given on "Ecology and Water," "Horses," and "The History of Independent Micro-Republics.' This insertion of genuine academic content within the experimental framework creates a

metamodernist oscillation between sincere intellectual engagement and performance context. By incorporating an actual lecture on relevant subjects, *KON-FERENT͡SE* extends EMT beyond pure artistic expression into knowledge production and dissemination, creating a hybrid form that honours both academic and artistic modes of communication. This approach aligns with the blurring of boundaries between art and life discussed in Section 2.1.2, extending EMT into educational contexts while maintaining a performative framing.

11. **Q & A:** The Therabrella, an indoor iteration of the Theratree from *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*, is introduced. Participants pluck advice-laden papers from the spokes of a large umbrella while being fanned, massaged, and offered chocolates and liquor. This is accompanied by the Therabrella lullaby for vibraphone and voice, enhancing the acousmatic sound experience. This sensorial reimagining of academic Q&A aligns with the participatory approaches discussed in Section 2.2, replacing verbal exchange with multisensory interaction. The offering of physical pleasure (massage, chocolates, liquor) alongside conceptual content creates a holistic experience that extends EMT beyond intellectual engagement into embodied sensation. The Therabrella lullaby creates a sonic environment that extends EMT's musical elements beyond functional background into an affective atmosphere, intended to influence participants' reception of the advice texts through emotional tonality.

12. **Announcement for the Next Meeting:** Dates for the next *KONFERENT͡SE* and Republica Gardening sessions are announced, followed by a loud, pithy performance involving voice, drum kit, and movement. Gardeners exit with high bells and whistles, just as they entered. This ceremonial conclusion connects to the cyclical temporality established in *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*, extending EMT beyond the single performance event into ongoing practice. The announcement of future dates creates a temporal extension that connects past, present, and future manifestations of the project. The symmetrical exit, complete with bells and whistles, makes a formal frame that extends EMT's compositional strategies into

ritualised beginnings and endings, treating entrances and exits as significant performance moments rather than mere transitions.

3.1.5.2 *KONFERENT͡SE* as Municipal-Artistic Governance Through EMT

KONFERENT͡SE exemplifies an oscillation between earnest municipal governance and artistic expression, between formal civic structure and imaginative disruption. By maintaining the recognisable form of a municipal conference while communicating through the EMT language established in the *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs*, the project creates a productive tension between institutional convention and artistic innovation. This approach extends EMT beyond purely aesthetic expression into practical governance, treating the municipal conference format as material for creative reinterpretation while addressing genuine questions about how to improve the republic.

The gardeners' function is not merely that of performers, but also as genuine stewards of the republic, using the conference to reflect on their experiences, evaluate activities, and plan future developments. This dual function blurs the line between performance and governance, extending EMT into civic practice while maintaining its artistic integrity. By discussing real concerns—such as the acoustic properties of different garden areas, interactions with regular visitors, and relationships with plants and insects—through experimental performance methods, *KONFERENT͡SE* creates a unique form of site administration that honours both practical needs and artistic values.

The project's translation of garden-based installations into an indoor theatrical context demonstrates the adaptability of extended EMT approaches across different environments. By recreating elements of *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* within a conventional performance venue, *KONFERENT͡SE* shows how site-responsive methodologies can create dialogue between different locations, extending EMT beyond site-specificity into site-translation and adaptive recontextualisation.

The formal conference structure provides a compositional framework that organises diverse performative elements into a coherent whole without imposing stylistic uniformity. This structural approach extends EMT beyond free-form improvisation into organised

heterogeneity, creating space for multiple expressive modes within a recognisable over-all form. The agenda items function simultaneously as practical matters requiring atten-tion and as movement titles in a larger composition, extending EMT's relationship to musical structure into administrative organisation.

KONFERENT͡S'Es engagement with academic conventions connects to the broader question of how extended EMT can engage with institutional contexts without being ab-sorbed by them. By "conducting" a conference rather than simply holding one, the pro-ject maintains critical distance while participating in knowledge production, extending EMT's social function beyond entertainment into intellectual discourse, while maintain-ing its experimental edge.

3.1.5.3 Digital Documentation and Extension

While the documentation strategies for *KONFERENT͡SE* are not explicitly detailed in the provided text, the project's relationship to digital extension merits consideration. As out-lined in Section 2.5, contemporary EMT practices are increasingly extending across physical and digital realms, creating multiple manifestations of performance work across various media.

Documentation of *KONFERENT͡SE* could extend the project beyond its immediate tem-poral and spatial boundaries, creating digital artefacts that function not merely as re-cords but as extensions of the performance itself. Video documentation may capture spatial relationships and movement patterns, while audio recording can preserve the sonic elements for various listening contexts. Photographic documentation could isolate visual moments for contemplation, while written reflection could translate embodied ex-perience into discursive engagement.

These documentation strategies would connect to the research question in section 1.2 regarding how digital technologies can be applied to develop novel experiences in EMT. By treating documentation not as secondary to performance but as an integral compon-ent of the work's extended life, *KONFERENT͡SE* could create digital manifestations that

reach audiences unable to attend the live event while offering new perspectives to those who were present.

The potential creation of a digital archive for *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* and *KONFERENȚSƐ* would extend EMT beyond ephemeral events into an ongoing resource, creating a repository of experimental approaches that could inform future practice. This archival dimension is connected to the memory and history approaches discussed in Section 2.1.6, treating performance documentation as a form of cultural memory that extends EMT's temporal impact beyond the moment of live presentation.

3.1.5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the *Republica Františsšsšsšsšs* and its associated *KONFERENȚSƐ* structure represent a significant advancement in the conceptualisation and practice of EMT by reframing and reconceptualising the Fransican Garden in Prague. By establishing a micro-republic that attempted to dissolve hierarchies between humans, plants, insects and objects, the project created a framework where performance could, for brief moments, transcend conventional theatrical boundaries. However, this approach is not without challenges: accessibility barriers for those unfamiliar with experimental traditions; tensions between stated egalitarianism and actual power dynamics; documentation difficulties inherent to ephemeral work; institutional constraints of public spaces; assessment complications in non-traditional formats; translation issues between garden and conference contexts; also, there was apparent a risk of superficial engagement with political concepts; balancing artistic coherence with unpredictability; sustaining engagement despite refusing conventional entertainment; and practical limitations of influencing large spaces with small teams. Despite these challenges, oscillation between structure and spontaneity, order and entropy, enabled a unique artistic ecosystem that offered new methodological approaches for understanding performance as a multidimensional experience reflecting our complex, interconnected existence while expanding EMT's expressive possibilities beyond traditional artistic confines.

3.2 *LETHE*: A Film and an Extended Music Theatre Game

Workshop/LARP Locations: Kythira, Greece. The River Thames and the British Museum. Filming took place in Kythira, September 2021 and September 2023, and in London, April 2024.

Film Screenings: June 24, 2024 and June 26, 2024; and the South London Gallery, September 21, 2023, Philharmoniki, Potamos, Kythira.

Team: Concept/Composition/Direction—Loré Lixenberg

Cast—Appearing as themselves and:

     Anna Birch—Schopenehauer/Ouranos

     Gina Boreham—Nietzche/Chronos

     Jimmy Condoleon—Poseidon

     Catherine Foderingham—Daphne

     Liz Herbert—Hera/Cellist

     Linda Leroy—Mnemosyne/ Ukulele

     Clark Page—Apollo/Trumpet

     Mick Peake—Zeus/Harmonica & percussion

     Metaxia Poulos—Aeolus

     Paul Scrivens—Helios

     Chris Shurety—Dionysius/Double Bass

     Panagas Stathis—Charon

     Amanda Vickers—Artemes/ Violin

     Tom Whitehouse—Hades

     Sigurborg Oskarsdottir—Weeping Harpie 1
     Heidi Siegel—Weeping Harpie 2

     Film Sound—Ian Hansen/The Bookhouse Recording Studio.

     Camera—Sasha Owen, Chris Adams.

3.2.1 Introduction: Between Worlds, Between Media

LETHE constitutes an extended music theatre piece, structured as an analogue game wherein live action role-playing (LARP) is employed to propel both its narrative and structural framework. This approach embodies a synthesis of music theatre techniques and participatory methodologies. The concept of *LETHE* is profoundly influenced by the oeuvre of Trevor Wishart, not only his integration of theatre games into his earlier musical contexts, but also his treatment of acousmatic sound in the way the soundtrack was built.

The participants were non-professional musicians, some of whom, despite the experimental framework of the piece, brought rather conventional approaches to their involvement. This conventionality created points of friction with some participants, creating an interesting tension within the work itself.

It is worth noting that the initial filming phase was remarkably minimal due to COVID-19 restrictions, consisting only of me, Chris Adams, the cameraman, a tiny core team, and a bunch of goats—an intimate beginning that would, from 2022, expand into the larger LARP framework.

LETHE occupies a liminal space between the analogue and digital realms, between the mythological past and the technological present, creating a contemporary performance framework that deliberately traverses boundaries. While initially developed as a physical LARP experience, *LETHE*'s structure harbours significant potential for translation into hybrid digital-physical formats that mirror contemporary gaming experiences, a potential that connects the ancient mythological themes of the work to current digital practices.

The project's filming coincided with several historically and politically significant events that profoundly informed its themes of time and memory. The bulk of the filming occurred immediately following the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Additionally, during this time, the Greek Prime Minister visited the UK and used this opportunity to request the return of the Parthenon Marbles—a particularly resonant connection, given that some similar artefacts remain submerged in the Mediterranean waters around Kythira. Simul-

taneously, Extinction Rebellion was staging active demonstrations in London on the same day the LARP component was performed, adding layers of contemporary urgency to the project's exploration of preservation and loss.

This iteration of *LETHE* can be considered as a research and development process for future hybrid development, with these concurrent events embedding themselves within the work's thematic exploration of memory and temporal boundaries.

3.2.2 Thematic Framework: Death, Memory, and Transformation

The narrative underpinning *LETHE* is inspired by the Hellenic myth of the river Lethe, whose waters induce a state of amnesia in the souls of the recently deceased, thereby facilitating the renunciation of their former existences and enabling their transition to new states of being. This mythological theme finds a parallel in the transformative journey of the performer, who must engage in a profound immersion into the character, entity, or musical quality they are portraying, thus undergoing a significant metamorphosis.

This thematic concern with transformation and fluidity of identity creates natural resonances with contemporary digital gaming and online role-playing communities, where players routinely adopt alternative identities and navigate between worlds. The mythology of Lethe, which crosses boundaries between life states through forgetting, parallels the way digital environments facilitate identity experimentation by temporarily releasing physical world constraints. As Turkle notes in her exploration of online identity, "The self is multiple, fluid, and constituted in interaction with machine connections; it is made and transformed by language."[166]

3.2.3 Site-Specificity and Reproducibility: Physical and Virtual Locations

In *One Place After Another*, Miwon Kwon's examination of the importance of site-specific art identifies the term "'functional site' to distinguish recent site-oriented practices from those of the past" and goes on to say "This conceptual shift has embraced the

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[166] Sherry Turkle, *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995).

meaning as an open, unfixed constellation, porous to contingencies..." [167] *LETHE* util-ises this principle, initially situating its performance on the island of Kythira, Greece,[168] yet designed to be adaptable to various other locales through its use of text score. The essential characteristics of the environment can be reinterpreted in the new context, maintaining the integrity and impact of the original piece. This is demonstrated within the piece itself when the same EMT strategies are transported, like the characters, from the island of Kythira in Part 1 to the banks of the River Thames in Part 3. Kwon further asserts, "Site-specific art is capable of being transposed to different contexts without losing its integrity,"[169] emphasising the versatility and adaptability of such performances. Moreover, Kwon discusses the politics of place; she highlights the socio-cultural implica-tions inherent in site-specific works, which "foreground the relationship between the art-work and its location."[170]

This adaptability across physical locations creates a natural bridge to adaptation across media, from physical to digital spaces. Just as *LETHE* can be performed in different physical sites while maintaining its core identity, it could similarly be translated into digi-tal environments—virtual worlds, game platforms, or mixed-reality spaces—while pre-serving its essential qualities. The principles that enable transposition between physical sites can equally facilitate transposition between physical and digital realms.

These connections between physical and virtual site-specificity have been explored by scholars like Christiane Paul, who observes that digital art has established its own forms

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[167] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Los Angeles: Mass-achusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 160.

[168] It is worth noting that The Greek island of Kythira holds mythological significance as one of the pur-ported birthplaces of Aphrodite, who reportedly emerged from the sea foam near its shores. According to Hesiod's Theogony, this foam originated from the severed genitals of Ouranos (the sky god), cast into the sea by his son Kronos. In local folklore, two small islets off Kythira's coast are sometimes identified as the physical manifestation of Ouranos' testicles in this castration myth, reflecting how ancient cosmogonic narratives remain embedded in Greece's geographical features. These features are utilised and feature in the film *LETHE.*

Robin Hard. *The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology*, 8th ed. (London: Routledge, 2020).

[169] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Los Angeles: Mass-achusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 160.

[170] Ibid.

of site-specificity that relate to the virtual realm and the possibilities of connectivity. [171]*LETHE*'s adaptable structure positions it well for extension into these connected virtual realms, creating potential for performances that span physical and digital spaces simultaneously.

3.2.4 LARPing and Group Dynamics: From Physical to Digital Role-Play

The utilisation of LARPing within *LETHE* serves as a mechanism for character development and narrative progression through participatory methods. This aligns with Kester's theories on participatory and socially engaged art, emphasising that the "aesthetic autonomy" of each participant enhances the collective creation.[172] Kester asserts that "participatory art practices foreground the relational dynamics between participants and the environment, challenging the notion of the autonomous, sovereign self."[173]

Furthermore, Kester elaborates on the concept of dialogical aesthetics, which prioritises interaction and dialogue over forms of artistic autonomy. He posits that "art's social dimension is central to its aesthetic significance,"[174] thus underscoring the importance of communal and interactive elements within *LETHE*.

The principles of the Nordic LARP tradition, as expounded in the *Nordic Larp* anthology, further underscore this approach. Stenros and Montola assert, "Larp offers a possibility to construct and explore alternative social realities through role-play."[175] They emphasise that LARP is a collaborative effort, where participants co-create the narrative and experience, which aligns with the collective nature of creating *LETHE*.

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[171] Christiane Paul, *Digital Art*. 3rd ed. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2015).

[172] Grant Kester, *Beyond the Sovereign Self: Aesthetic Autonomy from the Avant-Garde to Socially Engaged Art* (Durham, NC and Cambridge: Duke University Press, 2024).

[173] Ibid.

[174] Ibid.

[175] Jaakko Stenros and Markus Montola, *Nordic Larp* (Stockholm: Feä Livia, 2010), 27.

Moreover, it is highlighted that "the immersive quality of LARP allows for a deeper engagement with the character and the story."[176] This immersive engagement is crucial for the performers in *LETHE*, who must fully embody their characters to achieve the desired transformative effect.

Stenros and Montola also note that "As safe zones, games have enormous potential as critical tools. Communities, ideals and identities can be constructed to safely explore hypothetical scenarios",[177] providing a framework for the thematic explorations within *LETHE*. Furthermore, the notion that "larp encourages participants to experiment with different identities and perspectives"[178] resonates with the performative goals of the piece. As a device to encourage participants to create and step into new characters and states of being, it was invaluable.

LETHE's LARP foundation creates natural connections to digital role-playing games and online identity play, suggesting pathways for hybrid development. The principles that guide physical LARP—character embodiment, rule-bound improvisation, collaborative storytelling—have direct parallels in digital gaming environments, particularly MMORPGS[179] and narrative-driven multiplayer games. As Harviainen notes, "Both LARPS and MMORPGS are governed by rule systems that facilitate shared experiences, though they differ in their materiality and modes of embodiment."[180]

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[176] Ibid.

[177] Ibid.

[178] Ibid.

[179] MMORPGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games) are virtual gaming environments where large numbers of players simultaneously interact in a persistent online world, taking on character roles, completing quests, engaging in combat, crafting items, forming social groups like guilds, and developing their characters through experience points and level progression systems.
Popular examples include World of Warcraft, Final Fantasy XIV, Elder Scrolls Online, and Guild Wars 2. These games typically feature extensive world-building, character customisation, and social mechanics that allow for both cooperative and competitive gameplay. MMORPGs are distinguished from other online games by their persistent worlds that continue to exist and evolve regardless of whether individual players are logged in, creating a sense of a living digital environment with its own economy, politics, and social structures.

[180] Harviainen, J. Tuomas. 2012. "Systemic Perspectives on Information in Physically Performed Roleplay." PhD diss., University of Tampere.

These shared qualities create potential for *LETHE* to evolve into a hybrid experience that combines physical performance with digital extensions. Players might move between physical LARP sessions and online interactions, carrying their characters across media boundaries. The digital environment could extend temporal dimensions of the experience, allowing character development and inter-player relationships to evolve between physical gatherings. As Jenkins observes in his discussion of transmedia storytelling, "Each medium makes its unique contribution to the unfolding of the story."[181]

Contemporary experiments in hybrid LARP/digital gaming, such as *Monitor Celestra*—a Battlestar Galactica-themed LARP that incorporated digital interfaces—demonstrate the creative potential of such approaches.[182] As Stenros notes, "The integration of digital interfaces into physical LARP creates new possibilities for environmental storytelling and player agency."[183] *LETHE*'s mythological framework, which is concerned with crossing boundaries between life states, particularly lends itself to this type of media boundary crossing.

3.2.5 Structural Components: Physical Techniques with Digital Gaming Potential

Each day began with intensive preparatory EMT and music workshops for participants that ran until lunchtime. Afternoons were spent filming the resulting LARPs.

Part One: Preparatory Techniques

The initial phase of *LETHE* functions as a documentary, wherein participants are introduced to various music theatre techniques designed to augment their physicality, presence, and vocal or instrumental skills. Key components include:

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[181] Henry Jenkins, 2006. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide.* (New York: New York University Press).

[182] "Monitor Celestra" is a Nordic LARP based on the Battlestar Galactica TV series, played aboard a real decommissioned destroyer ship. The game ran for three events in 2013 in Sweden and was a significant production in the Nordic LARP tradition, subsequently adapted to online platforms.

[183] Jaakko Stenros and Markus Montola, *Nordic Larp* (Stockholm: Feä Livia, 2010), 67.

Breathing Workshops: Daily sessions emphasised foundational breathing techniques using Middendorf's[184] approach as it is distinct in its emphasis on allowing rather than controlling breath, making it an ideal strategy to teach breathing techniques to the musicians I was working with.

Vocal Laban:[185] Movement-voice games inspired by Laban's theories,[186] integrating body and space to rediscover vocal expression. Bonnie Marranca's *Conversations with Meredith Monk* underscores the importance of physicality and movement in vocal performance where she talks of voice and movement being "woven together" and further goes on to point out that, "in all the accounts we have of ancient performance, those things were woven together: music, movement, storytelling and ritual. That was an antidote to the fragmentation and specialisation of our world."[187] In these exercises, this technique was also adapted to singing, or vocalising technique, in an attempt to view the voice as "Movement and Space," and the EMT structure as a whole.

Ras box:[188] Inspired by Artaud's infamous vision of actors as "athletes of the emotions," the Ras box technique is rooted in Natya Shastra's description of the eight rasas, aiming for a comprehensive, embodied emotional experience. Artaud envisioned that "the theater, far from copying life, puts itself whenever possible in communication with pure forces."[189] He also emphasised that actors should "abandon themselves like puppets to the disposition of space."[190] In this vein, the Ras box facilitates a connection with these "pure forces," guiding actors to embody the eight rasas—heroism, disgust, fear, love,

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184 Ilse Middendorf, *The Perceptible Breath: A Breathing Science*. Translated by Elizabeth Beringer. (Paderborn: Junfermann-Verlag, 1990).

185 Rudolf Laban and F.C. Lawrence. *Effort: Economy in Body Movement*. (Boston: Plays, Inc., 1974).

186 Rudolf Laban, *Choreutics*. Edited by Lisa Ullmann. (London: Macdonald & Evans, 1966).

187 Bonnie Marranca, *Conversations with Meredith Monk* (New York: PAJ publications, 2014).

188 Bharat Muni, *Natya Shastra*, trans. Manomohan Ghosh (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1951).

189 Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and Its Double*, trans. Victor Corti (Paris: New Calder Press, 1958), 91.

190 Ibid.

humour, rage, compassion, and wonderment—profoundly and holistically. Schechner posits, "rasa is a whole experience, not fragmented between performer and audience."[191]

Flocking: Derived from Bogart and Landau's "Six Viewpoints" technique,[192] this exercise explores the kinetic relationship between performers through the elements of Space, Shape, Time, Emotion, Movement, and Story.

Musical Games: Adapted from Wishart's *Sounds Fun* Volumes 1 and 2,[193] these games include learning Morse code.

Potential Digital Adaptations of Physical Techniques

These physical preparation techniques have significant potential for digital adaptation and extension. Breathing workshops could be facilitated through video conferencing with biofeedback elements, perhaps using smartphone sensors to track breathing patterns. Vocal Laban exercises could be enhanced through motion capture technology that visualises the relationship between movement and sound. The Ras Box emotional technique could be extended through VR environments designed to trigger and amplify specific emotional states.

As Kozel explores in her work on phenomenology and digital performance, "Digital technologies need not be antithetical to embodied experience; they can extend and transform our understanding of embodiment."[194] These digital adaptations would not replace the physical techniques but extend them, creating new possibilities for preparation and practice that bridge physical and virtual modalities.

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[191] Richard Shechner, *Performance Theory,* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

[192] Anne Bogart & Tina Landau, *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*, (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2005), 78.

[193] Trevor Wishart, Sounds Fun 1 & 2 (London: Universal Edition, 1975).

[194] Susan Kozel, *Closer: Performance, Technologies, Phenomenology*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

Part Two: Character Exploration

In the second phase, participants delve deeper into their characters through continued LARPing and musical games, engaging with the distinctive locales of Kythira, such as a chapel in a cave, a clifftop where Cronos and Ouranos' argument took place, and a Byzantine chapel utilised for Dionysus' birth. The climax transpires in the amphitheatre, where characters audition before Orpheus and a herd of celestial goats, whose reactions determine their fate, reflecting themes of Elysium and Tartarus. Again, Wishart's *Beach Singularity* provides a paradigm for these adaptable and site-responsive performance structures.

Digital Extensions of Character Development

Digital tools and environments could supplement this location-based character development. Augmented reality applications could overlay mythological elements onto physical locations, enhancing the narrative connection to specific sites. Virtual environments could recreate the Kythira locations for remote participants, allowing synchronised performances across geographical distances. Character development could continue in digital spaces between physical sessions, with participants interacting through avatars in shared virtual environments.

These digital extensions connect to what Giannachi terms "hypersurface," where "the actual and the virtual coincide," creating experiences that are "neither wholly physical nor wholly virtual, but rather a hybrid combination of both."[195] For *LETHE*, this hybrid approach could create more accessible and extended experiences that maintain the core physical techniques while embracing digital possibilities.

Part Three: Descent into Tartarus

The final segment depicts the fate of characters consigned to Tartarus. The games and methods become fragmented, with Hades appearing to guide the performers through

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[195] Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres*: *An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2004).

their eternal damnation, underscoring the disintegration of previously established tech-niques and the embodiment of chaos.

Digital Manifestations of Chaos and Fragmentation

The chaotic fragmentation of this final phase particularly lends itself to digital interpreta-tion. Glitch aesthetics, algorithmic distortion, and real-time digital manipulation of audio and video could materialise the disintegration described in the physical performance. As Dixon notes in his exploration of digital performance, "Technological glitches and fail-ures can be incorporated as aesthetic elements that reflect thematic concerns with chaos and breakdown."[196]

This phase could incorporate networked performance elements where digital connec-tions between participants are deliberately destabilised, creating an experience of digital fragmentation that mirrors the thematic dissolution. Participants might experience their digital representations breaking down, voices becoming distorted, or interactions being algorithmically corrupted—all serving as digital manifestations of the descent into Tar-tarus.

3.2.6 More Than a Soundtrack: Digital Sound Transformation as a Bridge

Wishart's work with digital sound transformation offers a conceptual bridge between *LETHE*'s physical performance and its documentation. His techniques for capturing en-vironmental sounds and transforming them through digital processes informed the ap-proach to sound design for the *LETHE* film. As Emmerson notes in his analysis of Wis-hart's work, "Wishart's approach to transformation maintains a connection to the source material while revealing new dimensions through technological intervention."[197]

This principle guided the sound design for *LETHE*, which aimed to maintain connections to the physical performance while extending the experience through technological

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[196] Steve Dixon, *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater, Dance, Performance Art, and Installation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

[197] Simon Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007).

means. The film utilises a multi-channel sound approach influenced by Wishart's spatialisation techniques. Field recordings captured on Kythira were incorporated into the sound design and distributed across the sound field to create an environment that references the original performance location.

The treatment of voice recordings in the film draws upon observations of Wishart's practice. Participants' vocal performances were positioned within the spatial sound arrangement to reflect the thematic concerns with liminality in the mythological context. This approach to voice creates a sonic experience that connects to the transitional states explored in the performance.

The sound design incorporates focused sonic elements that emerge at particular moments in the documentation. This technique draws on aspects of Wishart's approach, as seen in works like *Encounters in the Republic of Heaven*, where discrete vocal elements serve as points of focus within a broader sonic landscape.

In developing *LETHE's* documentation, Wishart's strategy of working with recorded sounds from site-specific performances and transforming them into acousmatic compositions provided a valuable framework for the project. The sound design aims to transport the listener to Kythira through sonic means, supporting the mythological transformation at the heart of the project. This application of Wishart's principles demonstrates how digital sound transformation can serve as both a documentation and an extension of a performance experience.

3.2.7 Interspecies Communication and Participation in *LETHE*: Beyond Human Performance

While this commentary is not intended to dwell on the mythologies inevitably embedded in this piece, in this section I would like to consider the inclusion of goats and how they aid in the construction and thinking of the piece, and why they are considered the perfect "Jury" for the players. The integration of goats as a crucial part of the central scene in the game music theatre piece *LETHE* leverages their profound symbolic and per-

formative attributes, notably drawn from mythological figures such as Amalthea and the Dionysian tradition, to enhance the production's thematic and experiential dimensions. Amalthea, often depicted as the goat who nourished the infant Zeus and honoured as the constellation Capra, symbolises abundance and nourishment through her horn, the Cornucopia. Similarly, goats sacred to Dionysus, god of wine, theatre, and revelry, underscore themes of fertility, vitality, and the cyclical nature of life and death. These mythopoetic connotations resonate with the themes of oblivion and the chthonic realm associated with the river Lethe, enriching the dramaturgical fabric with Dionysian elements.

In performative terms, goats expand the actors' expressive repertoire through their dynamic physicality and non-verbal communicative behaviours, aligning with the "Six Viewpoints" technique in exploring Space, Shape, Time, Emotion, Movement, and Story. This interaction fosters acute sensory awareness and adaptability, leading to more nuanced and authentic enactments. The goats' unpredictable movements introduce spontaneity and controlled chaos, invigorating audience engagement and grounding abstract narratives of memory and forgetfulness in visceral, experiential contexts. This endeavour of interspecies interaction aims to encourage performers to refine their attentiveness to subtle cues, fostering a more instinctive, symbiotic, and performative synergy. As displayed in the first part of the *LETHE* film, which reveals part of the process utilised, the attempt is also to bridge the gap between the instinctive or Dionysian side of the brain and the ordered and Apollonian aspects of the self. The incorporation of goats both as entities to be observed and emulated, as well as characters in the narrative, aims to bridge mythological archetypes and contemporary performative practices.

Space: Goats are inherently spatially aware animals. Their keen sense of space can help actors become more attuned to their surroundings and the dynamics within a performance area. Goats' natural ability to navigate their environment with precision can inspire actors to use space more effectively in their performances, as "Goats possess a

remarkable ability to judge distances and navigate complex terrains, making them highly spatially aware creatures."[198]

Shape: Goats exhibit a wide range of physical shapes in their movements, from graceful leaps to sturdy stances. These diverse shapes can inspire actors to experiment with their physicality and movement. Goats' varied postures can serve as a model for creating compelling and authentic character shapes on stage. As noted by Langbein, "goats display a rich array of postures and body language, which can be instructive for those studying movement and physical expression."[199]

Time: The rhythm and timing of goats' movements are often unpredictable, challenging the players to adapt and respond in the moment. This unpredictability and distance enable a sense of spontaneity and timing among the players, which is crucial for live performances. By practising with goats, the players can develop a more instinctive sense of timing, learning to react naturally and maintain fluidity in their performances. In another study, it was observed that "Goats exhibit varied temporal patterns in their behaviours, which can serve as a dynamic model for exploring timing and rhythm in performance."[200]

Emotion: Goats, despite being non-verbal creatures, express a wide range of emotions through their behaviour and physicality. The players can learn to interpret and convey emotions more effectively by studying the subtle cues and body language of goats and react accordingly. This understanding can help the players project emotions more authentically in their performance and connect with audiences on a deeper level. Further research found that "Goats communicate emotions through a complex system of vocal-

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[198] Mary C. Smith and David M. Sherman, *Goat Medicine*, (Cambridge: Whiley Blackwell, 2009), 67.

[199] Eberhard von Borrel, Christian Nawroth, and Jan Langbein, *Goats that Stare at Men* (January 2016), DOI: 10.3920/9789086867974_150, p. 120.

[200] Baciadonna et al., "Goats Exhibit Varied Temporal Patterns in Their Behaviours, Which Can Serve as a Dynamic Model for Exploring Timing and Rhythm in Performance," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Learning and Cognition 44*, no. 4 (2018): 396.

isations and body language, providing valuable insights into non-verbal emotional expression.'[201]

Movement: The diverse and often dynamic movements of goats provide a rich source of inspiration for the player. Observing and analysing the goats' agility and ability to navigate the island's wild terrain with ease can encourage performers to expand their movement vocabulary. By exploring the goat's subjectivity and physicality in workshops, the player can access modes of movement they might not have tried otherwise. This exploration of new movements can lead to more innovative and expressive performances, breaking conventional movement patterns and introducing a fresh physicality to their performance repertoire, as "goats" movements are characterised by a combination of grace and robustness, offering a unique model for studying physical dynamics.[202]

Story: Observing goats interact with their environment and each other can provide the players with insights into non-verbal storytelling.[203] Goats communicate and establish social hierarchies through their actions, offering a natural demonstration of how story can be conveyed through movement and interaction. The players are encouraged to translate these observations into their performances, using physicality and spatial relationships to enrich the narrative. "Goats engage in complex social behaviours that can inform our understanding of narrative construction through physical interaction." [204]

Digital-Physical Extensions of Interspecies Performance

The interspecies elements of LETHE create unique opportunities for digital extension. Motion capture technology could record and analyse goat movements, creating data that could inform digital avatars or algorithmic performance elements. The unpredictabil-

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[201] Ibid., 76

[202] Ibid., 98

[203] Thomas Thwaites, "Goatman, Speculative Design," Wordpress, March 21, 2016, https://pengzhangzhe.wordpress.com/2016/03/21/research-02-goatman-by-thomas-thwaites.

[204] Eberhard von Borrel, Christian Nawroth, and Jan Langbein, *Goats that Stare at Men* (January 2016), DOI: 10.3920/9789086867974_150, p. 214.

ity of goat behaviour could be modelled in AI systems that introduce similar qualities of spontaneity into digital interactions.

As Donna Haraway explores in her work on companion species, "The relationship between species is not merely metaphorical but material, creating new possibilities for understanding and being."[205] Digital technologies could help materialise these interspecies relationships in new ways, extending *LETHE's* exploration of human-animal performance into digital realms without losing the embodied knowledge gained from physical interaction with goats.

These digital extensions connect to emerging artistic practices that Hayles describes as "exploring the boundaries between human cognition and machinic operations."[206] *LETHE*'s interspecies focus creates an opportunity to extend this exploration to include animal cognition as well, creating triangulated relationships between human, animal, and machine intelligences.

3.2.8 Superiority of Goats in Extended Music Theatre Performance Training

Among a multitude of strategies, animal movement analysis is utilised particularly in actor training by the physical theatre technique teacher Jacques Lecoq,[207] because in terms of improving performance skills, exploring and practising the body's potential results in a higher level of physical confidence, and animal observation and analysis exercises are an effective way to do this, as it encourages the performer to view their movement and presence from a different perspective. Additionally, body language is a form of communication in its own right. The ability to pick up on nonverbal cues and communicate nonverbally is a crucial skill for a performer. Goats offer several additions to traditional human-based training exercises. Their natural behaviours and instincts

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[205] Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003), 16.

[206] N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 88.

[207] Jacques Lecoq, *The Moving Body: Teaching Creative Theatre*. (London: Methuen, 2000).

provide a raw and unfiltered model for physical and emotional expression. Unlike human partners, who may consciously or unconsciously impose their own interpretations and limitations, goats act purely on instinct, offering actors an unbiased and organic source of inspiration.

Moreover, goats' unpredictable nature requires actors to develop a heightened sense of presence and adaptability. This necessity to remain alert and responsive can significantly improve the player's ability to perform spontaneously and authentically.

3.2.9 Interspecies Communication

Interspecies communication between goats and humans offers valuable lessons to train participants in both movement and voice. Goats communicate with humans through a variety of vocalisations, gestures, and behaviours. This interaction can teach the participants about the subtleties of non-verbal communication and the importance of being attuned to the responses of their partners and surroundings. According to a study by Nawroth, "Goats are capable of understanding human pointing gestures and can respond appropriately to human cues, demonstrating a level of interspecies communication that can be harnessed in actor training."[208]

Incorporating and embedding a jury of goats into the fabric of the piece, through the lens of the "Six Viewpoints" technique, presents a unique and enriching opportunity to assess the players' performances in the Goat Jury scene in an instinctual yet controlled way. By learning from goats' spatial awareness, physical diversity, rhythmic timing, emotional expression, dynamic movements, and non-verbal storytelling, the players can enhance their craft in ways that traditional methods may not fully provide. The superiority of goats in this context lies in their ability to offer genuine, instinctual, and diverse models of behaviour and movement, showing a deeper and more versatile approach to performance.

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[208] Eberhard von Borrel, Christian Nawroth, and Jan Langbein, *Goats that Stare at Men* (January 2016), DOI: 10.3920/9789086867974_150, p. 215.

3.2.10 *LETHE* as a Hybrid Analogue-Digital Experience: Future Directions

Building upon the physical LARP foundation of *LETHE*, there exists significant potential to develop hybrid extensions that combine physical and digital elements. Such extensions would not replace the embodied experiences central to *LETHE* but would complement and expand them, creating new possibilities for participation, documentation, and creative development.

Digital Documentation as Performance Extension

The existing film documentation of *LETHE* already represents a form of media extension, translating the ephemeral performance into a fixed yet distributable form. This documentation approach could be expanded through interactive digital platforms that allow viewers to navigate different perspectives, timeframes, and narrative threads within the performance. As Bay-Cheng observes in her work on digital performance documentation, "Digital archives need not be static repositories but can become performance spaces in their own right."[209]

Such interactive documentation would create a digital afterlife for the physical performance, maintaining its improvisational qualities while making it accessible to a broader audience. This connects to the research question in section 1.2 regarding how digital technologies can be applied to develop novel experiences in Extended Music Theatre.

Online-Offline Performance Integration

Beyond documentation, *LETHE* could evolve into a hybrid format that integrates online and offline performance elements. Physical LARP sessions could be interspersed with online role-playing, creating an extended narrative that unfolds across media boundaries. Digital platforms could facilitate preparation and character development leading up to physical gatherings, while also extending the experience afterwards through reflection and continued interaction.

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[209] Sarah Bay-Cheng, "*Digital Historiography and Performance,*" Theatre Journal 62, no. 4 (2010): 567.

This approach connects to transmedia storytelling principles, where, as Jenkins notes, "A transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole."[210] For *LETHE*, physical and digital components would each contribute unique elements to the overall experience, creating a richer and more accessible performance ecosystem.

Remote Participation and Distributed Performance

Digital extensions could also facilitate remote participation, enabling performers who are unable to attend physical gatherings to engage with the narrative through virtual means. This distributed approach connects to what Papagiannouli terms "cyberformance," where "performance unfolds across networked environments, creating connections between geographically dispersed participants."[211]

Such remote participation would be particularly meaningful in the context of *LETHE*'s themes, which involve crossing boundaries between realms, creating performances that not only traverse mythological boundaries but also geographical and technological ones. This connection between thematic content and formal structure exemplifies the metamodernist approach discussed in section 1.3, creating meaningful resonances between narrative and medium.

3.2.11 Conclusion: *LETHE* as Extended Performance Across Realms

In conclusion, the integration of the goat jury is crucial because it teaches participants through observation and then allows them to consider a goat's subjectivity. It could also be interpreted as one manifestation of a metamodernistic approach, as this artistic decision serves as a détournement of neoromanticism, wherein the juxtaposition of humanity and nature underscores a thematic discourse that positions humans as an integral component of the natural world, rather than as entities that are exceptional or distinct

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[210] Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 95–96.

[211] Christina Papagiannouli, *Political Cyberformance: The Etheatre Project* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 23.

from it. This approach not only challenges traditional perspectives but also reinstates a dialogue where man is seen in continuity with, rather than in opposition to, the natural environment. Additionally, it is these qualities inherent in goats and the ubiquitousness and importance of goats on the island that form the concept behind the central scene in *LETHE*, where, in the narrative, the participants are obliged to audition in front of a herd of goats to decide the fate of their souls.

The project successfully navigated Deleuzian concepts of order and entropy, particularly through its exploration of becoming-animal and deterritorialisation within the performance space. By encouraging participants to engage with the goats' subjectivity, the work enacts what Deleuze would recognise as a line of flight—a creative escape from stable identity that opens up new possibilities for experience and understanding. This resonates deeply with Prigogine's theories of dissipative structures, in which order emerges spontaneously from chaos under far-from-equilibrial conditions. The intentional destabilisation of human/animal boundaries created precisely such conditions, allowing for emergent behaviours and understandings that would not have been possible within more conventional performance frameworks.

The waters of the river Lethe—traditionally representing oblivion and forgetting in Greek mythology—became a powerful metaphor and performative device throughout the project. As participants symbolically crossed these waters, personal memories were both surrendered and transformed, challenging the Western privileging of continuous memory as the foundation of identity. This exploration of memory's malleability became particularly potent as fractious personal incidents arose among participants and organisers during the creation process. Rather than treating these tensions as obstacles, the project incorporated them as raw material that further illuminated the philosophical underpinnings of the work. These moments of friction became embodiments of the metamodernist oscillation between sincerity and irony, between structure and spontaneity, mirroring the piece's larger thematic concerns.

LETHE represents a multifaceted approach to Extended Music Theatre that spans physical and conceptual boundaries, between myth and contemporary practice,

between human and animal performance, between analogue and digital media. Its foundations in LARP methodology create natural connections to digital gaming practices, suggesting pathways for hybrid development that would maintain the embodied knowledge central to the work while extending its reach and accessibility through digital means.

This potential for extension across media boundaries reflects the thematic concerns of the work itself; crossing the river Lethe represents a transition between states of being, just as moving between physical and digital performance represents a transition between modes of embodiment. In this way, the form and content of *LETHE* align in a metamodernist oscillation between physical and digital, between mythological past and technological present, creating an extended music theatre experience that resonates with contemporary modes of being while honouring ancient traditions of storytelling and performance.[212]

However, this project not only contained beasts, it was also a beast to organise and conceive. Therefore, ambitions to realise the digital gamification as EMT of this piece had to be shelved until after the deadline for this practice-based Phd. Nevertheless, the theoretical groundwork established through this exploration of order/entropy, memory/ forgetting, and human/animal subjectivity provides a rich foundation for future iterations that may yet realise the full potential of *LETHE's* transmedia aspirations.

3.3 *SINGLR the APPERA*: An Exploration of Participatory Music Theatre in the Algorithmic Age

Locations: Online, NCEM, York. Streetlife, York. The Cockpit Theatre, London.

Concept/Composition/Direction: Loré Lixenberg.

Team: Tech team—Stuart Mellor, Leeds University; Sian Morell, Ben Eyes, York University. Producers—Lydia Cottrell, SLAP, York; Bill Banks Jones—Tête à Tête Opera Festival, London.

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[212] Timotheus Vermuelen and Robin Van den Akker, "Notes on Metamodernism," *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 2, no. 1 (2010): DOI:10.3402/jac.v210.5677.

Participants: The Pioneer *SINGLR*s were a combination of professional and non-professional singers.

> Patricia Auchtelonie
>
> George Chambers
>
> Elizabeth Dobson
>
> Utkucan Eken
>
> Elif Nur Karlidag
>
> Elise Lorraine
>
> Inggrid Patricia
>
> Richard Thomas
>
> Bilge Yılmaz

ZOOM *SINGLR*s

> Barbara Alden
>
> Colin Johnson
>
> Finlay McDermid
>
> James Redelinghuys
>
> Sarah Sarhandhi

MAITRESSE *SINGLR*

> Loré Lixenberg

3.3.1 Contextualising *SINGLR* Within Extended EMT

Introduction: Algorithmic Mediation and Personalised Media Consumption

SINGLR the APPERA, developed with Stuart Meller and Tom Collins' York University based coding collective, is an innovative six-week online dating experience where participants upload voice recordings instead of photos as profiles, culminating in the *SINGLR* Salon performance where selected matches meet their dates in person for the first time to continue their conversations.

Over the last decade, media consumption has undergone a profound transformation, primarily driven by the algorithmically personalised nature of online platforms. Social media algorithms meticulously curate the news we receive, while individualised streaming preferences have gradually altered the way we recieve information, and in some cases replace collective experiences such as live performances. This bespoke digital mediation infiltrates every aspect of daily life, influencing decisions in voting, shopping, and dating, epitomised by platforms like Tinder, Bumble, and Grindr.[213] These algorithms function as omnipresent influencers, subtly guiding our consumption patterns and decision-making processes, including romantic pursuits.[214] While the pervasive influence of these algorithms presents epistemological and ontological challenges, it also offers unprecedented opportunities for innovation within the realm of EMT. This potential is critically examined through the app *SINGLR.*

This algorithmic mediation represents perhaps the most profound extension of human experience in contemporary society, creating what philosopher Luciano Floridi[215] terms the "infosphere"—an environment where the boundaries between online and offline experience have become increasingly permeable. Within this context, *SINGLR* functions not merely as an art project about algorithmic mediation but as an intervention within algorithmic mediation itself, extending EMT into the very digital infrastructure that shapes contemporary social connections.

This approach directly addresses the research question posed in section 1.2 regarding how everyday emerging digital technologies can be applied to design and develop novel experiences in EMT. By appropriating the dating app format—a ubiquitous digital struc-

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[213] Tinder (2012), Bumble (2014), and Grindr (2009) represent three prominent mobile dating applications. Tinder pioneered the now-ubiquitous "swipe" mechanic, allowing users to indicate interest in profiles based on proximity. Bumble, founded by former Tinder co-founder Whitney Wolfe Herd, distinguished itself by requiring women to initiate conversations in heterosexual matches. Grindr, pre-dating both, serves primarily LGBTQ+ communities with a grid-based interface showing precise distances between users. All three operate on freemium models where basic functionality is free while premium features require subscription. Together, these platforms have significantly reshaped contemporary dating practices, relationship formation, and digital intimacy.

[214] Christian Rudder, *Dataclysm,* (London: Harper Collins, 2014), 177.

[215] Floridi, Luciano, *The Fourth Revolution: How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality*. (Oxford University Press UK, 2014).

ture that has fundamentally altered how human relationships form—*SINGLR* extends EMT beyond conventional performance contexts into the intimate digital spaces where contemporary relationships are increasingly negotiated.

The project's focus on vocal exchange rather than visual presentation aligns with the research question about multiple vocalities and modes of communication, providing a framework for exploring how the human voice functions when separated from physical presence. In this sense, *SINGLR* extends EMT's traditional concern with vocality beyond the concert hall or theatre into the private spaces of users' everyday lives, creating intimate performances that occur wherever and whenever users engage with the application.

3.3.2 Conceptual Framework and Technical Implementation

The *SINGLR* Solution: An Overview

SINGLR is a novel fusion of music theatre and contemporary participatory online dating, conceptualised as an "App-era." This project unfolds through three distinct stages:

1. **Initiation**: Participants download the *SINGLR* app, which parallels Tinder or Grindr in its operational framework but differentiates itself by exclusively utilising voice recordings, more specifically experimental "extended vocal technique" voice recordings for user profiles, eschewing images and text.

2. **Interaction**: Users can update their vocalisations as frequently as they like and engage in vocal exchanges, while direct interaction remains prohibited. These vocal contributions are systematically aggregated and synthesised into a complex sonic tapestry that forms the auditory backdrop for participants' inaugural face-to-face encounter at The *SINGLR* Salon.

3. **Introduction**: Participants convene for the first time in a public setting, at a nomadic cocktail bar called *The SINGLR* Salon, where they perpetuate their communication through vocalisations, now enhanced by live electronic tracks and sound design composed from their cumulative vocal data.

A friendly bot character within the app delivers vocal tutorials and guidance, accessible via an integrated YouTube channel, thereby augmenting the user experience.

This three-stage structure creates a distinctive extension of EMT across digital and physical realms, connecting to the concept of "extended" EMT introduced in Chapter 1. The app functions not merely as a tool for organising performance but as a performance space itself, creating a framework for vocal exploration and exchange that occurs primarily in virtual space before culminating in physical encounter. This approach extends EMT beyond the temporal and spatial constraints of conventional performance, creating a durational experience that unfolds over weeks rather than hours and occupies both digital and physical territories.

The bot character offering vocal tutorials creates a pedagogical element that extends EMT into educational territory, democratising access to extended vocal techniques that might otherwise remain the preserve of trained performers. This educational dimension aligns with the participatory methodology outlined in Section 1.4.2, positioning non-specialists as essential co-creators rather than passive consumers. By guiding users through vocal exploration, the bot extends EMT's traditional concern with specialised vocal production into everyday vocal practice.

App Design and Functional Objectives

SINGLR is meticulously designed as a profile-based, media-driven communication app that exclusively focuses on voice interactions. Users record and upload vocalisations as profile "pictures," explore others' contributions, and engage with appealing voices. The app's operational structure is delineated into six-week cycles, culminating in *SINGLR* Salons—live events where vocal contributions form the auditory backdrop. This structural framework gives rise to a meta-opera and a communal experience, fostering genuine connections through the inherent power of the human voice.

The concept of a "meta-opera" emerging from the app's structure aligns with the metamodernist framework discussed in Section 1.3, creating a performance that oscil-

lates between earnest exploration of human connection and playful subversion of dating app conventions. By framing the entire six-week cycle as an operatic structure, *SINGLR* extends EMT beyond discrete performances into durational experience, treating everyday interactions as components of an ongoing composition.

The app's design deliberately subverts conventional dating app priorities, replacing visual assessment with vocal encounter. This inversion is connected to the political engagement and social critique discussed in Section 2.1.3, challenging the ocularcentrism of contemporary digital culture by prioritising auditory exchange over visual consumption. By focusing exclusively on voice, *SINGLR* extends EMT's concern with embodied presence into questions of digital embodiment, exploring how vocal identity functions when separated from visual identity.

3.3.3 Experiential Design and Theoretical Framework

User Engagement and Experience

Frequency of Usage: Users engage with the app once daily, cultivating a ritualistic and anticipatory rhythm. This deliberate pacing accentuates the collective, cathartic experience reminiscent of traditional performative practices.

Duration: Each cycle spans six weeks, mirroring conventional opera rehearsal periods. Throughout this duration, users participate in a bespoke singing course conducted by a bot character, exploring their vocal potential and fostering a sense of community.

Impact: By eschewing visual biases and prioritising vocal qualities, *SINGLR* aims to uncover how the sound of individuals meeting, with no spoken word at all, can create an EMT aesthetic, which is also encouraged by the formation of meaningful connections. Users receive three matches daily, promoting intentional engagement and mitigating choice overload. The app supports vocal polyamory, allowing for multiple conversations and enhancing the user experience.

The daily engagement rhythm is connected to the ritualistic aspects of performance, as discussed by Richard Schechner and mentioned in Section 2.1.5 about site-specific per-

formance. By establishing a regular pattern of interaction, *SINGLR* extends EMT's traditional event-based structure into habitual practice, embedding artistic engagement into users' daily routines. This approach aligns with the fusion of art and life discussed in Section 2.1.2, treating everyday digital interaction as a site for ongoing performance rather than an exceptional event.

The six-week duration creates a temporal framework that extends beyond conventional performance timeframes, connecting to durational performance practices pioneered by artists like Marina Abramović and Tehching Hsieh. By stretching the performance across weeks rather than hours, *SINGLR* extends EMT's temporal dimensions, creating space for development, evolution, and emergence that would not be possible within conventional theatre timeframes.[216]

The concept of 'vocal polyamory' introduces a relational dimension that extends EMT into questions of intimacy, connection, and ethics. By facilitating multiple simultaneous vocal relationships, *SINGLR* extends EMT beyond dyadic performance structures into network-based composition, treating the web of connections between users as a compositional element rather than merely as an audience structure.

Transformative Potential: Reimagining Music Theatre

SINGLR redefines music theatre by intricately integrating elements of social media, dating, and vocal exploration into a singular EMT structure. The app's design promotes daily engagement, fosters emotional connections through vocal interactions, and facilitates genuine relational dynamics, aiming to achieve and capture a complex and "Baroque"- sounding aesthetic. In addition, *SINGLR the APPERA* frames the real-time narratives generated from the app.

The reference to a "Baroque" aesthetic connects to historical operatic traditions while reimagining them through contemporary technological means. This temporal oscillation

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[216] Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's "Einstein on the Beach" (1976) pioneered durational music-theatre. Later artists explored this form further, including François Sarhan's "Ephémère Enchainé" (2015) and Forced Entertainment's twelve-hour "12 am: Awake and Looking Down" (1993). See Chapter 2.

between historical forms and contemporary contexts exemplifies the metamodernist framework discussed in section 1.3, creating productive tension between tradition and innovation. By aspiring to Baroque complexity through algorithmic means, *SINGLR* extends EMT's relationship to musical history, treating historical aesthetics not as fixed forms to be preserved but as living traditions to be reinterpreted through new media.

The framing of real time narratives positions the app as a generator of stories rather than merely a platform for connection. This narrative dimension extends EMT beyond abstract sound into dramatic territory, treating users' interactions as elements of an emergent story rather than isolated exchanges. This approach aligns with the research question in Section 1.2, which explores the interdisciplinary integration of narrative, music, and social practice into a hybrid form that transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries.

3.3.4 Technical Specifications and Algorithmic Dramaturgy

Overview of Technical and Functional Specifications

User Profiles: Public profiles are articulated through concise vocal clips. Users browse profiles sequentially and receive notifications when they are matched with someone who has also liked their profile in return.

Messaging: Vocal exchanges are central, with a daily limit imposed to encourage thoughtful communication. Users can report abuse, with cases subjected to manual assessment.

Security: Minimal user data is stored locally and secured with SSL certificates.

Audio Quality: Vocalisations are maintained at standard bitrates, with pitch detection algorithms enhancing the auditory experience.

User Interface: The app is designed to be intuitive, engaging, and enjoyable, balancing anticipation and user availability, aiming for a special moment for exploration and connection each day.

The technical specifications extend EMT into software development territory, treating code and user experience design as compositional elements rather than merely as technical support. The sequential browsing of profiles creates a curated experience that extends EMT's traditional concern with pacing and dramaturgical structure into digital interaction design. By imposing daily limits on messaging, the app creates artificial scarcity that extends EMT's traditional use of constraint as a generative principle into algorithmic territory.

The pitch detection algorithms create a layer of computational listening that extends EMT's traditional concern with human perception into machine perception, creating a hybrid listening environment where both human users and algorithms attend to vocal qualities. This algorithmic dimension is connected to the research question in section 1.2, regarding how digital technologies can be applied to develop novel experiences in EMT, treating algorithms not merely as tools but as active participants in the performance ecosystem.

The user interface design extends EMT's concern with staging and presentation into digital space, treating screen layouts, interaction flows, and notification systems as compositional elements rather than merely as functional necessities. By deliberately balancing anticipation and availability, the interface design extends EMT's traditional concern with audience experience into user experience, treating digital interaction as a performance to be carefully choreographed rather than merely as a delivery mechanism.

Theoretical Framework: Spatial and Participatory Dimensions

As a hybrid project, *SINGLR* aims to navigate and reconceptualise the spaces of interaction and performance in both the online and analogue realms. Kwon's delineation of contemporary site-specificity as "infiltrating media spaces such as radio, newspapers and the internet"[217] resonates with the project's hybridity. Both *SINGLR*'s on and offline

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[217] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another,* 2002, 29.

meetings, the *SINGLR* private "chat" and the *SINGLR* Salons, wherein digital vocal contributions coalesce in physical spaces, create an ephemeral but hopefully profound sense of place and community, which in turn produces a unique set of sounds and relationships. Additionally, in Bishop's framework, participation extends beyond mere inclusion, fostering active co-creation and redefining the roles of both audience and performer. *SINGLR*'s alignment with participatory art practices amplifies its metamodernist aesthetic, which is arrived at through a communal and democratic EMT ethos.

Kwon's conception of site-specificity extending into media spaces directly connects to the site-responsive methodology outlined in Section 1.4.2, treating digital platforms as locations with their distinctive characteristics rather than neutral containers. By creating performance spaces within the dating app format, *SINGLR* extends EMT beyond physical venues into virtual territories, treating code, interface, and algorithm as architectural elements that shape performance experience just as physical architecture shapes live performance.

The creation of "ephemeral but profound sense of place and community" connects to the blurring of boundaries between participant and audience discussed in section 2.1.1, treating community formation itself as a performative achievement rather than a prerequisite for performance. By generating community through vocal exchange rather than assuming pre-existing connection, *SINGLR* extends EMT beyond representation of community into active community building, treating performance not merely as an expression of existing social relations but as a generator of new social possibilities.

Bishop's framework of participation as active co-creation aligns with the participatory methodologies outlined in Section 1.4.2, positioning users not merely as audience members but as essential collaborators whose contributions fundamentally shape the work. By treating users' vocal exchanges as raw material for composition, *SINGLR* extends EMT beyond professional production into collaborative creation, treating everyday vocal expression as legitimate artistic material rather than merely as amateur approximation.

3.3.5 Philosophical Implications and Cultural Context

Algorithmic Mediation as Extended Consciousness

SINGLR operates within a cultural context where algorithmic systems increasingly function as extensions of human consciousness, mediating perception, desire, and connection in ways that fundamentally alter social experience. The dating app format exemplifies this extension, creating algorithmic matchmaking systems that shape romantic possibilities according to computational logic rather than chance encounter. By appropriating this format for artistic purposes, *SINGLR* creates a critical intervention that extends EMT into the terrain of algorithmic critique, treating algorithms not merely as subjects of performance but as contexts within which performance occurs.

This approach aligns with the philosophical concept of "extended mind" developed by Andy Clark and David Chalmers,[218] which suggests that cognitive processes extend beyond the brain to include technological tools and environmental supports. Through this lens, *SINGLR* can be understood as creating a framework for extended vocality, where users' vocal expressions become distributed across digital space, creating a collective soundscape that transcends individual embodiment. This extension of vocality aligns with the research question in Section 1.2, which explores multiple vocalities and modes of communication, examining how digital mediation influences vocal identity and expression.

Dating Apps as Dramaturgical Structures

Dating apps possess inherent dramatic structures, creating narratives of anticipation, revelation, connection, and rejection that parallel those found in theatrical narratives. By repurposing these structures for artistic purposes, *SINGLR* reveals the performative dimensions of everyday digital interaction, treating swipes, matches, and messages as dramaturgical elements rather than merely as functional means of communication. This approach extends EMT beyond explicit performance into the implicit performances that

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[218] Andy Clark and David J. Chalmers, "The Extended Mind," Analysis 58, no. 1 (1998): 7–19.

structure contemporary social life, treating dating itself as a form of improvised theatre mediated by algorithmic systems.

This dramaturgical dimension is connected to the fusion of art and life discussed in Section 2.1.2, where everyday digital interactions are treated as sites for artistic intervention, rather than as separate from artistic practice. By revealing the theatrical dimensions of dating app interactions, *SINGLR* extends EMT's traditional concern with explicit performance into the realm of everyday performance, treating digital social rituals as legitimate theatrical material rather than merely as topics for representation.

Voice as Resistance to Visual Consumption

In a digital culture dominated by visual self-presentation—from carefully curated Instagram feeds to Tinder profile photos—*SINGLR*'s exclusive focus on voice represents a form of resistance to the visual consumption of identity. By eliminating visual elements, the app creates a space where identity and attraction emerge through vocal qualities rather than visual appearance, challenging the "ocularcentrism of contemporary digital culture."[219] This approach extends EMT's traditional concern with embodied presence into questions of digital embodiment, exploring how identity and connection function when freed from visual representation.

This resistance to visual consumption is connected to the political engagement and social critique discussed in Section 2.1.3, creating a performance format that challenges dominant modes of digital self-presentation. By privileging voice over image, *SINGLR* extends EMT's critical potential into digital activism, treating artistic choices about mediation and representation as political interventions rather than merely as aesthetic preferences.

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[219] Lore Lixenberg, *Canto: Brutto Canto,* (London, 2022 TVP Publications), 45.

3.3.6 The "Extended" in *SINGLR* as EMT

SINGLR exemplifies the concept of "extended" EMT introduced in Chapter 1, creating a performance framework that extends beyond traditional boundaries in multiple dimensions:

Spatial Extension: The project spans both digital and physical spaces, creating a performance that begins in the private settings where users interact with the app and culminates in the public space of the *SINGLR* Salon. This spatial extension aligns with the research question in Section 1.2, which explores how unconventional locations can expand the expressive possibilities of EMT, treating digital platforms as legitimate performance venues rather than merely as promotional tools.

Temporal Extension: By unfolding over a six-week cycle rather than a conventional performance timeframe, *SINGLR* extends EMT's temporal dimensions, creating space for development, evolution, and emergence that would not be possible in traditional theatrical formats. This temporal extension connects to durational performance practices, treating time itself as a compositional element rather than merely as a container for performance.

Participatory Extension: The project extends participation beyond conventional audience roles, positioning users as essential co-creators whose vocal contributions fundamentally shape the work. This participatory extension aligns with the methodological framework outlined in Section 1.4.2, treating participation not merely as an audience development strategy but as a fundamental compositional approach.

Vocal Extension: Through its focus on extended vocal techniques, *SINGLR* extends EMT's traditional concern with specialised vocal production into everyday vocal practice, democratising access to experimental vocal approaches. This vocal extension aligns with the research question in section 1.2, which addresses multiple vocalities and communication modes, thereby establishing a framework for examining how diverse vocal approaches can operate in digital contexts.

Technological Extension: By engaging with dating app formats and algorithmic matchmaking, *SINGLR* extends EMT into contemporary technological contexts, treating code, interface, and algorithm as compositional elements rather than merely as technical support. This technological extension addresses the research question of how everyday digital technologies can be leveraged to create novel experiences in EMT.

Through these multiple dimensions of extension, *SINGLR* creates a performance ecosystem that reflects the increasingly hybrid nature of contemporary experience, where boundaries between online and offline, between art and life, between professional and amateur have become increasingly permeable. By embracing this hybridity rather than resisting it, the project offers a model for how EMT can engage with contemporary technological realities while maintaining its experimental edge and critical potential.

3.3.7 Digital Vocality: Code as Extended Performance Space in *SINGLR*

The code that powers *SINGLR the APPERA* is not simply technical machinery—it is a performance script in its own right, a hidden theatrical score that shapes the experiences of everyone who uses the application. When we look beneath the surface, we discover that the code itself embodies the same principles as experimental music theatre, revealing unexpected connections between digital technology and human expression.

The Cast of Characters: Software Components Working Together

Just as a theatrical production brings together actors with different roles and skills, *SINGLR* assembles a diverse cast of software components:

```json
"dependencies": {
  "@babel/polyfill": "*7.12.1",
  "@emotion/react": "*11.4.0",
  "acorn": "48.0.4",
```

```json
  "audio-encoder": "*1.0.2",

  "axios": "40.21.1",

  "bcrypt": "*%5.0.1",

  "body-parser": "*1.19.0",

  // ...

}
```

This seemingly technical list reveals *SINGLR*'s priorities and concerns. The presence of sound-processing tools, such as audio encoders, alongside security tools like bcrypt, demonstrates how the application balances creative expression with personal privacy, creating both safe spaces for vocal exploration and protected boundaries between users.

Particularly revealing is the combination of React (for creating visual interfaces) with Wavesurfer (for visualising sound waves):

json

```json
"react": "17.0.1",

"react-dom": "*17.0.1",

"react-redux": "7.2.2",

"wavesurfer": "41.3.4",
```

This pairing creates a bridge between what we hear and what we see—a digital counterpart to the way experimental music theatre combines sound and visuals to create multisensory experiences.

Unfolding Voices: How Digital Compression Mirrors Vocal Expression

The application's attention to various compression formats reveals a surprising parallel to the way *SINGLR* works with human voices:

json

"decompress": "4.2.1",

"decompress-response": "3.3.0",

"decompress-tar": "4.1.1",

"decompress-tarbz2": "4.1.1",

"decompress-targz": "4.1.1",

"decompress-unzip": "4.0.1",

Just as these tools expand compressed files into their full form, *SINGLR* encourages users to expand their vocal expression beyond everyday speech into extended techniques. The array of different compression formats mirrors the diversity of human vocal expression—each format offers a distinct way of containing and revealing information, just as various vocal techniques provide different means of expressing emotion and identity.

The code's attentiveness to multiple formats reflects *SINGLR*'s commitment to diverse forms of expression, refusing to prioritise any single way of compressing or expressing information. This technical diversity quietly reinforces the application's celebration of vocal diversity among its users.

Marking Time: Digital Rhythms and Human Connections

The application's handling of time reveals how digital and human rhythms intertwine:

json

"date-fns": "2.22.1",

"resolved": "https://registry.npmjs.org/date-fns/-/date-fns-2.22.1.tgz",

"integrity": "sha512-yUFPQjrxEmlsMqlHhAhmxkuH769baF21Kk+nZwZGyrMoyLA+Lu-gaQtC0+Tqf9CBUUULWWUJt6Q5ySl3LJDDCGg==",

"funding": {

```json
    "type": "opencollective",

    "url": "https://opencollective.com/date-fns"

},
```

This time-management component controls when matches are made, when messages can be sent, and how long users wait between interactions, creating digital rhythms that shape human connections. Even the way this component is funded reflects community values, utilising an "open collective" model rather than corporate sponsorship, which mirrors how community theatre often relies on collective support rather than commercial backing.

The precision of the version number (2.22.1) suggests careful attention to how time is measured and managed, while the collective funding model suggests a more fluid, community-based approach to how the project is sustained—a balance between precision and flexibility that echoes the way experimental music theatre combines careful composition with improvisation.

Rehearsal and Reflection: How Code Improves Itself

Hidden within the code is a reflective practice similar to theatrical rehearsals:

```json
json

"debug": "4.3.1",

"resolved":  "https://registry.npmjs.org/debug/-/debug-4.3.1.tgz",

"integrity": "sha512-doEwdvm4PCeK4K3RQN22ZC2BYUBaxwLARCqZmMjtF8a51J2R-bO0xpVIoFRnNCODwajpwnAoao4peIN8I3RJdv3gRQ==",

"dependencies": {

  "ms": "2.1.2"

},
```

This debugging system creates a space for developers to observe, reflect on, and refine the application's behaviour, much like the way directors and performers use rehearsals to refine a production before presenting it to an audience. The ability to turn features on or off (through optional dependencies) allows the development team to experiment with different approaches, testing various possibilities before deciding which ones best serve the users.

Transforming Language: Breaking Down Communication Barriers

Several components focus on transforming language between different formats:

json

```
"decamelize": "1.2.0",

"resolved": "https://registry.npmjs.org/decamelize/-/decamelize-1.2.0.tgz",

"integrity": "sha1-9lNNFRSCabIDUue+4m9QH50ZEpA=",

"engines": {

  "node": ">=0.10.0"

}
```

This utility transforms text from one format to another, making technical language more accessible—a digital parallel to the way *SINGLR* translates specialised vocal techniques into accessible practices for everyday users. The module's broad compatibility with different software versions reflects *SINGLR*'s commitment to accessibility across various contexts and communities.

Creating Digital Spaces: The Architecture of Connection

Components that handle web addresses reveal how the application creates navigable spaces:

json

```
"decode-uri-component": "0.2.0",
```

"resolved": "https://registry.npmjs.org/decode-uri-component/-/decode-uri-component-0.2.0.tgz",

"integrity": "sha1-6zkTMzRYd1y4TNGh+uBiEGu4dUU=",

This module transforms encoded web addresses into navigable links, creating digital pathways between different spaces within the application. The way users move between profiles, messages, and gathering spaces mirrors the way audiences might move between different areas in a site-specific theatre production. The simplicity of this module (version 0.2.0) suggests a focus on straightforward navigation rather than complexity, making the digital space as accessible as possible.

Understanding Relationships: The Technology of Connection

The application's approach to comparing different elements reveals its understanding of human connection:

json

"deep-equal": "1.1.1",

"resolved":   "https://registry.npmjs.org/deep-equal/-/deep-equal-1.1.1.tgz",

"integrity": "sha512-yd9c5AdiqVcR+JjcwUQb9DkhJc8ngNrOMahEBGvDiJw8puWab2y-Zlh+nkasOnZP+EGTAP6rRp2JzJhJZZvNF8g==",

"dependencies": {

  "is-arguments": "^1.0.4",

  "is-date-object": "*1.0.1",

  "is-regex": "^1.0.4",

  "object-is": "^1.0.1",

  "object-keys": "*1.1.1",

  "regexp.prototype.flags": "%1.2.0"

},

This component distinguishes between surface similarities and deeper connections, examining whether two things are merely similar or genuinely connected at a fundamental level. This technological discernment aligns with *SINGLR*'s emphasis on genuine vocal connection rather than superficial matching. The complexity of this system reflects the nuance required to understand genuine connection, acknowledging that meaningful relationships involve multiple dimensions of compatibility.

Setting Boundaries: Creating Safe Spaces for Expression

Components that define properties establish the rules and boundaries within the application:

json

"define-properties": "1.1.3",

"resolved":   "https://registry.npmjs.org/define-properties/-/define-properties-1.1.3.tgz",

"integrity": "sha512-3MqfYKj2lLzdMSf8ZIZE/V+Zuy+BgD6f164e8K2w7dgnpKArBDer-GYpMA4GHs/QMmKr+bLYolLIUE/1eJ4GUB8tQ==",

"dependencies": {

  "object-keys": "*1.0.12"

},

These definition components establish which features of the application can be changed by users and which remain fixed, creating a balance between structure and freedom. This technological boundary-setting mirrors the way *SINGLR* establishes certain parameters for vocal interaction, such as time limits or privacy settings, while leaving creative expression open to user choice. The balance creates a safe space for experimentation, with sufficient structure to provide security while allowing genuine expression.

Diversity in Code, Diversity in Expression

Perhaps most revealing is how the technological diversity within *SINGLR*'s code—from sound processing to security, from visual interfaces to network communication—creates

a system that mirrors the diversity of human expression it seeks to facilitate. By bringing together technologies from different domains and traditions, the code creates a digital environment that welcomes diverse forms of human expression.

This technological heterogeneity is not merely practical but philosophical, recognising that complex human interactions require equally complex systems to support them. The code rejects technological uniformity just as *SINGLR* rejects artistic uniformity, creating space for multiple voices, formats, and approaches to coexist and interact.

Beyond the Hidden: When Code Becomes Visible Performance

Seen through this lens, *SINGLR*'s code reveals itself to be much more than just technical infrastructure; it is an extension of the performance itself, embodying the same values and principles as the human interactions it facilitates. The code doesn't simply support the artistic concept; it manifests that concept through its very structure, creating continuity between human expression and digital processes.

This integration creates a multilayered performance that spans both human and machine domains, combining predetermined structure with emerging behaviour, fixed rules with open creativity. The technology becomes not merely a tool for artistic expression but a form of expression itself—a digital counterpart to the human voices it celebrates and connects.

Unlike most applications, where code remains hidden from users, *SINGLR* deliberately makes its technical foundations visible. Throughout the pandemic performances, massive roll-up banners displaying the code architecture served as physical barriers between sociallydistanced participants, transforming technical documentation into protective sneeze screens that simultaneously separated and connected performers. During the *SINGLR* Salon, audiences witnessed code in action through pink-hued projections that elevated typically invisible processes into a visual art form.

This transparency represents a radical departure from our everyday relationship with code, which typically operates as an unseen force in our digital lives, sometimes even

with potentially malevolent intent,[220] as critics have suggested about data-gathering companies like Palantir.[221] By making its code visible and even beautiful,[222] *SINGLR* rejects the notion that technical systems must remain hidden. Instead, it celebrates the aesthetic qualities of code and invites audiences to appreciate the architecture that shapes their experience.

This approach closes the gap between human and machine domains, revealing the continuity between technical infrastructure and artistic expression. In *SINGLR*, code is not merely a tool that enables performance, it becomes performance itself and part of the aesthetic of the performance, a visible actor in the theatrical experience that embodies the same values it helps facilitate.

3.3.8 Conclusion: Vocal Algorithms—*SINGLR* as a Digital Reimagining of EMT Practice

SINGLR the APPERA represents a significant advancement in the exploration of Extended Music Theatre (EMT), challenging conventional boundaries between performance, technology, and everyday life. By appropriating the familiar structure of dating applications and subverting their visual primacy, *SINGLR* creates a novel framework for vocal exploration that extends EMT into the intimate digital spaces that increasingly mediate contemporary relationships.

The project's innovative approach to algorithmically mediated performance achieves several critical developments in EMT practice. By spanning both digital and physical

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[220] Natasha Singer, 2020. "The Hot New Covid Tech Is Wearable and Constantly Tracks You." The New York Times, November 15, 2020. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/technology/virus-wearable-tracker-privacy.html.

[221] Spencer Woodman, 2017. "*Palantir Provides the Engine for Donald Trump's Deportation Machine.*" The Intercept, March 2, 2017. https://theintercept.com/2017/03/02/palantir-provides-the-engine-for-donald-trumps-deportation-machine/. Palantir Technologies is a data analytics company founded in 2003 that specialises in processing and analysing massive datasets. Named after the all-seeing stones from Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings," the company is known for its work with government agencies, intelligence services, and corporations. Palantir has become controversial for its involvement in surveillance and security contracts, particularly with law enforcement and immigration authorities, where its powerful software enables extensive data collection and analysis largely hidden from public view.

[222] Lore Lixenberg, SINGLR: Code is Beautiful—A Complete EMT Analysis of the SINGLR Code (TVP Publications, 2023).

realms, *SINGLR* creates a durational performance experience that transcends the temporal and spatial limitations of conventional theatre. The six-week cycle establishes a rhythm of engagement that transforms everyday technological interactions into artistic practice, embedding performance into users' daily routines rather than segregating it as an exceptional event.

Despite the theoretical strength of *SINGLR*'s conceptual framework, the practical implementation revealed significant challenges in public engagement. Our efforts to recruit participants on Coney Street, a busy shopping street in York, demonstrated a surprising reluctance among the general public to engage with experimental vocal practices, even when framed within the familiar structure of a dating app. Despite the ubiquity of dating applications and online social platforms in contemporary life, the townsfolk of York approached the project with marked suspicion. Even enhanced recruitment strategies— from offering pink cupcakes and mocktails to live demonstrations of dancing and singing by performers Inggrid Patricia and Lydia Cottrell—failed to generate the anticipated level of interest.

This resistance illuminates a crucial tension between digital innovation and public reception. While dating applications have become normalised aspects of contemporary social life, the introduction of experimental vocal practices into this familiar format created a barrier that many potential participants were unwilling to cross. The reluctance to engage with the app suggests that technological familiarity alone does not guarantee engagement with artistic experimentation. Indeed, the subversion of familiar technological forms may heighten resistance rather than facilitating access. Once again, I found myself dealing with the question, What if the spectator does not want to be emancipated?

Perhaps most significantly, *SINGLR*'s exclusive focus on voice represents a deliberate resistance to the ocularcentrism of contemporary digital culture. In a mediascape dominated by visual self-presentation and consumption, the project's emphasis on vocal exchange creates space for connections that transcend appearance, challenging users to engage with one another through sound rather than sight. This inversion of sensory priorities not only creates novel aesthetic possibilities but constitutes a form of political in-

153

tervention, revealing how intensely visual bias has become embedded in digital social infrastructure.

The participatory nature of *SINGLR* fundamentally reconfigures the relationship between creator and audience, positioning users not merely as consumers of artistic content but as essential co-creators whose vocal contributions form the raw material from which the work emerges. This democratisation of the creative process connects to broader shifts in contemporary performance practice, where the boundaries between professional and amateur, as well as between artist and audience, have become increasingly permeable. By treating everyday vocal expressions as legitimate artistic material, *SINGLR* extends EMT's traditional concern with specialised vocal production into more inclusive territory.

The technological infrastructure of *SINGLR*—its code, interface design, and algorithmic systems—functions not merely as technical support but as an extension of the performance itself, embodying through its very structure the same principles and values that animate the human interactions it facilitates. By revealing the performative dimensions of digital infrastructure, the project extends EMT's concern with materiality beyond physical presence into code as a form of compositional material.

As a metamodernist intervention, *SINGLR* oscillates productively between earnest exploration of human connection and playful subversion of dating app conventions, between technological mediation and embodied encounter, between historical vocal traditions and contemporary digital contexts. This oscillation creates fertile territory for exploring how technology both constrains and enables human expression, revealing both the limitations of algorithmic mediation and its potential for creating new forms of connection.

The challenges encountered in public engagement with *SINGLR* also offer valuable insights for future EMT practice. The gap between theoretical innovation and public reception suggests the need for more gradual bridges between familiar practices and experimental approaches. Rather than presenting radical alternatives as complete systems,

future iterations might benefit from more incremental departures from established norms, creating stepping stones that guide participants toward more experimental terrain. The difficulty in recruiting participants on the streets of York demonstrates that site-specific engagement strategies must account not only for physical location but for the cultural and social specificities of different communities.

Looking forward, *SINGLR* suggests promising directions for future EMT practice in increasingly digitised contexts. By engaging directly with the algorithmic systems that increasingly structure contemporary social life, the project demonstrates how EMT can maintain its experimental edge and critical potential while acknowledging technological realities. Rather than rejecting digital mediation in favour of an idealised notion of unmediated presence, *SINGLR* embraces hybridity, treating digital platforms not as threats to authentic performance but as territories for artistic intervention and innovation.

In the broader context of this research, *SINGLR* demonstrates how EMT can be meaningfully extended through everyday digital technologies, creating performance experiences that span multiple locations, timeframes, and modes of engagement. Its focus on vocal exchange in the absence of visual cues directly addresses questions about multiple vocalities and modes of communication raised in the research questions, while its appropriation of dating app structures exemplifies how unconventional contexts can expand EMT's expressive possibilities. By creating a framework where performance emerges through participation rather than being delivered to passive audiences, *SINGLR* embodies the participatory methodology that has guided this research, treating interdisciplinary collaboration not merely as a production strategy but as a fundamental aesthetic principle.

In sum, *SINGLR the APPERA* demonstrates the continued vitality and relevance of EMT in contemporary contexts, showing how traditional concerns with vocality, embodiment, and presence can be productively reimagined through digital means without sacrificing their critical edge or experimental spirit. By extending EMT across multiple dimensions—spatial, temporal, participatory, vocal, and technological—the project presents a model for how performance can engage meaningfully with the complex realities of life in

the algorithmically mediated present, even as it reveals the persistent challenges in bridging experimental artistic practice with everyday public engagement.

3.4. Critical Analysis of *VOXXCOIN* as Extended Music Theatre

Installation Location: ACUD Culture Centre, Berlin. BGNMBGNMBGNM *Process and Protocol* Exhibition of art utilising web3.[223] April 1, 2022 to April 3, 2022

Concept/Composition/Direction: Loré Lixenberg

Tech Team: Evan Snoswell, Tom Collins**.**

Participants: Exhibition visitors.

3.4.1 Introduction: Digital Space, Extended Vocal Technique and Interaction

Blockchain has been around since 1991 and has seen early implementations in art projects, such as *Terravision*[224]. Its explosion in the art and music industry, particularly through NFTS and so-called "smart contracts," has transformed concepts of authenticity and ownership. For instance, Imogen Heap's "MyCelia" program aimed to create a fair payment system for creatives using NFTS, bypassing traditional platforms like Spotify and YouTube. Heap stated, "We are making music, and we are not getting paid fairly for it. MyCelia is about trying to fix that."[225] *VOXXCOIN* aims to capitalise on this concept of ownership by focusing on the synthesis of creation and ownership—Rhea Myers' pioneering innovations, where cutting-edge technology and artistic creativity provide a guideline for *VOXXCOIN*. Myers' work often explores the intersection of blockchain technology and visual art, challenging traditional notions of authorship and ownership, and instead brilliantly transforming these business and contractual concepts into both artwork and commentary. Her projects, such as *Is Art*, as articulated earlier, utilise blockchain to question the nature of art itself, which is what *VOXXCOIN* aims to do, but

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[223] https://protocol.bgnm.de/

[224] Terravision Project Berlin. 1994. https://artcom.de/en/?project=terravision.

[225] Imogen Heap, *MyCelia. Mycelia For Music*, https://myceliaformusic.org/.

with sound and the voice. Holly Herndon, although her work is more concerned with agency over voice ownership, in an age of artificial intelligence, emphasises the transformative potential of blockchain in art. She explains, "Blockchain technology allows artists to create works that challenge traditional notions of authorship and distribution, opening up new avenues for creative expression and interaction."[226] This idea resonates with Brandon LaBelle's exploration of sound and space, where he notes, "The resonance of space and the voice shapes our interaction with technology, creating a dialogue between the physical and digital worlds."[227]

VOXXCOIN, The Singing Blockchain, aims to be an example of this fusion. This novel web application intertwines the intricate mechanics of blockchain technology with the elemental human voice to create an interactive art exhibit, aptly described as a "Blockchain Opera" or "Blockchain EMT". The app has two main components: the "view" page, which offers a dynamic graphical simulation of the blockchain consensus mechanism, and the "submit" page, which invites users to participate through vocal submissions. The auditory dimension of the simulation lends a narrative quality, transforming users into "actors" within this digital tableau.

This analysis examines *VOXXCOIN* as a significant contribution to the field of Extended Music Theatre (EMT). As an innovative project that translates blockchain technology into vocal performance, *VOXXCOIN* represents a sophisticated exploration of how economic systems can be embodied through artistic practice. By situating this work within contemporary theoretical frameworks and examining its technical implementation, this analysis aims to demonstrate how *VOXXCOIN* advances new paradigms for vocal expression, digital performance, and socio-economic critique.

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[226] Emily McDermott and Holly Herndon, January 7, 2020, *Holly Herndon on her AI Baby, Reanimating Tupac, and Extracting voices.*

[227] Brandon LaBelle, *Sonic Agency: Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance* (London: Goldsmiths Press, 2018).

3.4.2 Conceptual Framework and Structure

VOXXCOIN is structured as a two-act extended music theatre piece that explores blockchain technology and cryptocurrency through the prism of vocal performance. The project takes the form of a web application with two interconnected pages—a "view" page presenting a graphical simulation of the blockchain consensus algorithm, and a "submit" page where users can record their voices.

The work explores a new potential architecture for EMT by developing a technical architecture for a potential cryptocurrency that utilises the human voice, functioning as both an interactive art installation and a conceptual economic system. The project's dual-act structure creates a dialectical relationship between contrasting economic paradigms.

3.4.3 Act I: Potlatch

Act I draws its theoretical foundation from the potlatch ceremony, a sophisticated gift-exchange ritual practised by indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest, notably the Kwakiutl. Anthropologist Marcel Mauss characterised potlatch as "a system of total services"[228] wherein elaborate gift-giving—and occasionally the ceremonial destruction of property—engenders a complex web of social obligations and hierarchical status.

The potlatch serves as an apt metaphor for blockchain technology:

- Both systems operate through distributed exchange networks where the "gift" is data or value transferred between users

- Both generate chains of obligation and reciprocity

- Both establish intricate social hierarchies through participatory mechanisms

- Both function beyond the constraints of centralised authority structures

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[228] Marcel Mauss, *The Gift,* (London: Cohen & West 1950), 55.

Mauss's observation that "The gift not yet repaid debases the man who accepted it"[229] provides dramatic tension, mirroring the social encumbrances that participation in cryptocurrency ecosystems creates.

In the implementation, the genesis block functions as the central dramatic personage, with each new "Hash" serving as a unique, algorithmically generated identifier. Upon creating a new hash, the chain evaluates the latest data using a Boolean[230] process to determine its validity. Data verified as true joins the blockchain "chorus," while data deemed false is excluded, gaining outsider status, further emphasised by the principle that longer chains are more trustworthy.

The vocal ensemble embodies the distributed network, functioning in some ways similarly to the chorus in traditional opera (e.g., The "Welt-Parlament" (World Parliament) chorus in Stockhausen's *Mittwoch aus Licht*).[231] Each vocalist (or submitted vocal recording) represents a node in the blockchain network, collectively validating transactions through consensus mechanisms expressed through sophisticated musical devices.

3.4.4 Act II: Stake—Market Mechanisms

Act II pivots to explore neoliberal economics through a Friedman-esque capitalistic framework. Milton Friedman's assertion that "Only a crisis—actual or perceived—pro-

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[229] Ibid.

[230] Boolean: A system of algebraic logic developed by George Boole (1815–1864) in 1847 through his work "The Mathematical Analysis of Logic" and refined in his 1854 publication "An Investigation of the Laws of Thought." This system uses binary variables (true/false, 1/0) and logical operators (AND, OR, NOT) to perform mathematical operations, forming the foundation of digital computing by enabling complex calculations through simple binary states.

[231] Günter Peters, 2003. *"...How Creation Is Composed: Spirituality in the Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen."* Perspectives of New Music 37, no. 1: 223–41. Stockhausen, Karlheinz, and Robin Maconie. 1989. Stockhausen on Music. London: Marion Boyars. Within the opera's structure, the chorus serves as a transitional element between the human and cosmic realms, positioned literally above the audience to reinforce this hierarchical relationship. The chorus doesn't simply comment on action (as in traditional opera); they are the action—their debate about love constitutes the central dramatic event of this scene.

duces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around"[232] serves as the intellectual scaffold for this section.

This act scrutinises how blockchain technology, initially conceived as a decentralised alternative to traditional financial systems, has been appropriated by market forces and speculative impulses. Act II shifts to a marketplace where different vocal gestures are assigned varying values based on parameters like popularity, height, loudness, and length. In this phase, vocal gestures are mined and encoded as *VOXXCOIN* NFTs, creating vocal artefacts that are traded and valued.

Various vocal qualities could be assigned economic values based on traditional quantifiable parameters:

- Pitch height (higher notes commanding greater market value)

- Dynamic range (more powerful phrases exerting greater market influence)

- Duration (sustained phrases establishing more enduring market presence)

- Complexity (more sophisticated vocal techniques conveying greater rarity value)

The potential is for dramatic tension to emerge from the volatility of this system, with sudden value fluctuations creating ascendant and descendant trajectories among the NFT gallery ensemble. This mirrors the boom-bust cycles and "Bull Runs"[233] characterising cryptocurrency markets and reflecting broader patterns of disaster capitalism, as cryptocurrency, far from providing the utopian alternative to fiat money, has indeed become another rather volatile investment fatally linked to fiat currency rather than escaping it. This mirrors the boom-bust cycles and "Bull Runs" characterising cryptocurrency markets and reflects broader patterns of disaster capitalism.

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[232] Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 52.

[233] A "Bull Run" refers to a period of sustained price increases in a market—typically 20% or more from recent lows—characterised by widespread investor optimism and confidence. The term originates from the way a bull attacks by thrusting its horns upward, symbolising upward market momentum. According to financial historian Charles Kindleberger in his seminal work "Manias, Panics, and Crashes" (1978), these periods often follow a pattern where initial price increases attract new buyers motivated primarily by the expectation of further price increases rather than fundamental value, creating a self-reinforcing cycle until eventually collapsing. The bull run is ubiquitous in the cryptocurrency arena often promoting accusations of some memecoins as ponzi schemes.

3.4.5 Addressing Core Research Questions

VOXXCOIN directly engages with the research questions concerning the development of novel forms of Extended Music Theatre through everyday structures, technologies, spaces, and vocal approaches.

Interdisciplinary Integration

VOXXCOIN exemplifies interdisciplinary integration by synthesising economic frameworks, blockchain technology, and experimental vocal performance. The project's two-act structure establishes a dialectical relationship between different economic paradigms: gift exchange (potlatch) in Act I and market capitalism in Act II. This demonstrates how economic theories can serve as compositional frameworks for Extended Music Theatre. This integration transforms abstract economic concepts into embodied performance experiences, addressing the research question of how seemingly diverse disciplines might contribute to the creation and presentation of extended experimental music theatre.

The project's theoretical foundation draws on anthropology (Marcel Mauss's analysis of potlatch ceremonies), economic theory (Milton Friedman's concept of disaster capitalism), and historical musical precedents (Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*). Wagner's idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total artwork) provides context for *VOXXCOIN*'s interdisciplinary approach. Wagner himself articulated: "The individual art strives no longer to exhibit itself in its specific character, but to lose itself in the one all-embracing art-work: the great united work of art."[234] This interdisciplinary approach generates new compositional strategies that transcend traditional boundaries between economic analysis and musical performance, creating a form of EMT that functions simultaneously as artistic expression and theoretical inquiry.

By anthropomorphising blockchain operations through vocal performance, *VOXXCOIN* transforms technical processes into dramatic narratives. The genesis block becomes a

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[234] Richard Wagner, *The Artwork of the Future*, trans. W. Ashton Ellis (University of Nebraska Press, 1894). 78

central dramatic character, while miners and validators function as a chorus, creating a performance structure that draws from both traditional operatic forms and contemporary technological systems. This integration of traditional musical dramaturgies with digital technologies exemplifies how diverse practices can generate novel compositional strategies for EMT.

Technological Application

VOXXCOIN represents a sophisticated application of blockchain technology to create novel EMT experiences. Rather than merely using blockchain as a subject matter or thematic element, the project incorporates the structural logic of distributed ledger technologies into its fundamental compositional framework. This approach directly addresses the research question concerning how technologies can serve "not merely as tools but as fundamental structures shaping both the form and content of contemporary performance practice."

The project's technical implementation involves a two-page web application with view and submit functions, allowing audience members to contribute vocal recordings that are then transformed through machine learning into synthetic narrations of blockchain actions. Behind the scenes, a machine learning model is used to generate all necessary "narrations" from the users' vocal clips. This technological framework enables a form of distributed performance that mirrors the distributed structure of blockchain networks themselves. By using machine learning to generate vocal expressions from user submissions, the project extends traditional notions of composition and performance to include algorithmic processes.

In Act II, the quantification of vocal gestures based on parameters such as pitch height, dynamic range, duration, and complexity parallels the tokenisation processes of cryptocurrencies and NFTs. This approach transforms qualitative expressive elements into quantifiable assets within a simulated market system, suggesting how technologies of quantification might reshape artistic expression in digital contexts. The real-time audio

analysis and visualisation components further demonstrate how technological systems can serve as fundamental structures in contemporary performance practice.

Spatial Experimentation

VOXXCOIN challenges traditional performance venues by extending EMT into digital spaces not conventionally associated with artistic expression. By creating a graphical simulation of blockchain consensus algorithms as a central visual element, the project transforms abstract computational processes into navigable performance spaces. This approach addresses the research question concerning "how the use of unconventional locations and digital spaces [can] challenge and expand the expressive possibilities of EMT."[235]

The project's implementation as a gallery installation, featuring large-screen displays and interaction with personal devices, creates a distributed performance environment that spans both public and private spaces simultaneously. In a gallery context, the view page is displayed on a large screen, and participants use laptops or phones to submit vocal clips. This spatial configuration enables unique dramaturgical opportunities, allowing participants to experience both the collective emergent performance and their individual contributions to it.

The visual representation of blockchain operations as connected graphs creates a spatial dimension for what would otherwise remain invisible computational processes. This graph-based blockchain representation, inspired by systems like *The Daily Blockchain*,[236] provides an intuitive and easy-to-follow visual counterpart to the vocal performance. By making these processes visible and audible through graphical simulation and vocal performance, *VOXXCOIN* transforms abstract digital systems into experiential environments. This spatialisation of digital processes demonstrates how unconventional digital spaces can expand the expressive possibilities of EMT.

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[235] See Chapter 2.

[236] https://dailyblockchain.github.io/

Vocal Exploration

VOXXCOIN explores multiple vocalities within digital contexts, directly addressing the research question concerning how diverse vocal approaches might "reflect and respond to our increasingly mediated modes of communication." By translating blockchain operations into vocal expressions, the project suggests alternative modes of understanding and engaging with digital economic systems beyond conventional technical documentation or financial analysis.

The project employs machine learning for vocal synthesis, transforming user-submitted recordings into synthetic voices that narrate blockchain actions. Real-Time-Voice-Cloning software is utilised to transform user-submitted recordings into synthetic narrations of blockchain actions. This technological mediation of vocal expression reflects our ever more technologically arbitrated modes of experience and communication, where human voices are increasingly processed, transformed, and synthesised through digital systems. By making this mediation explicit and central to the performance, *VOXXCOIN* creates a critical frame for reflecting on how technologies transform human vocality.

In Act I, the vocal ensemble functions as a distributed network, with each voice representing a node in the blockchain. The validation process manifests through call-and-response patterns, where new hash values emerge as distinctive musical motifs evaluated through a Boolean[237] process that determines their inclusion in or exclusion from the collective soundscape. This approach explores how algorithmic decision-making might be expressed through collective vocality, suggesting new possibilities for structured vocal improvisation in digital contexts.

In Act II, different vocal gestures are assigned varying economic values based on quantifiable parameters, creating a market system for vocal expressions. This approach ex-

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[237] Boolean (named after mathematician George Boole) refers to a logical data type that can have only two possible values: true or false (often represented as 1 and 0). Boolean algebra, the mathematical system underlying this concept, defines operations such as AND, OR, and NOT that manipulate these binary values. This fundamental concept forms the basis of digital circuit design, computer programming, database queries, and search algorithms, enabling logical decision-making processes in computing where conditions must evaluate to either true or false.

Franz E Hohn. *Applied Boolean Algebra: An Elementary Introduction*. 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1966).

amines how economic valuation systems may alter our understanding of vocal perform-ance, suggesting parallels between the commodification of artistic expression in digital marketplaces and the tokenisation of assets in cryptocurrency systems. By making these parallels explicit through performance, *VOXXCOIN* creates a critical frame for re-flecting on the economic dimensions of vocal expression in digital contexts.

Theoretical Framework and Context

VOXXCOIN emerges at the intersection of several theoretical discourses concerning performance, technology, and economic systems. The project engages with theories of performativity and digital embodiment, examining how abstract technological systems become embodied through human performance.

The project draws influence from several key sources. In the process of understanding how to create software that works in a gallery context, pieces such as Tom Terando's exhibit at Blocumenta Arts Blockathon were studied,[238] where viewers can spend Ethereum cryptocurrency to uncover pixels on a public screen. The graphical simulation was inspired by the open-source web app *The Daily Blockchain*, which tracks real-world cryptocurrency transactions and plots them on an interactive, force-directed graph.

Drawing on Judith Butler's concept of performativity,[239] *VOXXCOIN* explores how eco-nomic value is constituted through iterative, citational practices rather than inherent worth. By translating blockchain operations into vocal expressions, the project makes visible the performative aspects of digital currencies—the way they create value through collective belief and participation. Each vocal gesture simultaneously represents and constitutes value, highlighting how all currencies, digital or otherwise, function through the collective performance of consensus. Butler argues that characteristics we consider inherent, like gender,[240] are produced through repeated performances of culturally re-

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[238] Evan Snoswell, Creative Coding II Software Report and Technical Report: Y3863200, 2022.

[239] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 12–16.

[240] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 140–141.

cognised gestures and behaviours. These are not one-time performances but citational practices, repetitions that reference and reinforce social norms while appearing to express something natural.

Applied to cryptocurrency, this suggests that economic value is not inherent in digital tokens but is constituted through collective, repeated practices, such as trading, discussing, mining, and believing in the currency's worth. *VOXXCOIN* makes this performative aspect explicit by translating blockchain operations into vocal expressions, rendering audible the invisible social agreements that create value.

Each vocal gesture in *VOXXCOIN* both represents value, signifying a transaction, and constitutes value, participating in the network that makes the currency meaningful. This highlights how all currencies, from gold to dollars to Bitcoin, derive worth not from intrinsic properties but from our collective "performance of consensus" that they hold value.

This EMT project reflects how blockchain currencies, despite claims of being decentralised alternatives to traditional finance, still operate through performative frameworks, patterns of belief and participation that create the impression of inherent worth, while actually producing that worth through practice.

The project also engages with Katherine Hayles' theories of digital embodiment, exploring the tension between disembodied technological systems and embodied vocal performance. Where digital systems typically abstract human bodies away from economic exchange,[241] *VOXXCOIN* deliberately reinserts the body, specifically the voice, into the technological apparatus. This creates a productive tension between the abstract nature of cryptocurrency and the inherently embodied nature of vocal performance.

Mark Hansen's concept of "technical agency" provides another theoretical framework for understanding *VOXXCOIN*. By anthropomorphising blockchain through vocal performance, the project explores how technical systems themselves perform and act upon the

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[241] N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 2–5.

world. This approach recognises the agency of technological systems while simultaneously reclaiming human expression within these systems, suggesting how artistic practice might engage with technological autonomy without surrendering human creativity.[242]

3.4.6 Technical Implementation and Artistic Realisation

VOXXCOIN's technical implementation involves several interrelated components that together create a cohesive artistic experience.

Web Application Architecture

The project takes the form of a website with two pages: a "view" page and a "submit"[243] page. The view page presents a graphical simulation of the blockchain consensus algorithm, displaying actors and their blockchains as connected graphs. As the simulation is run, sound is played so that the "Actors" appear to narrate the actions they are performing.

The submit page allows users to input their name and record a vocal clip. This user-generated content becomes the raw material for the project's machine learning component, which generates synthetic narrations in the user's voice. The user then becomes visible and audible as an actor in the simulation on the view page.

This architectural design enables a form of distributed performance where audience members contribute individual vocal elements that are then transformed and integrated into a collective performance. The technical framework thus facilitates a participatory structure that mirrors the distributed nature of blockchain networks themselves.

Machine Learning for Vocal Synthesis

The machine learning component utilises real-time voice cloning to generate synthetic narrations from user-submitted vocal clips. Small modifications were applied to parameterise saving the vocal encoding file. This technological mediation transforms raw vocal

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[242] Mark B.N. Hansen, *Bodies in Code: Interfaces with Digital Media* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 20–22.

[243] Evan Snoswell, Creative Coding II Software Report and Technical Report: Y3863200, 2022.

recordings into structured performance elements that narrate specific blockchain actions, creating a cohesive sonic experience from diverse vocal inputs.

The use of machine learning for vocal synthesis represents a significant innovation in EMT, extending traditional notions of composition and performance to include algorithmic processes. By allowing computational systems to transform and reconfigure vocal expressions, *VOXXCOIN* explores how artificial intelligence might function as a compositional tool in contemporary performance practice.

Visual Representation and Sonification

The graphical simulation displays actors and their blockchains as connected graphs, providing a visual representation of blockchain operations. This visual element transforms abstract computational processes into navigable performance spaces, making visible what would otherwise remain invisible technical operations.

The sonification of blockchain actions through synthetic vocals creates a sonic counterpart to the visual representation, allowing audience members to both see and hear the blockchain in operation. This multi-modal approach creates a rich sensory experience that engages audiences through multiple perceptual channels simultaneously.

3.4.7. Significance for Extended Music Theatre

VOXXCOIN represents a significant contribution to the field of Extended Music Theatre in several respects.

Economic Systems as Compositional Frameworks

By using economic systems as compositional frameworks, *VOXXCOIN* demonstrates how EMT can engage with and critique contemporary socio-economic structures. The project's two-act structure, which juxtaposes gift exchange and market capitalism, creates a dialectical relationship between different economic paradigms, allowing audiences to experience and reflect on their contrasting logics. This approach suggests how EMT might function as a form of embodied economic analysis, making abstract systems tangible through performance.

Technological Systems as Performance Environments

VOXXCOIN transforms technological systems into performance environments, demonstrating how digital technologies might function as spaces for artistic expression rather than merely tools for creating or disseminating performance. By making blockchain operations visible, audible, and participatory, the project creates a multisensory environment that allows audiences to experience abstract computational processes through embodied engagement. This approach suggests how EMT might respond to our increasingly technologically mediated existence by creating performance environments that make these mediations explicit and accessible.

Distributed Authorship and Participation

The project's participatory structure, allowing audience members to contribute vocal elements that are then transformed and integrated into the performance, suggests new models of distributed authorship via blockchain in EMT. By creating a system where individual contributions become part of a collective performance through algorithmic mediation, *VOXXCOIN* explores how contemporary performance might reflect and respond to the distributed nature of digital networks. This approach suggests how EMT might evolve beyond traditional models of compositional authority to embrace more collaborative and emergent forms of creation.

Vocality as Interface Between Human and Machine

By utilising vocal synthesis to create an interface between human expression and computational systems, *VOXXCOIN* examines how vocality can serve as a bridge between human and machine agency. The project's use of machine learning to transform user-submitted vocals into synthetic narrations of blockchain actions suggests how voice might serve as a critical interface in human-computer interaction. This approach points toward future developments in EMT where vocal expression becomes a primary mode of engaging with and humanising technological systems.

3.4.8. Conclusion

VOXXCOIN represents a significant innovation in Extended Music Theatre, particularly in its exploration of blockchain technology as a compositional framework, its use of machine learning for vocal synthesis, and its creation of participatory structures that mirror the distributed nature of digital networks. The project directly addresses the core research questions established at the outset:

1. **Interdisciplinary Integration:** *VOXXCOIN* successfully integrates economic systems, blockchain technology, and vocal performance, demonstrating how seemingly diverse disciplines can generate new compositional strategies for EMT. The project's synthesis of anthropological theory, economic analysis, and musical performance creates a form of EMT that functions simultaneously as artistic expression and theoretical inquiry.

2. **Technological Application:** The project incorporates blockchain technology and machine learning not merely as tools, but as fundamental structures that shape both form and content. By making the operational logic of these technologies central to the performance experience, *VOXXCOIN* demonstrates how contemporary technologies can generate new paradigms for performance practice.

3. **Spatial Experimentation:** By transforming abstract computational processes into navigable performance environments, *VOXXCOIN* expands the expressive possibilities of EMT beyond traditional venues. The project's creation of a distributed performance space spanning public displays and private devices demonstrates how unconventional digital spaces can enable unique dramaturgical opportunities.

4. **Vocal Exploration:** *VOXXCOIN* explores multiple vocalities within digital contexts, using machine learning to transform user-submitted recordings into synthetic narrations of blockchain actions. This approach demonstrates how diverse vocal approaches might reflect and respond to our increasingly mediated modes of communication, suggesting new possibilities for vocal expression in technologically mediated environments.

The distinctive contribution of *VOXXCOIN* lies in its recognition that economic systems, like artistic performances, operate through collective belief and participation. By translating blockchain operations into vocal expressions, the project makes the performative dimensions of digital economies audible and visible, creating a space for critical reflection on how these systems operate and how these systems might be reimagined through artistic intervention.

As blockchain technologies continue to evolve and reshape economic and social relations, *VOXXCOIN* offers a model for how EMT might engage with these developments, not merely as a subject matter, but as compositional frameworks and performance environments. The project suggests that the future significance of EMT may lie precisely in its capacity to translate between abstract technological systems and embodied human experience, creating interfaces between these increasingly interdependent domains.

The exhibition of prototypes has already demonstrated *VOXXCOIN*'s success, providing both an educational and cultural perspective on blockchain and human communication. Several viewers have observed that the fundamental principles of blockchain consensus closely mirror the way humans in society reach consensus, highlighting the profound metaphorical power of this technological framework when embodied as vocal performance.

What emerges from this experiment is more than mere spectacle; it is a new grammar for understanding our relationship with technology. The project suggests that perhaps the most effective way to comprehend complex systems is not through abstract explanation but through artistic embodiment—through making the blockchain sing. In this sense, *VOXXCOIN* functions as both a critical apparatus and creative methodology, a means of interrogating digital systems through the most ancient of human technologies: the voice.

3.5 Critical Analysis of *The Voice Party* and *theVoicePartyOperaBot-Farm* as Extended Music Theatre

"Fed-up with the blah blah blah? VOTE VOICE FOR SOME LA LA LA!! THE VOICE PARTY IS A PARTY FOR VOICES! And the only political party that promises you nothing at all." [244]

Performance Locations: The Constituency of Hackney North and Stoke Newington, Hackney Town Hall: November 1, 2019 to December 12, 2019; The Britannia Centre, Hackney, UK, December 12, 2019. *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* was diffused by Radio Ö1 Vienna, May 20, 2021 and DeutschlandFunkKultur Berlin, April 23, 2021.

Tech and Production Team: Martin Leitner, Elizabeth Zimmermann, Marcus Gammel, Jeremy Richardson.

Participants: Constituents of Hackney North and Stoke Newington; Diane Abbott;

Electoral Team, Hackney Town Hall.

The Party Faithful: Frédéric Acquaviva—Election night and campaign film and photo documentation; Bill Banks Jones; Elise Lorriane; Natalie Raybould; Martina Schwarz; Richard Thomas; Heloise Werner; the Voice of Roman Zotov-Mikshin as Porno Putin in *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm.*

3.5.1 Introduction

This analysis examines *The Voice Party* and its associated *theVoicePartyOperaBot-Farm* as significant contributions to the field of Extended Music Theatre (EMT). These interrelated projects represent innovative approaches to artistic political intervention that reconfigure traditional boundaries between performance, participation, and political discourse. By situating these works within contemporary theoretical frameworks and artistic precedents, this analysis aims to demonstrate how they advance new paradigms for vocal expression, digital performance, and socio-political engagement.

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[244] *The Voice Party* campaign slogan. Please see *The Voice Party Manifesto,* appendix 33.

In the 2019 UK general election, *The Voice Party* participated as an EMT experience, combining extended voice techniques with public engagement and novel strategies to diffuse sound with political activities, aiming to expand upon the music theatre aesthetic of early Wishart.[245] *The Voice Party* emerged from the intention to synthesise avant-garde artistic innovation with the widespread political disillusionment prompted by the chaos surrounding Brexit prevalent at the time of creation. The goal, as defined by *The Voice Party Manifesto,* was to place music at the centre of UK politics, using the EMT strategies outlined in this research, as a purposefully useless attempt to challenge and redefine cultural norms.

Political activities were conducted exclusively through song, and vocalisation other than speech, positioning treatments of the voice in EMT as a significant aesthetic tool. As discussed earlier, according to Kwon, site-specific art transforms social spaces. Similarly, *The Voice Party*, as an EMT, aimed to redefine the political arena as a venue for artistic expression, thereby creating a new aesthetic that merges music with political discourse.

Social media, particularly through a dedicated Twitter bot farm (@TheVoiceParty1), played a crucial role, with operatic vocalisations engaging government accounts and transforming these interactions into musical compositions. This approach reflects Kaye's analysis of site-specific art in the digital age, suggesting that the digital environment serves as a new stage for EMT, subverting traditional performance and audience engagement dynamics.

The challenge to mainstream politics is fundamentally a critique of traditional political and artistic norms, highlighted by Heile,[246] who discusses how commodification homogenises culture, reducing the radical potential of creative expression. The party sought to counter this by integrating the creation of an EMT experience into political activities, thereby fostering a more dynamic Rancièrean and participatory aesthetic experience.

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[245] I am referring again to *Beach Singularity* for its mode of participation and to *Red Bird* and *Anticredos* for the way political critique is embedded into the structure of those pieces.

[246] Bjorn Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel,* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006).

This approach is aligned with Debord's concept of the dérive,[247] where affective responses guide artistic engagement.

The manifesto emphasises the integration of music into all aspects of governance and everyday life, proposing a society where creativity, particularly sonified creativity in everyday communication, is fundamental.

Campaign materials encouraged recipients to engage creatively through music and other forms of articulation, reflecting Kester's dialogical aesthetics, where art facilitates engagement and dialogue.[248] The campaign consisted of a series of EMT extended voice performances, transforming political events such as hustings, election meetings, and election night counts into EMT experiences.

Both digital and physical platforms were leveraged to create a multifaceted and communicative aesthetic experience. The Twitterbot farm served as a digital stage, where operatic responses to political tweets were part of an ongoing EMT performance aimed at encapsulating a Wishartian sensibility into a sonic tweet. This method aimed to challenge traditional social media interactions by utilising and transforming them into elements of an artistic narrative that critiqued the government of the time.

The endeavour represents an attempt to rethink the intersection between music and aesthetics, particularly in the UK. By placing EMT at the core of its manifesto and campaign activities and challenging the commodification and marginalisation of artistic expression, *The Voice Party* aimed to cultivate a more participatory and innovative aesthetic culture.

By integrating music into political discourse and employing the EMT strategies articulated above extensively, the party outlines a new aesthetic paradigm. Embedding musical principles in the core of political and social life, it envisions a future where creative and

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[247] Guy Debord. *Theory of the Derive, Internationale Situationniste #2,* (Paris: Situationniste Internationale, 1958).

[248] Grant H. Kester, *Beyond the Sovereign Self: Aesthetic Autonomy from the Avant Garde to Socially Engaged Art,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2024).

expressive processes drive human interactions, creating a cohesive, engaged, and artistically vibrant environment. This transformative approach aims to establish a new aesthetic framework, positioning music and artistic expression at the centre of the human experience.

This initiative also serves as an example of site-specific EMT adaptable to various locales, potentially transforming "people" into "sites" as discussed by Kwon.[249] The Voice Party plans to contest the 2024 UK election in four constituencies, illustrating the adaptability and transformative potential of its aesthetic and political methodology.

Schlingensief's *Chance 2000* is a significant precursor, representing a fusion of political activism and theatrical performance that aims to disrupt traditional political paradigms. However, the current initiative aims for a deeper synthesis of politics and EMT, thereby fostering a new musical aesthetic. Unlike *Chance 2000*,[250] which was ephemeral and focused on performance art for political critique, the integration of EMT seeks to reshape political engagement through music, reflecting an emerging aesthetic paradigm that places musical expression at the forefront of political discourse. This distinctive approach to EMT, utilising musical forms to foster new modes of political and aesthetic engagement, is in counterpoint to the performative critique typical of *Chance 2000*, establishing a new aesthetic that redefines the parameters of political engagement. In this sense, deploying the idea of an EMT experience as a foundational element of political methodology marks a shift from the performative interventions of *Chance 2000,* which encouraged his followers to "Wähle Dich Selbst!" or vote for themselves, with the slogan "Act act act!!" *Chance 2000,* therefore, was not only "The Party of Last Chance" but also part of Schlingensief's literal action art. "Do something! What doesn't matter!" *The Voice Party* aimed to build on this urgency for artistic action.

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[249] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another* (2002).

[250] Christoph Schlingensief, *Chance 2000–Party of the Last Chance/ Election Campaign Circus 98/ Election Campaign Tour/ Election Debacle '98*, Schlingensief, 1998, https://www.schlingensief.com/projekt.php?id=t014.

By embedding musical principles at the core of political and aesthetic practice, the aim is to create an aesthetic paradigm that radiates from positioning music and artistic articulation as a significant guiding force in the human experience.

The party's approach to politics is idealistic, humorous, unconventional and completely hopeless. This embodies a metamodern oscillation between the hope of affecting real change through artistic expression (a modernist aspiration) and the ironic recognition of the party's promise to deliver "nothing at all," acknowledging the often-disillusioning nature of political promises.

3.5.2 Addressing Core Research Questions

The Voice Party and *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* directly engage with the research questions concerning the development of novel forms of EMT through everyday structures, technologies, spaces, and vocal approaches.

3.5.2.1 Interdisciplinary Integration

The Voice Party exemplifies interdisciplinary integration by synthesising political frameworks, participatory art practices, and experimental vocal performance. By establishing a functioning political party that operates primarily through non-linguistic vocalisation rather than conventional political rhetoric, the project creates a new compositional strategy that transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries. The integration of political campaigning methodologies with extended vocal techniques creates a novel performance context that challenges conventional understandings of both politics and music theatre.

The project further demonstrates interdisciplinary integration through its incorporation of metamodern principles, oscillating between earnest political engagement and ironic detachment. This approach reflects the research question's concern with how metamodernism might contribute to new forms of EMT, providing a theoretical framework that accommodates both the sincere desire for political change and the recognition of the limitations of conventional political approaches.

3.5.2.2 Technological Application

TheVoicePartyOperaBotFarm represents a sophisticated application of everyday digital technologies to create novel EMT experiences. By developing a Twitterbot[251] that automatically responds to government communications with operatic vocalisations, the project transforms social media from a communication platform into a performance space. This approach addresses the research question concerning how digital technologies can serve "not merely as tools but as fundamental structures shaping both the form and content of contemporary performance practice."[252]

The project's use of social media algorithms as compositional devices demonstrates how technological systems can determine performance parameters, timing, and content. By allowing the Twitter platform's algorithms to select which political tweets receive operatic responses, the project incorporates computational decision-making into the creative process, extending traditional notions of composition and performance.

3.5.2.3 Spatial Experimentation

The Voice Party challenges traditional performance venues by extending EMT into political spaces not conventionally associated with artistic expression. By transforming hustings, election meetings, and the election night count into sites for extended vocal performance, the project addresses the research question of how the use of unconventional locations and digital spaces can challenge and expand the expressive possibilities of EMT.

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[251] A Twitterbot refers to an automated software program designed to post content, interact with users, or perform other functions on the Twitter social media platform. These bots can range from simple automated accounts that retweet specific hashtags to sophisticated programs using artificial intelligence to generate original content. They frequently serve artistic, journalistic, activist, commercial, or entertainment purposes. Notable examples include creative bots like @pentametron, which finds and retweets rhyming tweets in iambic pentameter, and informational bots that automatically share weather alerts or news updates.

Robert Gorwa and Douglas Guilbeault, "*Unpacking the Social Media Bot: A Typology to Guide Research and Policy*," Policy & Internet 12, no. 2 (2020): 225–248.

[252] Chapter 1.3.

The project's simultaneous occupation of physical and digital spaces—from election halls to Twitter feeds and TikTok videos—creates a distributed performance that extends across multiple environments simultaneously. This approach enables unique dramaturgical opportunities, allowing the project to engage with different audiences through different platforms while maintaining a cohesive artistic vision.

3.5.2.4 Vocal Exploration

The Voice Party explores multiple vocalities within cross-arts and digital media contexts, directly addressing the research question concerning how diverse vocal approaches might "reflect and respond to our increasingly mediated modes of communication." By replacing conventional political speech with extended vocal techniques, the project highlights the limitations of rational discourse in contemporary political communication and suggests alternative modes of expression.

The three alter egos created for the project—KombatDiva, the Twitter bot, and The Radical Tongue Twister—each employ different vocal methodologies across various platforms, exploring how extended voice techniques function in different mediated contexts. This approach demonstrates how vocality might adapt to and comment upon the fragmented, multi-platform nature of contemporary communication.

3.5.3 Theoretical Framework and Context

The Voice Party emerges as a multifaceted project that deliberately positions itself at the intersection of political activism and EMT. As with all the projects in the portfolio, the primary concern here is not the political activism but the extended music theatre structure that emerges from it. The political elements serve primarily as a contextual, theoretical and musical framework from which innovative EMT approaches can emerge and be explored.

Created during the tumultuous period of Brexit and the December 12, 2019, UK general election, the project responds to widespread political disillusionment through the strategic deployment of vocal techniques and performance methodologies that transform po-

litical discourse into an artistic medium. The project draws upon and extends several key theoretical frameworks:

First, it engages with Miwon Kwon's theories of site-specificity,[253] wherein artistic interventions transform social spaces and relationships. The Voice Party reimagines the political arena, traditionally dominated by rational discourse and rhetorical speech, as a site for experimental vocalisation and musical expression. This transformation aligns with Nick Kaye's understanding of site-specific art[254] as practices that disrupt conventional relationships between spaces and their intended functions.

Second, the project employs Guy Debord's concept of the dérive,[255] using affective vocal responses to navigate and critique political landscapes. By replacing conventional political rhetoric with operatic vocalisation and extended vocal techniques, *The Voice Party* enacts a form of détournement that subverts expected political behaviours and communication styles.

Third, the project engages with Grant Kester's theories of dialogical aesthetics,[256] where art creates spaces for engagement and dialogue. However, *The Voice Party* significantly reconfigures this model by substituting rational discourse with non-linguistic vocalisation, suggesting that meaningful political engagement might occur outside the constraints of conventional language.

3.5.4 *The Voice Party* as Extended Music Theatre

3.5.4.1 Vocalisation as Political Methodology

The Voice Party functions as an EMT experiment through several key strategies:

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[253] Miwon Kwon. *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

[254] Nick Kaye. *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation*. (London: Routledge, 2000).

[255] Guy Debord. *The Society of the Spectacle.* Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. (New York: Zone Books, 1994).

[256] Grant H Kester. *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

The Voice Party's most distinctive feature is its exclusive use of song and non-speech vocalisation for political activities. This approach positions extended vocal techniques as both aesthetic tools and political methodologies. By committing to communication solely through vocalisation, *The Voice Party* transforms political engagement from a language-based activity to a sound-based one. This shift is significant in that it challenges fundamental assumptions about political discourse, suggesting that the affective dimensions of sound might convey political meanings that rational discourse cannot.

The project's manifesto, delivered by KombatDiva using extended vocal techniques, exemplifies this approach. Rather than articulating political positions through argumentative prose, the manifesto becomes a vocal performance that embodies its political vision through its sonic qualities. This transformation of political rhetoric into musical performance represents a significant innovation in EMT, extending the boundaries of what constitutes both political communication and musical expression.

3.5.4.2 Digital Platforms as Performance Spaces

TheVoicePartyOperaBotFarm represents a particularly innovative dimension of the project, utilising social media platforms as sites for ongoing EMT performances. The creation of a Twitter bot that responds to government tweets with operatic vocalisations transforms the digital communication environment into a stage for persistent musical intervention.

This strategy is significant in several respects. First, it extends the temporal dimensions of performance beyond discrete events to create continuous, algorithmic performances that occur in real-time response to political statements. Second, it reconceptualises the audience for EMT, engaging not only intentional viewers but also unwitting social media users who encounter these vocal interventions in their regular digital activities. Third, it creates a form of automated EMT where computational processes become co-performers in the creation of vocal expressions.

The radiophonic compilation of the most retweeted bot responses—covering topics from COVID-19 mismanagement to Brexit consequences—creates a temporal document of

this digital performance. Titles such as "Not Father Christmas," "Please Buy More Shit Now the Economy is Collapsing," "Liar," and "Escape from Plague Island" function as thematic movements in an evolving operatic work that responds to the political landscape in real time.

3.5.4.3 Alter-Ego Construction as Performance Strategy

The creation of three distinct alter egos—KombatDiva, the Twitter bot, and The Radical Tongue Twister—represents a sophisticated approach to performer identity within EMT. Each persona occupies a different performance space (physical events, Twitter, TikTok) and employs distinct vocal methodologies. This distribution of performance identity across multiple platforms and embodiments extends the conventional understanding of the performer in musical theatre.

KombatDiva functions as the physical embodiment of *The Voice Party*, performing at hustings and election events. The Twitterbot creates an algorithmically mediated performance presence, responding to government figures with operatic vocalisations. The Radical Tongue Twister employs extended vocal techniques to deliver news updates on social media platforms. Together, these personas create a distributed performance identity that spans physical and digital spaces.

3.5.4.4 Participatory Structures and Evolutionary Composition

"The Voice Party Anthem" exemplifies the project's innovative approach to participation and compositional evolution. Rather than presenting a fixed musical work, the anthem functions as an ongoing process wherein each performance is recorded and incorporated into subsequent performances. This approach creates a continuously evolving composition that accumulates layers of participatory vocalisation over time.

The text-based score, which provides guidelines rather than fixed notes, enables performers to contribute personal interpretations while maintaining a coherent collective expression. This strategy transforms audience members from passive listeners to active contributors to an evolving musical narrative. The anthem thus becomes not merely a

fixed composition but a process of collective vocal creation that extends across multiple performances and participants.

3.5.5 TheVoicePartyOperaBotFarm as Digital EMT

TheVoicePartyOperaBotFarm merits particular attention as an innovative exploration of digital performance methodologies within EMT. This component of the project creates an automated system for generating operatic responses to political tweets, effectively creating an ongoing, algorithmically driven performance that unfolds across social media platforms.

Several aspects of this approach are particularly significant:

- **Algorithmic Performance**: The bot farm establishes a system wherein computational processes become co-creators of musical expressions, triggering operatic responses based on algorithmically identified political statements. This creates a form of automated Extended Music Theatre that continues to perform without constant human intervention.

- **Real-time Responsiveness**: Unlike traditional composition, which typically occurs before performance, the bot farm generates musical responses in real time to unfolding political discourse. This creates a dynamic, responsive form of musical creation that evolves in direct relation to political events.

- **Digital Dissemination**: The circulation of these operatic interventions through social media platforms creates new channels for disseminating EMT beyond traditional performance venues. The project effectively transforms social media from a communication platform into a performance space for experimental vocal work.

- **Documentation as Composition**: The compilation of the most retweeted bot responses into a radiophonic medley transforms the project's documentation into a distinct musical composition.

- The varying recording techniques employed in the project, from professional studio equipment to mobile phone recordings, further this approach by incorporating

the materiality of recording technologies into the composition itself. When experienced in a spatialised performance context, these varying sound qualities create a sonic environment that ranges from "all-encompassing surround sound to one crackling mono speaker," effectively transforming technical limitations into aesthetic elements.

3.5.6 Adaptation to Pandemic Constraints

The project's development during the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated significant adaptations to its performance methodologies. The intended physical performances at hustings and election events were largely replaced by digital dissemination strategies. This constraint, however, became a productive force in the project's evolution, encouraging further exploration of digital performance methodologies.

The creation of *Phonetic Requiem for Coffee Corner,* an acousmatic piece combining voice recordings and field recordings from cafes in York, exemplifies this adaptation. Originally intended as research for physical performance venues, this work evolved into a requiem for spaces rendered inaccessible by pandemic restrictions. The layering of ambient sounds with extended vocal techniques creates a counterpoint between presence and absence, reflecting the changed social conditions of the pandemic era.

Similarly, the party political broadcasts adapted to pandemic conditions by embracing digital dissemination. The second broadcast, created for the Futur Zwei festival in Halle, 2023, projects forward to imagine *The Voice Party*'s influence in 2032, suggesting how digital performance strategies might continue to evolve in post-pandemic contexts.

3.5.7 Critical Analysis and Theoretical Implications

The Voice Party and *theVoicePartyOperaBotFarm* raise several critical questions about the nature of Extended Music Theatre and its relationship to political discourse, digital technologies, and participatory structures.

3.5.7.1 Political Efficacy and Artistic Autonomy

The project deliberately positions itself as "idealistic, humorous, unconventional and completely hopeless," embracing a tension between genuine political engagement and ironic detachment. This tension raises important questions about the political efficacy of artistic interventions in formal political processes. By promising "nothing at all," *The Voice Party* acknowledges the limitations of political promises while simultaneously creating a space for reimagining political discourse through artistic means.

This approach challenges conventional understandings of political art, which often assume that artistic interventions should articulate clear political positions or work toward specific social changes. Instead, *The Voice Party* suggests that artistic practices might engage politics most effectively by transforming the very structures of political discourse rather than operating within existing parameters.

3.5.7.2 Digital Performance and Embodiment

TheVoicePartyOperaBotFarm's use of automated systems to generate operatic responses to political statements raises significant questions about embodiment and presence in digital performance contexts. The bot's operatic vocalisations maintain connections to embodied vocal production while existing primarily as digital artefacts divorced from physical bodies. This tension between embodied vocalisation and disembodied dissemination creates a productive friction that highlights the changing relationships between bodies, voices, and technologies in contemporary performance practices.

The project's distribution across multiple platforms—from physical election events to Twitter interactions and TikTok performances—further extends this exploration of presence and embodiment across digital and physical spaces. The creation of distinct alter egos for different platforms suggests that performer identity itself may be distributed across multiple embodiments and technical systems, rather than remaining unified in a single performing body.

3.5.7.3 Participatory Structures and Collective Authorship

The Voice Party Anthem's approach to participation and compositional evolution suggests new models for collective authorship in Extended Music Theatre. By incorporating recordings from each performance into subsequent iterations, the anthem creates a temporal chain of participation that accumulates over time. This approach challenges traditional distinctions between composers, performers, and audiences, suggesting instead a model of collective creation wherein each participant contributes to an evolving musical work.

This participatory approach aligns with *The Voice Party*'s broader political vision, which proposes a society where "creative, in particular sonified creativity in everyday communication is fundamental."[257] The anthem thus becomes not merely a musical work but a model for the kind of participatory, creative social structures that the project envisions.

3.5.8 Conclusion

The Voice Party and *VoicePartyOperaBotFarm* represent transformative innovations in Extended Music Theatre, fundamentally reimagining the relationship between vocal expression, political discourse, and digital performance. Far from being merely experimental artistic interventions, these projects achieved remarkable public engagement, with audience members responding predominantly with curiosity and delight rather than confusion or dismissal. This enthusiastic reception—culminating in 200 votes in one constituency—demonstrates that even the most unconventional EMT practices can resonate meaningfully with audiences beyond traditional artistic contexts when deployed through accessible frameworks of participation.

This project alone suggested several productive directions for future exploration in EMT:

- The development of algorithmic and automated systems for generating and disseminating vocal performances in response to real-time events and communications

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257 Lore Lixenberg, T*he Voice Party Manifesto* (London TVP Publications, 2020), 3.

- The creation of distributed performance identities that span multiple platforms, embodiments, and technical systems

- The establishment of participatory structures that enable collective authorship and compositional evolution across multiple performances and participants

- The transformation of political discourse through non-linguistic vocalisation and extended vocal techniques

- The adaptation of performance methodologies to digital platforms and pandemic constraints suggests new approaches to presence and participation in physically distanced contexts.

What distinguishes these projects is their synthesis of political activism, experimental vocalisation, and digital performance strategies. By securing 200 votes as a performance-based political entity, *The Voice Party* achieved tangible evidence that EMT methodologies can transcend purely artistic spaces to create meaningful civic engagement, even in challenging environments, such as the incident in a dodgy pub where KombatDiva nearly faced physical confrontation.

Particularly striking was how participants in these encounters enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to use their voices in unconventional ways. When confronted with KombatDiva's performative interventions, members of the public did not merely observe but actively engaged, experimenting with non-linguistic vocalisations and extended vocal techniques themselves. These spontaneous participatory moments—occurring in politically charged spaces traditionally dominated by rational discourse—possibly revealed, at least at that moment, a latent desire among non-specialists to explore vocal expression beyond conventional speech. The unexpected willingness of everyday citizens to join in these vocal experiments suggests that EMT methodologies can tap into fundamental human impulses toward sonic play and expression that conventional political processes typically suppress.

The projects suggest several fertile directions for future EMT exploration in the political domain.

As *The Voice Party* prepares to contest the 2024 UK election in four constituencies, these methodologies continue to evolve in response to shifting political and technological landscapes. The project's enduring significance lies in its recognition that political and economic systems already function as performative structures, as spectacular frameworks that shape social relations and collective understanding. By rendering this performative dimension explicit through vocalisation, *The Voice Party* creates spaces for critical reflection on how the political system operates and how the voters might be re-imagining them through artistic intervention.

The most compelling evidence of the project's success is not merely its conceptual sophistication but its demonstrated capacity to engage diverse public audiences—from social media users encountering operatic interjections in their feeds to voters in polling booths confronted with a musical alternative to conventional politics. This achievement suggests that EMT can function not only as an artistic practice but as a methodology for reimagining social and political relations through sound. In this sense, *The Voice Party* transcends categorisation as either art or politics, instead offering a provocative model for how vocal expression might transform both domains simultaneously.

Chapter 4. The Apology and Conclusion

4.1 Reconfigurations of Extended Music Theatre in the Digital Age

This research has explored the development of novel forms of EMT through a series of experimental projects that integrate everyday structures, technologies, spaces, and vocalities. By examining works such as V*OXXCOIN*, *The Voice Party*, and *LETHE* through the lenses of interdisciplinary practice, technological application, spatial experimentation, and vocal exploration, this investigation has revealed productive tensions and emerging possibilities at the intersections of artistic disciplines.

I want to apologise to the reader who finds themselves at the end of this for what might at first appear to be more of a white-knuckle ride through many seemingly disparate concepts than a commentary. Hopefully, the commentary is in itself an act of entropy in search of an EMT singularity, providing some insight into the multifaceted problem of illuminating an EMT for our age. It is as focused as going over the event horizon of a black hole; the mystery lies in what we do not know that lies beyond.

4.2 The Critical Imperative: Beyond Institutional Ossification

This research, in part, stems from a critical recognition that institutions commissioning contemporary music theatre remain wedded mainly to 19th-century music theatre paradigms, despite operating in a radically different technological, social, and philosophical landscape. The persistent dominance of traditional operatic forms within institutional contexts represents not merely an aesthetic preference but a systemic resistance to structural innovation that limits the potential evolution of the form. As Adorno notes in his critique of the culture industry, "The cultural commodities of the industry are governed... by the principle of their realisation as value, and not by their own specific content and harmonious formation."[258] This observation remains pertinent today as opera houses continue to commission works that replicate familiar structures while merely updating surface content.

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[258] Theodor W. Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991), 99.

Consider George Benjamin's *Written on Skin* (2012), widely celebrated as a contemporary masterpiece. Despite its musical innovations, the work fundamentally recapitulates problematic narrative tropes, specifically the sexualisation and abuse of a teenage girl, Agnes, by her middle-aged protector, enacted through traditional operatic staging conventions. As McClary observes in her seminal work "Feminine Endings," such narratives represent "the standard sacrificial scenario of Western culture,"[259] where female bodies become sites of violence justified through aesthetic sublimation. The institutional requirement for performers with the technical capacity to project over orchestras further reinforces this problem, creating a situation where adolescent characters are inevitably portrayed by mature singers, adding layers of representational dissonance.

Similarly problematic is the persistent trend of adapting existing films that already function effectively in their original medium. Thomas Adès' *The Exterminating Angel* (2016) exemplifies this approach. While these composers demonstrate considerable skill, such adaptations rarely interrogate the structural foundations of music theatre itself. As Born argues, "It is not enough to produce new art objects; what is required is to produce new social relations of art."[260] This portfolio, therefore, contends that diversity in music theatre must extend beyond representational concerns to encompass diversity of structures, methodologies, and relationships.

The integration of new technologies into traditional frameworks often serves merely to create a simulacrum of contemporaneity while preserving conventional power structures and narrative approaches. Projections, holograms, and VR experiences are frequently deployed as spectacular enhancements rather than as fundamental reconceptualisations of what music theatre might become in a digital age. As Baudrillard might suggest, these become simulations that mask the absence of genuine structural innovation.[261]

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[259] Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 47.

[260] Georgina Born, "The Social and the Aesthetic: For a Post-Bourdieuian Theory of Cultural Production," *Cultural Sociology 4, no. 2* (2010): 189.·

[261] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

In our post-Deleuzian landscape characterised by rhizomatic relationships and entropic systems, music theatre requires approaches that embrace rather than resist complexity. As Deleuze and Guattari argue, "There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author)."[262] Similarly, Extended Music Theatre must transcend divisions between performance, technology, and everyday life to create new configurations that reflect contemporary existence.

Furthermore, this research advocates for a plurality of voices beyond the merely human. Following Haraway's concept of "making kin" with non-human entities,[263] the projects documented here explore how the subjectivities of animals, plants, and even algorithmic systems might be incorporated into EMT. As Bennett suggests in her work on vital materialism, we must develop "a vocabulary and syntax that is more responsive to the material agency or effectivity of non-human or not-quite-human things."[264] This approach recognises that in an age of climate crisis and technological entanglement, music theatre cannot remain exclusively anthropocentric.

This portfolio does not claim to have discovered definitive solutions to these challenges. Rather, it represents a continuation of investigations into how EMT might evolve to address contemporary concerns through methodologies appropriate to our complex, interconnected world. The projects documented here offer glimpses into uncertain territory, suggesting how artistic practice might respond to the distributed, mediated, and hybridised nature of contemporary existence.

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[262] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 23.

[263] Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

[264] Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 108.

4.3 Reimagining Everyday Structures as EMT Frameworks

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this research is the revelation that seemingly mundane structures from everyday life—such as political parties, blockchain algorithms, dating applications, and border-crossing procedures—can serve as rich compositional frameworks for EMT. By reframing these quotidian systems as artistic architectures, the research has demonstrated how EMT can function not merely as a form of aesthetic expression but as a critical apparatus for engaging with and reimagining contemporary social, economic, and technological systems.

VOXXCOIN and *The Voice Party* exemplify this approach in their transformation of blockchain technology and political campaigning, respectively, into frameworks for vocal performance. *LETHE* extends this approach by reimagining ancient mythological structures—particularly the river of forgetfulness in Greek mythology—as a framework for exploring contemporary concerns about memory, identity, and transformation. Where traditional composition begins with musical structures—harmonic progressions, rhythmic patterns, melodic ideas—these projects begin with structures borrowed from non-artistic domains, allowing EMT to engage directly with the systems that shape contemporary experience.

This methodology reverses the conventional relationship between art and life. Rather than artistic structures being applied to represent everyday experience, everyday structures are repurposed as artistic frameworks. This inversion creates productive friction, allowing audiences to experience familiar systems from unfamiliar perspectives and generate critical insights that might otherwise remain inaccessible through conventional analytical approaches.

4.4 The Distributed Performance Environment

The projects examined in this research collectively demonstrate the emergence of what might be termed the "distributed performance environment,"[265] an approach to EMT that spans multiple physical and digital spaces simultaneously, creating performances that

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[265] Roy Ascott, "Is There Love in the Telematic Embrace?" *Art Journal* 49, no. 3 (1990): 241–247.

are neither fully embodied nor fully virtual, but exist in the interstitial spaces between these domains.[266]

In *VOXXCOIN*, the gallery installation, featuring large-screen displays, coexists alongside personal devices that enable audience members to contribute vocal elements. The performance unfolds across both shared public space and individual private interactions. Similarly, *The Voice Party* extends from physical election hustings to Twitter feeds and TikTok videos, creating a performance that cannot be confined to any single site but emerges through the relationships between these diverse contexts.

LETHE further explores this distributed approach by spanning both mythological and contemporary spaces. As a LARP-based performance, *LETHE* creates what Kwon terms a "functional site... an open, unfixed constellation, porous to contingencies,"[267] initially situated on the island of Kythira but designed to be adaptable to various locales through its text score. This adaptability across physical locations creates a natural bridge to adaptation across media, from physical to digital spaces. As the analysis of *LETHE* notes, "Just as *LETHE* can be performed in different physical sites while maintaining its core identity, it could similarly translate into digital environments—virtual worlds, game platforms, or mixed-reality spaces—while preserving its essential qualities."[268]

This distributed approach responds directly to our increasingly extended existence across physical and digital realms. Where traditional performance assumes co-presence in a single shared space, these projects create permeable boundaries between various performance contexts, allowing participants to engage through multiple channels simultaneously. This approach challenges conventional understandings of pres-

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[266] Pauline Oliveros, "Networked Music: Low and High Tech." *Contemporary Music Review* 28, no. 4–5 (2009): 433–435.

[267] Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

[268] See 3.2.11.

ence, participation, and spectatorship, suggesting new modalities of engagement appropriate to our hybrid contemporary existence.

4.5 Technological Mediation as Compositional Strategy

The research has demonstrated how technological mediation can function not merely as a means of creating or disseminating performance but as a compositional strategy in itself. By incorporating machine learning, algorithmic processes, and digital platforms into the fundamental structure of performances, these projects extend traditional notions of composition to include technological systems as active co-creators.

VOXXCOIN's use of machine learning to transform user-submitted vocals into synthetic narrations of blockchain actions exemplifies this approach. The compositional process encompasses not only human decisions about performance structure and content but also the computational transformations that reshape vocal expressions through algorithmic mediation. Similarly*, The Voice Party*'s Twitter bot creates an ongoing, algorithmically driven performance that unfolds according to computational logics as much as human intentions.

LETHE's engagement with technological mediation takes a different but complementary approach, exploring how digital documentation can become "performance spaces in their own right." The film documentation of *LETHE* represents a form of media extension, translating the ephemeral performance into a fixed yet distributable form. This approach suggests how documentation itself can become a form of compositional practice, creating new performances through the technological mediation of original events.

This approach suggests a significant evolution in EMT's engagement with technology. Where earlier electronic music theatre might have used technology primarily as a tool for realising human compositional visions, these projects incorporate technological systems as semi-autonomous creative agents, creating performances that emerge through the interaction between human and machine intelligence. This collaborative approach

reflects our contemporary condition, where human agency is increasingly entangled with technological systems in ways that blur the boundaries between users and tools.

4.6. Vocality in the Digital Age

There is far too much to address in this topic to be contained in a short commentary such as this. However, the exploration of vocality across these projects reveals new possibilities for vocal expression in technologically mediated environments. By translating abstract computational processes into vocal performances, these works suggest that the human voice might serve as an interface between embodied experience and digital systems, thereby creating bridges between domains that often remain disconnected.

The Voice Party's replacement of conventional political rhetoric with extended vocal techniques highlights the limitations of rational discourse in contemporary political communication, suggesting alternative modes of expression that might engage with political realities in more embodied and affective ways. Similarly, *VOXXCOIN*'s transformation of blockchain operations into vocal narrations creates an interface between abstract economic systems and embodied experience, making tangible what would otherwise remain conceptual.

LETHE's exploration of vocality takes yet another direction, examining the relationship between human voice and interspecies communication. The incorporation of goats as both entities to be observed and emulated, as well as characters in the narrative, aims to bridge mythological archetypes and contemporary performative practices. This focus on interspecies vocality suggests how EMT might extend beyond human-centred approaches to consider more-than-human perspectives and expressions. As the analysis notes, "By learning from goats' spatial awareness, physical diversity, rhythmic timing, emotional expression, dynamic movements, and non-verbal storytelling, the players can enhance their craft in ways that traditional methods may not fully provide."

These approaches to vocality suggest how EMT might respond to our increasingly mediated modes of communication. By creating performances that explicitly thematise the technological mediation of the voice through machine learning, digital platforms, and algorithmic systems, these projects develop critical frames for reflecting on how contemporary technologies transform human expression. They suggest how extended vocal techniques might function not merely as aesthetic experiments but as methodologies for navigating and critiquing our technologically extended existence.

4.7. Interdisciplinary Methodologies and Emergent Forms

The methodological approach across these projects demonstrates the value of interdisciplinary integration in generating new compositional strategies for EMT. By combining methodologies from diverse domains—political campaigning, economic theory, software development, machine learning, LARPing, interspecies communication, border-crossing protocols—these projects create hybrid approaches that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries.

This interdisciplinary methodology has generated emergent forms that would have been impossible to predict from within the confines of any single discipline. *The Voice Party*'s integration of political structures with extended vocal techniques creates a form of EMT that functions simultaneously as political intervention and artistic expression. Similarly, *VOXXCOIN*'s synthesis of blockchain technology with vocal performance creates a form that is neither purely technological nor purely artistic but emerges from the productive tension between these domains.

LETHE's integration of LARP methodologies with vocal performance and interspecies communication similarly generates an emergent form that transcends its constituent elements. As the analysis notes, "*LETHE* occupies a liminal space between the analogue and digital realms, between the mythological past and the technological present, creating a contemporary performance framework that deliberately traverses boundaries." This liminality reflects the metamodernist approach outlined in the re-

search objectives, creating performances that oscillate between seemingly contradictory positions—ancient and contemporary, physical and digital, human and non-human.

Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs extends this interdisciplinary approach by transforming border-crossing protocols and nation-state formation processes into frameworks for EMT. By establishing a functioning artistic micro-republic that operates simultaneously as a sovereign entity and as a performance space, the project blurs distinctions between institutional structures and artistic practices. The founding of a music conference, which encompasses extended voice and movement within this micro-republic, creates a nested structure where participants are simultaneously citizens, performers, and audience members, thereby dissolving conventional distinctions between these roles. This approach exemplifies how EMT can function as a form of institutional critique, examining the performative dimensions of political structures through artistic practice.

These emergent forms suggest how EMT might evolve to address contemporary concerns through methodologies appropriate to our complex, interconnected world. By embracing interdisciplinary approaches, EMT can develop forms that engage directly with the systems and structures that shape contemporary experience, creating performances that function simultaneously as artistic expressions and as critical interventions in social, economic, and technological domains in a glorious, endless EMT feedback loop.

4.8. The Ongoing Challenge

The primary success of projects like *VOXXCOIN*, *The Voice Party*, *SINGLR the APPERA, Republica Františšsšsšsšsšs*, and *LETHE* lies in their ongoing nature and the emergent structures, websites, games and apps that stem from these initiatives. However, significant challenges remain in implementing participatory projects in a post-capitalist era where everything, including attention, is commodified, and where Rancière's spectator may not necessarily wish to be emancipated.

These projects contend with fundamental tensions between participation and spectatorship, between artistic autonomy and social engagement, and between physical embodiment and digital mediation. They navigate these tensions not by resolving them into

neat solutions but by creating frameworks that allow these contradictions to remain productive, generating performances that acknowledge complexity rather than reducing it.

The work continues precisely because these tensions cannot be definitively resolved. Each project represents not a final statement but an ongoing inquiry into how EMT might engage with our extended contemporary existence. As blockchain technologies evolve, as political systems transform, and as new digital platforms emerge, these artistic methodologies must continue to adapt and respond, creating performances that reflect and critique our rapidly changing world.

4.9. Beyond the Event Horizon: EMT as Entropic Singularity

What emerges from this seemingly disparate collection of projects and concepts is not merely a new categorisation of artistic practice but potentially an entropic singularity—a point at which conventional understandings of performance, technology, and social structures collapse into new formulations that defy traditional categorisation. Like particles accelerating toward an event horizon, these diverse approaches to EMT gain momentum and focus as they converge, even as the ultimate destination remains uncertain.

The multifaceted nature of illuminating an EMT for our age necessitates this white-knuckle journey through seemingly unrelated domains. The conceptual vertigo experienced by participants and researchers alike is not incidental but essential to the enterprise—it reflects the destabilising nature of contemporary experience itself, where boundaries between physical and digital, human and technological, artistic and everyday are increasingly porous.

What lies beyond this theoretical event horizon cannot be fully predicted or prescribed. Just as physical singularities represent the limits of our current understanding of physics, this EMT singularity represents the edge of conventional performance theory. The projects documented here offer glimpses into this uncertain territory, suggesting how artistic practice might evolve to address the complex entanglements of contemporary existence.

Rather than providing definitive answers, this research opens new questions about how performance might function in a world of distributed presence, technological mediation, and disciplinary convergence. The ongoing challenge for EMT practitioners and researchers is to continue this entropic journey, exploring the uncharted territories that emerge when conventional understandings of performance collapse under the gravitational pull of technological and social transformation.

Appendices

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THE VOICE PARTY ANTHEM

To be sung by all *present at the end* of *the voice party conference at the command* of *me birds.*

INSTRUCTIONS.

1. To be performed **in** any direction you like, forwards, backwards,up,down,sideways, diagonal *or* spiral.

2. Take great care to use your entire vocal apparatus, your forward resonators (cheeks, nose, sinus) and the sub-bass at the back of your mouth. You may also use wimpers, barks and other inter-species noises.

3. The chorus is indicated by pure symbols. You attach your favourite vocal sounds to these symbols and perform them with great joy,entropy and honest confusion.

4. No two people should sound the same, but all should sing together.

5. Whilst vocalising, think about something you feel very strongly about in the world that you would like to change and allow that thought to inform your performance.Alternatively, if this is too much *for* this moment think about your favourite recipe.

Appendix 1. Text Score for The Voice Party Anthem

Appendix 2. After the announcement at the election count, December 2019

Appendix 3. The 2019 election count for Hackney North and Stoke Newington at the Britannia Leisure Centre, London.

Appendix 4. Pandemic version of the *SINGLR* Salon at the Cockpit Theatre, London

Appendix 5. NCEM version of the *SINGLR* Salon.

```
"name": "lorelixenberg",
"version": "1.0.0",
"license": "ISC",
"dependencies": {
  "@babel/polyfill": "^7.12.1",
  "@emotion/react": "^11.4.0",
  "acorn": "^8.0.4",
  "audio-encoder": "^1.0.2",
  "axios": "^0.21.1",
  "babel-eslint": "^10.1.0",
  "bcrypt": "^5.0.1",
  "body-parser": "^1.19.0",
  "concurrently": "^5.3.0",
  "connect-mongo": "^3.2.0",
  "dotenv": "^8.2.0",
  "express": "^4.17.1",
  "express-session": "^1.17.1",
  "fluent-ffmpeg": "^2.1.2",
  "get-stream": "^6.0.0",
  "google-spreadsheet": "^3.0.14",
  "googleapis": "^73.0.0",
  "howler": "^2.2.1",
  "https-localhost": "^4.6.4",
  "image-webpack-loader": "^7.0.1",
  "mobile": "^3.0.0",
  "json2csv": "^5.0.6",
  "jwt-simple": "^0.5.6",
  "md5": "^2.3.0",
  "mongoose": "^5.11.8",
  "multer": "^1.4.2",
  "nodemailer": "^6.6.1",
  "p5": "^1.3.1",
  "passport": "^0.4.1",
  "passport-local": "^1.0.0",
  "pem": "^1.14.4",
  "prop-types": "^15.7.2",
  "purecss": "^2.0.6",
  "react": "^17.0.1",
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  "react-spinners": "^0.11.0",
  "react-use-gesture": "^8.0.1",
  "scroll-js": "^3.3.0",
  "short-hash": "^1.0.0",
  "source-map-support": "^0.4.2",
  "svg-path-generator": "^1.1.0",
  "terser-webpack-plugin":
  "^4.2.3",
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opera is dead! long live opera!

Appendix 6. Code is beautiful—an example of the app code used for roller banners and *SINGLR* Salon projections.

Appendix 7. Outside the York University Streetlife initiative, trying to engage bystanders.

Appendix 8. Inggrid Patricia in a *SINGLR* t-shirt.

Appendix 9. Image of SINGLR app for the Tête a Tête Opera festival *SINGLR* Salon, 2021.

Appendix 10. Roman Zotov-Mikshin and Elia Moretti of Ferst Dadler in *SINGLR* t-shirts.

Appendix 11. Tony Howe from the BCMG Sternklang project in SINLGR.

Appendix 12. Double bassist, Chris Shurity, auditions before Orpheus and his herd of celestial goats in LETHE.

Appendix 13. Characters in Part 2 of LETHE with Poseidon and Helios to the fore.

Appendix 14. Workshop on the myth of Daphne and Apollo.

Appendix 15. Schopnehauer/Ouranos with Nietsche/Chronos

Appendix 16. Lethe pt.2. Dionysios in pink.

Appendix 17. Lethe Pt.2. Mnemosyne in Blue

Appendix 18. Lethe Pt.1. Breathing workshop.

Appendix 19. Cellist auditions in front of the goat jury.
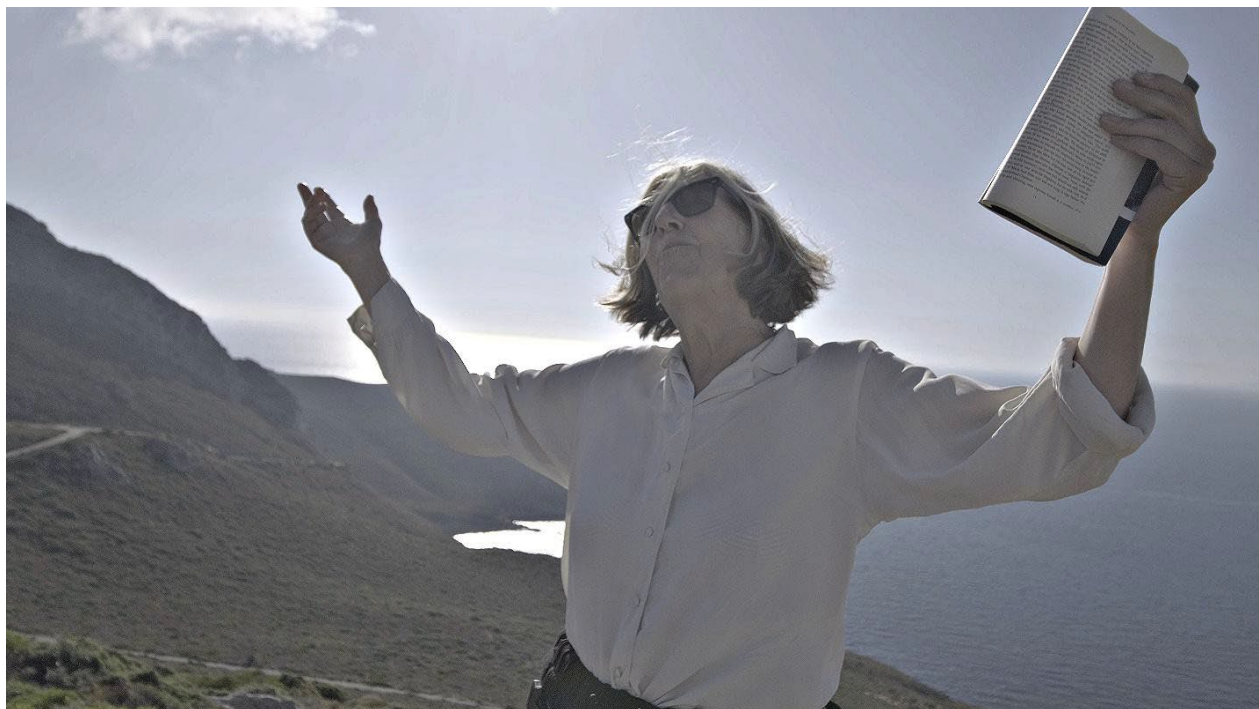
Appendix 20. Musicians in the underworld.

Appendix 21. The souls of the recent dead queue to be taken over the river Styx by Charon, the boatman.

Appendix 22. Schopenhauer/Ouranos prior to orchidectomy.

Appendix 23. Morse code rhythm workshop.

Appendix 24. The waters of the river Lethe were ceremonially drunk every day (sometimes several times a day), symbolising the shedding of one persona and transition into another state of being.

Appendix 25. The VOXXCOINS as seen in the OpenSea NFT Gallery of VOXXCOINS.

Appendix 26. The VOXXCOIN installation at ACUD, Berlin, showing Act 1 & 2 on the piano. Also in view is the graphic score based on the daily blockchain graphic with the ceremonial golden robe that the VOXXCOIN pioneers while having their voices 'mined.'

Appendix 27. Image from the Micro-gallery of the Unseen in Republica Františšsšsšsšsš, set up by Inga Zotova-Mikshina. This shows a postcard of the gardens as they were as functioning kitchen gardens for the Franciscan monks before it was made into a public space.

Dear person,

the gardeners of Františšsšsšsšs republic invite everyone to become a citizen of this newly formed country where insects, plants, flowers, humans and objects are all equal and interrelated.

Please, come with an open body and bring your whole mind to the party!

Do not expect to be entertained. Do not ask what the Republic can do for you, ask what you can do for the Republic.

Where: Františkánská zahrada, Praha 1

When:
12/05/2023 9:00 – 12:00
13/05/2023 12:00 – 15:00

Ferst Dadler gardeners:
Lore Lixenberg, Elia Moretti, Inga & Roman Zotov–Mikshin & Santa Isabelle

Milí a vážení,

zahradníci republiky Františšsšsšsšs vás všechny zvou, abyste se stali občany této nově vzniklé země, kde jsou si hmyz, rostliny, květiny, lidé a předměty rovni a podmíněni jeden druhým.

Přijďte, prosím, s otevřeným tělem a celou svou myslí!

Neočekávejte, že budete baveni. Neptejte se, co může republika udělat pro vás, ptejte se, co můžete udělat vy pro republiku.

Kde: Františkánská zahrada, Praha 1

Kdy:

Zahradníci Ferst Dadler:
Lore Lixenberg, Elia Moretti, Inga & Roman Zotov–Mikshin & Santa Isabelle
Cattie della repubblica Františšsšsšsšs

PASSPORT

Františšsšsšsšs republic
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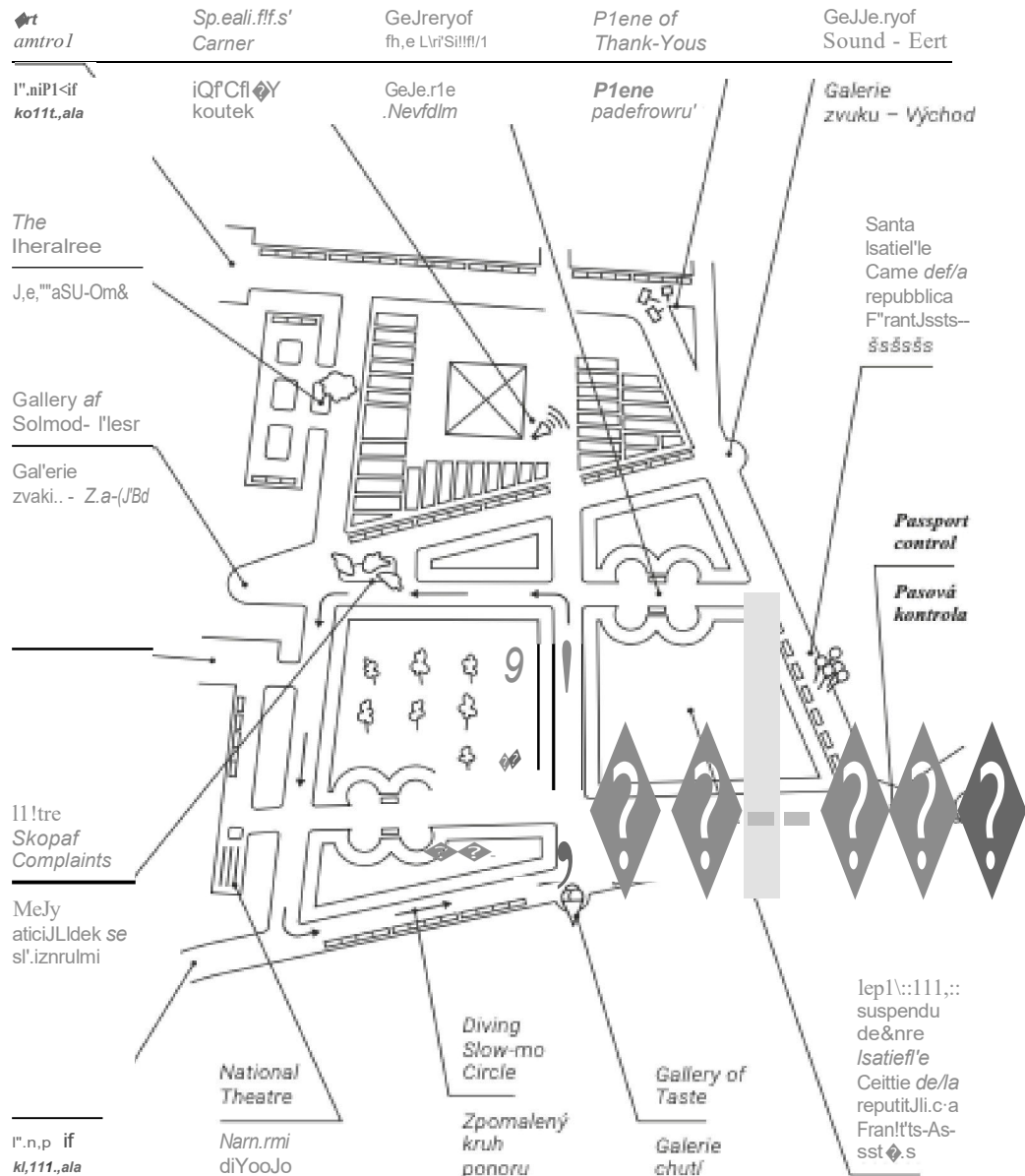
Appendix 28. Passport to the Republic that was handed out to all people on entry.

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Appendix 29. The Gallery of Sound. Republica Františššššššššš

Appendix 30. Roman Zotov-Mikshin in Speakers' Corner.

Appendix 31. Maestro Elia Moretti waters the garden with sound.

Appendix 32. Inga Zotova-Mikshina waters the gardens with sound. On the watering cans were speakers, not water.

Appendix 33. The Voice Party Manifesto Leaflet for the 2019 election.

The Voice Party Manifesto and Mission Statement

Mission Statement
The Voice Party is dedicated to transforming the political landscape of the United Kingdom by integrating the arts, especially music, into the very core of our civic life. We believe that creativity, expression, and cultural engagement are not mere luxuries but essential components of a healthy, vibrant society. Our mission is to bring harmony to politics through operatic principles, ensuring that every voice is heard, valued, and celebrated.

Manifesto

1. Political Engagement Through Music
- Music at the Core: We propose that all political discourse, debates, and campaigns be conducted through musical forms. This approach will enhance engagement, promote emotional expression, and ensure that political interactions are both meaningful and memorable.
- Voxxcoin Implementation: Introducing Voxxcoin, a new currency dedicated to supporting musical and artistic endeavors. Organizations failing to implement musical activities will be fined and the funds will support community music projects.

2. Education Reform
- Vocalized Curriculum: All subjects in schools will be taught through vocalization and musical history. Music, acoustics, and psychoacoustics will be integrated into the teaching of science and other subjects.
- Inclusive Music Education: Music lessons, inclusive and decolonized, will be mandatory for all children. Financial barriers to accessing music education will be removed, and all children will receive instruments and voice training.

3. Healthcare Integration
- Universal Music Therapy: Music therapy will be a staple in the National Health Service. Daily musical meditation and music therapy sessions will be provided in all workplaces and healthcare facilities.
- Preventative Care: More funding will be dedicated to preventative medicine, with an emphasis on the therapeutic benefits of music.

4. Cultural and Social Policy
- Creative Autonomy: Encouraging children and adults alike to find their identities through artistic pursuits rather than consumerism. Public spaces will be designed to facilitate and celebrate artistic expression.
- Musical Communities: Open borders will foster orchestral and choral communities. All immigrants and will be encouraged to contribute to the musical life of the UK upon arrival.

5. Housing and Urban Planning
- Acoustic Prioritisation: New architectural structures will prioritize acoustic excellence, enhancir being of inhabitants. Rehearsal and practice spaces will be mandatory in all new buildings.
- Soundscapes in Urban Design: Cities will be redesigned to create harmonious soundscapes, redu and promoting public musical performances.
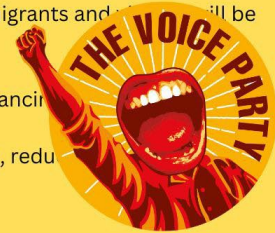
6. Economic Policy
- A-Capitalist Approach: Beyond capitalism, the Voice Party promotes an economic system where artistic and cultural contributions are valued as highly as financial ones. The Voxxcoin will facilitate transactions in the cultural sector, ensuring artists are fairly compensated.
- Support for Artists: Financial support systems for artists, musicians, and cultural workers will be established to ensure they can thrive without compromising their creativity.

7. Defense and Foreign Policy
- Defense Through Harmony: Our defense policy will leverage the power of music to resolve conflicts. We will sing our enemies into submission," using musical diplomacy to foster peace and understanding. "We will destroy evil through the power of our voices.
- Global Cultural Exchange: Promoting international cultural exchange programs to build bridges through music and the arts, fostering global peace and cooperation.

8. Government and Governance
- Musician Politicians: All politicians must undergo anonymous auditions to serve, demonstrating proficiency in at least two languages and having lived abroad for at least three years.
- Cabinet of Musicians: The government will include a cabinet of musician-ministers, each bringing their artistic expertise to their respective portfolios.

9. Community and Social Well-being
- Participatory Arts: Encouraging participatory musical performances in all aspects of daily life and politics. Community choirs, orchestras, and theatre groups will receive government support.
- Mental Health Through Music: Addressing mental health issues with a strong focus on music therapy and creative expression as healing tools.
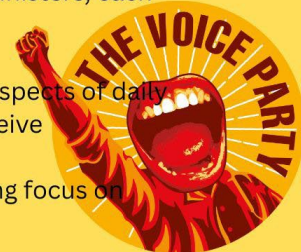
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