Nanas of Sila

A compositional reflection about an Inuit conception

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music

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Department of Music
Master for New Audiences and Innovative Practice

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Abstract

Nanas of Sila is a concert evening of southern lullabies developed in the eight following movements: The Hunt, The Death, The Confusion, The Renunciation, The Devotion, The Healing, The Return and The Transformation. It is a Performance-Composition that enhances the relationship of inside and outside. The movement oscillation, the complexity of overlapping rhythms and natures musical harmonies are traduce into the music of the human cradle. Rhythm, movement, poetry and melodies are performed by the musicians and create a landscape of the Inuit conception Sila. This project is the result of my two-year residency in Iceland, my confrontation with the Nordic nature and my encounter with the Inuit tradition. The music is a result of a larger framework “VIOLETT”. “VIOLETT” is my artistic research on the reflection on music seen as a transitory object. My personal situation, singularity and environmental experiences, orients this compositional cycle and the meaning it generates.

Keywords

Lullabies – Transitional Phenomenae – Sila –
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Dedicated to

My mother Nidia Edith De Avila Jimenez
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Music of transition

"Because we live through the memory

Of our mothers that have been weaving for us"

I. Introduction

In Vienna, during the year 2012, I started to perform more often as a solo dancer for diverse musical ensembles. At that time I was completing my second year of my BA in Rhythmics/Rhythmical Education- music and movement pedagogy. My collaborations as a musician were still very few and mostly consisted on improvisational- evenings where diverse art forms would merge. Through these performances I caught the attention of the theatre “Lalish Theater Labor- Forschungszentrum für experimentälen Kunst”. At the end of the year this theatre offered me a space to create my own performance evening. My artistic reflection led me to the encounter with the trilogy: Verde, VIOLETT and Black. This trilogy remains my work in progress.

The first presentation of Verde was in December 2012. Verde is a choreographic performance with live music that refers to one of the first themes of my artistic research “Return”. This artistic frame gave me also the opportunity to be part of the theatre’s ensemble for the next two years, further developing my creative skills. Black is the last part of the trilogy, a short film-work on the third theme of investigation “perception VS Illusion” but yet to be done.

During the summer of 2014 I started to approach through improvisation the materials of VIOLETT. VIOLETT is a framework that surrounds my reflection of music in transition, the mutation of tones and the relational space that is generated by that which we cannot hear and is full of movement and instability. This relational space I was approaching then developed into eight abstract dialogues on the subject of time. During that summer I had the opportunity to make a visit to Iceland, and I spent two weeks in the countryside thinking about my new project and about the possibility of staying longer in this Nordic country.
During my time in Vienna, Alejandro Del Valle Lattanzio curated the first showing of VIOLETT as part of a cycle of “Synesthetic Movements”. The showing took place in the culture house and concert hall for contemporary music “Alte Schmiede”, October 2014. At the same time I was applying for the European Music Master for New Audiences and Innovative Practice (NAIP) at the Iceland Academy of the Arts, in Reykjavik. During this period I was in the midst of a transition—leaving myself as a dancer and beginning to experience myself as I musician. I had found my passion and my peace in the art of music composition.

II. What is the Nanas of Sila?

The compositional cycle that will eventually develop into a Performance-Composition is the last part of a trilogy inside a trilogy. Nanas of Sila belong to third and final movement of VIOLETT. VIOLETT is the second stage of the colour trilogy “Verde, VIOLETT, Black”. These colours refer to inner manifestation of movements.

The encounter of my music with the arctic environment and with the memory created the Performance – Composition “Nanas of Sila”. Each nana (which in Spanish is a free form of lullaby) approaches a stage of dying and the process of a journey towards transformation and the redesigning of realities.

The intention of the piece is to create a sense of experience, such as when we experience weather. The audience should share a journey with the performance and this is the form that the music is contained. The elements of the musical composition are inspired by the Inuit conception of Sila and by the movement of the physical cradle we humans inhabit. Sila refers to the relationship of inside and outside, and is conceived as a spiritual body that breathes. It is for the Inuit elders a relationship to their environment. The perception of natural oscillations overlapping rhythms, symphonies of natural harmonies and evolutionary melodies are translated into eight poems of Sila and eight songs with chamber instrumentation for cello, piano, clarinet, flute, electronics and voice; in the different variations of such. The questioning of the forgotten relationship with death, the instability and the meaning of life in a primer state are also the fundamental of this compositional cycle. Through this musical project I wish to investigate the way in which the recreation of myth and stories is one first essential step towards regaining memory (archaeological thought) and recovering balance with our surrounding environment and moral intentions.
The Performance – Composition has duration of an approximated 60 minutes and varies depending of the space where it is performed. The proposal is to create a new audience by breaking the front back form of performance and listening. Through a social experience in the form of a story telling evening and an active audience, I seek to create a different sense of atmosphere and common reflection within emotional insight. The re-consideration of the symbolic relation between dying (stage of transformation) and falling asleep orients the compositional movement and the meaning it generates. The cycle of eight Nanas should be conceived as one evolutionary song.

III. Artistic development during my NAIP studies

During the first three months of my experience as a NAIP student “Death” became the theme of investigation. I could recognize death as the highest state of instability referred to by humanity, and therefore I could establish the eight dialogues on time as stages of dying and as a transformational cycle. Along with the establishing of the dialogues I also composed the first Nana: Nana No. 8 de la Transformation, the Trio “Todestanz” and the ”Kanon of yemaya” during this time. All three works are result of my reflections on Death. Also I began to explore film editing with the making of the video-dance “Remembering VIOLETT”.

In the summer of 2015, I hiked and travelled around Iceland to gather the melodies for the lullabies, and it was during this time that a friend poet introduced me to the conception of Sila. Right after, at the beginning of the fall semester I was invited to participate in the intensive workshop Konnect, which is an environmental project overarching scientists and artists. During this working week and residency at Kolsstaðir (in the “Borgafjörður” in Iceland) I began to work on the theoretical background of the Nanas, developing a series of small audio works engaging some melodies of the Sila and based on the Sustainability framework. During the following course “Sounds of nature” that followed I also developed also the audio recording “Journey” and the acoustic-electronic piece “Gebrochenes Glass II”. The combination of having developed these pieces during the first and second semester of my studies, together with the practical work, gaining experience at Ísafjörður (where I led a music and movement/ rhythmical workshop with the 1rst year BA students at the Icelandic Academy of the Arts), encouraged me to put in practice the acquired knowledge with my own reflections on time and space. I then decided to develop a basic form of the conception of Sila in a compositional evening involving students of the Iceland Academy of the Arts. The work...
and rehearsals with the musicians was a fundamental step for my artistic growth and the later development of the Nanas of Sila.

III.I The singing

The manifestation of whales came unexpectedly into my personal life. I read for the first time about the song of the whale in 2015. The idea was fascinating and I integrated it immediately into artistic thought: -A motherly singing voice that apparently transmits knowledge throughout the ocean while simultaneously creating a symphony of sound.

I was motivated to understand singing in a new perspective, and decisive to undertake a pathway of learning to sing well and train my voice. To discover a “bel canto” technique became the main core of my artistic expression during the 2 years of my NAIP studies and had enormous effect on the outcome of my compositional work.

IV. How I came to encounter the composition form Sila

Expression is a moment of presence, sometimes transcendental

And does not necessarily need to be distinguished nor identified

When I first realised that music was so infinite as the universe itself was during a conversation with my sister. She shared with me her experience attending a certain workshop for telescope amateurs. Nydia, my sister, was beginning her research of the moon maps and while doing so, decided to learn how to build her own lens. As I listened to the way she described the participants of the workshop and how they would dedicate so much time to polish their lens I suddenly understood the meaning of composition. We polish the lens; we sharpen the lens of music and are eventually able to discover a new star or phenomena of our infinite universe.

I arrived in Iceland for my first stay in February of 2015. At that time, VIOLETT was still a work in progress and the theme of my investigation. I could name the dialogues of the cycle of transformation in eight stages of dying: the hunt, death, confusion, renunciation, devotion, healing, return and transformation. I continued developing the stage performance of this cycle. Flamenco had become the visual rhythmical space of dialogue. The hexagonal form was the fundament for the rhythmical and harmonic relations of my musical visions and my perception of arctic landscapes. For the transition of a musical dialogue into the rhythmical
performance space I found the need to compose a lullaby as symbol of overpass and falling into the new state of the unknowable.

„Bodies cannot be disentangled from the cultural ways of knowing and the social practices that have shaped them, and on which they in turn impinge. It is precisely this local, historical imbrication of the real and the representational that body studies must seek to elucidate.“

As I went back to Vienna in June 2015 to present the new performance part of VIOLETT, I noticed that something was missing; I could not understand the musical whole. The environment I had been experiencing in the latest months in Iceland did not match with the context of my music. During the summer of 2015 I knew that every single dialogue had to have a lullaby, the abstract form had to relate to a very fine and natural musical form. The most natural: the form of the lullaby would, at the same time, generate a movement of oscillation.

Another aspect that was decisive for the development of this pilot project was my reflexion about forms of creation. It seemed to me as if the recreation of culture had adopted the tendency to ensure a continuity of the “old” and “antique” by maintaining images of that what is already well known. Similarly, performance seemed to recreate a reproduction of interpretations. This tendency seemed to no longer be an act of transcendence nor of evolution. The states in which we create should be re-evaluated. Here began my inclination to observe and attend the methodology of the Sila. The methodology of Sila is an attempt to give meaning to the act of creation as a physical-dynamical landscaping where the real meets the realm and where the place becomes the space of embodied knowledge.

This was the beginning of my new way of thinking, and I slowly encountered the motivation and intention of the whole that I could later understand as the dialogue of the Sila. The gesture of falling, as an act of full instability, leads to the re-consideration of the symbolic relation between dying and falling asleep and orients my compositional movement and the meaning it generates. The cycle of eight Nanas should be conceived as one evolutionary song.

The elements of the musical composition are inspired by the conception of Sila, by the movement of the physical cradle we humans inhabit and by the landscapes and the way

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1 Peter Whitridge, „Landscapes, Houses, Bodies, Things: ‘Place’ and the Archaeology of Inuit Imaginaries,“ *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 11, no. 2 (June 2004): 216.
geometries occur in the arctic. The perception of natural oscillations overlapping rhythms, symphonies of natural harmonies and evolutionary melodies are traduced in poems of *Sila* and chamber instrumentation for cello, piano, clarinet, flute, electronics and voice; in the different variations of such. The music is carved within the interrelationships of the hexagonal: “A circle of sixths in the symphony of a stone and raw earth”. The performance-composition has duration of approximately sixty minutes and varies depending on the space in which it is performed. In this artistic project the action of composing is explored as an act that regains cultural memory. The development of a new form of music transmission within a western context is the main purpose of the nanas. I also seek the transformation of music perception into a social experience and a regain of memory.

The materials of my compositional frame are, above all, the rawness of sound and then the potential of silence as a visible material: as the surrounding of the clearness; the grasping of a sound you cannot grasp. Another aspect of my compositional reflection is the perception of melodies as already existent wholes in the outside world and the “instrument composer” should only capture these. There are infinite possibilities to perceive and rediscover the universe and infinite timelines.

V. Music in transition: Transitional Phenomenae

The relational space of transitional phenomenae is the one, which is created and generated between objects in transition. Moments of transition happen as we capture the whole universe in one moment of presence and trust.

One of the very first relational rooms between human beings are lullabies, which responds to the uncertain state of a mother, who is realizing and beginning to differentiate between herself and her child. That moment where one becomes two; I am my mother, she is me and she is my mother is a chain of death and creation.

The transmission of memory begins as I mentioned before, as the mother explores the entire universe in one moment of presence and starts to differ between herself and the new human being. This happens simultaneously as the baby is establishing its own differentiation in the world. The mother has to learn to conceive herself no longer as subject but as object. This first transitional perception is the first real and natural death necessary to evolution. This is I; as he/she/it is; and is I as I am my mother. The reaction in form of a melody is nothing else but the transmission of the spirit of the things we have always known, such as the experience
of fear, love, anxiety, loss and hope, which are necessary to our survival. In many different cultures of the world have the voices that lull into sleep, expressed the tragedy of life with acute voice and lamentful melody.

“While the primary function of the lullaby is indubitably putting the infant to sleep through melodic, rhythmic movement, lullabies in many traditional societies have other no less important—that is, not secondary—functions. They may commence inculturation of the infant in musical as well as conceptual terms, and simultaneously, they may provide the mother or other female custodian such as grandmother, aunt, older sister, an outlet for the expression of emotions, anxieties, desires, and generally her world view.”

Behind the gentle-motherly nursery walls most Lullabies (especially when we refer to the southern form of the Nana) contain the seed of repressed violence and are a repeatedly reminder of the ghosts of the past (the forgotten). Besides being a metaphoric strategy, the southern Nana is a borderless form that defies logics of language and any kind of rhythmical organisation. This transitional phenomena contains a state of rebirth fundamental for the chain of continuity. Del Guidice Luisa (1988) approaches the zone of the lullabies as an “oneiric” process, a place/state where the rocking movement generates the overlapping of a mass of conscious/semi-conscious/ unconscious expressions that still remain unlikely intact from a dream state.

“One mechanism typical of the dream process is displacement through metonymy or metaphor.... The very nature of the lullaby “event” provides the natural context for the oneiric process. The rocking movement, the melodic voices often induce a state of rêverie in the mother herself, intimate moments of reflection in which profound fears and desires may surface in consciousness.”

The lulling tradition in Iceland and Greenland also shares the idea of transmitting fears and hope through the motherly singing. The melodies are also melancholic and sometimes the

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3 Factors such as the “oneiric” process or a subconscious metaphoric displacement of anxieties and desires, patterns of “falling” mimicking the descent into sleep, genre-crossover which widens the lullaby’s semantic “zones”; all these account for the structure and content of more than a few Italian lullabies. See Luisa del Giudice’s article “Ninna-nanna-nonsense? Fears, Dreams and Falling in the Italian Lullaby.” Oral Tradition 3.3 (1988): 270–293.

lyrics make reference to terrifying acts. Nature is also frequently mentioned and, in a way, represents the connection between natural and supernatural. Death and sleep also seem to take place in the same “zone” and can be interpreted in a correlation.

_Sofðu unga ástin mín,_
- úti regnið gætur.
_Mamma geymir gullin þín,_
gamla leggi og völuskrið.
_Við skulum ekki vaka um dimmar nætur._

Það er margt, sem myrkrið veit,
- minn er hugur þungur.
_Ofi ég svarta sandinn leit_
svíða grænan engireit.
Í jöklinum hljóða dauðadjúpar sprungur.

_Sofðu lengi, sofðu rótt,_
seint mun best að vakna.
_Mæðan kenna mun þér fljótt,_
meðan hallar degi skjótt,
_að mennirnir elska, missa, gráta og sakna._

Icelandic Lullaby

Ljóðið er eftir Jóhann Sigurjónsson

The falling of the conscious state into the unconscious one is a moment of high instability. In my artistic reflexion as a composer this moment “zone” is the most drastic relational space we daily confront. This “falling” happens in the lack of gravity and opens up the space (gap) for the possible re-creation. Within this space, a mutation or transformation can take place. It is interesting to underline that these two physical processes are maybe the only ones that prove the capacity of evolution. Evolution is an unexpected/unpredictable movement just as the weather is, and happens in a very high state of instability and lack of control.
“The singing of a lullaby is thus at the same time a remembrance of what persists in abstract form and a constant remembrance of what has been forgotten, of the shadow itself, the words that lack into what now is wordless – they are a reminder of an absence that cannot be reached but by indirect, affective means.”

The spirit of Sila is an invisible movement and refers in this same way to the dialogue between inside-outside; the relational space of trust and memory. It can also be seen as a “dynamic zone” where the acknowledgement and also the transmission of the things we will always know happen. These things are necessary to our survival and are released in a moment of continuity, as a “falling” into one whole body that breathes. So a moment of transmission of memory takes place in the invisible, in the instable, with the things we cannot name and happen through the capacity of trust. Transitional objects are a matter of trust. In the various and richness of textures and colours, the human voice capable of recognizing and reflecting the movement of the cosmic dialogue, Sila: the humming of a mother to accompany her child towards one of the most drastic changes of the human mind setting or state—from being awake to falling asleep—is the innermost need of the Soul.

Another fundamental idea, that gives source to the compositional musical form for the Nanas, is to understand and listen to the overlapping rhythms of “cradle,” which, in their own complexity, are the companions of ancient melodies. The movement of the oscillation is a consequence of nature’s orbit cycles. Collin and Webb write on the “symphony of climate” and explain how oceans and atmosphere are steered by Earth’s rotation. The planet’s mode of complex -relational oscillations creates complicated harmonies and multiple interconnected feedback and loops. This complex can be seen as the metabolism of the earth, and its eccentric rhythm is the fundamental.

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VI. Inuit Memoryscapes

For the Inuit, among many other ancient cultures of the world, the heart is the core of the rhythm of life; “from here the eternal pulsating beats emanate and branch off to the rest of the body, return to seek new life and begin all over again. This is the eternal cycle of life, this is the world seen in the microcosm, this is the basic rhythm of Man and life in its simplest form. It is the elementary, basic conditions breathing and which, combined with the voice, the song and the body’s movement, forms the artistic creativity of every man. It constitutes a natural and necessary part of every man’s movement in harmony with life, as a natural as the eternal breaking waves, the murmuring river and the whispering wind.”

The Greenlandic Inuit sustain an oral tradition. The people themselves recognise the singing, the drum dancing and story telling as patrimonial heritage. The Mask dance is also a unique form of their tradition. Documentations, archives and writing belong to the modern Greenland, which is build up through the Danish impact on the language. For centuries they maintained their culture of continuous adaptation through their artistic heritage. It is important to highlight that the history of this culture can only been seen as a collectiveness of the many cultures of the arctic and their migrations in the North. The continuous movement of the Inuit, during the Thule era, developed into memory landscaping called “memoryscape” which is a kind of mnemonic process that has been transmitted through generations and is also a transitional and transformative way of knowing. A state of continuous adaptation is equal to the state of evolution. In this state temporality becomes just the manifestation of a dynamic relation between the past the present and the future. The Inuit ethnographies where a combination of the imaginaries and the temporal landscape in which they continuously re-adapted. The mapping of places would represent a relation of navigation, harvesting and spirituality. Meaningful places would become meaningful times and would be named according to an experience. The illustrations of space would also be represented as a complex four-dimensional hybrid (journey) based on the real the ideal, the natural and the cultural. The scales would represent the relation of space-time as an inwards-outwards movement indicated for geographic knowledge and practice. Through out time the Greenlandic Inuit developed an extraordinary accurate sense of navigation and sense of spatiality. Spatiality became the

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7 Ole Jørgensen, „Soul, beautify thyself: The INUIT of Alaska, Canada and Greenland“ Klim (Denmark 2008).
8 Mask dance is the traditional bodily technique, which is a combination of physical theatre and dance. The dancer learns to develop the artistic expression throughout the understanding of fertility, fear and clowning. The dancer is also responsible for how the mask is created. Amulets, costumes, also, red, black and white colourings belong to the performance.
dialogue of evolution and survival, a biophysical experience based on the things they would see and the ones that were in their memories.

"The map served as a mnemonic device during the relating of stories or the description of intended routes, for the outline drawn in the sand or snow was unimportant when compared with the names and stories given as various locations were reached in the drawing process. The progressive drawing of the map recalled the features in the mind of the narrator, and the naming fixed them in the memory of his observer."⁹

VII. The cartography of the Nanas of Sila: The body of Sila: a state of space

Physicality, for life; spirituality, for eternity

Umberto Eco

As I was flying for the first time from Reykjavík to Nuuk, two relevant things happened. The first one was that 20 min before departure, while sitting at the gate almost ready to board, the Keflavik airport was entirely evacuated. After such a particular and exhausting procedure, we where finally able to board. The second being, that on board I found my seat next to Aleqa. Aleqa was the first Greenlandic woman, Inuit decent, to become Prime Minister and is currently member of the parliament in Denmark. She asked me about my interest in her land, and I immediately asked if she knew about the Sila. Her response was: Yes! And continued with determination, while knitting socks for her newborn niece: *Sila is the Cosmos, the intelligence; the centre of the mind and the weather; and everything is interconnected.*

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10 It is relevant to acknowledge that the conception of Sila is currently fading away in the modern Greenland. The younger generations only understand under Sila the translation of „weather“*. This is one of the many culture heritages that is disapering.
The original inspiration for Sila arose from the conclusion that life itself was in fact the breath—the Sila—and that when the Sila was drawn into the body, it was alive and animated. Rachel Qitsualik says that in time, Sila took on the form of an “incorporeal power” that manifested itself in breath, weather, and the power behind the world’s movements.

“Sila, for the Inuit, became a raw life force that lay over the entire Land; that could be felt as air, seen as the sky, and lived as breath.”  

The Inuit philosophy of life is connected with their environmental conditions and they do not distinguish between the supernatural and the natural. K. Rasmussen writes about humans being subject to the mysterious, inexplicable force Sila. Sila is a spiritual, shamanistic and moral conception that remains in the daily language among Inuit elders. It is conceived as “wisdom” of a constant movement that devolves through the conception of a dialogue between the outside cosmical intentions and moral human acts. In contrast to climate research, translations of Sila as weather, ethnographies of Inuit conceive of Sila as a spiritual power that is related to the weather and also described as the spirit of the air. According to the Inuit the world was divided in two parts: The visible world, Sila, which everyone could see, and the invisible world, Silap Aappaa, which only shamans with clear-sight and inner light could see. The two worlds are interconnected. Now, humans can pass out and loose their Sila. When there is damage to someone’s Sila, they becomes ill and loses her balance. The Sila can be threatened by disorder and confusion of categories, among others sea and land, as well as birth and death. This is the reason, why humans should keep to their traditions, taboos and customs in order to maintain the cycle and balance of the world.

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“Being haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our own will and always a bit magically, into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge, but as transformative recognition.”

Avery Gordon,

This belief of the one spirit that breathes, and contains the all, has been traduced since ancient times throughout all cultures of the world and belongs also to the western conception of life. It is the thought of a body that unifies all existing matter and refers to the universal law of order. The Greek philosopher Tales de Miletus suggested that water is the primary form, which all else is derived. Newtown showed that gravity is universal. Albert Einstein unified space and time, and eventually joined together matter and energy. Modern physics have developed the irrefutable Core Theory. The process of Unification goes further into the human beliefs and artistic expression. Hinduism philosophers believe that Brahman is the ultimate reality. In Norse mythology the world tree Yggdrasíl served as a symbol for a dynamic cosmos. The Zen culture believes that all things are one, and none has an immutable identity. The change is therefor the proof of life. The Kybalion is a text that studies the hermetic tradition of the ancient Egypt and Greece and describes the idea of the principle of correspondence. This principle refers to the “Above and “below”, how the inner world mirrors the outer, and how all individual things underline the one Unitary Source, “the many are one”. We can find many references of this conception in western literature. For example in the nineteenth century the American poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson writes about the “over-soul” and puts beautifully into words this movement of the one: With each divine impulse the mind rends to the thin rinds of the visible and finite and comes out into eternity and inspires and expires its air.

The movement of the one soul is for the many the law of moral, physical and mental gain and just like the Sila a multidimensional reality. The purpose is to grow awareness.

It is not uncommon for diverse non-western cultures to manifest their spiritual awareness throughout their relationship towards the creatures that mostly influence and that have impact on the social and culture community development. The Greenlandic Inuit concept of Sila is especially interesting for me because it relates at the same time to whales. Inuit hunters maintained a strong spiritual relationship towards the whales, as whaling used to be performed in form of a ritual. The hunters would dress in their best clothing and ask their wives to remain indoors in complete darkness until the men returned with the catch. Also
whale amulets would be necessary for the housing. This relation has been difficult to trace in modern ways of Whalers. It seems to be disappearing from the daily knowledge and remains possibly only in certain myths and stories, of seal and whale hunters.

Whales are known for being one of the only species that have an extraordinary developed sense of collective “Self”. A single cohesive unit is activated in their brains for a numerous group of whales. This species also seems to relate to the environment with the creation of sound, specifically with the vocalisations and continues melodically sequences that they produce. A new born Calf learns to move in the ocean accompanied by the song of mother that lets him know that he is not alone. The song of the whale is highly complex and the reason for it’s cause is still uncertain. But the fact that the singer whales adopt a certain position and remain steady during the vocalisations shows the value and importance of this act.

As we know that all information is and moves in form of a wave, and that the measures of waves have infinite variables it is not extraordinary to understand that the transmission of a whales singing could be the transmission of spatial knowledge. This musical wave is believed to be evolving melodically for millions of years through out the generations and has created simultaneously the substantial music of the ocean.

*Place is an intersection of the real and the realm, the effect of the movement of thought and practice*

All levels of existence have a very strong physicality and can also help to understand the meaning of the body of *Sila*. The human consciousness moves in physical ways such as sound travels through the universe. Sound is movement as movement is light, as light is life. Every single image is at the same time an identity of sound. And because the sound is evolution of a variables set of waves, it becomes a function of a single independent variable called time.

The process that I went through to develop the Nanas of *Sila*, was the one of being lulled into an archaeological thought and therefor to define a dimension where the narrative of the spirit of *Sila* could happen. The form I chose to maintain a system of entropy (body) was the geometrical hexagon.
This pattern goes back to the crystal structure of hexagonal lava columns that carve the landscape of the arctic. The icy earth of the north seems to break and create a song of the “self”. It unifies the prism of the mind and of the mother earth. This pattern becomes also a tesseract, which is a cubical in the 4th dimension, and shows the movement of inward becoming outward becoming inward and repeatedly so on forever. The various textures of the spirit of Sila manifest an eternal transformation in which landscape is internal and external at the same time.
The perception of nature in its rawness gave inspiration to the in-outside relations of the Nanas of Sila. It is the combination of the observation of nature and my inner visions that have created this system, which has no further intention then to realise creation as a state of perception.

This form also creates a series of interrelations that move eventually in mechanical ways. The performer throughout a ritual of detachment and degree of freedom and instability should reach authenticity within harmonic and physical relations. The performer is encouraged to act in organic and efficient manners.

The hunt is the first Nana of the cycle and the last one I composed. The rhythmical pattern of the left hand in the piano part persists almost during the whole score. This pattern symbolizes the calling into the state of the unknown. It works together with the voice in a poly-rhythmical relation. The singing melody represents the arrow of a hunter aiming at his prey. This piece is inspired in the identity of the number seven situated at the centre of the hexagonal form. The character of this number is of the one of the “observer” who interconnects the change of the tesseract and of the hexagonal form. The melodic motive refers in the same way, to the hexagonal, a sixth that resolves into a diminished fourth.
During the entire composition cycle, aspects of polyrhythmic are essential for the resemblance of the movement of the weather.
“The Devotion” (Nana No. 5), is an example for the use of polyphonic techniques, which would represent a dance.
The healing

licht und schatten singt er-de sei ge-heilt
ro-ha kra-bbelt hin sie

flus-tert sanft lie-be soll es-sein lieb-ster sei ge-heilt
Another important aspect to describe the music of the nanas is that the time coordinates, in which a certain instrument or voice, are situated give the whole sense to the harmonic and rhythmical intentions..

*The mind can zoom to any scale, from the microscopic to the cosmological, and find each level richly detailed and inexhaustible to thought*

_Peter Whitridge_

The Performance – Composition Nanas of Sila intends to investigate the mechanics of the _human instrument artist_ and the way we can re-create in a space (place) of embodiment. The physical reality is the focus of this research. The performance refers to the degree of freedom within a state of equilibrium. The equilibrium is the musical and poetical score. The embodiment in music performance occurs mainly in moments of „physical-mechanical“ falling (into a new state). These moments can be seen as an improvisational act or as a state of re-adaptation for the musicians. The re-adaptation is the aspect that I would like explore in my future practice and investigate the elements of entropy, inertia, energy and exergy in the human instrument. Time can be studied as a mechanical system and the simplest expression of mechanical archetypes is the harmonic oscillator, which can possibly serve to introduce a geometrical description of the dynamics in a state space and inspire new the dimension in which a set of variables happens.

I find it import to study this aspect in a musical performance, because musicians do not seem to pay attention to the infinite possibilities of the trajectories of music. According to Ingarden, in his work on “The work of music and its Problem of Identity”, there are three points to consider in the ontology of music:

1) There is an enduring musical score, which, however, does not constitute the musical experience, and, indeed is not even part of that experience.

2) There is the potentially infinite sets of performances, each a distinct and unique musical experience, but however deriving from the authority of the score.

3) None is judged the absolute, faultless, genuine embodiment of the score.
The intention of the scores lies in the domain and acts of embodiment of performers and of the listeners, and remains imperfect because of the nature and constitution of the world. I believe the only possible way to begin to approach this terrain, is with the work of memory, by this meaning, the translation of mnemonic processes in the musical performance.

The analysis of my own work has finally led me to the matter of my future research and to the following questions: Is entropy a manifestation of dynamical memory, of a continuous state of adaptation of the realm and the real? How does the remembrance affect simultaneously the actual perception? Where are the extensions to the realm? How do you react to music without any intention, but as a matter of mechanical harmonies? Is a performance able to trace cartographies of memory? To adapt the Nanas of Sila in a four-dimensional Performance by this, integrating the above and below, the inner-outer and the movement that surrounds these dimensions is the next step to be done.

The Research is to be seen as a ritual of practice. To discover the mechanics of the human artist requires the analysis of the balance of Intention-Non-Intention and the study of archaeology of senses and perception. Also it enquires the re-interpretation of the space. The challenge lies in the translation of language that apparently remains as a shadow of knowledge.
I believe I belong to a stream of thinking where the use of space gives the sound a metaphorical meaning. My personal concern as a physical performer and as a composer is the physicality of the human instrument in a multidimensional way. The proposal of the work Nanas of Sila is to create in a state of detachment, whereas movement is result of the natural mechanics of being. This idea has been adapted into to the act of composing and later by the act of performing. The analysis comes from the fundamental thinking that nature moves in the most efficient way. Efficiency is a property of nature (entropy.) Even thou organic systems manifest themselves in a high complexity (state of chaos) they remain organised. Instability is a property of natural events in a higher state of energy and gives place also to authentic and sometimes unpredictable acts. The use of the dynamical memory, as I mentioned before is the dialogue between inside outside, where the movement becomes the metaphor. It is a continuum; a state of place of something not to be distinguished, is not differentiable and just like an improvisational dance has been the movement of our evolution. Every single musical note is bound to a part of the body as well as every melodic, harmonic and rhythmic shifting, without the knowledge of its power, affects the positions of our nature and we find ourselves deformed in a manifestation of the mechanics of the human instrument artist.

“The body is the mediating vehicle that drives and makes possible the “process of turning physical energy into action-relevant and, as a consequence, action-intended ontology.”12 In this view, mediation, either by way of body movements and embodied interactions, or by artificial mediation technologies, is necessary because ideas or mental representations have somehow to be transferred “into a material or energetic form.”13
IX. A new wave of thought

The journey of going into a world of music composition has been one great experience, but to put into words the fundamentals of the travels and the discoveries was a big challenge for me.

At the beginning, answers seemed to appear in every single detail from my daily life, in my conversations, my groceries and in every book I would open. How to explain it was the problem. After a long period of reading all sorts of things and coming apparently to scientific conclusions it was clear to me that I belong to a wave of thinking and that my thinking and perception is result of the time and space I inhabit. This is logical, but also fascinating to realise that a personal search is a manifestation of a bigger movement and that there are so many humans thinking at the same time the same thing for no real reason. We cannot isolate ourselves from our time no matter how hard we try.

Modern science shows us that everything is part of a big idea of Being and that particles and atoms overlap in exceptional ways. Thought and Information is a wave. To measure it and capture specific waves was the beginning of all modern communication technologies. Motion of waves gave me the answer and led me to understand a wave of human thought. A wave that evolves throughout time and is equal to a whale song. The Aristotle idea of cause implanted in our traditional western mind has finally found its limits with modern physics. The modern idea of Inertia and Motion put in consideration the absence of cause and remain infinite. The eternal impulse of life without cause is fundamental for our present human era.

More often I bump into colleagues and listen repeatedly the same concern and worries. Finding meaning to the act of performance or being a performer is a problem for many and mostly within traditional aesthetics. Of course the sense of cause has generally changed, and if the idea of expressing oneself changes the actual form and frame of art has to develop towards it. Many artists feel the need to evolve the form and I am one of the many. My needs have become the sense of my creative work. Poetic naturalism is a stream where I can contextualise my work and according to the author and physician Sean Carroll comes down to three things:

- There is only one world, the natural world.
- The world evolves according to unbroken patterns, the laws of nature.
- The only reliable way of learning about the world is by observing it.
The poetical part comes as Carroll points out when we start talking about it:

- There are many ways of talking about the world
- All good ways of talking must be consistent with one another in the world
- Our purposes in the moment determine the best way of talking

It seems that Poetic Naturalism relates to the idea of art creation in one fundamental thing: the essence of something lies within the way of telling about it! Telling a story is all we have to do. Meaning is found in the movement of thought, rather than in the thought or idea itself. Nature evolves and transforms constantly, infinitely and will never exhaust our attention or the need to reflect on it. We will always find new ways of narrating.

Therefore the meaning of motion is found within the observer: The one steady point without dimension that creates the movement of the pendulum.

My personality during my MA NAIP has developed in two strong directions: the creator and the researcher. I have found during my practice in creative matters the need to revaluate many aspects of it. Innovative practice develops throughout innovative thought. So the need to intensify my skills and artistic development has encouraged me to proceed further within an academically frame my investigation and aim towards further studies. Navigation in bodily, mental and cultural entities will be explored and the inspiration for the development of my new artistic framework: The time travellers.
X. Bibliography


Wildlife: A Humpback Whale’s Song - Documentary Films, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEC3GWOdMxs