

Master Thesis

Contrasting Intent, Content and Effect:

Music Theory and Audience Experience of '*På tide
å komma heim no. Heilt heim.*'

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Abstract

This study takes a deep dive into the music of the commercial in the title to explore the relationship between musical intention, theoretical analysis and audience experience. To this end the study utilized a music-oriented content analysis primarily structured by the BRECVEMA framework of musical emotion, a qualitative interview with the composer, and a pseudo-experimental small-scale design that culminates in semi-structured qualitative interviews with 6 participants. Notable findings include: The composer was more intuitively oriented than reliant on music theory; Music can be comforting even when coupled with something uncanny; While functional for analysis, BRECVEMA translates poorly into qualitative interviews as different effects easily blend; The fit of the music was important to both composer and audience.

Introduction

The concern of this project was to examine functional music in media, particularly in a commercial. The overarching question concerned the relationship between musical intention, theoretical analysis and audience experience. I take interest in inspiration, which I regard to be a phenomenological concept, experienced to the same effect as either internal or external, which is reflected in the orientation of the study to the research questions. In media music, what is attempted is to inspire either a response or a *kind* of response in the audience. As a composer, I wanted to explore how this relates to music theory.

To investigate this, the study took a three-fold multi-method approach in the following order: To get at the musical content of the commercial and to inform the consequent components I conducted a music-theory based qualitative content analysis of the commercial *På tide å komma heim nå. Heilt heim.* (Ryfylke Trelast, 2019) To explore the composer and the productions' intentions and goals and provide a broader knowledge-basis for the final component, I then conducted an interview with the commercial's composer. Finally, six qualitative interviews were conducted in a pseudo-experimental setting to get a picture of its experiential effects. These methods combined are used to answer four research questions: 1) How is the purpose of music in the commercial treated and perceived by the creative minds behind it? 2) Are the production's goals, as articulated by the composer, identifiable through music theory-based content analysis? 3) How were the production's goals, as articulated by the composer, reflected in the participants' reported experience? 4) In which ways did effects implied by the music theoretical content analysis of the commercial manifest in the participants' reports? In answering these questions with a comprehensive analysis of one instance of the line from composer through music theory to audience response, it is my hope to contribute to our understanding of how music theory is used, successfully or otherwise, in media around us, which is of interest to both its creators and its audience in respective ways.¹

¹ When I write, I seek to uphold standards of academic rigor, clarity and stringency without foregoing play.

Previous Research

A cursory overview of the literature suggests that while the semiotics of music have been investigated thoroughly (see for example *Signs of music*, 2002, by Eero Tarasti) it is surprisingly difficult to find analyses or research that compare a production's intent with the production's results in terms of music. That being said, some similar studies were found. Most notably, Thorsen (2008) asked the same question but oriented it towards his own composition. The insights into intentions as well as ready-made overview of the musical structure this affords his analysis is immense, but it prevents a comparison to the actual content of the production/music due to the difficulties in rigorously evaluating one's own work. Moreover, his study did not investigate intentions relating to music in the context of a broader production, with no visual components to speak of.

Concerts and performances necessarily involve productions of some sort. Bratlie (2016) as well as Gabrielsson and Juslin (1996) investigated intentions (or as Bratlie put it, "ideas") in performances and how those related to the audience. Respectively, Bratlie looked at the success of a Norwegian concert-organization in producing the desired experiences for school-concerts, whereas Gabrielsson and Juslin were concerned with musicians' emotion-coding of their performances and the audience's ability to decode the performances. Neither study investigated intentions at the level of the music being performed. There is also the notable difference between a live-performance and recorded sequences of sounds and images. Given their similarities, Bratlie and Thorsen's studies may be methodologically relevant.

Discussions of music that "moves us" - the experience I hold to be central to the phenomenology of inspiration - are many (Guldbrandsen & Varkøy (2004) features several from the perspectives of various composers), and psychological research has found that atonal music generates fear responses in non-expert listeners, specifically fear bradycardia (lower heart rate) and increased blood pressure (Alice Mado et al., 2015). However, this research investigates responses to atonal music in relation to classical tonal music, which is far from the entire spectrum of musical possibilities. Additionally, it does not investigate music in a multimedia setting, so while it might indicate one music theory-based effect that might be found in for example a commercial, it far from exhausts the topic.

Beyond music, it has been found that individuals who score highly in need for affect experience more negative and ambivalent emotions and more positive meta-emotions ("*evaluative thoughts and feelings about one's emotions*") as a consequence of watching

horror and drama films (Bartsch, Appel, & Storch, 2010). While predictable, this also demonstrates that there are factors beyond music that feed into the audience response.

Propaganda, by most definitions, takes “moving people” to an extreme, and frequently employs music to this end. In her review, Curnalia (2005) provides an argument for the reintegration of the old paradigm of propaganda studies in modern theorizing, but she also covers definitions. While increasingly focused on the systematic and strategic elements of large-scale propagandizing, definitions of propaganda that orient themselves towards individual items of propaganda discuss their qualities. Of particular interest, she cites Lee (1952) in saying that propaganda uses “*combinations of words personalities, music, drama, pageantry and other symbols... [that are] frequent and charged with emotion. They may be wholly or partly true, confusing or false.*” Unfortunately, while acknowledged it does not appear that music was considered in any depth.

Perhaps alleviating this somewhat, it has been found that intensely emotional or “chills”-evoking music, “moving” music, in audio-visual advertisements tends to make people less inclined to infer manipulative intent (if there are some indicators of it), and more inclined to for example give money – apparently based on affect, not cognition (Strick, de Bruin, de Ruiter & Jonkers, 2015). Bordering on (small-scale) propaganda, this study of music in advertisements makes it clear that music is indeed relevant, as people have long thought.

However, while music is relevant, research on music in the context of consumer behavior and advertisements is mixed according to Morris and Boone (1998), who provide a useful overview of the literature regarding this research. These mixed results may follow from the sheer complexity of the matters at hand. As they write in their conclusion after analyzing the effects of music on the variables of pleasure, arousal, dominance, brand attitude and purchase intent: “*Music alone was not a significant enough factor to drastically increase any of the five dependent variables. However, when deciding whether to use background music with an advertisement, just considering whether the music significantly increased or decreased purchase intent should not be the sole consideration.*” They then point to the matter of whether the music “fits”, itself a complex matter.

Using conceptual blending theory, Antović (2018) recently delved into the theoretical side of how music persuades, arguing that the meaning it produces is an emergent phenomenon. However, the focus of his theorizing is on established music (blends) being

applied to new contexts, with only brief summaries of what in the music might blend with what is on screen - amplifying or contrasting it.

Theoretical approach

Philosophically, this article follows the critical realist paradigm with the observation that natural selection is bound to create patterns in sensory processing, not allowing us to monitor reality *as such*, but reality in a way that is conducive to our evolutionary “purpose” (what our genes are selected for), as an interface for effectively interacting with our surroundings. This has implications for phenomenology and the constructivist paradigm in which every individual builds his own understanding of the world through interacting with portions of it and processing its responses. Specifically, it would suggest that while we are active interpreters of experience, the machinery by which we interpret experience is a product of natural selection and therefore prewired in certain ways. In *How the mind works* (1997), Pinker discusses some that have been documented under the name “intuitive theories”. More recently, Haidt (2012) discusses innateness (like that of intuitive theories - in his case: of morality), combining two citations from Gary Marcus’ *The Birth of the Mind* (2004) to say “*Nature provides a first draft, which experience then revises... “built-in” does not mean unmalleable; it means “organized in advance of experience”.*” With this in mind, this article adds a caveat to phenomenological inquiry in the context of constructivism; that there are patterns to the interpretations humans make, some of which may be inferred by consulting evolutionary theory, specifically evolutionary psychology.² This is to say nothing about the validity or the reliability of any data produced from qualitative interviews focused on the audience’s experience, but to suggest that carefully conducted qualitative interviews might garner a culturally situated example of how the book of the innate has been revised. Unfortunately, while a large-scale analysis would be a much preferable contribution in this sense, that is simply not feasible for a master thesis, with the necessarily limited scope the format requires.

Chion (1994) made a landmark contribution to the analysis of film music as well as sound more generally in providing a vocabulary for such discussions. It might be said that his concept of *added value* is what is to be investigated in this study, with reference both to the intended value of the music in a scene, and the value experienced by audience members. As *added value* comes from more than music, this requires some method of isolation of the musical elements, and consequently a clear distinction between music and sound. Given the

² While only tangential context to this thesis, it is central to what I consider my larger project: to develop an understanding of the humanities that is evolutionarily sound.

aims of the study, the method of isolation may differ for the various parts; Allowing informants to themselves determine what they find to be music as opposed to just sound would least constrain their phenomenological accounts. Moreover, our brains cannot be expected to make that distinction immediately and may treat some music as sounds and vice versa. However, for the purposes of content analysis a definition may be necessary.

As it is, basic definitions of music, amounting to “organized sound”, would not distinguish between the scored music and the rest of the soundtrack for a film. More sophisticated definitions usually include further elements that are distinctly musical in nature, such as the organized sounds’ timber, period, tone and rhythm.

In discussions of film music and emotion, an influential theoretical work is *Movie Music as Moving Music* (1999) by Jeff Smith. Smith argues for a unification of cognitivist and emotivist thought on the topic (the former proposing that music through conventions tells us how to respond emotionally to the music, thereby making cognition a mediator. The latter that music – sometimes – directly arouses emotional responses) under a primarily cognitivist framework. When discussing thinkers who argue that emotion in music is vague, ineffable or non-existent (itself a broad range of opinions), he notes that most of these claims discuss it in relation to pure music, whereas film music, due to its relationship to the relevant film, is better understood as program music (that is, music structured to tell a story of some specificity, originally accompanied by brief texts that explain what elements in the music signify), accompanying a representational art and therefore capable of intentionally creating a context. In doing this, he contends that he sidesteps objections from “ineffabilists and formalists” (p. 152).

Smith then proceeds to delve into two processes held to be central to a phenomenological account of musical cognition: polarization (where the music moves the emotional meaning of the scene towards a “pole”) and affective congruence (where the appraisal of aspects – music, narrative context etc. of the scene amplify each other, becoming “more than the sum of its parts”). Here, he faces criticism, notably from Sim (2013), who points out, among other things, that cognitivist models tend to assume “too little, and [to underestimate] the emotional range of what films can express” (p.310). With various examples, Sim points out that these two processes cannot account for the complexities and the diversity of the emotional “appeals” films make to their viewers (p. 316). Moreover, both processes appear to presuppose “filmic expression of emotions on single registers” (p.317), something Sim suggests is a methodological tendency of the cognitivist approach to the topic.

On the topic of emotions and music, Juslin (2013) provides a helpful fundament for understanding the apparent complexity, which is also grounded in assumptions following from evolutionary theory. The paper, aiming to provide and argue for a revision to the established framework known as BRECVEM (Brain stem reflex, Rhythmic entrainment, Evaluative conditioning, Contagion, Visual imagery, Episodic memory and Musical expectancy) by adding A (-esthetic judgment) is extensive. Among the things its argument lay out is the degree to which the different levels of arousal that the parts of the (~~admittedly awkward~~) acronym refer to are likely to be influenced by cultural factors. For example, music that triggers brain stem reflexes, like Haydn's famous symphony no. 94 (the "surprise" symphony) generally involved in responding to things that warrant immediate response, should not be particularly influenced by culture – or whether the music is identified as such. Even for an intentionally culturally limited investigation like the one of this study, BRECVEMA and Juslin's paper seems a sound starting position.

BRECVEMA may be understood as a framework of analysis building on Cognitive Psychology, that is, a field that takes "a constructivist approach to experience, [assuming that] the brain [is] modular (separate modules are in charge of specialistic operations) and [that] the mind [operates] in a way similar to a computer: it elaborates the raw data collected through the senses by applying schemata, prototypes, heuristics, and inferential routines" (Audissino, 2017, p. 69). As the mechanisms that comprise the acronym suggest, this kind of approach tends to investigate mechanisms one at a time. By contrast, a Gestalt Psychology-oriented approach would focus on the way in which the different elements come together as a whole. For example, by looking at micro/macro configurations, which – seemingly regardless of emotivist or cognitivist orientation³ – let music contribute to our experience of a film (and vice versa) by fusing with other cinematic elements, to produce a whole that is something else than the sum of its parts (Audissino, 2017). Echoing Chion, the whole in the context of film consists of both auditory elements and visual elements and is thus audiovisual. It may therefore warrant at least some consideration for the visual elements accompanying the music to get at what the music provides. Audissino informs readers that the contribution of micro/macro configurations largely echoes Smith's affective congruence and polarization

³ Unfortunately, cognition, musical cognitivists, cognitive psychology and cognitive science refer to different things. There is most overlap between the latter two. Whereas cognition is the means through which cognitivists believe music produces emotion, Cognitive Psychology is probably best understood as a subdivision of Cognitive Science, which concerns how thinking works while drawing on knowledge and speculation from several disciplines. ~~Thankfully, none of the above have anything to do with ethical cognitivism.~~

aside from Smith's context of cognitivism and singular focus on emotion-related effects (Audissino, 2017, p. 85). With a gestalt-oriented approach, it is noted, one is looking for isomorphic elements between music and visuals. Moreover, when similar musical elements occur in very different contexts, they become isomorphic to other visual elements. Thus, while potentially informative, the relativity of auditory elements to visual elements and vice versa means that effects identified through a Gestalt-orientation generally should not be attributed to the music itself, though they may still be conscious choices made by the composer and/or the production.

In the context of cognitive science, the Gestalt approach can be understood as a form of relevance realization (Vervaeke & Ferarro, 2013), which might be said to be the fundamental problem of cognitive science, and, perhaps disturbingly, seems to map on to what is called general intelligence. As a product of natural selection, relevance realization is theoretically compatible with the cognitive psychology that postulates various mechanisms governing different responses, as it appears to be through the interplay of such mechanisms within an internal bioeconomy that this capacity develops. This perspective on the Gestalt, the whole that can be sensed but not completely captured, also explains how, through a process of relevance realization, a sudden insight (reformulation of the problem/reconfiguration of the model used to understand the Gestalt) can yield the Aha!-moments associated with it (Audissino, 2017, p 80).

Together with the BRECVEMA framework, Gestalt-based analysis may produce valuable additions to a musical theory of affect as it concerns use in media. For the sake of comprehensiveness, other effects, such as the possibility of conceptual blending playing a part through quotation (or perhaps, choice of instrumentation), will also be considered, though their relevance is not a given.

Discussing the relationship of music theory, the production's intentions and the production's effects cannot be done without some comprehension of music theory. However, music theory is not really one thing. It is anything but a unified theory, but rather several ways in which musicologists, composers and musicians understand music. Some delve into normative claims, while others remain purely descriptive. Some propose ways of writing music down, and others propose ways of reading the written music. Some are concerned with scales and patterns, others with expression and affect. To make matters more complex, it has developed in various schools with different orientations throughout history, as any book on the history of music can explain in more detail. Drawing on the Oxford Companion for Music,

Wikipedia (which is admittedly taboo in academic circles) provides an elegant definition: “*Music theory is the study of the practices and possibilities of music.*” (Wikipedia, 2020). Wikipedia also correctly points out, as I have above, that music theory is not so much one thing as a name for (at least) 3: Standards for music notation, the history of scholarly views of music, as well as the musicological affair of identifying processes and principles in music.⁴ (This is not to say that the above are not related; It is for example difficult to discuss principles of music without some knowledge of the history of thought on the topic, or without notation to illustrate it.) Of these, it is primarily principles of music (and necessarily the capacity to recognize them through sound) that concerns this study.

Due to the complexities of what is called music theory, it is anything but obvious what principles will prove relevant to analysis. It may be mostly a matter of the musical Gestalt, identified by a trained intuition. Still, the (musical) doctrine of the affects from the baroque period may be worth mentioning, as it could reflect on certain choices composers make, be they intuitively or consciously. Briefly, the doctrine concerns itself with musical choices that indicate various affects. Johann Mattheson wrote about the different choices and affects in 1739. For example, he argues that joy is best expressed with large intervals, that small intervals best express sadness, and that pompous, majestic and ascending figures indicate arrogance (Mattheson, 1981). As a counterpoint, it is commonly thought today that large intervals, being hard to sing accurately, and (especially when bigger than an octave) difficult to place, sound intense and dramatic more than joyful – more than they express a particular emotion. (It may well be that joy is indeed what they “best” express, even if they can express much more than just joy.) However, the doctrine of the affects has had centuries to ingrain itself into the traditions of western music, and an intuitive, updated form of it could influence both decision-making in the creation of film music and the audience’s response; Things like this do not simply go away.⁵

⁴ Somehow Wikipedia turned out to be the best accessible source on this topic. As it is not vital, and merely supplies a definition that I vouch for, I hope this will not become a problem.

⁵ This is a point about cultural evolution that critics of the concept rarely understand: The evolution people discuss in the context of natural selection is qualitatively different from the evolution of a child into an adult, or from single-celled organism to multi-celled organisms like ourselves. Single-celled organisms still exist today, as do animals whose evolutionary niche fit their phenotypic expressions well, like sharks. They exist alongside more recent products of natural selection that fill different niches because they can. The same is true for units of cultural evolution, transmitted through mimesis. Natural selection operates far faster on cultural units; as fast as we can imitate and demonstrate, speak, read and write. To disappear, the niche must be filled by something more competitive in relevant ways in every place where the likeness of the cultural unit (which, having to go from one

mind's understanding through another's interpretation to replicate in a curious parallel to sexual reproduction, is anything but clear-cut) exists at once. This does not happen all that often, much less when we consider that the cultural units can be adapted to new contexts, too, uncovering new niches to fill and thrive.

Methods

The current study seeks to comprehensively analyze one instance of the relationship between the composer's aims and choices, the content produced to this end, and the audience's responses as a form of case study. By necessity this requires at least a multi-method approach, with mixed methods being ideal (especially for the audience-oriented component), relying on different approaches to collect the different kinds of complementary data that might help develop the further parts of the study (Mark, 2015, p. 24-26). In order to grasp the composer's aims and consequent choices, a qualitative interview with the composer and perhaps also with the person in charge of the production could confirm the intentions and perhaps confirm analysis of the production's content. The content itself will require a content-analysis with emphasis on the music. Finally, qualitative interviews with audience members supplemented by their own notes will be useful in confirming or challenging the effectiveness of the composer's choices and may present opportunities to identify reasons for the result, potentially laying the groundwork for more extensive studies.

That information about the intention of the composer is accessible is a real constraint on the possible objects of investigation. Moreover, in order to minimize external factors, the product must be something unfamiliar yet communicable to the informants – a film that follows enough conventions to be accessible to the audience, without them already recognizing the film and its music. Otherwise, their familiarity would likely change their experience and make it difficult if not impossible to isolate the qualitative effects of the music. This will influence the selection of both, depending on what is available.

While it is not obvious how such a small-scale qualitative investigation would benefit from a pseudo-experiment, it could increase the validity of findings to control as many factors as possible. (Whereas, given that people's repeat experiences and reflection through qualitative interviews changes their perspectives, reliability is out of the question.) Quasi-experiments are usually resorted to when a proper experimental setting is either unfeasible or unethical (Mark, 2015, p. 36-37). In this case, it is unfeasible. Moreover, the form of quasi-experiment the design would most resemble is "*posttest only nonequivalent groups design*", a design that suffers from an important weakness to selection, further undermining the validity of the project. The project is executed under the assumption that extended interviews inviting participants to reflect will increasingly equalize the meaningful content of their information, but this cannot be tested on this scale. Additionally, pre-existing knowledge will necessarily alter participant engagement with their given sequence, whether through linguistic ability,

media literacy, knowledge of music theory, as well undoubtedly many more. To reflect the weaknesses of this “experimental” component of the project even compared to seriously flawed quasi-experimental designs like posttest only nonequivalent groups design, I refer to it as a pseudo-experiment.⁶

Additionally, and further exacerbating the problems touched on by the previous paragraph, Craton, Lantos and Leventhal (2017) highlight two kinds of variability in musical responses: between-listener and within-listener variability. The former, which perhaps most obviously (though far from exclusively) follows from exposure to different music over a lifetime, is well illuminated by the differences between the two pilot interviews and the first recorded interview (see section on pilot). Given the small scale of experimental changes between pilots and the study itself, these may be directly compared. Within-listener variability on the other hand, can hardly be accounted for in an experimental setting, but different responses in different settings is of little relevance to the findings themselves, so long as it is remembered that the experimental setting probably differs in important ways from what might be ascertained in various more natural situations, such as when watching TV, when not following a list of instructions (however simple), and in a different mood.

Due to practical limitations, as well as to ensure that as many factors as possible are accounted for (while retaining the anonymity of the participants), it was necessary to limit the project to one video sequence. Time constraints rendered little choice in sequence, as few composers showed any interest in time for the project to proceed as planned, and of the ones that did, only one was willing to participate on behalf of content that hypothetical audience members in Norway could realistically be expected to understand.⁷ Thus, the commercial “*På tide å komme heim no. Heilt heim.*” was settled upon.

The primary ethical concerns in this research regard disclosing information from the qualitative interviews. It will be necessary to inform participants about how the information they provide will be used and how it will not. A lesser concern is the actual influence the chosen sequence might have on the audience. It is conceivable that a commercial might influence a participant’s views, though given the reason why the propaganda studies-

⁶ While one might expect some of these pre-existing factors to be equalized by operating with the student body of a university, educational background in fields such as media could have significant effects. The second pilot featured a media student, who took an almost exclusively aesthetic stance towards the sequence.

⁷ Another candidate was a short film in French.

paradigm was largely abandoned – that it produced only minimal effects in experimental settings (Curnalia, 2005), this should not be a major risk.

In order to isolate the effects of the music, following Chion (1994) in masking sound or image or neither in separate showings of the sequence seems a sound approach. However, it is far easier to mask all sounds than to only mask music. To complement the phenomenological focus of the study, it was decided that participants would separate music and other sounds for themselves, intuitively. It was conceivable that the order in which these three are experienced influences one's experience of them. Capturing this in the qualitative interviews would be ideal. Thus, a largely homogenous audience being exposed to the sequence with different elements masked in different orders is ideal. With 3 different masking possibilities, this requires a minimum of 6 qualitative interviews:

Sound masked – Image masked – Neither masked

Sound masked – Neither masked – Image masked

Image masked – Neither masked – Sound masked

Image masked – Sound masked – Neither masked

Neither masked – Sound masked – Image masked

Neither masked – Image masked – Sound masked

To make the procedure more efficient and to attempt to preserve and separate the different viewings in the data, participants were asked to write down notes about their experiences. The consequent qualitative interviews then elaborated on their respective notes,

The logistical ordering of the 3 main components of this study finds a natural starting point in doing an independent content-analysis of the material, focusing on musical components considering basic music theory and the concepts outlined in the theory-section above. But what kind of content analysis does that imply? Seeing as the content analysis will be of limited material, a quantitative analysis would not be very productive. However, for a qualitative analysis, there are some challenges.

First, *“Qualitative content analysis is difficult and maybe impossible to do with scientific reliability. But qualitative analysis of texts is necessary to understand their deeper meanings and likely interpretations by audiences – surely the ultimate goal of analysing media content”* (Macnamara, 2005, p. 5). The matter of scientific reliability is extremely difficult because

everyone engages in qualitative analysis based on their prior understanding and what appears relevant to them through their relevance realization. Moreover, “*The precise methodology best used for qualitative message or text analysis is poorly defined*” (Macnamara, 2005, p. 15). Macnamara also cites McKee (2004) in saying that the central (qualitative) methodology of cultural studies is mostly left to intuition. To make it more reliable, it is worth operating with an a priori framework, which BRECVEMA will serve as for this study. Primarily looking at musical structures is also helpful, though moments of apparent or potential musical synchresis (synchronization of sound and image) may also be worth noting. This approach also provides an opportunity to evaluate BRECVEMA and gestalt-based analysis and how these transfer from theoretical breakdown to audience experience.

Another danger in qualitative analysis is that the text is made to fit the categories rather than the reverse (Macnamara, 2005). While BRECVEMA provides a structuring principle, music analysis building on music theory can hardly be done without being post hoc; You do not know what you will find until you look. At that point, our brains immediately begin to evaluate it (Haidt, 2012, Peterson, 1999). As a result, music analysis can easily devolve into asking questions like “why is this music good”, or “why is this music bad”, drawing on music theory to explain it through a Gestalt-based approach that keeps looking until something is found. Fortunately, this might be mitigated or perhaps even avoided by a structured analysis oriented not towards the value of the music, but its likely effects on an audience. It may also be further mitigated by making sure that the analyst does not have a special relationship to the music being analyzed, for example by having never been exposed to it before, or by knowing as little as possible about (for example) the composer prior to analysis.⁸

The above echoes a sentiment common to media content analysts, that it is difficult to establish relevant categories for (usually quantitative) analysis before the analysis begins. To resolve this, it has been recommended to investigate a representative subset of the field to be analyzed, but, more importantly for qualitative analysis, also to investigate the existing research literature on the field for insights (Macnamara, 2005). The investigated literature that was deemed relevant is to be found in the Theory-section.

⁸ Full disclosure: As much as there was effort put into avoiding it, the composer whose work this study ultimately became about is a friend and former teacher of mine, as can be seen in the transcript (see the appendix).

With all the above in mind, the content analysis will identify musical structures through their gestalts in the order that they appear and then relate them to the BRECVEMA-mechanisms, eventual musical conventions and other theories as well as how its gestalt relates to what is on screen.

An intercoder reliability assessment is also recommended for qualitative analysis, but due to the nature of qualitative analysis, the standards for reliability are more flexible. An example to follow is that of Philipp Mayring, whose studies “*maximized reliability and validity by using ‘only trained members of the project team’*” (Macnamara, 2005, p.17). This was not feasible for the current study.

What should follow content analysis? This is really the question of what should be done last, or which part of the study would benefit most from following the other two. It is not obvious what is to be gained by consulting the composer last, but by contrast, consulting the composer may inform the qualitative interviews and expectations from the response analysis, providing an organizing principle for the processing of data alongside the musical content analysis.

The composer interview was loosely structured by the primary question of intention. As composers are relatively unique, especially when coupled with any given product of theirs, a pilot interview was impossible. Particularly in the context of a preceding content analysis, that would require duplicating the study up to this point with a second composer. Nonetheless, the interview with the composer will allow for a contrast of what an informed analysis would suggest about the music compared to what was considered in its formation. As its originator, the composer is likely to have reflected on his choices and may be able to inform not just of his own intentions but also of their relationship to the surrounding production’s intentions as reflected in feedback.

Alsaawi (2014) recommends semi-structured interviews when the researcher has an overview of the topic, but also wants to preserve the potential depth that could be stifled by an inflexible structure. This is accomplished with open-ended questions that, ideally, are piloted in advance of the study. The audience-oriented part of the study took this form, with roughly outlined open-ended supplementary questions (ex: “is there anything you took note of regarding this viewing that you decided against writing down?”), but otherwise structured by what was in their notes.

In Thorsen's (2008) study, a pilot was conducted on recording data for quantification of the audience experience. Some audience members were asked to write notes while listening to the music, some to write it down afterwards, and others in turn were asked to rate various associations from their listening experience. It was concluded that the most valuable dataset came from writing while listening, as it was much less confined to the participants' capacity to recall their experiences. Rating associations turned out to introduce the challenge that their associations changed across the experience, making it unclear which part of their experience they should prioritize. This is on top of the problem that they did not all find the proposed associations appropriate. In this study, participants were asked to write while watching/listening, but were told that they were free to change it after watching it in full, but only before proceeding to the next viewing.

Given the timing of the study taking place during a pandemic, interviews were conducted and recorded digitally, limiting what can be considered regarding the environment. Some interviewees may be uncomfortable with digital interviews, but this should be possible to alleviate by giving the interviewee time and control of when the interview begins. An extra benefit of this is that it makes it more plausible that participants are in an as relaxed state as is typical of them.

For the interviews themselves, Robson (2011) recommends that interviewers ask clear, straightforward questions, listen more than they speak, and avoid indicators of what the response should be, jargon, and multi-barrelled questions. He also provides a basic structure for such interviews, with an introduction of the interviewer and the purpose of the interview followed by easy questions, then the main concern of the study, before a return to simple, concluding questions and a closing show of appreciation for the contribution of the interviewee. This outline was kept in mind, but only loosely, given the context of the individual interview. For example, some participants had already followed the instructions (outlined in the appendix) when the interview began, others felt a need to have it verified verbally, and for some it seemed appropriate to talk a little off the record after the interviews themselves. Participant Daniel is an example of the latter, where potentially relevant information about factors surrounding the pseudo-experiment in his case came out of a brief talk after recording ended.

Audience participants were de-identified by replacing their names based on the alphabetical order of the interviews that only reflect their sex. Unlike the audience, there is no

way for the composer to remain fully anonymous in this investigation, but his name will not be mentioned in this text.

Participant selection is normally done randomly, but as Alsaawi (2014) points out, the nature of interviews makes random selection difficult. Due to the requirement of consent from participants, self-selection is generally more appropriate. Consequently, generalizable data is generally out of the question. This study nonetheless attempted to control the self-selection of audience participants by selecting as homogenous participants from self-selection as possible, in order to make discrepancies in their experiences of the differently masked sequences more likely to reflect something more than just individual differences.⁹ Unfortunately, standard procedures left too little time for this plan to be followed through. As a result, the study relies purely on convenience-sampling of students at Volda University College. If the study were significantly greater in scope, the sampling technique known as “maximum variation” (whose name describes it well)¹⁰ could be beneficial, hypothetically allowing for the entire spectrum of audience experiences to be captured in the data.

One undiscussed issue in this methodology, most importantly for the audience-oriented part of the study, is the matter of language. While this thesis is written in English, the study is conducted in Norway, most likely with exclusively Norwegian participants. In order to make interviewees comfortable and allow them to express themselves with maximum coherence and clarity, every interaction in the study proceeded in the language of choice of the individual participant. This will likely make translation required in order to present the data in this thesis. Translation of quotes will proceed based on recorded interviews in dialogue with the relevant participant, but for the general meaning expressed by interviewees quotation will be kept to a minimum in order to minimize this problem. There is an anonymized and translated transcription of every interview in the appendices, coupled with the respective accompanying notes in their original language to be translated at the readers’ discretion.

Before the content analysis can begin proper, it may be worthwhile to cover BRECVEMA in more depth. Juslin (2013, p. 241-246) provides a helpful elaboration on the original BRECVEM-mechanisms followed by a case for the A-ddition, but to avoid confusion it should first be noted that it is not a given that our brain responds to musical cues *as music*. To do so it must first be recognized as such, (and by implication: as insignificant to most of

⁹ The probability of this itself unfortunately cannot be analyzed within the scope of this study.

¹⁰ Alsaawi, 2014, p. 152

our goals¹¹) which takes time. Sometimes, natural selection simply cannot afford us to take this time. Therefore, some of these mechanisms are not exclusively musical, but are applied to sensory data that is later recognized as musical as well as any other data that fit the bill (p. 239).

Brain stem reflexes happen to be a good example of this. They are “*quick, automatic and unlearned*” responses to signals of potential importance and urgency, akin to the sudden roar of a tiger nearby. When identified in music, they might for example stem from sudden, loud, dissonant or accelerating events, including dynamic changes. Aside from the obvious capacity to cause surprise, phenomena that trigger a brain stem reflex may increase “arousal” – that is, roughly translated, the intensity of the experience (p. 236, 241).

Rhythmic entrainment, generally stimulated by a strong pulse, regards the phenomenon of bodily rhythms adjusting to and eventually matching external rhythms like those found in music. This process can then affect emotions. It can increase arousal, but it is also capable of generating an experience of communion, or connectedness more broadly.¹² Juslin specifies that entrainment is especially tied to pulses around 2 Hz (p. 241, 243).¹³

Evaluative conditioning refers to emotions stemming from developed associations between a piece of music and positive or negative stimuli in a behavioral sense that may eventually lead to the music – or another signal – being enough to produce the emotions related with the stimuli even in the absence of what caused it initially. In film and different forms of musical theater, this might for example occur from use of leitmotifs (and its effect would depend on what it is being associated with). Perhaps needless to say, evaluative conditioning is very much a matter of learned responses, and so it is likely to vary between cultures (p. 241, 243).

Contagion on the other hand does not. It refers to the processes that make us mirror the emotions of other people. When it comes to music it seems like “expressive music” can produce this effect, particularly when it is vocal or at least voice-like like some string-

¹¹ See Peterson & Flanders (2002), particularly their discussion of the frame problem for more on the challenges of identifying something as insignificant.

¹² In my bachelor thesis (Taranger, 2019) I speculated based on Cross’ (2009, p. 7) comments that music and dance through rhythmic entrainment and the vague sense of shared intentionality they can produce may have played a part in the initial development of culture.

¹³ As it happens, 2 Hz as a pulse translates directly to around 120 beats per minute, which is extremely common in popular music. As a musical soundwave, it constitutes a bass so deep just about no human will be able to hear it, only feel it.

instruments. Emotional contagion has been associated with mirror neurons, but most importantly it is capable of arousing basic emotions like sadness (p. 242).

Visual imagery concerns emotions following from the listener's own capacity to generate images of landscapes or similar things. While the capacity to do this by means of music is well documented it is also subject to individual variation and appears to be influenced by cultural learning. When experienced, it may lead to pleasure or relaxation (p. 242-243).

Episodic memories from a person's life can produce emotions. They can also be recalled through music. The emotions of the memory also tend to return when this happens. As such, the emotional effect through episodic memories is dependent on the individual experiences that can be recalled and the emotions that are tied to them. Juslin notes nostalgia, pride and longing as examples of the emotions evoked through episodic memory (p. 242).

Musical expectancy, which concerns emotions following from whether the music does what the listener expects given previous experience, is the final mechanism in the established model. Depending on whether the music does what is expected, it may cause anxiety, surprise or thrills (p. 242).

Finally, *Aesthetic judgment* is thought to be a more recent addition to our emotional toolkits than the above, relying on conceptions of art and higher cognitive functions. Juslin suggests that it is tied to signals that cause an individual listener to enter an aesthetic attitude, wherein the listener regards the music as art and judges it as such based on the listener's own set of criteria, reaching an individual conclusion whose intensity might cross the threshold to induce emotion in turn. The previously discussed mechanisms may factor into the identification of the piece of music as art and/or in the aesthetic judgment, alongside cognitive and perceptual input (p. 246-261).¹⁴

Out of the eight BRECVEMA mechanisms, some are less applicable in analysis than others. The three mechanisms that are least affected by learning (Brain stem reflex, Rhythmic entrainment and Contagion) will likely be the most applicable to the upcoming analysis. Visual imagery might conceivably be further stimulated by the commercial's imagery reinforcing it. Evaluative conditioning might follow from a commercial campaign, but there is

¹⁴ As might be expected from a paper arguing for the addition of aesthetic judgement as a mechanism to BRECVEMA, Juslin (2013) covers it in much more depth.

little room for it in a 40-second-long advertisement. The episodic memory of a given listener and how it will interact with the music is wholly unpredictable for a musical analysis. Musical expectancy might follow from commercial-style music that the listeners have run into previously, but insofar as it is a genre it is very general. Moreover, there is no anticipating how a listener might be stimulated by musical expectancy when we know it depends on their individual expectations. On the other hand, evaluation and reflection might trigger an aesthetic attitude, though if it is the case, its valence could still be both positive and negative.

Analysis and Results

Content Analysis

The commercial (which can be found here, see footnote¹⁵) begins with a sustained suspended chord in a slow crescendo. For the first 10 seconds, the audio consists of this chord, two hints of a melody in violin, and the narrator's calm voice. Suspended chords are difficult to identify, as on their own they do not specify a tonal center and based on their surroundings they can imply several different ones. Thus, until other elements are introduced, a suspended chord stands as an open question. As such, it could be expected to create uncertainty – at least until the voice and the violin enter the picture.

However, the chord undergoes a slight (and repeated) change alongside the violin. In its first outing, the violin, whose first note is B, implies that what is being suspended is a major G chord. Before its second outing, a relatively low F has been added to the chord, and it is emphasized by the violin, which transforms the major G from a tonic to a dominant chord, putting the tonic at C major. It should be remembered that the B that makes the chord a dominant was temporary in the violin; While the piece has established its tonality, just what the chord at any given time should be thought to be and by extension its function in the piece is up in the air. This is further confounded by the fact that the bass is not playing a defining note in the dominant chord. It plays the minor 7th, that is, the bass you would expect of the subdominant (and the major 3rd, which is arguably the most defining note of the dominant chord, is barely present). When seen as a subdominant chord, the violin touching the B creates a *lydian* mood, which is generally associated with folk music and might sound nostalgic, especially from the violin, which has had a big place in Norwegian folk music. (Evoking nostalgia is likely an aim of the whole commercial considering the imagery and the narration about home, and the imagery of uniquely Norwegian landscapes, childhood and family.)

While it enters the picture later than the violin, the bass is the most constant harmonic element that shifts the meaning of the suspended chord. It comes in proper as the pattern repeats beyond the 10-second mark, outlining G – that is, the dominant, then F, the subdominant. Alongside it come more rhythmic elements (on that note, 10 seconds

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https://vimeo.com/319004617?fbclid=IwAR0QJTY5sPV_oh0CYLMD3JEF18PDV6yTL7Xhkl0h6d4XrAFHseXGNyrRgE0

corresponds to about 4 measures of 6 beats): mild percussion and an ostinato in piano consisting of an arpeggio of the suspended chord base of the piece. These make the pulse more concrete while maintaining the mood.

Over the first 20 seconds then, we have a crescendo that might be expected to trigger a brain stem reflex, a violin that might trigger contagion, an extremely delayed resolution that could trigger musical expectancy and together with the violin might trigger evaluative conditioning via associations with folk music (i.e., nostalgia), and a pulse that could feasibly trigger rhythmic entrainment. The entrance of the rhythmic section could also qualify as a sudden enough change in the music to trigger a brain stem reflex.

Having a distinctly major/lydian (depending on point of orientation, but either way boiling down to a one note difference in scale) melody might mean that any effect of a brain stem reflex would be one of increased arousal and attentiveness more so than threat-response (especially in a pseudo-experimental setting as will be the case for the last component of the project). A contagion-effect arising from the major-scale melody in the violin should also not be one of “negative” emotions such as sadness, knowing that this scale’s tonal relationship is one of consonance, unlike the minor scale. Recalling Sim’s criticism of cognitivist models, a likely positive effect of contagion could still mix with the remaining components of the piece to create a cascade of emotional qualities from longing to pure joy. As noted earlier, a great number of elements in this commercial suggest an attempt at evoking nostalgia. It is conceivable that people who, for any reason feel like they have missed out on what the nostalgia is directed towards might feel sadness as a second-order effect of feeling like they missed out on a positive experience. It is certainly worth remembering that humans are complicated, and that cognition can turn probable effects upside down in special cases. This is to say the ‘shoulds’ and the ‘likelies’ in this section are based on a sterile music theory and Juslin’s summary of BRECVEMA, but that individual cases might reveal the opposite. That aside, any rhythmic entrainment going on from around the 10-second mark could increase general arousal. Perhaps it could also create a sense of communion with the “Norwegian”, of having something in common with all the other people who “understand” the combination of sensory inputs the commercial offers. If so, that would certainly not just be due to the rhythm-section, but rather following from the many elements that attempt to evoke nostalgia.

Around the 20-second mark, some things change in the music. The repeated movement from G to F in the bass now moves on to E. At the same time, the violin moves from D to E. Now we have all the notes of the tonic C, but due to the bass, it sounds more like

an E-minor, the parallel to G-major. Thus, the effect is much like the previous movements, except now, the violin, which had concealed itself by playing a note from the suspended chord (D) after the 10-second mark is distinct from the chord once again, and ready to present a melody. At the same time, the suspended chord retreats into the background, serving as a pad.¹⁶



Figure 1: The melody in violin from measure 9.

When it is not outlining a C-major chord, the melody (figure 1) moves stepwise. For the most part it is easily singable. It also puts much deliberation on the neighbors E and F, respectively. It is entirely believable that this melody could trigger emotional contagion. Moreover, stepwise movement in melody is about as calm as one could imagine – considering that larger intervals are generally associated with intensity (possibly because they are easier to miss when sung). While there are bigger intervals in the melody (a 6th interval from E to G and vice versa), keeping them within a functional chord such as the tonic, and especially when this chord is found in the accompanying instruments at the same time, keeps it simple. Altogether this is a rather inoffensive melody, retaining interest (regarding musical expectancy) by mixing up the timing of its movements and through slight ornamentation.

The movement in the bass from F to E around the time the melody enters the picture (the 20-second mark) does not mark the beginning of something groundbreaking in the music. It serves as a variation, replacing G every other time in the already established movement. Since the melody abandoned B over 10 seconds ago and there have been several chord-changes since, the suspended G-chord no longer sounds like a dominant minor 7th chord. Since every turn to the C-major chord with E in the bass follows a subdominant F-major chord, the functional harmonics are playing softball; The resolution is not as pressing as it was (and *if* it were to be pressing it would be from C to F). The new pattern moves between C/E and F. After one repeat, the bass moves to D, turning the suspended chord that has been

¹⁶ A “pad” is a sound that serves the purpose of a kind of musical pillow, softly playing longer notes, be they full chords or singular notes.

the background throughout the piece into what serves in place of a dominant G (though it is still technically suspended) but could just as well be classified as some form of a Dsus4 chord, leading up to a final resolution when not only the chord C-major is struck, but the bass confirms it by also playing C. It sticks around for 2 measures before it fades away, whereas the rhythm-section calms down after 1 measure. For the C-major chord, the melody reaches its highest point, (figure 1) after previously resting on the F just below it. This climactic finish might satisfy the musical expectations the track has held back for almost 40 seconds at this point, presumably increasing arousal.

While music is the main concern of this analysis, its interplay with other elements is nonetheless significant, particularly when it comes to understanding the commercial's gestalt(s). Therefore, they too will receive some attention, beginning with the imagery and their order.

The commercial opens with a landscape and a man that some might recognize as the actor Jørgen Langhelle leaning against a tree while presumably admiring the view. Next, we get a close-up of the man's face, revealing him to be an older man, with a complex look in his eyes. After he closes his eyes, we are introduced to a younger man in an office, looking stressed and exhausted as he turns towards the window. Immediately after, we see a close-up of the same man in his car in the evening. Then the commercial introduces a spinning toy (just about as the rhythm section comes in, perhaps mirroring it as a kind of beginning).

Suddenly we see people hard at work building and planning a house. As the younger man (looking much happier) appears against a blurred background with the same color-scheme as the workplace, it may be implied that it is his house that is being built. We then see a drawing-in-the-making of a happy family with a house. As we get another camera-angle at the scene, it is revealed that the artist is a young girl, who turns to look at the blurred face – presumably of the younger man (who may be her father), and smiles.

Next, and about when the melody enters proper, a car driving out of a tunnel is shown, followed by a close-up of the younger man's eyes lighting up. The scene before it would indicate that his eyes light up as he leaves the tunnel, but the next scene is of him looking up at a house being built by the firm that had this commercial made. It could be his house or related to his work (there are indicators that he works for that same firm in his entrance-scene), but it is shown to be close to a view like that of the first scene. On that note, we see a man against the sunset sitting on a dry-stone wall, seemingly talking to a dog. His hair

resembles the older man from the first scene. The younger man, now against a different backdrop, appears to be seeing this scene, as he has the sun in his face. The next scene is of the two men sitting next to each other, apparently sharing a moment having to do with the spinning top from before. Given the context (as will become apparent later when considering the narration) this is likely intended to suggest they are father and son.

Regardless, the next scene is of the girl playing and being caught/carried by her (now basically confirmed) father, and the next one in turn is of the two and what is probably the girl's mother walking in the distance as he points at something nondescript in the distance. Finally (for the characters featured), we see the younger man touching a rock with a complex look in his eyes as he just about recreates the shot with his likely father from the opening of the commercial, which perfectly coincides with the tonic being confirmed in the music. The final two (moving) images of the advert are of a line of houses from below, and of a densely populated island from above, amidst typical Norwegian scenery. The latter with the logo of the firm behind it all in front. These are shown as the music fades over two measures.

The set of these scenes paint a picture but seeing as the scenography is not the focus here, the narration will be considered first. The following is a stylized translation of the Norwegian narration of the commercial, where I have highlighted phrasing with indentation to give a sense of its flow:

Translation:

“Home.

Isn't that a beautiful word?

To find your way home

is a kind of gravity,

a place you land after

you've thrown yourself out of the nest,

out into the air

to all the possibilities

to the choices

Original Text:

“Heim.

Er ikkje det et fint ord?

Å finne veien heim

er en slags tyngdekraft,

en plass du lander etter

du har kasta deg ut fra reiret,

Ut i svevet

Til alle mulighetane

Til valgå

<i>to the opportunities you just had to pursue.</i>	<i>Til sjansane du bare måtte ta.</i>
<i>No matter where you're from</i>	<i>Uansett kor du komme fra</i>
<i>the road home</i>	<i>Er veien heim</i>
<i>is pretty short.</i>	<i>Ganske kort.</i>
<i>To where you felt freedom before</i>	<i>Til der du kjente frihet før</i>
<i>you learned of words.</i>	<i>Du lærte ord.</i>
<i>To where everything</i>	<i>Til der alt</i>
<i>began so small.</i>	<i>begynte i det små.</i>
<i>To where</i>	<i>Til der</i>
<i>the dreams</i>	<i>Drømmane</i>
<i>took shape.</i>	<i>Tok form.</i>
<i>And the dreams</i>	<i>Og drømmane</i>
<i>do come from somewhere.</i>	<i>Kommer jo fra et sted.</i>
<i>There's a place</i>	<i>Ein plass</i>
<i>Where they belong.</i>	<i>hører de heime.</i>
<i>Wouldn't it be nice to come home now?</i>	<i>Hadde det ikkje vært fint å komma heim no?</i>
<i>All the way home?"</i>	<i>Heilt heim?"</i>

The narrator is a man speaking in a calm and warm voice. As the indentations suggest, the lines are delivered as if they were a poem, and their contents add a different kind of color to the commercial's imagery. Taken together, it presents a story of three generations of family, where the grandfather appears to miss his son, and the father longs for his childhood home, and wishes to provide a similarly joyful experience to his daughter. The firm who made the commercial and their appearances in it appear to suggest the idea of building a home of one's own, whereas the surrounding context seems to suggest building it close to one's own

roots. It is certainly difficult to not see evoking nostalgic longing as a main target of the commercial.

The way the commercial brings together different elements – with the odd one out, if any, being the firm’s inclusion in its own commercial - seems to be making its various components, the melodic violin, the chords, the hints of Lydian harmony, the landscape, the family and even the dry-stone wall evoke national-romantic sentiments typical to Norway, as well as nostalgia for coming home to one’s loved ones and aspirations about making home for someone else. This mixture can hardly be expressed in words, but it is a clear gestalt produced by the commercial, and every element complements it (even the firm, whose presence makes ‘making a home’ more concrete in that it is literally what they do – at least the physical part). It should be noted that amidst the sentimental and traditional aspirations and nostalgia, the commercial does not do anything to suggest opposition to new developments. The houses showcased, when it is possible to make out their shapes, are far from the classical cottages one might expect from a romantic. Rather, they are modern to a point, complete with the peculiar shapes and large windows that modern architecture can support. Some might call this a contradiction, but I think it is more appropriately understood as an integration, and only as significant as people want to make it. (It *may* be noteworthy in this case because students, on whom the last part of this research will be conducted, might be particularly alert and conscious to these kinds of things, as the quintessential WEIRD population (Haidt, 2012 p. 96-98)¹⁷.)

There are moments in the commercial where isomorphic elements between music and the rest become especially prominent. The first would be the Lydian harmonies at the start of the commercial, as they correspond to the environment of the old man to amplify the sense of

¹⁷ Being from a WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democracy) culture has no obvious link to alertness for such things, but it seems to me that WEIRD culture, particularly around universities, is developing a sociocentric subculture inspired by critical theorists to look for contradictions that is willing to take the smallest things as signs of opposition to progress. Being very intellectually oriented right down to the first critical theorist (Marx), it is predicated on education, and so might naturally appear in the data here. It is undoubtedly not as prevalent as it might appear in the media, but *i*) it might warrant further investigation and *ii*) a reflexive response to awareness of this subculture might also lead to increased consciousness of the kinds of things it would make members alert to, particularly from people educated to understand the importance of being an informed citizen to the functioning of a democracy, as both lecturers and students should be by the time they reach university.

Norwegian-ness (at the lack of a better word). The juxtaposition of a sunset over the hills at the other side of a fjord seen from an apparent island with dry-stone walls by a man leaning against a tree while dressed in a typically Norwegian sweater and Lydian harmonies in violin (or fiddle as it was called in folk music) supported by a chord like what you would inevitably hear from a Hardanger Fiddle (built by stacked perfect fourths; a suspended chord) practically screams “Norway!”

There is one more notable isomorphism, around the 10-second mark. The spinning top in the commercial is spun as a cymbal rises at the end of the opening crescendo. It may be regarded as isomorphic with the cymbal in this instance, with both being ways to release tension, or momentum. Moreover, it may serve a symbolic function, as it coincides with the narration about home being somewhere you land before it moves on to talking about possibilities and opportunities. The spinning top is let loose, like a person leaving one home to find or make their own. Indeed, this may be regarded as a three-way isomorphism, where every direction amplifies the impression of the rest. Seeing as the cymbal serves as the final part of the anticipation in the music before the rhythm-section enters, it could be expected to increase arousal in general.

In sum, the theoretical expectations in an audience are as follows: Of the BRECVEMA-mechanisms, brain stem reflexes, rhythmic entrainment, contagion and musical expectancy are the ones with most grounds in the commercial for a response if we only consider the music (producing attention/arousal, arousal/communion, reflected basic emotions and anxiety/relief respectively). If we also consider the rest of the commercial, the visual imagery invites a response (that might be amplified by evaluative conditioning to folk music), but it is possible that it, alongside other elements mentioned above, might amalgamate into a gestalt that evokes national-romantic and/or personal nostalgia. The personal relationships the commercial suggests, alongside the narration, could also feasibly produce a response building on some combination of contagion (lest we forget: it has been linked to mirror neurons and our brains reflecting emotions we observe, whether from the father or the child) and episodic memory, inviting recall of either one’s own childhood or of the period in one’s own life where small children were in the picture. Notably, the latter might be made more intense by the music (generic arousal), but it is strictly not tied to any musical elements; not compared to the narration. There are two main isomorphisms, one encouraging the national-romantic gestalt mentioned above, and the other concerning the spinning top metaphor (?), likely producing arousal.

Finally, there is the matter of higher cognitive effects playing into the impression of the commercial, surrounding aesthetic judgment. It is not a given that people will regard the commercial aesthetically or otherwise engage with it cognitively, nor is it particularly predictable how it would impact their views. However, it seems likely that the upcoming pseudo-experiment could invite cognitive engagement in participants as they reflect upon their experience of the commercial as it is or was presented to them. This is something to be on the lookout for.

Composer Interview - Summarized

When the music for this commercial was commissioned, the composer had access to a storyboard, a manuscript, the text, and knowledge of who the actor who would narrate it was. Thus, he knew the general message of the commercial-to-be, but little to nothing about its pace besides a general guideline. Utilizing a trick from film-music – creating a rhythmic figure for the background with a slow melody or just chords on top, he started with an arpeggiated figure in piano that would play over “*some kind of G and some kind of F chord*”, that could feel “*either kind of mixolydian or kind of lydian, or in a way [give a sense of] both*”, he made a baseline that could be maintained without any loss of musical information if the voice-over were to drown out portions of it. It was not his first idea, but it was the first one he brought to the director, and while some things were changed over the process, the base idea remained.

The initial duration of the commercial was then increased from about 1 minute and 2 minutes, which worked well with this choice. When a short version was made, it was cut down to 45 seconds. Unfortunately, the short version was the only one known for the analysis above. The composer stressed how there were only a few different ideas in the piece. As such, the main loss in the shorter version is that there are fewer melodic phrases, whereas the rest was just more condensed.

When it comes to instrumentation, he mentions wanting it to sound close, like something you could “*hear in a chapeau deep in inner Ry County*”. He also tried to rely mostly on “wooden” sounds to allude to how the company commissioning the commercial are all about that.

Harmonically, it was a semi-conscious – the composer noted that in practice, composers are rarely that analytical in their approach, looking more at how things feel - choice to deny listeners the tonic chord played “properly” until the end of the piece, to delay the tonal home of musical expectancy until the corresponding moment in the commercial. He believes he intuited it from what direction he was given, and repeated use of the “home” as tonic metaphor (familiar to most musicians) shows it is not much of stretch given even as little as the title of the commercial, especially since the narration asks about coming home – all the way home – just as the tonic is finally played. That aside, the harmonies of the piece are not strictly functional; The chords do not move where they “should”. Even the cadence near the end intentionally avoids what is usually the centerpiece – the dominant chord.

Meanwhile, even chords that do not usually contain it within the scale have a C in them in this piece, which the composer said was to tie them together.

When asked if he targeted any emotional response in viewers, he said that if there was one it was something like the “*longing for home*”, but with some joy. He identified the wooden sounds, the piano, and the “close” sound with trying to make people experience it. Moreover, that he thought when the percussion and the piano enter the piece, the sense of forward locomotion they provide correspond to the shift in the mood of the commercial as the emotions are acted upon. This was amplified by the conscious choice to have only a subtle pulse for the opening portion while instructing the violinist to listen and play the next phrase only after hearing a change in the chords.

The slow opening was one of a few deliberate moves that were coordinated by the direction. Another was the spinning top that marked its end, and the man at the tree by the fjord. These were key images that influenced the decision-making process of the composer, though he stressed that he did not look at specifics very much, opting to instead focus on making it flow, not following the text or the narrative, but travelling side by side with them. He wanted to avoid mickey-mousing (micromanaging the music to correspond to moment-to-moment changes in its surroundings), stating both that it makes him feel less from the music, and that while it can be fun accompanying old cartoons and the likes, but was inappropriate for a calm commercial like this one, on top of being somewhat infantilizing.

In all, the composer’s expressed how his intentions and approach strove for maturity¹⁸ in the music, while capturing the same energy as the remaining commercial in a musical format without micromanagement. In trying to sound homely with mostly acoustic and “*wooden*” instruments while delaying the harmonical “home” tonic in a tonally safe-sounding context he mirrored the other elements of the commercial in broad strokes, coordinating but a few moments, like the spinning top near the opening and the – in his words, “*triumphant*” release as the C-chord is finally played.

¹⁸ Maturity here seems to refer to not being excessively responsive to what the other elements in the commercial are doing, contrasted with “mickey-mousing”.

Audience Participant Interviews

Pilot interviews

Two pilot interviews were conducted without recording. Their respective notes, the thought process behind revisions made for later iterations, and the instructions complete with revisions can be found in the appendix, though full transcriptions were not made. As noted earlier, the pilot interviews featured the same sequence of differently masked viewings as the first interview, and thus provide a direct contrast that might highlight individual variance in experience of the commercial. Before discussing this in detail, the pilot interviews will be discussed in some more detail.

The first pilot saw technical difficulties surrounding a digital format, as the internet connection failed on both ends, resulting in a disruptive loss of notes. As a result, the participant had to rewrite the notes from memory. To counteract this for future interviews, it was specified that the notes should be written separate from the platform used for interviews (Zoom). Technical difficulties aside, the first pilot featured not a word about the music from the participant. When asked about this, the participant confirmed that he had not thought about it. This led to a stronger emphasis on the music (specifically mentioning it) in the instructions, rather than just asking participants to write what occurs to them.

As for the notes themselves, the viewing with image masked had the participant enjoying a “story” about the “idea of home”, while reflecting on his own challenges, describing a kind of enjoyable pain from imagining what was stated, that inquiry indicated had to do with his personal home-situation. The viewing with sound masked led to a basic summary of the narrative of the imagery of the commercial. However, the viewing with no elements masked had the participant thinking about the commercial *as* a commercial, most likely involving a stance of aesthetic judgment. In any case, he identified that it was trying to evoke a longing for home.

The second pilot featured instructions that specified that the participant was to write what occurred to him about the music, what was seen and what was heard, privileging the music somewhat. Masked imagery led to thoughts about nationalism, attributed to the dialect and the repeated word, “home”. There was also mention of a sense of it being a commercial for a travel company.

Masked sound had the participant noting down dreams and hope, as well as the abstract “innovative solutions”. The participant noted symbolism, to which further inquiry led to emphasis on the spinning top along with the words, which crucially were absent from this viewing, demonstrating a blurring of different viewings. Finally, this viewing had the participant describe it as “feeling like a commercial”.

The viewing with no elements masked saw the participant comment on how the scenes were put together, clichés, and how interestingly put together the commercial was. These are clear indicators of the commercial being judged as a commercial, that is, cognitively, and perhaps also aesthetically. The only other difference from the prior viewing was that dreams were replaced by family in these notes.

As is clear from the above, neither of the pilot participants made any unprovoked comments on the music, despite the greater emphasis in the second pilot. When asked about it, the second participant thought it fit the dialogue, specifically with images masked, and suggested that he might not have the toolkit to notice it to the point of saying anything more substantial. That being said, thoughts of nationalism from the second pilot with image masked probably weren’t weakened by the music, considering the content analysis above, and how elements typical of Norwegian national romanticism are particularly prevalent early in the commercial’s soundscape, which is also where nationalism was noted (in present tense). However, that it is primarily attributed to dialect and word-emphasis cannot be ignored.

Following these pilots, there was some uncertainty regarding the relevance of the entire method to questions of phenomenological experience of media music, and complete redesigns were considered. I ultimately decided to stick with the initial design, with a greater emphasis being put on experiences of emotion in the interviews, since this is how music would be expected to make an impact on the music-theoretically illiterate majority.

Before proceeding to the main interviews, note some similarities between the two pilot interviews, as well as some dissimilarities. These will be kept in mind, especially when considering the first main interview, since it highlights what kind of variation might be between participants. The first pilot featured aesthetic judgments primarily for the final viewing with no elements masked. The second on the other hand, saw elements of it even in the first viewing. The first pilot roughly went over the narrative with sound masked, whereas the second, when not judging aesthetically, only noted abstract concepts. Finally, the first

pilot recognized longing for home, and the second nationalism, with nothing or image masked, respectively.

Main Interviews

In rough terms, the first main interview, Alex, could, for the first two viewings (that is, image masked and sound masked) be summarized as the first pilot except more abstract. However, for the last viewing, there are some notable differences. Most significantly, there is little aesthetic appraisal of the commercial as such, with the participant instead indicating frustration at feeling overwhelmed by having both image and sound, and experiencing a conflict between them, as well as a development that the “sound tried to make magical”. Participant Alex also identified the spinning top as significant, citing the movie “*Inception*” for a metaphor about being stuck, quite unlike the second pilot, the content analysis and my impression from the composer. For contrast, the first pilot did not mention the spinning top at all. Clearly then, leaving it at such a summary of the interview with Alex would do a disservice to the material, which goes to show just how much variation there might be between equally ordered interviews.

In addition to being particularly abstract, Alex also wrote down questions in his notes, not directed at the commercial, but at himself. “What ought home to be”, and “what is truly important” are complex questions to answer. These questions arose for separate viewings, with the former naturally following from the narration with image masked, and the latter arising from the contrast of the man at work, (and presumably the metaphor he identified in the spinning top just before) the daughter smiling and drawing. “*What is important, is it family or work?*” Immediately following the latter question, he noted “family”, which he described as both “*a little bit of an*” answer to the question and the next thing to spring to mind from watching the video. On the other hand, the former question was left hanging as the final part of his notes for the viewing with image masked; There was no immediate answer.

It is curious then, that there was no spontaneous question from the final viewing. Perhaps the overwhelming juxtaposition of the hypothetically complementary elements overshadowed any potential question, or perhaps he already felt like he had the questions in his system. Unfortunately, this was not delved into in greater depth in the interview, so we can only speculate. The point about the music trying to make the development of the commercial magical might lend credence to the latter interpretation, as its more analytically critical tone is not suggestive of feeling overwhelmed (any longer, at any rate). One might also add that it is

not obvious what kind of questions could be added based on putting sound and image together that would not feel a lot like the two above. To counter one might suggest that spontaneous questions written during the viewing would not take the same shape when reflecting on a finished viewing (which was not discouraged), where reflection on what one has experienced could be more in order. It is not clear either way.

In any case, Alex's data stands out for its questions, the unique take on the spinning top, and its abstract plot-“summary” of the second viewing - a trend in the other interviews that is typically more concrete. It should also be noted that he attributed wonder and tingling to the first few seconds of music initially, and that the conflict he felt in his final viewing diminished over time – in an interestingly reverse relationship to the development the sound “tried to make magical” (and possibly reflecting the suspended chords of the discussed in the content analysis).

The spinning top was noted by most participants. Daniel wrote outright in his notes: “I’m wondering about the significance of the spinner”. As just discussed, Alex identified it as a metaphor for being stuck in a cycle, following “*Inception*”. Counting pilots, there were only 3 out of 8 participants total who did not in any way comment on the spinning top, those being the first pilot, Bob and Eric. Christine did not make any significant comments about it, but mentioned it in two contexts, 1) as a point in transition from the main character of the commercial being bored to the small, enjoyable things in life, and 2) alongside the theme of trees as an example of how there is a thread binding the commercial together. In line with his question, Daniel noticed it but could not figure out *how* it was important, only *that* it was, somehow. This tidbit might be noteworthy as an example of human intuition sensing things it cannot fully comprehend.

Finally, Fred, after noting that he might be reading too much into it, related the spinning top to being played with, moving forward, showing the progression and thus complementing the text. He then elaborated on his notes (“*a toy from a simpler time, something that adult life is not*”), explaining how when the son shows his father the spinning top later in the commercial, he saw it as an inspiration for the young man's current occupation. It is also of potential interest that in his second viewing, the spinning top in its first appearance was the last thing he noted, even though it was before the half-way point of the commercial.

The three-way isomorphic effect attributed to when the spinning top first shows up by the content analysis and supported by the interview is an element that could be expected to be influenced by the masking methodology utilized in this study. Since it relies on the interplay of different elements, it might be expected to be more salient with all elements introduced at once, that is, if the first viewing is unmasked (which, we might emphasize, is – obviously – how the commercial is intended to be viewed). While obviously – given the data – apprehensible regardless of the order of viewings, the participant whose recognition of it most aligned with the intentions behind it, Fred, was one of the two who experienced the unmasked version first. The other, Eric, did not even mention it. However, image masked would also make the isomorphism impossible to link to the spinning top at first. The other components respectively emphasize a kind of “flight” (like a bird leaving the nest for the first time, to roughly paraphrase the narrator) or just some kind of forward motion (the rhythmic instruments picking up the beat), implied to be towards adventure when put together, which is of course always the case since music and narration are not isolated in this study. This may have been recognized without identifying it with the spinner, too.

Mentions of some form of adventure or journey are plentiful across the interviews, though not present in all. Starting with the pilots, the second pilot picked up on it in the form of suspecting that it was a travel commercial, with image masked. Also with image masked, Alex identified a journey from the sequence when asked about his noted question about home. More, when explaining his notes about the development the sound tried to make magical in his unmasked viewing, he identified a build-up with the music specifically: “*the music sounds like it’s trying to support something like that. That it’s a journey.*” Finally (for Alex), he wrapped up his notes with “*life is a journey*”.

Echoing Alex somewhat, Bob also noted “*journey*” on his first viewing with image masked, explaining how “*I thought kind of leaving one’s own and coming up with something big out there*”. About his second, unmasked viewing, Bob mentions adventure, repeats the point about coming up with something big, saying “*so it’s like an adventure or a dream about doing something big. Creating something big*”. Bob, however, links this to the imagery of the man looking at a building.

Offering a counterpoint, the closest Christine got to discussing it as a journey or an adventure was mentioning a connective thread throughout the piece. Even when prodded for it with questions going off the implication of a narrative in such a thread, the only story-like things she pointed to were the declaratives “*buy a house*”, and “*it’s the small, repeated things*

in your life that make you who you are.” Less extreme was Daniel, who while he could not grasp the meaning of the spinning top, and did not discuss adventure or journey *exactly*, discussed home relating to his second, unmasked viewing, by suggesting an imperative to “*build yourself a good and cozy home so that you can feel safe where you’re from to go out into the world.*” While oriented towards the home, Daniel implied adventure – leaving one’s “nest”, though it was not brought into focus beyond the note: “*something that gives you strength to go out into the world*”. Paradoxically, both in the past as a precondition and the future as a goal. It may be worth noting that these two happen to be the two participants whose first viewing was with sound masked, though there is certainly space here for individual variation to be more significant.

For Eric, the emphasis was on the return *after* the journey: “*it speaks of how home is a place you’re always drawn back to after some kind of hero’s journey.*” Specifically, from his second viewing with image masked, which he conceived of as “*a reflection on what a good home is*”. While it clearly brought adventure to mind then, home was the focus, like it was for Daniel.

Fred identified the flight itself in his third viewing, which was with image masked. When elaborating on it and the notes that immediately followed, which concerned leaving home, he took special note of the drums, discussing how they keep going - echoed in his notes by repeated statements of “*forward motion*” – “*before you pan out and reveal the neighborhood, the house*”, which crucially was invisible in the viewing in question, demonstrating a blurring of memories from the separate viewings. The drums, as the musical equivalent of the spinning top – flight/adventure isomorphism, being highlighted like this might be regarded as a proof of concept for the composer. “*So it’s about growing up, exploration, and then you return home. Back home is kind of the goal to reach, you could say.*” “*A bit like... are you familiar with the hero’s journey?*” “*Yeah, a bit like that.*”¹⁹

¹⁹ The Hero’s Journey is a model based on human narratives described by Joseph Campbell popularized not least for being a source of inspiration for the famous Star Wars-movies through Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (2008). This is a book I have found very interesting personally, rife with insights and counterpoints to the more cynical perspectives of our age, even if reading it quickly might make its message from comparative mythology sound overly optimistic. Its deep influence on Star Wars (which among other

There was a clear – even explicit - attempt in the commercial to evoke feelings of nostalgia or longing, using a variety of means to do so. Visually through relatively romantic images of nature, neighborhoods, implied family and happiness contrasting a stressful, mostly grey work-environment. Narration-wise through what many participants described as a reflection on what home is, culminating as it does in the question of whether it is time to come home now. Musically through the “close” sound, instrumentation, delayed tonal center, and the suspended chords, though the composer conceived of the entrance of the rhythm-section as the point where “*we move past the longing and start working*”. However, besides the music very little actually suggests aspirational forward motion. One might perceive the tunnel-scene as symbolic of this, or the brief seconds of people literally working, but one should not forget that various participants overlooked several scenes in their accounts as well as their notes. For example, Alex said he felt overwhelmed when no elements were masked, and Eric similarly “*when I first saw the clip with both images and sound, I didn’t really hear what he said*”. Clearly then, overlooking but a small number of things without sound can hypothetically change the tone remarkably, as any forward motion from music or sound will be gone.

Bob might provide the most extreme example of this if we contrast his response to the viewing with sound masked to his other two. As previously discussed, Bob’s viewings with sound have him get a relatively optimistic view, discussing adventure and creating something bigger than himself (like a house). “*On the third viewing I read the situation completely differently... Then it was just dark. No buildup, nothing positive. He was just sad, he missed the old, and wished for it.*” These were emotions he mirrored (though perhaps less pessimistically) in his first viewing (image masked), but for himself, except he still felt some “*connection, or maybe a better word would be belonging*”. He affirmatively confirmed (“*Ding-ding!*”) that the pictures were not something the commercial’s protagonist was moving towards, but something he felt was absent when it came to the viewing with sound masked. This might be the single most powerful expression of the impact of the soundtrack on the entire sequence in the data and presents a plausible case for at least one effect successfully caused not least by the music.

things led to George Lucas providing the foreword to the edition I read) might also be taken as a form of “proof of concept”, illustrating that Campbell’s thesis is at least not entirely wrong.

Christine, who generally did not respond to the commercial as a narrative, took things very differently. Before it is covered in more depth, it should be noted that she attributed the following primarily to the narration, stating “*it would have been even less comfortable without the music*”, but also “*it’s like if you have a burnt cake and you try to cover it in marzipan...*” (She later suggested that she was a “*very visual person*”.) So, what was so uncomfortable, and compared to what? Christine’s first viewing was with sound masked. Briefly, she described it by identifying emotion in the office-scene (“*people who are bored*”), and associations (“*they started building a house, and then there was this little girl who sat there drawing, which I guess is a kind of innovation, too.*” “*Children are kind of the future.*”) for most of the rest, culminating in the emotional observation: “*these people savour life, they’re satisfied*”.

Her second viewing was with image masked. She felt it was uncanny and uncomfortable: “*it was kind of ‘you’ve got to come home’... it felt a bit like I was receiving instructions. It felt really wrong.*” Beyond the “instructions”, she thought it was “*a little scary*” since “*the way they said it was so joyful.*” In her view, no one is happy all the time, so the narration felt “*unreal*”, “*mechanical*”, or fake. Since it was tied to the narration, perhaps it is no surprise that this discomfort was consistent throughout the second viewing, even if it was especially prominent near the beginning “*since it was so unexpected*”. In any case, when conjoined with the imagery, which showcased what she thought was boredom in addition to joy, it seems to have felt less fake and thus more comfortable. Though nothing in the narration changed, “*they were bored, but I thought about nice things, which was cozy*”. Towards the end of her final viewing, she shared the experience of a wish about going home that was immediately followed by the pleasant realization “*hey, I am home!*” While drastically different from Bob’s perceptions, the impact here did not arise from the music, which was described as making it feel less uncomfortable. The response here appears largely to be cognitive (or even psychological), following from an apprehension and dislike of instructions and a suspicion of pure happiness. Lacking the tools to engage with the music in this manner may have prevented the music from being taken in the same way as the narration, but this is merely speculation.

Engagement of the sort cognitivists emphasize, recognizing music as *the kind of music that goes along with a kind of emotion in a scene* (recalling all the weaknesses of this view considering the possibility of mixed feelings and so on), can be difficult to disentangle from more immediate emotional responses. In Eric’s case, this became a topic in the interview in a couple of different ways.

His first, unmasked viewing had him breaking down the commercial analytically, identifying how the commercial *played on* things being made from wood, and *tried to leverage* the feeling of being “*at home in the world*”, with sentimental music and beautiful nature. Before we move on, this might be a good example of aesthetic judgment entering into the conversation, entailing cognitive engagement with the different components of the commercial and evaluating how they come together as a whole, to then have that judgment influence the overall impression and following emotions.

This analytical approach in an unmasked viewing was not unique to Eric, nor are they necessarily favorable to the commercial, as both Fred and Alex showed clear indications of such evaluation going on. The second pilot did very little besides it, and the first pilot identified the commercial as “*trying to evoke a...form of ‘longing for home’ or something similar*”, followed by describing it as a “*sales-technique*”. As previously discussed, Alex identified a conflict between image and sound - not exactly the highest praise. Fred was largely on the same page as Eric however, with the evaluation being largely positive, though he closed the interview with a remark on how he “*wouldn’t say it was the most gripping video*”.

Returning to Eric, when asked to elaborate on what he meant by the music being sentimental, he could only identify “*those bright, light tones*”, tentatively suggesting the music contained some melancholia in his view, before commenting on how it is “*difficult to put words on emotions from music*”. He then settled on “*a kind of longing*”.

Later, when discussing his viewing with image masked, he was asked if, like how he found the speech clearer, he noticed something more in the music with this viewing. He felt it was “*more consistent with the message... There was something that just fit, in a way I can’t explain.*” He started comparing his memories of the commercial to what it would have been like if the music was a different genre (given a lack of musical education, likely operating from stereotypes of what the genres are like, and not in the sense of the same musical structures adapted to new genres), specifically hip-hop or metal, suggesting “*it might not have matched the same message*”. Intrigued by this line of approach, I asked what he thought would be the worst fit. “*It really depends on what the commercial is aiming at... if the intention was to show that it would be a horrible experience, then metal would have matched well.*” There is a clear sense of the commercial’s gestalt at play here, even as Eric is incapable of expressing how in words.

This spontaneous exercise was then repeated for the speech – the only other component with image masked, with Eric suggesting that a speech urging for a fight, a “warmongering speech” would be a poor fit, since “[the music] *doesn’t give you an urge to fight or anything*”. This might be said to be *one* way in which the music was *not* “gripping”.

Finally, in discussing Eric’s viewing with sound masked, he said he “*saw that they played at the country-side surroundings and so on, but not quite as... deep feeling as when you have just the sound or with sound and image.*” When asked, perhaps too explicitly, if he could separate emotions from analysis, he corrected himself, saying “*it really shows... that it feels, feels good to live in surroundings like those. And that it, yeah, back to the impression from the whole, it seems like they’re trying... no, not that ‘they’re trying’! I feel like there’s a kind of genuine ‘what we humans wish for’, and maybe what I will wish for myself also. Later. And to feel some kind of connection.*” Catching and correcting himself a couple of times could indicate that it is difficult to separate the emotive from the cognitive, but he seemed to think there was more at play. Notably, he thought this was important enough that it should have been in the notes but did not believe he had thought about it by then.

While not so much a topic of conversation with Fred, he is easily the most analytical if we go by interview. At one point, he expressed surprise at this being a commercial for a private company. “*I expected it could be more about selling the product... when it is a private company...you’d expect them to dare promote themselves just a bit more aggressively to the hypothetical buyer. But in this video I didn’t feel treated like a customer. I just observed a video... that was pretty nice.*” Without preconceptions beyond the video title, he evaluated the video based on similarities with municipality-advertisements he had familiarized himself with as part of his studies. That he was able to feel surprise at this at all suggests he was cognitively contrasting the commercial with the kind of advert he knew used similar means, which might indicate an aesthetic judgment-effect. In any case, the familiarity of the commercial’s style might explain his analytical approach.

Discussing his viewing with sound masked, I confronted Fred with the question of if he *saw* or *felt* emotions when watching. “*I wouldn’t say that it’s just emotions I see in it. If the goal was to produce an emotion from the first viewing, it was still there in the second one.*” Following this thread further made it more confusing: “*there’s nothing that indicates that it [the spinning top? Unclear from context] would be connected to emotion, but it’s what my mind caught. So it might be most accurate to say a bit of both.*” He said there was an “*excess weight of emotions*”, both with and without sound, “*but that was because I recognized it from*

the first listening, and I put the emotions into the video even though they weren't in..." By process of exclusion then, this attributes emotion to audible components of the piece. He previously described the music as sentimental, and extensively discusses how various elements of the commercial make him think of national romanticism, but for concrete emotions: "*I felt some longing or nostalgia for a time that was a bit simpler*" before adult responsibilities.

It should be clear by now that while every participant stood out in one way or another, they were largely singing the same tune (as might be expected from people having seen the same three sequences). Most participants recognized longing or nostalgia in some form, though it usually was unclear if it was cognitively or emotively so. Most participants felt that the music was supportive, that it "fit" or improved on the context, and moreover, though beyond the build-up, which is effectively illustrated by Bob's interview, it had no clear effects. A theme that has yet to be discussed in any depth is nature.

Nature was pointed out by every participant after Bob in one way or another. Christine thought it was "*unique*" for the commercial "*trying to sell houses*" to mostly use pictures of nature to sell it. As if developing this idea, Daniel thought the commercial was trying to say their houses were ecologically sustainable, that the main message was something like "*what we're doing is in harmony with nature*". Eric took it in a somewhat different direction, suggesting that "*it's not the city that's home. It's out in nature*". Eric's perspective here begins to illuminate the conceptual connection between romanticism and nature, as he later ties the "*authentic life*" to "*Something that flows from what's natural, not what's artificial.*" Fred takes it one step further, linking the "*Norwegian*" to "*trollish nature*", associating the violin with villages for the full view of Norwegian national romanticism, as he was explicitly aware of: "*it's already well established after all, that national romanticism for Norway*". While it is conceivable that the violin led other participants in the same direction, in my estimation only Fred and Eric's words are in the romantic paradigm, though Daniel comes close with his take on the main message. It is likely that the imagery of the commercial was (far) more significant, as alluded to in no uncertain (albeit different) terms by several participants including Fred and Eric. This imagery was, after all, what surprised Christine, knowing the commercial context.

With images masked, most participants reported more abstractly, and some more personally (as one might expect with no images to connect it to). Apart from Christine's special case of uncanniness from the narration, the general direction of what was reported

largely remained the same as with no masked elements. For Alex, who felt different elements came into conflict, image masked was “*more comfortable*”. For Bob, the focus shifted from first viewing with image masked (home) to second, unmasked viewing (family), and he felt his second viewing had him feeling enhanced emotions, suggesting complementarity of image and sound. While sound by itself was uncanny to Christine, contrasting her notes from viewings with sound masked and without masking shows that adding sound brought positive states (coziness and homeliness) to the forefront as well as a sense of connectedness, since the combination appeared to solve her problems with narration. It is possible that the sense of connectedness, which she struggled to explain by pointing to trees and described vaguely as a “*common thread*”, came to the forefront as a result of the music not having to fight the narration in her mind. After all, an experience of connectedness can easily be compared to an experience of communion, as rhythmic entrainment can induce. However, there is nothing conclusive linking this to the music, and even if there were, it could just as well be the simple fact that sound is continuous, lacking in parallel to the visual cuts between scenes, and that it no longer feeling fake let her absorb points from the narration, providing a more coherent experience. Daniel felt the sound made the least impression on him, while the unmasked viewing had strongest, that it made it more emotional. “*Not different emotions but a bit more intense*”. He also describes an unease that he attributed to the start of the viewing with image masked, which he thought had a priming effect on that experience. Daniel’s response is a prime example of the viewing with only sound making things more abstract, but he also felt “*much less personally involved without the video*”. Finally, Eric and Fred both showcase that the general direction remains the same, but have been discussed in sufficient depth already.

It is not clear how such material could be summarized further without doing a disservice to the material. However, it is at least worth noting that music received generally little thought from participants yet was seen as fitting or supporting the remaining material. The whole the music supported also generally evoked feelings of longing or nostalgia (cognitively, emotively or both), as well as thoughts about home and the future. This appears to have been accomplished independently of the participants’ aesthetic judgments.

Discussion and conclusions

The overarching concern of this study was the relationship between musical intention, theoretical analysis and audience experience. This was broken down into four research questions: 1) How is the purpose of music in the commercial treated and perceived by the creative minds behind it? 2) Are the production's goals, as articulated by the composer, identifiable through music theory-based content analysis? 3) How were the production's goals, as articulated by the composer, reflected in the participants' reported experience? 4) In which ways did effects implied by the music theoretical content analysis of the commercial manifest in the participants' reports? The contributions of this project will be discussed below, and demarcated. It should be remembered that this thesis only concerned itself with analysis of one case, where these three questions were put together because of the (likely) complementary nature of their answers for an understanding of the path from process to product to response.

How is the purpose of music in the commercial treated and perceived by the creative minds behind it?

This study presupposed that there was an intention behind the creative endeavors that come together to form a product. In the case of the commercial in question, that intention might be formulated in various ways, as can be seen in the interviews. For this research question however, the primary interest is the perspective of the composer, and what might be gleaned from it regarding the broader production.

The first thing that might be noted is that the composer did not start out with any instructions. He was given freedom to do what he thought was right given the manuscript and the storyboard. From these he appears to have apprehended an overall purpose or message for the commercial, which he articulated as follows at one point in the interview: "*hi, now you should come home and get a nice house in Jørpeland*". He tried to support this message by having the music produced with a "*close*" sound from wooden instruments and piano.

He engaged in dialogue with the director to make the music fit the rest of the commercial, resulting in one particularly dark chord foreign to the main scale of the composition being scrapped. Darker chords, as the moniker suggests, usually sound ominous or otherwise sad compared to brighter ones such as basic major chords, and especially when they leave the scale of their surroundings in a way that moves one or more intervals down.

The chord in question, the fourth of the scale, replaces A with Ab, and could therefore be expected to have this effect. This incident clearly demonstrates that there was such a thing as “too dark” for the rest of the commercial in the view of the production, though another darker element (Bb in the bass) was admitted. From this we might infer that the production did not have a problem with dark sound as such, but rather with an excess of it, or a perceived misplacement of it when considering the whole. That is, an aesthetic judgment.

In addition to the occasional influence on emotion, leading to the inclusion in BRECVEMA, aesthetic judgments play an important role in the creation of art. It is what the artist uses to settle on one choice out of the (technically) infinite potential choices they have in front of them. It is an intuitive process where the basis of judgment might beneficially be likened to that of (developed) taste for food, incorporating everything the brain deems necessary, regardless of whether it is fully understood (Peterson, 1999).²⁰ Naturally, this includes goals, but since it involves tacit knowledge or know-how (Polanyi, 1966, Pedersen, 2012), aesthetic judgment in the creative process can hardly be understood fully in a cynical manner. The exact role of goals in this process, not to mention subgoals, can be difficult to work out. Habermas, as cited by Pedersen, suggests that implicit (largely but not entirely synonymous with tacit) knowledge, which may not be easily accessible to subjects themselves, can be “*brought to consciousness through the choice of suitable examples and counterexamples*”, or simply put, through exploratory (if we avoid presupposing to know what it will be already) dialogue. During the interview, one such goal was made explicit.

Throughout the discussion, there was talk of the “home key” (or scale) of the music. Every scale has chords that feel more “stable”, or “at rest” than others, with the dominant chord being a prime example of a chord that is unstable, and the tonic being a prime example of a stable chord. Stable chords generally do not feel like they need to change, whereas chords like the dominant “really want to” go somewhere, possibly because of the inherent tension of the wavelengths that comprise them that is absent (or lesser) in more stable chords. No matter the cause, the root chord (tonic) of a key is often referred to as a home, not just in this interview. Near the end of the interview, I drew together the composer’s previous references

²⁰ This citation reflects a core theme of the book and can therefore hardly be directed to a particular page. It also concerns creative endeavors more broadly understood than just confined to art, reasonably understood as problem-solving. Problem-solving implies a goal accomplished when the problem is dealt with and may be used to understand the creative process in the artistic setting as follows: The problem of the artist is “how do I create something with the attributes I desire it to have”. The matter of where that desire comes from or how it changes throughout the process is a separate but substantive issue.

to this chord as home and his description following our discussion of the suspension of chords in the music and how the C-chord was implied but withheld until the release at the end of the commercial to suggest that he used the C-chord as a metaphorical home in the music to correspond to the home the commercial treats. His response was “*it feels exactly right when you say it, but you know how this works in practice too, you don’t sit there thinking analytically when you write music.*” Dialogue thus identified what looks to have been a subconscious or implicit goal in the realm of musical expectancy, used to evoke longing by suspension of harmonic tension.

As a composer myself, I feel I should echo that this kind of analytical planning is only rarely involved on a conscious level in my creation of music. A generally more pressing concern is creating something that seems “right” in an abstract sense, or for cooperative productions, something that seems to “fit” with what it is supposed to be a part of. In this case, the composer wanted to create something mature that would fit with components he conceptualized as suggesting that audience members (“*you*”) should travel to a specific place and get a house there. From this we might infer that he developed subgoals, such as roughly: “*evoke joyful longing in audience*”, beneath which one might think that more specific goals were organized. Figure 2 attempts to map out what it might look like in the abstract:

While an overarching goal was perceived by the composer, he did not emphasize it very much in the interview. It seems to have been quickly subdivided into more concrete goals having to do with his personal philosophy and craft, as illustrated in figure 2.

As they move from the abstract to the particular, the goals increasingly transform into application of skills. The skills may be thought of as a toolkit utilized by the artisan (categorizing composers as such), where different tools are known from experience to be good at accomplishing different things. These goals and our choices regarding them can be anything from explicit to completely procedural, knowing that while our brains appear to

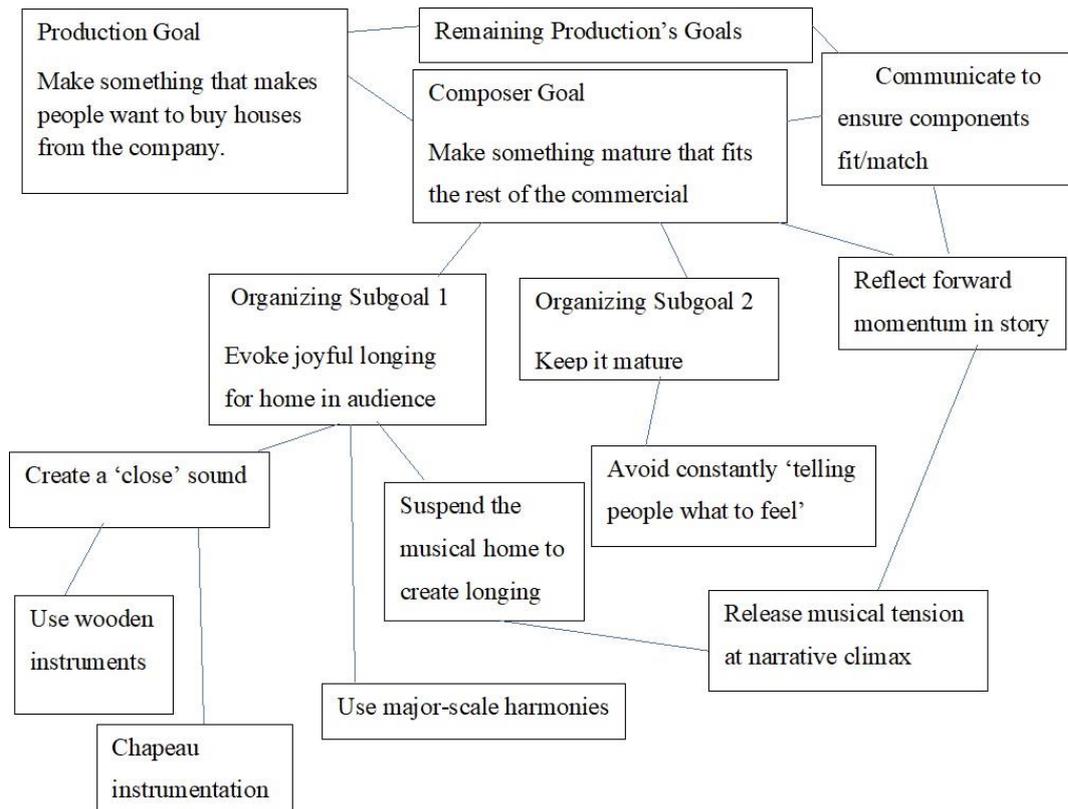


Figure 2: Rough map of goals pertaining to the composer, building on statements from the interview

operate on a goal-oriented structure, they are fractal in nature, the extent of which is unclear (Peterson, 1999). As we get into the weeds, then, it may look increasingly deterministic (or absurd to call them goals), but the whole that is to be created through a creative process is sufficiently removed from any one of them for it to be difficult – if not impossible – to predict in its entirety (Polanyi, 1966).

Some goals are philosophical and speak to the general orientation of the creative at work. An example from this case is how the composer wanted to create something mature, that respected its audience to figure out (to the degree that this phrase applies to emotional responses) how they should respond themselves. Philosophical goals are, perhaps by definition, accessible to the rational mind, and should at least in most cases be easy to relate back to something having to do with a specific worldview. In this case, we might say it stems from some form of humanism that venerates individual judgment.

This is not so easily done if we look at procedural goals. Where the abstract goals, such as “*avoid constantly 'telling people what to feel'*”, may be said to reflect a philosophical worldview, the toolkit utilized to release musical tension at the narrative climax is based on knowledge of the craft, of how it is known to be possible to do something. The parameters that determine this are not completely charted. Consequently, it can only really be said to be

the product of pragmatic approach based in experience and taste, where experience provides the tools (known ways to accomplish X) and taste (“*do I like how this sounds as it tries to do X?*”) ultimately determines what is done. This is not to say that these do not interact with philosophical goals; Personal philosophy can obviously inform what is attempted with the tools, what “X” is, as it does in this example (even if it is subordinate to the overall purpose of the commercial, seeing as personal philosophy can be restrained by external limiting factors), but merely that as we approach practical goals, the influence of philosophy (what we *try* to do) gives way to a kind of pragmatism of taste and experience (how we know we *can* do it). Through this understanding, deliberate choices may be understood as goals.

One might infer that, given the freedom he got to do what he thought was appropriate and how he at no point suggested that he was told what he should try to do beyond discussing how the music fit the rest, that the production either trusted his ability to infer it, or, perhaps even more radically, cared more about crafting something they could agree was good than they cared about the commercial message. This might seem paradoxical, but if one assumes that the audience seeing and liking the commercial for its non-commercial qualities creates a more positive perception of the company that made it, thereby giving them a reason to not be cynical about the company’s intentions, this might work to the company’s commercial benefit. Not asking people responsible for a component of the production to attempt to be manipulative could thus be justifiable, even for the most cynical among us. Of course, not asking for such things could just as well be genuine, or out of a lack of knowledge on how it might be used to manipulate in the first place besides by fitting alongside the rest of the commercial. In any case, while the study shows how the composer describes being left to his own devices, this case study does not have grounds for any statements as to why, though his relationship to the person who recruited him to the project, an old student of his, might indicate respect and trust in their relationship.

To summarize: The composer had to use his own mental faculties to infer what his overall goal should be, separating it into more practical goals that when followed through on produced a demo that was adjusted in dialogue with the production to coordinate some elements (like the spinning top isomorphism) and make everything fit together. The purpose of the commercial itself, insofar as it can be said to be intrinsic to it being a commercial – that is, to sell a product – was at most implied as far as the composer was concerned, who appeared to be more concerned with making music that fit with the rest, reflecting home, and longing, and progression towards it.

Are the production's goals, as articulated by the composer, identifiable through music theory-based content analysis?

The independent music theoretical analysis was largely congruent with the composer's report. The content analysis identified the evocation of longing or nostalgia as a primary goal based on a variety of musical elements as well as the gestalt within which some of them appear isomorphic to one romantic motif or another.

Interestingly, while both composer and content analysis recognized the way in which musical expectancy was used leading up to the tonal home, neither appears to have consciously identified it as an isomorphism to the home the narrator discusses before near the end of the interview. It was almost pointed out as such by both composer and in the analysis but was only made explicit after extended dialogue. When neither party thought of it as such at the start of the interview, this is a curious example of content analysis accurately reflecting the composer's current understanding of a goal, before dialogue between analyst and composer developed the understanding of both parties in tandem.

While some of the composer's goals were identified fairly accurately, the content analysis did not identify deliberate choices having to do with instrumentation as in a chapeau setting, sounding "close" or being made of wood, though all of these points were brought up by the composer. What the analysis did point to having to do with instrumentation amounted to the violin as a folk music instrument, and as a melodic instrument associated with emotional Contagion.

As folk instrument, the violin was associated with national romanticism, discussed in the context of nostalgia and longing. While this was a target for the composer to a degree, with how he stressed the importance of making it sound close like in a chapeau, it does not seem fair to say it was entirely accurate when something the composer emphasized as deliberate was overlooked in this way.

Given how several interviewees noted the emphasis on wooden material in the commercial, it seems plausible that a different analyst versed in musical theory could have noted it and thus accurately identified that goal in the music, instead of only one related to it. Certainly, qualitative content analysis is not entirely reliable as a method in any case, but when it comes to music theory, this point is relatively tangential. Even knowing that these instruments are made of wood, as one might expect from someone familiar with instruments

through music theory, does not immediately lend itself to these notions of closeness or even the idea that it was relevant, even if it might seem obvious in hindsight.

Knowing that the composer was free to work at his own discretion for the most part, it is interesting to note what appears to be either overstated or understated in the content analysis relative to the interview. A point of note here is continuity, in a couple of different ways. At one point in the interview, the composer mentions how every chord contained the root note of C, to create continuity between the otherwise relatively unorthodox chord-progressions. This could be called harmonic continuity, and appears to have been a deliberate choice from the composer *over* conventional functional harmonics, without being discussed in the content analysis beyond the G-chord being recognized as suspended, thus implying that it contains a C. Since the remaining chords all typically contain a C as described, it was therefore acknowledged, but no link to composer intention was drawn.

Another kind of continuity that is understated in the content analysis - and which may be understated more generally - is the importance of the stable rhythmic figure, not just as a source of entrainment, but as a means of creating anticipation through the continuity of the music. In the film-music trick which the composer explains how he relied upon, which entails stable rhythmic figures and slow melodic lines above them, this anticipation is what allows it to build up “energy” for a “release”. While rhythmic continuity is hardly avoidable within a stable beat (at least up to a point of complexity that might be entirely subjective, but perhaps also related to what our working memory can recognize *as* stable or “chunkable”, Snyder, 2009, p. 108), and in that sense is not obviously special, it was given weight by the composer through the film-music trick as a more suitable alternative to what he called “mickey-mousing” for the commercial in question. Moreover, as was also discussed in the interview to a degree (with the composer comparing film framerates with musical wavelengths), music that suddenly loses its rhythmic continuity is instantly jarring. It seems fair to suggest that rhythmic continuity might constitute one of the more important elements that factor into whether a piece of music “fits” anything.²¹ After all, being “jarring” is not easily made part of a greater whole.

²¹ This suggestion is not meant to privilege any one way that such continuity can be created. Through the phenomenon of relevance realization, in the form of insight, we can adapt our frame of reference very quickly upon indication that it is insufficient or otherwise improper. With this in mind, the suggestion is really extremely broad, and it is just that, a suggestion.

Completing a trifecta of continuities is narrative continuity, reflecting the narrative of the other components of the commercial. Like rhythmic continuity, it is easily taken for granted and thus overlooked, but with the explicitly deliberate steps taken to have the spinning top metaphor for moving beyond longing and build-up and towards doing something about it coincide with the rhythm-section of the music entering in full (which *was* noted in analysis, if not in those exact terms), efforts were made to achieve it. It is the only one of the three I think was fairly captured by analysis, if only because music can only do so much for it. But it is also a plausible origin for the conflict experienced by one of the participants, as well as the sense of confusion experienced by others.

The main problem with narrative continuity through music in the commercial is that the images tell a story that fluctuates, moving from longing to doing before culminating in a home well made. The music reflects this by having exclusively suspended chords before the “doing” starts with the spinning top, moving closer to functional harmonics in the following section, before finally reaching the tonic chord proper at the end of the commercial. This might seem like a fair approach to reflecting that narrative, and to be sure, it is, for the most part (the narrative of the imagery arguably ends about 10 seconds prior to the musical release). However, this is a commercial with a narrator doing voice-over, and the narration does not follow this narrative arc, opting instead to ponder home, relations and belonging with a warm and friendly tone. Where the imagery moves on to “doing”, *making*, home, the narration reaches the near-opposite topic of *leaving* home. Can the music accurately reflect both at once? As discussed in the analysis of the interviews, it kind of does, by binding them together as a kind of adventure. Nonetheless, striving for a sense of narrative continuity in music that is supposed to supplement both a narrative arc that includes distress (imagery) and narration that only moves close to this at one point that is distinctly (and immediately) *after* said distress on the timeline presents challenges regarding what should be emphasized and when. Given this, it is not obvious how a narrative continuity should be made when combining these elements.²²

²² Of course, knowing that what was analyzed here was not the full commercial as it was devised but a version from which about 1 minute and 15 seconds were cut, this might have desynchronized events across different mediums utilized in the commercial and forced compromises that resulted in these difficulties of narrative continuity.

The solution to this challenge of narrative continuity may have come through a focus on the general mood. Mood is easier to capture musically than narrative²³, perhaps precisely because it is fuzzy. Unfortunately, this fuzziness makes it difficult to analyze objectively. That said, it is my impression that the mood the composer attempted to create was picked up on in analysis as well as in participants, being one of longing and joy, described as everything from cozy to magical when combined with the other elements. Admittedly, the joy-part is understated in the content analysis, as was discussion of the shift in mood that accompanied the rhythm-section.

Of things that were overstated in the content analysis insofar as the production's goals were concerned, there are few that cannot be attributed to how the content analysis relied upon a framework for musical emotion in listeners for structure. Predictions based on Contagion, Brain stem reflexes, Musical expectancy and Rhythmic entrainment were overstated as far as the composer was concerned, but I believe this goes back to the difference between analysis of music and the creative process behind it, echoing the sentiment I share with the composer, discussed in the previous section, which is probably indicative at least of how the two of us make music, that is, more intuitively than by plan. Given that one has built up knowledge of music theory over more than a decade, it is unsurprising if (many of) the mechanisms laid out conceptually in BRECVEMA have been personally discovered over that time-period, even if the composer is unable to articulate them as such, and thus could easily constitute part of the toolkit the brain can draw upon in the creative process. The case of the tonic-home isomorphism discussed earlier illustrates this point with musical expectancy. Speaking for myself, as far as my compositions are concerned it seems banal to describe my intentions in BRECVEMA-terms; I have yet to experience it like I have access to these mechanisms as tools to intentionally employ. The interview made me think the composer in question could have thought similarly, not least because of considering the case with musical expectancy. Putting it in BRECVEMA-terms may be overstating it as far as the composer is concerned.

In all, considering that the content analysis did not have access to the composer's mind, it was mostly accurate to the goals articulated by the composer. Besides the deliberate choices regarding use of wooden instruments and sounding "close", nothing appears to have

²³ This is arguably the reason why it is so common to tell stories with lyrics on top of music; That the music would not translate to those stories without.

gone completely under the radar, even if some things are overstated, generally like BRECVEMA, and other things, like joy and harmonic continuity, are understated. Personally, I am surprised by how congruent the composer's stated goals were with the content analysis, though the reader may disagree.

How were the production's goals, as articulated by the composer, reflected in the participants' reported experience?

Before this can be answered, there is an elephant in the room, or maybe even two, that should be acknowledged, having to do with the study's validity and reliability. Participants in the pseudo-experiment were decidedly *not* experiencing the commercial as it was intended to be experienced, for more than a couple of reasons: 1) They watched it three times in succession, 2) they were asked to write down notes from each viewing, 3) they were given free control of time to reflect between viewings, 4) the three viewings were all markedly different due to masking, 5) they knew what they signed up for as part of the experiment, and finally 6) they watched it in the context of anticipating an interview. This was the result of pragmatic choices necessitated by the context of research and aims, as discussed in the methods-section, but it does not change the fact that the participants responses could be meaningfully different for any of these reasons if encountering the commercial in its "natural habitat". Worse, as a first exposure, there is no way to check how it would have been different under ordinary conditions. That was one elephant, which compromises the data for the purposes of comparing the production's intentions (which after all are) for the whole of the commercial to the participants' contributions. Still, as the choices were deliberate and made while conscious of these weaknesses, the data should reflect the effects of isolating components on the participants' experiences fairly given the situation, which is relevant for the next research question.

The other, more tentative elephant is that the data are filtered through the composer on the one hand and 6 people on the other. Said 6 people had varying degrees of attentiveness even at their chosen time for their contribution. Comments about sleepiness, or tiredness, or statements like "words fail me today" are not limited to just one of the interviews. Scientifically speaking, this weakens the data, polluting it with effects of, for instance, sleepiness, the likes of which are of no interest to this study, though it could also be seen as reflective of real world complexity and in that way informative. No doubt, conducting a set of studies with different orientation (for example focusing on the research question currently for consideration rather than compromising to also include questions of applied music theory by

content analysis) on the same commercial, with less convenience-sampling and a larger number of randomly selected informants, would be a logical next step in understanding the topics at hand.

With the elephants acknowledged, there is the question of how to evaluate the matter at hand. While not complete, the chart of composer goals (figure 2) offers clear examples of what the goals might look like to the composer. But what of the effects? Even in the pilots, participants pointed out that they probably lacked the language (or the “psycho-technology”²⁴) to explain what they heard in the music. When detailed conceptualization is off the table, it limits how and by extension what can be said on this front. However, detailed conceptualization of musical elements by definition involves aspects of music theory and can therefore hardly be isolated from one of the objects of inquiry for this study, if at all. It might therefore be said to be inevitably off the table. In its place, we must rely on how their reports of their experiences compare to the stated aims behind decisions, and when they appear to correspond, discuss whether it is a plausible cause given the context.

A goal of little concern for this study is the implied purpose of selling the company’s product. While it is of obvious interest to the company, it was not emphasized by the composer, who as already observed was left to infer his own goals based on the existing manuscript, and whose choices and goals lie much closer to the music.

Before this is begun proper, a quality of music that one participant commented on lies close to my personal interests, and probably to those of most philosophically inclined composers. The *gripping* quality Fred felt the commercial could have had more of could probably be said to be at the heart of the more immediate emotional experience that emotivists emphasize and is probably on a continuum between awe-inspiring experiences of “communion”, that many would probably call religious, and what is mundane to the point of being deemed unworthy of attention. To the degree that this is a fair estimate, it indicates a potential focal point for cognitive research on perception and modal brain systems (reflecting BRECVEMA-mechanisms), music theory – at least regarding rhythm but perhaps more, religious and maybe even moral psychology and sociology, a potential point of integration of various sciences; To the degree that ‘gripping’ means “intrinsically meaningful” and we can

²⁴ A term from cognitive science, helpfully explained by Vervaeke (2019) as the equivalent of a tool, but for the brain. With examples like literacy, the socratic method and shamanism, it seems appropriate to apply to musical literacy as well.

understand how something becomes gripping (and perhaps more disturbingly: how or if it can be guided), it would have far-reaching implications. Unfortunately, this was beyond the scope of this project in more ways than one.

Moving on to the goals articulated by the composer, there are plenty to look at. The matter of fitness is probably the most nebulous. It is also one highlighted by previous studies, such as Morris & Boone (1998). While it is difficult to pin down what it means for music to fit, this can ostensibly be set aside for this question, as very little in participant reports suggests they thought otherwise, with many struggling to say anything *more* than that the music fit the rest. Certainly, it was not a universal experience, with Alex being clear about experiencing a conflict. Importantly though, the conflict was between the *sound* and the images. Unfortunately, this was not further discriminated in the interview. However, a later comment from him indicates he thought the music supported the rest, and his first statement in the interview alludes to a conflict between warm music with tension and images of frustration. It is possible that the conflict he experienced, which he explicitly noted was near the beginning, may have been overstated by the conditions of his interview, with a couple of lines of thought interrupted by issues with the internet, and him being generally sleepy at the time. In the previous section a potential cause for conflict or confusion having to do with narrative was considered, but this alternative explanation should also be kept in mind, not least because Alex is the most contrarian on this front. The second most would have to be Daniel. Daniel said the *narration* fit, and said he experienced the commercial similarly with and without sound, but more strongly with sound, which in his case meant a sense of unease followed by satisfaction. He attributes the former of these to a priming effect from his previous viewing, and the main character of the commercial appearing distracted, or concerned. He makes no comments about the music beyond thinking it contributed to the former, presumably implying that it fit, even if that means something different to him than to the others.

Can it be determined if the participants felt like the music told them what to feel? Certainly, there are some indications of this, though their extent is debatable. Comments about the sound trying to make things magical, or Christine's disturbing experience of the commercial with image masked, could be taken to imply this in the participants' experience. It should be remembered though, that at least for Christine's part, she was clear about the cause of her unease being the combination of feeling like she was told what to do and the

voice sounding too happy, and that the music counteracted this somewhat. In other words, she indicated that she felt like the *voice* told her something about how to feel, not the music.

Comments like the one about the sound trying to make things magical are more diffuse. It seems to me that this effect is more plausibly associated with music than with voice (as a matter of fact, every single time I have referenced it I have misremembered it as about music rather than sound, only to correct myself upon double-checking), but it is not out of the question for it to concern dialogue, either; Not least when the dialogue amounts to a reflection that is basically independent of the narrative depicted in the commercial, as previously discussed. It is conceivable for that to have the effect of making everything seem a bit unreal or dreamlike, which is reasonably “magical”. However, when the music fits, surely it would amplify this effect? At any rate, “magical” is not easily pinned down as any one feeling. It therefore seems appropriate to say the composer succeeded in his goal of keeping the music abstract, with the caveat that musical literacy might influence this through providing means by which musical elements can more easily be categorized to even *understand* what the music tells you. For example, the use of a major scale itself contains information about what to feel, not least since it was chosen by a composer who would know that it is generally associated with sounding happy, or at least positive. A moment-to-moment test of a sequence that employs mickey-mousing (which I do not recall ever seeing in a commercial I did not make the music for myself but is frequent in shows like Tom & Jerry) with a musically illiterate audience could be informative on this front.

It might seem paradoxical for the composer to accomplish the goal of not telling people what to feel while simultaneously evoking joyful longing in the audience, not least while also reflecting forward momentum in the story, but that would be forgetting that he was referring specifically to mickey-mousing, which involves frequent shifts in musical content to reflect every or most changes in the visuals. Slower changes and gradual developments then, should not be confused with the hectic changes you might find in a cartoon.

At this point I have referred to propaganda music, commercial music, movie music, cartoon music and program music. This is because I regard them as on a continuum, at least insofar as music is concerned, but also intention. In all these contexts, the composer’s intentions are adjusted to a broader goal, which might be said to be the purpose of the entire production. Whether the goal is to tell a certain story the best way possible, to convince the audience to buy something, or to get people to support something like a war or a candidate for election, it remains an overarching goal. This is not to say that there is no meaningful

distinction between propaganda and telling an apolitical story to the best of a team's abilities, but when we get into the weeds between propaganda and commercial music, or politically motivated movies, those distinctions become more difficult to make.

In my bachelor thesis (Taranger, 2019) I made some relevant points, building on an evolutionarily informed perspective on the creative process. Most importantly for this topic, that products of the creative process that involve a clear-cut message will necessarily force the mainly intuitive process to unfold in a limited space. On this basis, I suggested a distinction between, in operative and admittedly cliched terms, “deep” and “shallow” art, based on whether it had a clear-cut message influencing its creation (or at least, if it seems plausible that it had) or not.²⁵ Art, broadly construed as products of the creative process, that has a clear message, may be regarded as shallow, and insofar as it seeks to propagate this message (or agenda), as propagandistic. With this conceptualization, I do not mean to suggest that it is automatically suspect, or that shallow art contributes nothing of value (unless you agree with it). Art is rarely constrained to one medium of communication. With the example of the current commercial, one can reasonably distinguish between the mediums of written words (the name of the company), spoken words (narration), pictures, and music. These are not equally explicit. I think one could reasonably argue that it is only to the degree that a medium is explicit that one is able to imbue a specific message in it; Otherwise, it could turn out to *not be the same message*, especially as understood by different people. While it might be easy to put a message in words, putting that same message in music can be difficult, and might even be impossible, no matter how much one wishes to do so. With this, it is possible for a work of art containing different mediums to be shallow in its more explicit elements while being deep in others. This is not meant to repeat my previous thesis, but simply to explain why I am willing to reference all these different forms of (in my view) multimedia products side by side, without going into too much detail.

As far as music is concerned, it is difficult enough to identify messages in it for there to be a field devoted to understanding how music works which, in its more ambitious contributors, contains claims about how music either actually works or should work, that *even still* is disregarded beyond names by many composers, like the composer for this commercial and myself. I will happily admit that in my case, I might listen to someone else's work and

²⁵ Crucially, such a categorization would be compatible both with the view that art has to have a message and the view that it does not need to have a message, since not being able to find a message does not mean it is not there, but it also does not mean it *is* there.

imitate things in it I recognize (or experiment until I figure it out) when I think it fits what I want in the piece I am working on (or hum a tune I have heard until it suddenly transforms in how I do it to the point of being something new, becoming the inspiration for a piece of music). When it is this diffuse to people who make it, it is not obvious what more a propagandist could ask of their project's composer than to make music that fits the rest of the product. As we have seen, that appears to have been effectively what was asked of the current composer as well. While it is conceivable for a project to ask their composer(s) for something jarring to a scene or two based on the creative vision of the people in charge - which can be done in various ways - that can be done in all kinds of productions. While a meaningful exception to requests of music that fits a scene, it remains music that fits the creative vision, so it would arguably still fit the purpose of the scene in the greater context.

Given that the appropriateness of music when paired with images is such a complex affair, perhaps a more fruitful approach to understanding media music would be to try to identify conditions of failure. Another affair that appears to be primarily intuitive, that of morality (Haidt, 2012) has developed psychological models like moral foundations theory, with the hypothesis that people have a set of evolved moral instincts²⁶ (or, in the terms of cognitive science, modules) that are weighted differently by different people. Different importance being put on different aspects of a case based on evolved systems (by implication with natural and effectively random variation that at the very least flows from the genes being remixed every generation) could go a long way towards explaining the difficulty of establishing a consensus for what is good, or when and how different principles should be compromised. Yet, there appears to be a consensus on some things being absolutely immoral, dubbed 'atrocities' by the United Nations (2014).²⁷ While the matter of how music fits its surroundings is (hilariously) tame by comparison, and unlike atrocities it is of little consequence if transgressed against, it is possible that a methodology that looks at extreme examples of musical juxtaposition, similarly to how 1948 convention that defined the three kinds of 'atrocities' following examples of would-be transgressions of the terms as then defined, could provide a helpful guideline for composers and media productions. Then again, it might not be worth the effort given how even people who do not create music, such as Eric

²⁶ In *The Righteous Mind*, 2012, Haidt presents two different versions of the theory with 5 and 6 moral foundations, respectively.

²⁷ It is obviously not lost that this consensus does not mean nobody wants to do it, just that basically everyone else agrees that those people are morally in the wrong.

in this study, appear to have clear ideas of what would not fit. Indeed, such guidelines might only appear necessary to someone with no intuition, like a computer. While it might appear outlandish to most, composing computers have existed in some capacity for a while (Ball, 2014). Perhaps developing explicit guidelines in this way could speed up their development for media use if that is desirable. (Unsurprisingly, I have mixed feelings on this front.)

Returning to the comparison of what the composer tried to do and what the participants experienced, the aim of evoking joyful longing saw some discussion in the analysis, and if we understand nationalism, romanticism and nostalgia to be effectively equivalent to longing (with slightly different emphasis, most obviously in nationalism, which for example might be prideful), every single participant either pointed it out or agreed to it as capturing the sentiment of their words, albeit with different objects of longing, ranging from childhood to their family to making something big. This might cast too large a net, however. Distinguishing between a conceptual recognition of longing as what the commercial was trying to make them feel (following from what Craton et al. (2017) describe as the emotion recognition mechanism in a variation of BRECVEMA) and them recognizing the emotion in themselves it is difficult. Not least knowing it was a commercial (something 5 out of 8 participants indicated in their written notes that they were thinking about if we include the pilots), which might make people a bit more suspicious and incline them to hold back on feeling what they perceive it as trying to make them feel. This kind of effect cannot be ruled out, nor can it be asserted to have been present. It is in fact possible that the methodology of the pseudo-experiment may have counteracted such effects in participants to some degree by having them experience it differently than it was made to be presented. Nonetheless, experiencing the commercial's music as trying to evoke longing may have contributed to the music feeling like it fit.

The “joyful” aspect of the longing, easily represented through use of major-scale harmonies, is reasonably reflected in a general pleasantness that is acknowledged by most participants, with Bob's experience of the commercial with music masked and Christine's adjectives for her unmasked viewing being particularly potent examples when contrasted with Bob's general experience or Christine's viewing with image masked, respectively. Still, it may be worth noting that Christine's reported experiences contained no indications of longing beyond her expressing a wish to be home followed abruptly by the realization that she was. For her then, it was more a joy in the moment than it was anything like an optimistic longing for anything.

The suspension involved in attempting to create the joyful longing and the consequent harmonic release it allowed for received no attention from participants. The closest anyone got to indicating it was Fred, who observed that the drums stopped playing at about the same time, which he related to the imagery, not to the harmony or the narration, though he did come close in his notes about the viewing with image masked, where he made a similar observation about the narration “returning home” which we now know the composer (semi-consciously) mirrored in the music.

That the longing found different objects for different participants could indicate that while composers can successfully evoke or at least make people think about an emotion (one might also ask if the longing being associated with an object means it was necessarily felt and not just recognized), where that emotion goes is outside of their control. This might be likened to the Visual imagery of BRECVEMA, about which Juslin (2013) noted how there are wide individual differences among listeners, or how the genre of program music required explication of what people were supposed to associate music (-al elements) with. This might apply equally to emotional responses themselves, where for example the surrounding elements could provide pointers for any emotions evoked by the music, or to which the music binds itself perceptually as isomorphic. For the former, consider how the narration of this commercial emphasizes home, or how it depicts a child playing, both of which became the object of longing for a participant. For the latter, perhaps a better example is that of leitmotifs, setting up isomorphisms through repeated co-exposure. There could very well be a testable hypothesis here, though any such hypothesis would have to account for the clear individual differences and might therefore require substantial scale as well as a randomly selected representative sample, and perhaps also media material developed specifically for the study to ensure it is not already familiar to some participants.

Neither the composer’s deliberate choice of instrumentation like what one might hear in a local chapeau, nor the close-sounding aspect of the music were reflected in any comments from participants, beyond Fred commenting on how the violin and the voice combined made him think of rural Norway, and how it was calm and careful, thus: “*near and dear*”.²⁸ Many picked up on there being a “wooden” theme, but no one extended it to the instruments. It seems unreasonable to expect anything concrete on these fronts. Even if they had the

²⁸ In this case, probably literally if we consider the location of the university college where the study took place.

knowledge, as far as participants are concerned it could probably very easily amalgamate into simply fitting the rest of the commercial.

Finally, we might compare how the composer's goal of reflecting the forward momentum of the narrative was apprehended by participants. Two participants, Bob and Alex, commented on the build-up in the music, which was a notable component of the composer's expressed ways of reflecting the forward momentum. While not attentive to the build-up, Fred identified progression with the spinning top, the rhythm and the narration, seemingly reflecting the development seeing as the drums he identified the rhythm with are absent until the spinning top, which we recall was a coordinated kick-off point for moving past the longing. For the rest, there are no comments that clearly reflect it, but once again we come back to how the music fits, since presumably fitting also means matching enough to feel right, which could not be limited to the narration, and should therefore extend to the depicted narrative. If we are strict about it though, only half of the main participants expressed anything that could be said to reflect this concretely. If we are less strict, comments about the commercial making participants think of adventure or a journey could be taken to indicate that it was experienced, but that foregoes any concrete claim of connection to the music.

It would seem that insofar as the participant reports are concerned, a lot of these goals coalesce or at least relate back to the fuzzy matter of the music fitting the rest of the material. This is in line with the findings summarized by Morris and Boone (1998) but does not appear to contribute anything to the topic. As for the question at hand, would a composer want their audience to be able to apprehend their goals – if any? I would posit that a composer is likely to have most interest in accomplishing what amounts to the subgoals in the production-context, whether shared by other parts of production or not. That is, philosophical, abstract goals like keeping the music mature, making it fit its surroundings, and if not evoking then at least supporting a kind of emotional response in the given context. In reverse order, participants all described the intended kind of emotional response, of joyful longing, even if with substantial variation in its directionality and emphasis. Participants generally thought the music fit or supported (which implies fitness in) its surroundings when viewing the entire production at once, even if some felt overwhelmed by the totality. Little in any participant-interview said anything with regard to the maturity of the music, but arguably that would be because the music was sufficiently mature for it to not feel overly hectic. For what it is worth, nothing in any participant interview indicated that the music was immature. Then again, these are the terms of a well-versed critic, and should not be expected from laypeople.

In which ways did effects implied by the music theoretical content analysis of the commercial manifest in the participants' reports?

The effects implied by the content analysis either derive from musical structures associated with BRECVEMA-effects or from gestalts that are not entirely musical, involving other elements of the commercial. The primary effects associated with BRECVEMA that were deemed relevant to the music were effects of increased arousal, a sense of connectedness, and affect following from contagion. Musical expectancy was initially disregarded for being unpredictable, which appears to have been a mistake, since musical expectancy played into a couple of gestalts as part of isomorphisms (both as absence of home and as home). Moreover, musical expectancy regarding functional harmonies, which as the composer commented on in the interview, are everywhere in our children's songs as well as broader popular culture (and as he also mentioned, build on the relationships between the wavelengths of the different notes). While musical expectancy can only be used for prediction based on shared experiences then, a set of experiences sufficient for such a basis between Norwegian students is a reasonable assumption.

All the same, the problem of gleaning information about these effects in practice from musically illiterate participants rears its head again. While plausibly measured with the equipment required to measure neuroactivity and neurochemical responses, it is for example not obvious how increased arousal would translate to written notes or relayable memory, nor how or even if it could be discriminated between arousal stemming from brain stem reflexes and arousal originating in rhythmic entrainment. To be sure, sudden and pronounced changes in the content (recalling that brain stem reflexes are not exclusive to music) and a clearly defined beat being present make assuming that these well-established effects have played a part reasonable, but with qualitative methods, can it be anything more than an assumption? I do not see a way to get around this problem with the present study.

With that said, insofar as increased arousal can be detected in the data, it should be reflected in expressions of satisfaction, contentedness, and intensity of experience. Unfortunately, they could also be inspired by other elements in the commercial. An example would be Daniel reporting unease followed by satisfaction with sound masked. Clearly then, such expressions are not sufficient in themselves.

It should also be noted that in being felt as sudden, loud or unison sounds, volume is a potentially important factor. Situations known to induce responses associated with rhythmic entrainment, like the sense of connectedness people describe from rave-parties (Haidt, 2013, p. 231-232) indicate that volume is significant for both B and R effects in musical emotion. However, this study could not account for volume what with the wide variety of different sound-systems participants could be using, so its data relating to volume-related effects should not be taken too seriously. Coupled with the fact that this commercial does not feature rapidly changing chords or a strong beat (which would arguably be inappropriate for the rest of the commercial anyway), this might go a long way towards explaining why Fred reported not finding it particularly gripping, though as noted when discussing participant estimations of how well the music fits, most candidates reported that the music (and/or) supported the commercial. For Daniel for example, this entailed making the emotions more intense, potentially due to B and/or R effects. These effects may therefore be said to plausibly be present, but not very strong if so, at least insofar as this method can detect them.

What emotional response comes from contagion is dependent on what emotion the voice-like instrument appears to express. The content analysis acknowledged complexity around this, concluding contagion effects in this case should not at the outset be “negative” like sadness, but might mix with remaining components of the piece to everything from longing to pure joy. While not strictly a matter of contagion but rather of a cognitive interaction with Sim’s mixed emotions (2013), the longing was also noted as potential source of sadness at having “missed out” on what one experienced longing towards. It seems to me that these complexities, coupled with how human attention is surprisingly limited (Simons & Chabris, 1999), make it unlikely for any contagion-effects, or any other emotional effects for that matter, to be possible to isolate or, consequently, to falsify by a study like the current. They should instead be expected to mix into an emotional gestalt (that might change over time), which appears to be what happened in the pseudo-experiment. As the analysis of the qualitative interviews clearly indicated, this gestalt was generally positive, both with and without images. Moreover, as Bob describes his viewing without sound, its absence could completely change the reading of the video to appear more tragic than optimistic, losing the voice participants described as welcoming (except when Christine found it too happy and commanding) as well as the major key music.

When it comes to gestalts and isomorphisms, participants and analysis were mostly on the same page. As has been noted several times by now, most participants at the very least

picked up on one aspect of the isomorphisms having to do with longing, Norwegian national romanticism or nostalgia. Similarly, most participants noted the isomorphism around adventure, the rhythm and the spinning top to some degree. This is admittedly painting with a broad brush, as for example Alex read the spinning top completely differently, in a way that does not line up with this isomorphism at all, but rather reflects the narrative elements established before the 10-second mark. And only the narrative elements; A curiously consistent element in all the interviews is no regard for the first scene of the commercial. Participants instead consistently treat the second scene, which introduces the narrative protagonist, as the first, with exceptions only going so far as to emphasize that the first scene contains a tree, or to say the close-up of the older man's face did not do anything for them. This might be taken to indicate the degree to which our brains scan for and focus on narratives; The spectrum of participants ranged from those who did not care to those who *forgot it was even in the commercial*.

Overlooking the first scene could change how the music is contextualized. Instead of the older man with the fjord in front of him combining with the suspended chords' resemblance to the traditional Norwegian instrument of the Hardanger Fiddle for a national romantic gestalt, we get the tired (or bored) frustration of the protagonist at work combining with the suspension for a gestalt of uneasiness. This appears to be what happened in many participants, who report a sense of unease near the start of the commercial that later diminished. To the degree that the suspension played a role in this outcome, this reflects an effect anticipated by the content analysis, thought to be diminished by the music being distinctly in a major scale and therefore not threatening. When participants generally describe their responses to the unmasked commercial in similar terms to the viewing with sound masked, only amplified somewhat, it still does not suggest a particularly potent effect from musical expectancy. Rather it appears to have coalesced to the impressions from viewings with sound masked in most cases.

It is possible that the reason the music tended towards amplifying the image in participant reports is that the imagery is more accessible to ordinary students, that the language and conventions of visual imagery are better understood than the language and conventions of music. To only look at the music and the imagery in this way overlooks the narration (which is undoubtedly better understood than the music), but perhaps it is justified in this case by virtue of how the music attempts to reflect narrative developments in the commercial that are less immediate in the narration that was, after all, commonly described as

a reflection on what home is – that is, not a story. That the narrative is most strongly presented in imagery could therefore play a role, where it is least present in the narration. Of course, this all presupposes that the music generally fits the rest, but given that as the case, it seems plausible that the reason it generally was the impressions from the imagery that were amplified rather than the narration when the three were put together was because narratives hit us harder than reflections. As further indication of this, consider that the music also took a supportive role relative to the narration when images were out of the picture. If taking this as a further indication surprises, recall that the proposition is two-fold; *i*) that narratives are more immediate to our minds, *and ii*) that how we can understand something is related to how we can remember it,²⁹ which frequently might mean that music receives less attention due to lack of (if nothing else) literacy, which might explain why it takes on a supportive role behind either in the absence of the other.

Christine's reported experiences of the narration could be seen as a counter to this explanation, as while she found the narration creepy and fake in its pleasantries, she maintained that the music made it less uncomfortable. While there appears to be something to music that makes it amplify what other mediums convey, Christine - and no doubt others out there who are similar in the relevant ways - did not find the music to be creepy and fake or to amplify that impression and in that sense support the narration even as it accompanied narration found to have those qualities. She did comment on it being like covering a burnt cake in marzipan, but to follow the metaphor, it still seems to have made the burnt cake more digestible.

To do this, the music must have had qualities that could be recognized as separate from what it accompanies. Said qualities can either amplify the content of other mediums if it fits, as was seen in most participants of this study, or make something that seems wrong less uncomfortable to apprehend as with Christine. Presumably, if it is intentionally a poor fit, or, as showcased in Smith's discussion of his examples (1999), otherwise invites audience members to do something uncomfortable such as view a film-scene from the perspective of the perpetrator of something abhorrent, or in contrast to other elements suggesting such

²⁹ It is not my intention to suggest either of these notions are new. The latter, concerning memory and understanding is for example well reflected in the title of Peterson & Djikic's 2003 paper, "*You can neither remember nor forget what you do not understand*", on top of making logical sense; You can only explain something as you remember it and you only remember it as you understand it (and vice versa), not least because of the malleability of memory, as they discuss around page 3. The former is to be expected when our brain operates on a narrative structure (Peterson, 1999).

identification it could have a great number of similar effects, depending on its relationship to the material. In horror, where music often acts as a counterpoint to something creepy or disgusting by emulating lullabies, stereotypically played by something simple associated with childhood like a music box, this contrast or intentional misfit is used as a device.³⁰ Speaking from personal experience though, it is rarely the only way a horror movie uses music, but it is common enough to probably play a part in the generally satisfying package for people who are high in need for affect as per Bartsch et al. (2010).

Consciously aiming for the musical effect experienced by Christine might be tempting to propagandists who wish to make people who are generally apprehensive of their message more amenable to it. Presumably, making their content more digestible would be of interest. This is a disturbing potential for media music, but I think it overlooks a couple of factors. First, making it less uncomfortable to listen to does not automatically extend to making one more inclined to integrate the stated words in one's personality – it does not necessarily extend to buying into the message. Second, her main problem appears to have been that it seemed fake in how joyful it was, which seems to have been mitigated by adding the imagery the soundtrack was designed to go with, depicting more than just joy, thus completing the image in a sense. Third, as for example pointed out by Eric, without the imagery it is impossible to tell what the intended message even is, as nothing directly alludes to it or the company. If the message were something else, Alex's interpretation (along with several others) of the commercial with image masked as trying to remind us of what is most important might give an idea for an agenda it could serve, but to echo my summary of shallow art, people can still identify and potentially disagree with that message. Especially if guarded by the knowledge that it was made with an intended message as discussed earlier, it might have little effect on people who do not already agree (or in the realm of facts, who know the claims to be false). But this is speculative, and only to say that trying to persuade in this manner could very well be a waste of time.

The centuries-old doctrine of the affects, summarized when discussing music theory, was suggested to have “not simply gone away”. However, in this study it is not obviously relevant to any component of the study. Perhaps it should be thought of as an early attempt at capturing musical gestalts, described in more assertive language than modern researchers

³⁰ This musical trope has also expanded into videogames, with the popular horror-inspired game *Bloodborne* (Myiazaki, 2015) as an example where a simple melody played by music box featured strongly in one of the game's most significant encounters with a horrific monster.

would be comfortable with? For example, that pompous and majestic music easily becomes isomorphic with arrogance? The baroque period saw developments in musical theater (Opera), within which such an isomorphism could frequently be recognized, perhaps consistently enough for someone to comfortably assert that it is, as Mattheson (1981) appears to do. If so, the doctrine could be said to be reflected in people in any aspect of the study pointing to an isomorphism. To the degree that this is fair it also seems fair to say that an orientation towards (musical) gestalts is both more comprehensive, humble and accurate than its predecessor.

All around, there are only vague and uncertain connections between what the qualitative content analysis pointed to based on BRECVEMA and what participants reported. This might be due to a poor fit of method in the pseudo-experiment to the BRECVEMA framework for the analysis, as illustrated by the difficulties with increased arousal, as well as the problem of mixed emotions making effects stemming from sources like Contagion inestimable. Gestalts on the other hand appear to translate reasonably well, even if their musical instantiations were not pinpointed by participants; That is to be expected when the audience is musically illiterate. Even then, Fred highlighted the drums and agreed to a comparison to the Hero's Journey (which Eric mentioned while connecting it to the narration), arguably connecting it to an isomorphism of adventure, and the violin was noted by both Fred and Alex, though only Fred elaborated, connecting it to a sense of national romanticism. Gestalts appear to be far more fruitful as a means for making qualitative musical predictions from this study, though doubtless working from BRECVEMA would have more application given the proper tools of measurement; After all, it *is* established as such – at least besides the A. Musical Expectancy was underestimated in this content analysis and appears to have corroborated – going by composer interview as well as analysis – a both unintended and unexpected isomorphism in the unease of work in more than one participant. The bigger and (as discussed: semi-consciously) intended isomorphism of coming home was, by contrast, not picked up on by any participants in the pseudo-experiment, or at least, not connected to the music. In my estimation, the most noteworthy finding from this analysis is that phenomenologically speaking, narrative was front and center in most participants even as it was undiscussed by two of them, even when directly prodded for. Also for consideration is the presumably connected finding that the first scene, which contributed little to the narrative, was either completely overlooked to the point of forgetting or disregarded by all participants. Even if not connected to a focus on narrative, it can still be noted together with the issues

some participants experienced in keeping up with the various occurrences in the commercial's different mediums (video, narration, text and music). For example, along with Bob's experiences when the sound was masked it can suggest that the experience of visual commercials can be changed drastically by the common occurrence of overlooking some element, which is something music, or sound more generally, appears to counteract, or guide.

Final Conclusion and Future Directions

People are complicated. That much has been clear for ages. It is therefore not surprising when the findings of this multi-method study, regarding the overarching research question of whether commercial music produces the desired effects in its audience, and whether these correspond to what one might expect from music theory, follow this track. In this study, there was surprising accord between the qualitative analysis and the composer interview, and in general terms the same can be said for the audience reports from the pseudo-experiment; though there was tremendous variation between participants, it was revolving around themes that corresponded to composer interview and content analysis.

There were some more notable contributions from this project, if only due to how some might find them surprising. First, we might note how the composer was given free rein to do what he thought was right (with one, aesthetic, exception), and did not consciously rely on music theory, preferring an intuitive approach. The latter of these lends credence to a modernized, cultural version of the Piagetian perspective on the development of music theory, à la Peterson (1999, p. 68-73³¹). If read optimistically (which may not be warranted, depending on what the music supports), the former goes to show that even in a commercial context, music is not entirely a cynical affair. On the audience side of things, Christine's reported experiences clearly illustrate that music can be comforting even when coupled with something found creepy, uncanny and fake, and that it thus does not take an exclusively supportive role in multimedia productions, even when it is found in contrast with the contents of the remaining mediums.

Based on this study, BRECVEMA cannot be recommended for qualitative interviews, whereas operating based on Gestalts appears to work quite well. The music was generally found to be supportive of the remaining commercial by participants, amplifying what was

³¹ If this appears a far stretch, I think in this context it is appropriate to understand a theory as a formalized, more explicit equivalent to the story, and the creative process as a form of play.

more salient, though there was some confusion. While unfortunately still quite nebulous, the matter of musical fitness appears to be central, but also to be something this composer and the surrounding production succeeded at doing with this commercial, even as it appears from this study to have been a largely intuitive affair. With this, it may also be noted that the study failed in evaluating the merits of music theory as anything more than an analytical toolkit for breaking down music into components that could be associated with theories outside of the realm of music theory, such as cognitive neuroscience (BRECVEMA) and the more phenomenological matter of gestalts.

While music theory amounted to little more than a toolkit or a form of literacy (which is not to minimize the significance of these in allowing for the articulation and communication of musical structures and ideas, but rather to highlight the more ambitious side of it as reflected in for example the doctrine of the affects) in this study, there are some grounds for optimism. The preceding discussions and analysis pointed in a wide variety of directions that might inform future research in different ways. To highlight some: There is the lightly-touched-on matter of “gripping music”, which might constitute a focal point for numerous fields, and might be pursued in various ways. There are also the implications of Christine’s curious response to her viewing with image masked and Bob’s response to his viewing with sound masked, which may both be of interest when it comes to understanding how media material interacts with music in people’s experience. Along that line, there is also ample room for a similar approach putting more emphasis on perceived impact, and with longitudinal study, eventual differences between perceived impact and actual impact. The weaknesses of this study having to do with sacrifices in order to look at all the related research questions at once can also be made up for in further studies that avoid having to compromise, be it due to scale or focus.

Future studies of similar design would benefit from a longer preparatory phase, or the option to delay the main project until at least the production-side of the study can be confirmed with a more systematic mode of sampling than convenience-sampling. This would allow for examination of more specific musical structures. For example, one could hypothetically test the stability of meaning of a musical leitmotif across the domains of analysis, creation and reception. Given the results of this study, it does not seem likely that most audience members would recognize it at all, but that is beside the point that it could be investigated, given enough preparation-time to secure an object of analysis suitable for the questions at hand. While this study was primarily occupied with a commercial, and there is

room for similar studies of other commercials to compare findings, it could also be examined across different forms of media products, such as films, or music videos. The greatest strength of this design was probably how the pseudo-experiment allowed for a comparison between audience experiences with different elements masked (which *did* yield some interesting results, even with just a minimal number of participants), but at several points it seemed like further masking would have allowed for a more fine-tuned analysis, discriminating between not just sound and image, but dialogue and music as well. This would require a close cooperation with the production responsible for creating the media product, or extensive effort put into separating different elements of the soundtrack, but it might be worth that cost.

Given the repeated emphasis in this study and elsewhere on the fit of music to its surroundings, a natural next step would be to develop a method for non-intuitively determining musical fitness, what goes into it and how those components might be weighted. This study has highlighted topics of plausible significance, such as harmonic continuity and rhythmic continuity, but at least the former of these are likely to be dependent on what the surroundings are. As a participant pointed out, what fits also depends on what is attempted. The element of intentionality in fitness would pose a challenge for such a design, presenting the issue that intention can only be inferred in the absence of mind-reading abilities (not least because it is possible to lie about intentions). But if we could grasp the rest of what contributes to (or detracts from) fitness, perhaps intentionality could be isolated? I do not see how that might be done, but at least this might be possible.

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Returning to the academic side of things, I feel I should once again thank the Canadian Dr. Peterson for giving away his book, *Maps of Meaning* (1999), for free some years ago. From the citations it should be clear how it has influenced my thinking; It inspired the direction of both my bachelor thesis and by extension this project, and that inspiration led me to read a number of great books, thereby contributing to many a great conversation, not least

with Volda's own Magnar Åm. Both deserve thanks, respectively for the free book (which it seems is normally quite expensive due to its girth) and the wonderful philosophical discussions we had as I worked on my bachelor thesis.

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Appendix

Composer Interview Transcription

Note: Late in the interview we uncover that there is both a long and a short version of the commercial in question, and that he has been answering under the assumption that I had seen the long one when the opposite was the case. This was cause for some confusion.

Composer (henceforth Co): So, now we're recording.

Me (M): Ok, I suppose we should start with the topic then. So, this commercial that you wrote music for, perhaps it would be good to have some background information. Was it commissioned?

Co: Yes, it was commissioned. The director was a former drum student of mine who came to me hoping that I could make music for it.

M: Cool. Were you asked to think about something in particular when composing?

Co: No, not before I had started working on it. I came with an idea, and received feedback, so some things were changed or added at the director's request, but the main idea was used – not the first one I made, but the first one I presented to him.

M: Right, and that idea, it sounded kind of folkloristic, was that part of it?

Co: Yeah, that was something I tried to do, both with instrumentation and the music itself, that it should be something like that.

M: At the lack of a better word, with some elements of lydian harmony and such.

Co: Yeah, absolutely, but most importantly the instrumentation, if not exactly folkloristic, then like what you would hear at a small local mass or something, like what you would hear in a chapeau deep in inner Ry County. That it should feel "close". It felt wrong to start using electronic sounds like synthesizers. It should be more like... wood, like wooden sounds.

M: Right, so what was the idea you started with then? Was it to have that kind of sound?

Co: I think I started with the piano-riff. When I found that motion – the only thing I really knew about the finished product was roughly how long it should last. Then that changed; Suddenly it was to be twice as long. That's why there's a long intro. Without piano. I had to extend the whole idea.

M: And the way you did it was by adding those long notes in – it was strings, wasn't it?

Co: It was a harmonium, actually. Organ.

M: Now that's really an instrument for a chapeau, isn't it.

Co: Yeah, and I really just copied the background from where the piano played, and cut it together.

M: And then you added the melody in violin on top later.

Co: Yeah, the violin and kind of shaped that motion. To begin with I didn't record the piano; I just used some kind of el-piano sound which I used to have a demo, which I could arrange the rest around. I kept it fairly open so I wouldn't have to record the instruments. The solo instruments I only recorded near the end of the process, so I had the shape and the whole take to work with. Then I used MIDI and things like ukulele and percussion loops, which are thankfully easy to make work today, so it's easy to just record the paces you need and use those.

M: Right. I'll say I really liked it more the more I listened to it. I've been very thorough in my analysis of it. For example, I annotated the whole melody. I tried to use the analysis to predict what people might get out of it emotionally, based on some scientific research. But I think that for now, it's more important what you wanted to arouse in listeners.

Co: Ok, cool. Have you come up with some particular questions or would you like me to speak loosely around it?

M: Did you target some kind of emotion in listeners?

Co: Well, if it was one in particular then it was the longing for home or something, like the rest of the commercial suggesting “hi, now you should come home and get a nice house in Jørpeland”, you know? It was what they aimed for, I thought, so I tried to evoke longing, with the wooden sounds, the piano, and the “close” sound. It was kind of a double point, not just compositionally but also to evoke some emotion. The piece is kind of drawn out. There aren’t that many ideas in it. There’s just a few chords that move slowly, and the melody is slow with long notes.

M: Right, and they’re also either stepwise or within a C-chord. (In Norwegian, scale and chord can be expressed in the same way, hence the following confusion.)

Co: Well, almost everything is within a C-major scale. There’s one note in the bass that is B-flat, near the finale. I also intended one minor 4th chord near the end that was scrapped for sounding too dark for the director, so I had to go in there and edit it to make it even more major. So there is that feeling of... longing with some joy you know, but there is a shift in the music, when the piano comes in, it kind of moves towards more joy, with more longing before it in a way, with some distance. And when the piano comes in, it’s like that longing is being acted on in a forward motion where they plan and build a house. In the end, it is a kind of triumphal release.

M: Right, it ends with a nice cadence. So, that change when the piano enters is something I’ve picked up on in my analysis. I’ve tied it to what are called brain stem reflexes, which is one of 7 established mechanisms that can evoke emotions in music. And, well, it’s the kind of reflex that directs your attention when you hear something like a sudden roar, but there’s a lot more to it than that – in music.

Co: Right, so that’s just the simplest way to understand what the reflex is.

M: Yes, in music it might for example be triggered by a cymbal rise, by all the instruments playing in accord. Or the reverse, when all the instruments disappear from the soundscape, leaving one for a solo.

Co: I see, so it’s like when a break or something makes you more alert?

M: Yes, and it has a very general effect when it doesn’t lead to some kind of shock, making everything appear more intense – if I’ve understood it right. And it’s interesting to me that it coincides with you introducing more rhythm to the piece, as before that point, there’s just a few hints of tempo in the chord changes, which are fairly soft, and in the melody.

Co: Yes, and it is pretty unspecified there as well. The melody in the beginning, well I suppose it was written with a beat, and I know that there’s four beats to each chord or something like that – not that I recall off the top of my head. But the violinist was instructed to play each phrase after hearing change in the chords, so she wasn’t given a pulse to work with.

M: Extremely ad lib.

Co: Yeah, which makes it extremely open at the beginning. Then the locomotion starts with percussion first, I think, with drums, and I think with ukulele being the most important until the piano sort of takes over. And that’s sort of a film-music trick. Since I didn’t have the voice over to work with, to place melodies in-between spoken phrases as is common in film and such, it created a challenge of only having a general guideline for what to do. You probably know the film-music trick of having long notes in the melody, while something engine-like in the orchestra is playing a rhythmic figure under it, like ding-da-da-ding-da-da-ding-da-da-ding. Since the locomotion is there, they can just keep doing this for over a minute, while maybe occasionally moving in mediants, they can just sit there until things are ready to move on, even without having very much musical content, very many ideas in there.

M: Right, so that's roughly what you're doing with the beginning of the piece?

Co: That it is, and really throughout the entire piece, ever from the ukulele and through the entire piano-riff. It has some kind of melody in it, in a way, but for the most part it's just arpeggiated chords that pull you forward, introducing so little new information that you don't lose anything if it is drowned out by the voice-over. You just get carried on.

M: I see. In my opinion it fills that role pretty well. This use of rhythm can actually also be tied to one of these 7 mechanisms. Now, I don't know how interested you are in hearing about this, but...

Co: Oh yes, go on, that sounds interesting.

M: Right, so in English it's called "rhythmic entrainment", it's a well-documented effect which I've actually speculated about before. I think it might have played a role in the development of culture as such. It concerns our internal rhythms synchronizing themselves to external rhythms, like a kick-drum for example. And what it does, briefly, is that it makes people feel like they're in contact with something greater.

Co: Ok, so it's related to things like transcendental meditation and such, like dancing that causes hallucination and trance.

M: Yes, that's a very natural connection to draw. And it goes so far in fact, as I read in an article about 2 years ago now, that people actually need to make an effort not to synchronize their movements with the beat. That it could even be involuntary.

Co: Absolutely, and that's very exciting. It's about how our brain tracks rhythms and registers rhythm and pulse, and makes us "have" to move because the brain gets activated? Such effects are noticeable when you start with this kind of rhythmical thing, that makes it feel like you have to move forward, in a way?

M: Right, and the way you do it in this piece is pretty cool, since it has - as discussed - this longing part first right, and then the rhythm enters the picture, and then it beings, it propels it towards the goal. And that the rhythm comes in at the same time as things change, I'd expect it to be a pretty effective way to communicate it. I'm excited to see if people catch it in the next part of my research.

Co: Yeah, and it is actually kind of a coincidence. When I started working on the commercial it was supposed to be about 1 minute long. Then it became 1 minute and 15 seconds, and then it became almost 2 minutes. Most likely the piano-riff would have been over almost every part of the track if it was shorter. Then it would have had some locomotion, but I probably wouldn't have introduced the percussion at that point. But there would still be some in the piano then, which isn't there now. Which I'm happy about. Sometimes, it's coincidences that lead you to your goals.

M: It's fascinating what role coincidences play in all kinds of creative endeavors, since it's so hard to anticipate.

Co: Sometimes, you just find things, in this kind of happy accidents, you know? Like in my first meeting with the director, we just slapped the soundfile on top of the film, to see if we needed to change anything about the tempo or where the film was cut. But we found no, that we didn't feel it was necessary. We didn't want to mickey-mouse it either, to try to line up the cuts exactly with the music. It felt too obvious, and wrong for the situation. Instead, we felt that they just lined up, that the progression of the demo music matched the film, it just felt like they matched. And they probably didn't. The film wasn't cut based on BPM (beats per minute) or anything like that. But the music trumps the image in a way. I've made a few music video clips in my time, and often I have to cut the image shifts to precede the music by quite a bit to avoid it feeling like the image was delayed, because we just experience the sound "faster" than the image.

M: That's kind of strange. Since sound moves more slowly than light, that's the opposite of what you would expect.

Co: Yes, but the brain apprehends it, well, we can see 24 images split over a second as continuous, so we can't really apprehend much more than 24 pictures in a second or something, but sound we can distinguish based on as little as overtones. So the solution is completely different, if we compare it digitally, we have a completely different solution for sound and music than we have for images.

M: Right, so I want to provide some pushback here, because in the video-game context, you find plenty of people who want way more than 24 frames per second. And their reasoning is something like: regardless of where they are in that cycle they get a fluid motion, whereas if it was just 24 frames per second paying attention slightly off might make the experience choppy.

Co: Yeah, absolutely, and they want at least 60 frames and so on. But my point is that 60 oscillations per second isn't a very high pitch. You see what I mean? We have a completely different solution. If you get two pictures that shift with 1 frame in-between you can't really "see" it, you might just get a feeling. But in sound, you notice it instantly. So it wins, the auditive wins in that situation.

M: Right, and you're not the only one who thinks that. Have you heard of Michel Chion?

Co: No?

M: Ok. He was a composer from France who wrote a few books on sound and film. And he's particularly famous for his book, "Audiovision", where he puts the two terms together and insists that sound comes first. And he's very influential, so there's probably plenty of people who think along those lines today, even if it isn't the most intuitive. I hadn't thought of it like you describe even though I've read his book.

Co: No, I probably wouldn't have thought of it either if I hadn't sat down to edit music and sound. When creating a countdown for music, like 1-2-3-4-play. And what I found was that the images had to come 4-6 frames before the sound, or I would experience them as too late. And that was a consistent finding.

M: It is so unintuitive!

Co: Very unintuitive! Very weird. But if there's just one change every now and then, you can put it right on the beat. If it's landscape pictures for example, you can do that.

M: Like in this commercial.

Co: Yes, but here we didn't. Here it was more coincidental. But what's interesting is that we experience these pictures – we just move them to the closest beat in our heads, and connect the dots in our heads.

M: Right. In my analysis I looked at one such event. What are those toys called again, those spinners?

Co: Spinning tops?

M: Yes, so there's this spinning top that is spun just as the cymbal rises before the percussion comes in.

Co: Yes, and that was intentional. It was meant to signal the shift in the story when we move past the longing and start working.

M: Ok, that's pretty cool to have confirmed, since that's exactly what I expected from my analysis. I thought of it as a three-way version of an effect I read about in a book on gestalt-analysis. My source called them isomorphic effects, similar in different domains, that amplify the experience of each other.

Co: Yeah. If I remember correctly, when we did that demo test, I still hadn't made the intro-part. And we found that, ok, here's the piece I've made. Here's the film. It has gotten a bit longer, and so on. Much longer. Where do we want it, the piano to come in, where do we

want the tune to begin. And I think the piano came in there, or was it percussion that came in there?

M: I think it was percussion, and at least something that played arpeggio. I can't say for sure if it was piano or something else.

Co: But that's where the rhythm begins to propel things forward. So I think we just pulled it over there and said this is where it's going to happen, and I just used the elements I had and looped and moved the organ to the beginning, and we felt like we had the shape. So yes, that's where it shifts, at the spinning top.

M: Ok. A somewhat different question then. Was there any thought behind the chord-progression that was intentional regarding the piece's feel or something?

Co: Yeah, there was something there. For the entire first minute or something it just shifts between some kind of G and some kind of F chord. And... whether you hear G or F as the bass, it feels either kind of mixolydian or kind of lydian, or in a way a sense of both. They build on the same pitch-set after all. And neither of them has a very clear pitch-center. So it kind of moves between them for the entire longing and building-section, with only hints of the true tonal center C. In the piano, or in the violin melody or something else like that. But nothing that says "here it is"! Not before we get to the cadence. And then it really comes, then we've gotten home and we're going to start telling who Ry County Wood is and so on.

M: Right. I'm pretty sure there's a few Cs with E in the bass before that point, but they don't really feel like C.

Co: You're right, I forgot a sequence there. Yeah, there's a few C/Es in there. And there's a D minor that leads into the final C. But you don't get the full C including in the bass before the end of that part. So we have this long modal stretch, but since it's all within a C-major scale, it doesn't feel dangerous. There's nothing scary to it. At the same time there are no dominant chords there.

M: Well, there are hints of it I'd say in the first chords. In the strange G-F thing, at one point, you have G, F and B. And even though it doesn't last very long, it does give a hint. It is a dominant.

Co: Yeah, that's right. It kind of works as a dominant until the violin comes in and says –
M: It's just the violin that plays B. And only for a brief moment, but that provides the hint that it's a dominant chord, which implies the tonality.

Co: Correct, but it's just a hint. It's not the classic 1-4-5 chord progression of tonic, subdominant, dominant, there's no – and not even in the cadence, there's no dominant. When it comes in for the last part, it follows a D minor chord. The piece never follows the "rules" of functional harmony. It hints at it, since it still relies on the same 7 ionian notes aside from the one B flat in the bass that comes in eventually, but there's only notes that – our ears will only listen for them. We're so conditioned to listen for these harmonic patterns.

M: Yeah, and us as musicians perhaps more than others.

Co: Well, yeah, but it depends on what we've been listening to. But it's in our children's songs and our traditions that our music has this kind of harmonic structure. And we can ask our sociologists and our brain researchers, who might have somewhat different answers regarding what we've inherited and what's from the environment, but at least much of it comes from the environment, right?

M: Yes. The phenomenon is called evaluative conditioning. When they speak to each other, they usually find agreement, that our capacity to notice these things evolved, but that the details in what it looks for depend on our traditions, depends on our culture.

Co: Yeah, right. My assumption is that only one thing in music is concrete, the pattern of overtones. And maybe pulse I guess. That those two are the things we have that are relatively concrete and scientifically estimatable.

M: Almost mathematical.

Co: yeah, or at least that can be put into mathematical terms. All the others are human constructs based on these things, I believe. So then evolution and environment and those kinds of things builds on that. Along with the kinds of things that brain researchers find, like how we've got higher resolution on high notes than on low notes that make us like some things. But it's exciting, all of that stuff.

M: Right, so what I thought when I saw that chord-progression in the piece, was that you started with a suspended chord, that you switched the bass for but kept suspended, which matches the goal of longing pretty well to begin with. And you first get a C/E, which doesn't quite feel like C, when the melody starts proper.

Co: No, and there's a couple of reasons for that, as I break another one of those classical "rules". That C/E both has an E in bass and in the melody, so it's heavy on the third. I don't know how many Es that are played at once there, as there's plenty of string samples and an organ behind it that play it as well, and at least the Ukulele plays it as well. Which just makes it say C even less.

M: It's more like it says E minor without the B.

Co: Yeah, in a way. And that's pretty interesting since very often when we write E minor we mean C/E, kind of. That's one of the first things I learned about harmonics, that it's often what you mean.

M: It generally sounds prettier.

Co: Yes, depending on where it's going. In C major the E minor is generally part of a series of 5ths, moving from E to A to D to G and so on.

M: Or in phrygian scale, maybe E to F.

Co: True, but in the world of C major, as we are here, well I get what you mean, especially if there's a B in there it might just as well be an E phrygian that wants to go to F.

M: As it does here.

Co: Yup, but we have to look at common tones here. Such as the C that's always in the chords here and kind of tie them together, but that just doesn't get to be in both melody and bass at the same time before finally at the end when you get the release.

M: If I remember correctly, when they finally get to C proper, the melody plays G.

Co: That may be. Right. As I hear it in my head it's a C, not where I'm thinking about, but there might be something before it that I don't remember.

M: See, I transcribed the melody, and I may not have done it completely correctly, but it definitely ends on a G.

Co: Right, it ends on G. That it does.

M: And that G is the only thing it plays over the final C-chord.

Co: Ok. See, I was thinking about the first C-chord, where the-

M: The one with the E in the bass?

Co: No, not that one, but the next one, just before C/Bb. The chord before that, you know.

M: Wait a moment here, I'm starting to think we may be talking about different versions of the piece or something. The link you sent me led to a 45-second video.

Co: 45 seconds? Aha, you've been watching the short version!

M: Yeah. I haven't seen anything else.

Co: Right, see there are two versions. One at 45 seconds, and one that is 2 minutes.

M: Right, yes that explains why you were talking about 2 minutes so much.

Co: No, I thought you'd been watching the 2 minute version, but then it's the 45 second one. Got it.

M: I'm guessing that if I had watched that one I would have a lot more to talk to you about, but there's still plenty here.

Co: At least now I understand what you mean. And that would be why it goes up to a G there, since it's cut from a longer, greater melody. And I suppose it could have been interesting to compare them then, if there's time for that some time.

M: Yes, but unfortunately I don't think there will be time for that in this project, but it could have been interesting to hear or see something about what the differences are?

Co: Right, so to not run a comprehensive analysis of it, but just see what they are.

M: And maybe hear what the differences are.

Co: Ok, so in the short version there's just two phrases in the violin at the start. Then the piano comes immediately afterwards or something, right? Whereas in the 2 minute version there are four phrases. And there are some paces with only percussion before the piano enters. So I went in there to cut the idea down to size.

M: Right, "kill your darlings" and all that jazz.

Co: Yes, but you need to establish all those emotions in a much shorter timespan, while retaining the forward motion throughout the piece. And you can't just remove things in the middle of a melody either, because that gets weird. So you need to find the right places to cut to make it make sense. It's kind of like a puzzle. But then I understand what you mean. That means the melody you've been looking at has been a bit different from what I conceived.

M: That's unfortunate, but what can you do?

Co: It will probably work out. We can talk about that version if you'd like?

M: Sure. I don't really have much more to talk about here. But I'm excited to see what the next part of the investigation will bring.

[I lay out the plan and some expectations for the next step of the project as it stood.]

M: I have also noted the text of the commercial and some of the context of the surroundings. I don't know how actively it was based on the music, or how much you were asked to change the music to match it, but you mentioned that you had to cut some things?

Co: Right. I had the text, and I had the storyboard, and the manuscript I suppose, with sketches of the expected motions. I think that's all I had. And eventually I got the pictures. But I never got the narrated text. So I didn't have the feeling of it. I knew who the actor who would read it was, so I knew the voice, but I didn't have any idea of what its rhythm would be, or exactly when things would be said. Therefore, it seemed better to me to disregard it completely.

M: Do you think it influenced what you came up with in some way?

Co: ... Yes, but not on its own. Together with the manuscript. There were some key images, like the spinning top. And the man alone by the tree in front of the fjord was a key image, that were telling me what was going to happen, together with the text, starting with the longing, and coming home. So it inspired me in that sense, but more than any sentence in the text, I looked at the whole of it, and the flow of the music.

M: You may have tried to find the... feel of the text or something then, and tried to create something that matches it?

Co: Yes, but that also doesn't follow after it. I didn't want to start micromanaging it clip by clip, following the emotional waves scene by scene.

M: True, that could be exhausting to listen to.

Co: Yes, and it also makes me at least feel less of it. It is fun in old cartoons when they really mickey-mouse it, and all the sounds and the orchestra kind of play all the movements. Super fun. But the time for that isn't a calm commercial for Ry County Wood, you know? It's not the time. It is much more a time for this kind of slow motions that slowly carry you forward. And I often think it gets kind of infantilizing if the music tells you everything you're

supposed to feel. Together with the pictures, since then there's no element of figuring things out. And what you haven't figured out for yourself you haven't really learned well, I think.

M: I absolutely concur.

Co: There's just something about, if you recall from when you went here to learn about computer music. The point there was to let you do your things, and not get in the way, and only come in from time to time to push you in a direction that might lead to you discovering how something works for yourself. Since what you find yourself, you've learned. But what people tell you that you can and can't do, like "you should always go from the dominant to the tonic", you don't believe it. But when you get to experience how moving from the dominant to the tonic feels, you learn you can use it when you want to. And it's perfectly possible that somebody else has found this before us, that's just cool, kind of.

M: Right. It's not that important that you're the first to discover something.

Co: Right? But you learn it best if you discover it yourself. That's how you remember it best. And when it comes to the music here, I want the music to be a bit like that. I wanted it to just be, and give a direction and a mood, and to move us along, and just get us from the beginning to the end, but not to tell you how this moment it should be bright, and this moment it should be dark.

M: So to try to summarize this a bit, what you've been trying to do is to reflect the general feel of the whole.

Co: Yes, and how it changes. How it changes from the longing-part. To the building and preparation and anticipation part, to the back home part. So that's the big arc of the commercial. And it is reflected in its way. But not all the small moments. There's no sound of you seeing the tree, like an angel or something.

M: No. So one thing I find from this interview that you've been doing fairly consciously is a mechanism like brain stem reflexes and rhythmic entrainment that's called musical expectancy. You've probably heard about it in a general way. It concerns how what you would expect a piece of music to do is done, delayed or not done. Emotions that have to do with that.

Co: Absolutely, that's something you always work with.

M: And all pieces kind of do it.

Co: Yeah, since if you always get what you want it gets boring, but if you never get it, you never feel at home in the music, you kind of fall off –

M: And exactly that way of putting it, that way of putting it highlights how you have used it in this piece I think. It's the C-chord that is hinted at at the start that gets delayed and delayed and delayed and then finally you're home.

Co: Yeah, absolutely, there's something there. Though I haven't thought about it that analytically, that's what I've done, yeah. And it feels exactly right when you say it, but you know how this works in practice too. You don't sit there thinking analytically when you write music. The analysis is for analysis. And to understand what you're doing. And to reflect and to improve.

M: And it's fascinating when the analysis hits the nail on the head to the point that the person whose work is analyzed is in agreement, but it's also a little scary since some of those times you've planted the thought there, too.

Co: That's true, and it might be that you've planted some thoughts. But still, it feels like it's right, and it matches it musically, too. In the analysis of the whole piece. And it was a fully conscious choice to delay the C-chord.

M: And it was you who brought the metaphor of home just now. I just caught it.

Co: Yeah. And I think that thought comes from the director. There was something in the text. About it being time to come home now or something. I may be misremembering it slightly, but it's there in my head. Maybe that's what the commercial was called in the manuscript?

M: It was just about what it was called in the link you sent me as well if I remember correctly. The sentence you're thinking about from the text I think, is probably "wouldn't it be nice to come home now?"

Co: Yes! Precisely.

M: "All the way home".

Co: Yes, exactly, since it's that C, the last big C chord is on the "all the way home".

M: Right, though I'm pretty sure that's said after the chord lands. "Wouldn't it be nice to come home now?" Is just about when it happens.

Co: Yes, and that goes back to how I don't know when things would be said. And it being the short condensed version. But also that it didn't need to be mickey-moused by me, it could just be from the feeling, since you can easily get the "now we're home" and then "all the way home" immediately following each other. They can play each other up. They don't need to hit at the same time to feel at the same time.

M: Right, like we talked about earlier. I see that we've spent about one hour of your time now. We've covered most of what I think is important to mention, and it seems like we're starting to repeat ourselves, too, so I'd like to thank you for the interview.

Addendum:

M: When reviewing the interview, I realized that I let the conversation slide away from something we should have covered. Could you write some words about the logic behind what you kept of the original melody when you made the short version?

Co: When I was to cut it down from about 2 minutes to 45 seconds (I think it was), it was important to me to maintain the piece's progression, to preserve the structure of it. I began with some math, to find out how many pulse-beats I had to work with. Then I divided them into measures and checked how many periods of four or eight measures I had. The leftovers I used to create an outro, and not least a short version of the intro. I then found that I'd get less time for the build-up and the consequent "build-down" at the end, so I instead decided to make it a longer build-up, to finish "on top".

The Pilot Interviews

Instructions for first pilot-interview (NO)

Når du er klar til å begynne pilotundersøkelsen vil jeg at du skal åpne denne

linken: https://vimeo.com/319004617?fbclid=IwAR3AajgG660Vzc09Ee-5-cwEFfFdxn6_Tr-PkPPcXZI7VqTI4FsI0G16WI

Men ikke begynn å spille den av.

Deretter går du inn i zoom-møtet.

Så åpner du chat-vinduet, velger meg som mottaker, og gjør deg klar til å skrive.

I chat-vinduet skal du skrive det som faller deg inn når du spiller av videoen tre ganger. Den første gangen med vinduet minimert eller skjult så du ikke kan se bildene. Den andre gangen med lyden mutet, og den tredje gangen med både lyd og bilde. Ta deg gjerne en liten refleksjonspause mellom hver gang du ser videoen.

Du trenger ikke å ha verken bilde eller lyd på i zoom mens du gjør denne delen av undersøkelsen - de kan du skru på etterpå. Send det du skrev rundt hver visning etter den visningen, med et lite notat om det var med bilde, lyd eller begge deler.

resten gjør vi live. 😊

Notes from first Pilot:

Uten bilde:

Det var kult å høre på en slags fortelling om "idéen" hjemme. Jeg tenkte på en del personlige utfordringer jeg jobber med om dagen. Det var behagelig å forestille seg det som ble formidlet verbalt, men for meg var det også på en måte litt vondt.

Med bilde:

Her tenkte jeg egentlig at det er en fyr som er i en jobb han ikke trives i, og heller vil være et annet sted. Med familien sin eller lignende

Med lyd og bilde:

Her tenker jeg egentlig at det er noen som prøver å vekke en følelse i meg som skal vekke en form for "hjemlengsel" eller lignende. En form for salgsteknikk for å få denne entreprenøren til å bygge huset mitt eller noe

Observation: Evidently the music was largely overlooked by the first pilot's subject. It may be necessary to ask them to specifically consider the music as well as the voice when there is sound to get more data. Asking for more detail in general may also be beneficial. The pilot was contaminated by an unfortunate loss of network-connection mid-process that can be accounted for in future procedures. This aside, the methodology seems to work. It also appears to make it easy to avoid leading questions.

Revisions for the second pilot: Ask that participant writes down reflections somewhere more concrete than in a zoom chat-window before copying it into the chat. Doing it by hand on paper may also be better for some participants' expression. Ask that they write down what they notice rather than what occurs to them, and what/if it makes them feel.

Instructions for 2nd Pilot-interview (NO)

Når du er klar til å begynne pilotundersøkelsen vil jeg at du skal åpne denne linken, men ikke spille den av.

: https://vimeo.com/319004617?fbclid=IwAR3AajG660Vzc09Ee-5-cwEFfFdxn6_Trr-PkPPcXZI7VqTI4FsI0G16WI

Deretter går du inn i zoom-møtet.

Så sørger du for at du har noe å notere med og på (som ikke er på Zoom), åpner chat-vinduet, velger meg som mottaker, og gjør deg klar til å skrive.

Mens du spiller av videoen skal du notere det som faller deg inn om musikken, det du ser, eller det du hører med utstyret du valgte å bruke. Den første gangen med vinduet minimert eller skjult så du ikke kan se bildene. Den andre gangen med lyden mutet, og den tredje gangen med både lyd og bilde. Ta deg gjerne en liten refleksjonspause mellom hver gang du ser videoen.

Du trenger ikke å ha verken bilde eller lyd på i zoom mens du gjør denne delen av undersøkelsen - de kan du skru på etterpå. Kopier det du skrev etter hver visning over i chat-vinduet visningen, med et lite notat om det var med bilde, lyd eller begge deler, og send det til meg før du starter neste.

resten gjør vi live. 😊

Notes from second Pilot

Bare lyd: Jeg tenker på nasjonalisme, mest på grunn av dialekten og bruket av ordet heim. Jeg fikk også veldig følelsen av at det var en reisereklame, spesielt med den siste setningen «det gjelder å komme helt heim», eller hva den var.

Bare bilde: Fikk følelsen av drømmer, håp. Innovative løsninger. Mye symbolikk. Veldig reklame-film følelse.

Både lyd og bilde: Familie og håp. Veldig bra bildeutsnitt og profesjonelt laget. Klisjeer.. familie som løper og drømmer og slikt. Bra, laget på en spennende måte

Observation: The second pilot saw the participant engage aesthetically and cognitively with the commercial. In spite of greater emphasis on the music in what the participant was asked to do, the music still largely went under the radar. When asked about the music, the participant commented that it seemed to fit the dialogue with

no images, and had nothing further to say about it except when discussing the viewing with no sound, where the spinning top was linked to the music when discussing the symbolism – point. This and more suggested that the participant kept previous viewings in mind. For this pilot, the participant ignored the request to send each part of the reflection before viewing the commercial again. The notes on the final viewing are exclusively aesthetic beyond the first two key words. This participant came from a media background. It is plausible that students of media would be more likely to enter an aesthetic mode like this. If possible then, participants should either be limited to media students, or media students should be avoided entirely in order to avoid them distorting the data.

Possible revision of participant-interview approach:

The composer's intentions are clear, and largely in line with what came of the analysis; To generally evoke a kind of longing for a (new) home, with a couple of deliberate instances where it matches events in the video. Since the music was partly inspired by the narrated text and these are not separated in the clip, only musically literate participants should be expected to be able to go into any detail regarding the music. More, these two cannot be separated by their evaluation, and in contrasting music theory with what participants get out of it, musically literate participants would have a view distorted by knowledge of music theory, and would not allow for any meaningful findings regarding music theory in practice. Thus, the interviews must be carefully conducted, probing for knowledge of general emotion, as well as of the particular moments where the music should change something going by music theory. A moment-to-moment approach should help with this, covering all the moments in order of appearance in an ironic mirror to what the composer dubbed mickey-mousing.

The Main Interviews

Instructions for the main participant (sequence changes) interviews (NO):

Når du er klar til å begynne pilotundersøkelsen vil jeg at du skal åpne denne linken, men ikke spille den av.

: https://vimeo.com/319004617?fbclid=IwAR3AajG660Vzc09Ee-5-cwEFfFdxn6_Trr-PkPPcXZI7VqTI4FsI0G16WI

Deretter går du inn i zoom-møtet.

Så sørger du for at du har noe å notere med og på (som ikke er på Zoom), åpner chat-vinduet, velger meg som mottaker, og gjør deg klar til å skrive.

Mens du spiller av videoen skal du notere det som faller deg inn om musikken, det du ser, eller det du hører med utstyret du valgte å bruke. Den første gangen som normalt. Den andre med lyden mutet, og den tredje gangen med vinduet minimert eller skjult så du ikke kan se bildene (men med lyden på). Ta deg gjerne en liten refleksjonspause mellom hver gang du ser videoen.

Du trenger ikke å ha verken bilde eller lyd på i zoom mens du gjør denne delen av undersøkelsen - de kan du skru på etterpå. Kopier det du skrev etter hver visning over i chat-vinduet visningen, med et lite notat om det var med bilde, lyd eller begge deler, og send det til meg før du starter neste.

resten gjør vi live. 😊

Alex

Notes from participant Alex

Bere lyd:

Varme.

kriblande og undrande.

Kva skal heim vere?

bere vidio:

Frustrasjon.

fanget

Kva er det som virkelig er viktig?

Familie

Ein heim

Tidssyklus

Begge:

motstriding mellom bilde og lyd i byrjinga.

Ser ei utveking over tid som lyden prøvere å gjere magisk. At livet er ei reise.

Interview with participant Alex

M: So, you've written some interesting notes here. Is there something you want to say before I start asking questions about it?

A: (Alex had a poor internet connection for the first minutes of the interview, so what follows is lacking some context) You kind of have a warm sound, that creates some tension, and then you have the pictures at the start that maybe show some kind of frustration, being stuck, right? So you have this kind of conflict.

M: Ok, what was it in the pictures that made you think of frustration and being stuck?

A: Well, I saw a guy at work, I'm guessing a young father. (Lost connection again)

A: Sorry, I lost contact. What got through?

M: I got you talking about the conflict between warm music, and a sense of frustration and being stuck in the pictures.

A: Yeah, I think it was that spinning top that made me think that.

M: The spinning top?

A: Yes, what was that film? Inception was it.

M: I haven't seen Inception. But how so?

A: It's what that film uses to illustrate being captured in this kind of... (lost connection again).

(A: switches network solution, some chatter about that)

A: There?

M: Yeah, now I can hear you again.

A: Ok, great. Yes, maybe we should start over?

M: So if we take it from the top then, the first thing you write about your viewing with only sound, is warmth. Can you specify what it was that made you think of warmth?

A: I think it was the voice, and the word "hi". It's just a nice word in my opinion. It gets me thinking about people caring when they I think of "hi".

M: Right, I see. I believe it's supposed to be "home" (one letter/phoneme difference in Norwegian), but it's almost the same word.

A: Home? Oh my god, well home is much the same though.

M: True, so there's not much of a difference there. And it is a smooth start. Then you follow "warmth" with "tingling" and "wondering". What brought that to min-

A: Uuh, it was the violin that was doing it's thing and, oh my god I'm so tired I'm sorry. But anyway, that would be the music that comes after he's said "home" the first time, with the violin and is kind of magical; tingling.

M: Ok, then you only wrote one more thing in your first viewing "what ought home to be?"

A: Yes, since he asks about home, and there's a journey it seems like, so I was wondering what home ought to be for me I guess. What you might think there could differ from what I might think after all.

M: That may well be, yes. So, do you remember anything concrete of the voice or the music?

A: Hm. No, not really. There's just the sound of "home" that I recall, and the violin that's there, and, well, that is built upon somewhat.

M: Hm. That's really kind of fascinating, but... there might not be that much more to say about it. So, with video you start with the word "frustration".

A: Yes.

M: And you said earlier that you thought about the man who looked like he was at work, and also kind of stuck.

A: Yes.

M: Then I might have to ask if there was nothing earlier in the film that brought something to mind? Since there were at least a couple of seconds before that came up, before that man is in the film at all.

A: Well, there was a face I guess, but I didn't really associate anything with it, it was just the guy who stood there for a few seconds. It was just a face to me; It didn't give me anything special.

M: Right, okay. Then you've written the question "what is truly important", but maybe before we go there, you wrote frustration first, and stuck after. What brought it from frustration to stuck?

A: Eeh, well you know you can get really stuck in your work, like the spinning top, that it just goes on and on, right? An endless "I've got to go to work", with no spare time or time for what's important, just "got to get to work" and so one's just stuck in that cycle you know.

M: Well that's an interesting metaphor you're pointing to.

A: Yeah.

M: And then you write "what is truly important". And that question is something you thought of I assume, since nobody said anything like it in the video?

A: No, you kind of had this picture with work and frustration and then you see the daughter, or that child, who's smiling and drawing, which is just, what is important, is it family or work, right?

M: I see. And then you write "family". Was that an answer to your own question or was it the next thought that sprung to mind?

A: The latter, but it is both I mean, ha ha, it is family.

M: Right. There's no either-or there, but the question is how it was in focus for you.

A: Uuh, no it was a little bit of an answer to the question, and it was the next thought in my mind after I'd thought that question. What's truly important is the family.

M: And then you added "a home"?

A: Yes, a home? Ehh, I mean you see that house grow slowly but steadily throughout and then you realize "oh right, he was actually planning this house earlier in the commercial". And then you see it being built before the end.

M: Right, and I don't believe he's the only one planning/(drawing) it, but the daughter as well.

A: Agreed. So it was kind of cool to see how it moved from one place to another.

M: Ok, so the next thing you wrote was "cycle of time". What was that about?

A: Well, things take time right, so, yeah. It seemed like the tree from the start was very important, that he was touching. Wasn't it there at the start?

M: Correct, the tree was there at the start.

A: So maybe it was the story of a tree becoming a house, eh?

M: Maybe so.

A: Yeah, maybe so, ha ha. Associations!

M: Ok, so maybe we should move on to the last viewing with both sound and image. Here you've written a lot more sentences and fewer key words I'd say, so... "Conflict between image and sound at the beginning".

A: Yes.

M: You said something about that right as we began, but I couldn't really catch all of it. Can you say the same thing, not necessarily exactly like you did then, and maybe also without losing your connection?

A: Could you send that part of my notes to me in the chat?

M: Ok, so it was this... Right! You switched user, so you switched chat! One moment... There!

A: There we go. No, at the start I feel like there is a contradiction between the image and the sound. And it was a bit difficult to focus when both of them were on? Since both of them have a message in

and of themselves you know, from you see the beginning of the house until it's done, and then the sound... It was difficult to feel them connect at times.

M: Really? Any thoughts as to why?

A: Eeh, they both had a focus, so to get what was being said and what the sound was supposed to provide, and to get the imagery on top? There was a lot happening. So it was difficult to focus on one, or to see it as connected parts. Since there were so many sensations.

M: Hm. So, you said you didn't get very much from the face at the start, or the man by the tree, which you alluded to earlier?

A: Yes?

M: But would you say there's conflict between that and your first impressions of the sounds? Or was it really about the next things that happened in the video?

A: No, the first seconds of imagery didn't really give me anything. To me the face just seemed void of emotion, so it didn't provide any input. It was just a picture of a guy out in nature.

M: Very well. Was the conflict between image and sound long lasting? Can you point to when it ended, since you wrote about how it was there at the beginning?

A: Oh, uuh. When I saw the video... I suppose the conflict lasted until I got to the daughter, really. But I think it was relatively chaotic when both image and sound were there at the same time.

M: Chaotic, huh?

A: Yes.

M: How so?

A: Eh, how so...?

M: If you think you can answer that question?

A: I'm really not sure I can answer that. It was just a lot of impressions, you have to keep track of what's being said, what's being shown, and then you have the background music which supported it, but... there was a lot happening.

M: Ok, so you don't feel like you prioritized some elements over others when you watched them both at the same time?

A: No I couldn't really settle on something when I saw it all together.

M: Hm. That's pretty special. I can't believe that to be a very common experience from watching a commercial.

A: Ha ha ha. Yeah, isn't that what they say about commercials? That they're supposed to be [ineligible] is supposed to compete with the rest of the components of the commercial? I lost the narrative. Ha ha ha.

M: Ops. Oh well. So the next thing you wrote is that you saw a development throughout the commercial, that the sound "tries to make magical".

A: Yes, and I suppose that's kind of conflicting with what I said earlier, huh? No, I... development... Oh my god, my words just fail me today.

M: Sleepy?

A: Oh yes, yes.

M: Oh well.

A: No, but you... You kind of have the tree there at the start, which begins there, and might, I don't know, maybe you draw your own house, and then your family has empathy and anticipation there, right? And then you might find some kind of build-up or mastery there, and the music sounds like it's trying to support something like that. That it's a journey.

M: Right, ok. And then you say it tries to make it magical. How so, and was it primarily the music or was it the voice or was it both at the same time that did this?

A: "Make it magical"...? I mean, life is life no matter what, but you usually try to dramatize things, create some magic around it, some kind of excitement, to make things appeal – be more appealing. To create your own home is the goal of many, and it's probably great for most of us, but then for some people it might not be that great. But they at least try to present the building of the house, one's own house, as a magical, great goal, together with the family perhaps.

M: Ok, and then the final sentence you wrote down was that "life is a journey".

A: "Life is a journey", yes that's what I said. That it starts somewhere and ends somewhere.

M: Right. Apparently.

A: Ha ha ha ha ha. It started as a tree and then it became a house after all, it has gone a long way being cut down filled with insulating material and then just typically... Ha ha ha ha.

M: But then I feel like I must ask about the people in the commercial. Do they have some kind of journey in the film that you saw.

A: Hmm. Yes I think. Ehh. Oh my god. So at the start you have someone who's just looking out over the fjord, towards a mountain and so on. And you apparently have this bachelor who is at work, who apparently comes from work, and we see him work at this house of his and does it with his daughter, building anticipation maybe. And then later we see the house.

M: Great. Now, you mentioned the spinning top earlier. I was wondering how many times you saw it?

A: Oh. Well, it was there at the beginning. And I think once later with the older guy, so maybe two times I think?

M: So two times.

A: Yes.

M: Were there anybody other than the older guy present the second time?

A: The other time huh? Eeh, was there a dog? I don't know if that counts as a person though, ha ha.

M: Oh that's up to you!

A: And so I think he sat there with the dog on a wall of stone and then the younger guy comes over. So I don't know, there were at least 3 living creatures there.

M: Right. But does that change anything about how you see the spinning top? I don't know inception so I don't know exactly what you were thinking about with that.

A: No, but it's very easy to be trapped in an endless cycle you know, and the spinning top can illustrate that. Since the first time we see it, it's spinning? And the second time it's being held still. So maybe one should relax, not stress out, take the time it takes to just... live.

M: That's an interesting interpretation of the spinning top.

A: Ha ha, spinning tops are nice, ha ha.

M: But you mentioned that both the young man and the older man were present in the second scene with the spinning top, in addition to a dog. And I think you mentioned a tree as well?

A: Yeah?

M: So you mentioned family as something that sprung to mind earlier. Do you think they're family? Or do you think they sit there for some other reason?

A: Eeh, wow. I mean it's possible. We're just working with associations, aren't we?

M: Yeah.

A: Sure. That may be, but it seems like you had wife, child and a guy, and you had at least another guy, who might be the father of the other one I guess. Ha ha.

M: There's at least an age difference there.

A: Oh yeah. There are 2 generations there at least, or three maybe who are in the picture.

M: If that's the case then there's 3. And I mean, the commercial is all about trees (in Norwegian, same word as 3), isn't it?

A: True. All good things are 3, eh?

M: Generations. Trees. So, was there anything in the music you noticed more when you had both sound and image at once?

A: The violin mostly, or at least I think that's what it was.

M: Let's just say it was. It isn't that important anyway, the important thing is that it's what you recognized. And there aren't that many things to confuse it with in the commercial, there's kind of just one instrument that sounds like it.

A: Yeah.

M: So, I don't believe I have much more to ask about, but maybe... Did you feel any emotions watching both at once that you didn't get when watching them separately?

A: Ehm, No, I had gotten an impression from the different, both sounds and images by themselves, and it was difficult to combine them. To get that kind of encompassing impression.

M: So you feel like you got a lot out of the sequences by themselves, that nothing was added to by viewing them together, is that right?

A: I think I would have been happy with just the sound. Or maybe with just the images if I saw them on the TV while on some ferry, but the whole of it didn't give me anything special. It was more comfortable to just hear the sound of it.

M: Ok. I suppose I can tell you that you're not the only one I've asked who found the sound more interesting on its own than the commercial in its entirety. But it is a commercial after all, and if you think about it, was there anything in the sound of it that said "commercial" to you?

A: In just the sound..? I didn't think about that. If the sound on its own made a commercial? It was kind of with images when the logo showed up that I saw "ok, this is a commercial".

M: Right, but there was nothing prior to that, and it is only visible, no? So without both it isn't much of a commercial, huh? But what is it without images?

A: Without images it's kind of inspirational. Well, I mean, it might try to show us what's important I guess. Point towards something more. Encourage to avoid getting caught up in the system.

M: Ok, I think I'm happy with what we've got now, so thanks a lot for taking part in this.

A: No problem!

Bob

Notes from participant Bob

1. uten bildet med musikk.

fornemmelse av hjemmet, familien oppvekst sted , barndommen, reise.

2. [både bilde og musikk]

Fornemmelse av familien, jobb, tilhørighet. eventyr finne på noe stort. Skape noe.

3. [bare bilde]

Følelse av savn, slitsomhet, og gjennerfning med det gamle.

Interview with participant Bob

B: Tell me what we are going to do so I don't mess this up for you. "Continue?"

M: Yes! So, first and foremost, thanks again for participating in this project. I really appreciate it.

B: You're welcome.

M: If we just get right to it then, in your first viewing, the first thing you wrote was "sensation of home". Can you tell me what brought that to mind?

B: The first viewing was with [just] sound, and they said "home", and all the words. And... the music that played in the background, but it was mainly the positive buildup in the music, along with the words.

M: Hm.

B: So I got a sense of "home", which made me think of family, and then there was this sense of adolescence and childhood, a kind of evocation of memories.

M: Ok, so you just went through all of your keywords for that viewing except "journey". Am I understanding you correctly that you think of it as some kind of journey of association? You went from thinking of home to family to adolescence/upbringing to place to childhood? Or is it some kind of journey separate from the above as well?

B: Journey stands on its own, since it's in a way... in the first part I got, I heard the road, and then I thought kind of leaving one's own and coming up with something big out there.

M: Ok.

B: I suppose "journey" should be the first thing in the notes, but well, if you just rearrange them mentally? Haha.

M: Ok, so it was the last thing you thought about, but it slots in first?

B: It really does. But I first thought about home, and family and so on, so when it comes down to it I've written it down correctly. Just forget about that.

M: Very well. But if we then move on to the second viewing?

B: Yeah?

M: You start of with "family".

B: Yes.

M: So this second viewing had both sound and image.

B: Yes.

M: What do you think it was that made you think of family first this time at an equivalent time/place as you thought about home with just sound?

B: Uuh, because now I saw children and I saw him in several settings. I didn't see houses. I saw... people. And then the sound of "home" wasn't so important anymore, instead it was family. And then I saw him at work.

M: Yes.

B: And I thought "oh yes, that's his job", and then I thought about belonging with family.

M: And then you've written "adventure" "come up with something big" with no demarcation. Are these two separate from each other or equivalent?

B: Equivalent. For in the last part of the video, he kind of stands there looking at a building and it's like "here's something bigger than him", and so it's like an adventure or a dream about doing something big. Creating something big.

M: Yes. You wrote that last, too. So if we move somewhat point by point here. Do you recall what the first thing that shows up in the commercial is?

B: Uuh, it was, if I remember correctly, it was him sitting in his office?

M: Sitting in his office? Ok, then you've forgotten something, but I'm not gonna tell you what. Feel free to guess at it later though.

B: Should I try again?

M: Can you imagine something before the office?

B: Was it a building, some kind of project plan for making something.

M: Strictly speaking that's not before the office.

B: In that case it was a frozen picture or something moving.

M: It wasn't frozen.

B: Ok, if it wasn't frozen then the first thing I can recall is the man, the main character in his office.

M: Very well. So, after the man in the office, what's next? You said work? You were thinking of the office then I assume, but belonging?

B: Yes, that was in relation to the family. When he was reminiscing, or when the video showed the family and them playing and enjoying each other's company. Then there was belonging somewhere, I got the sense that it had something to do with belonging.

M: Ok, so when he was playing with a child and so on.

B: In contrast with the work, where it didn't seem like he had any belonging as I saw it.

M: I see. And that contrast was these things immediately juxtaposed or was there something in-between?

B: There was something in-between, but my perception of these sensations was sequential. What was in-between wasn't very important as far as I was concerned.

M: Very well, then I'd like to ask if he did more than one thing with children?

B: Uuh, I can't remember. But I remember that he lifted her up once, but other than that I don't remember anything specific, but of course I've only watched the video twice.

M: True.

B: I was more focused on what I felt.

M: That's good, that's good. Was there anything special beyond what you've written that you feel like mentioning?

B: About the second viewing? No. The family... no.

M: Moving on to the third one then, the first thing you've written is a "sense of bereavement". I think I can guess where you're going with that, but by all means say it.

B: No, since it was so grey and sad. He was sitting in the office and missed his family or longed for some other place.

M: Hmm. I see.

B: And there wasn't anything... the atmosphere around him told me he was looking forward to getting away from there. And I wrote exhaustion. He seemed tired and affected by the setting he was in as he was driving and I thought reminiscing.

M: Reminiscing? What do you reckon he was reminiscing about ten?

B: I thought he was reminiscing about being united with what came after, the family, the house, the home, what belonged to him.

M: Do you have any words for it?

B: I wrote "the old".

M: The old, ok.

B: Do you want me to find a better word to express it more?

M: No, you certainly don't need to. But I can tell you that a phrase I would consider that might sound a bit more academic there is reuniting with the old, or a desire to reunite with the old, or it might be called a form of nostalgia.

B: Yes.

M: So, I'm not sure if there's anything more I can grab onto here. Is there anything you feel has gone unsaid that should be said?

B: I obviously thought about houses", but I thought that was so clear it might not be a sense, but just some kind of -

M: association? That kind of just hung in the air there or something?

B: That is consistent in all three.

M: Right.

B: Buildings and houses, but it was... yeah.

M: Strictly speaking you don't exactly see houses without images, but well, how many homes aren't houses, eh?

B: Yeah.

M: I see. Very well. This actually went by surprisingly fast, but I think I've got what I want from this interview, unless... Were there any changes in the music that you think might have mattered? Did you notice anything?

B: Uuh, no, but I did notice that the music supported the rest. On the second viewing I'd say my emotions were enhanced compared to the first one.

M: You'd say that?

B: Yes.

M: Ok. But then I would like to emphasize that what was added on the second viewing was images, not music.

B: Well, yes, it was images, but I maintain that my emotions were enhanced on the second viewing.

M: Ok.

B: On the third viewing I read the situation completely differently.

M: Really?

B: Then it was just dark. No buildup, nothing positive. He was just sad, he missed the old, and wished for it.

M: So your impression of the third viewing was quite simply that the pictures weren't something he moved towards, but something he felt was absent?

B: Ding-ding! Yes! And viewings one and two were the opposite, that he moved towards something that was waiting for him.

M: Ok, even though in the first viewing it might not have been... him. Since, you know...

B: It was just so, then I thought "me". I thought the home in question was my home, my local area, my family and a sense of road towards some kind of... I can't say reunion, since it wasn't that, but there was reminiscence of that in the past and some kind of... connection, or... maybe a better word would be... belonging to the old. Of still being connected to the old. Kind of like "I've been out on a journey; now I'm on my way back to the old". And for the second viewing it was more like this was a part of my everyday experience, or... I didn't think me, I thought him, that it was a part of his everyday experience. On the third viewing it was something he was missing, something that was but is no more.

M: Ok... This is... interesting to hear. Thanks a lot, I don't believe I need to ask about anything more, so I'll just end the recording...

Christine

Notes from participant Christine

[Bare bilde:]

-folk som kjeder seg

-innovasjon

-fremtidstenkende

-nyte livet

[Bare lyd]

-Uncanny

-Ubehaglig

[Både lyd og bilde]

-Kos

-Sammenkobling

-Livet

-Hjemmekoslig

Interview with participant Christine

M: Thanks. And now, with your consent, we can start the interview. So when discussing your first viewing, with just the images, you've written "people who are bored". Can you tell me something about what made you want to write that?

C: Well, but he's just hanging in there in the office, which is boring.

M: Right, I see. Then the next key word you've noted is "innovation"?

C: Mm.

M: What got you thinking about innovation?

C: Well, they started building a house, and then there was this... little girl who sat there drawing, which I guess is a kind of innovation, too. It can become something more in the future, after all, thinking ahead.

M: I see. Just a question about just before "people who are bored". Did you think about anything before it at all that you didn't feel like writing down?

C: I don't actually remember.

M: Would you say that's because you are sleepy (she informed me about this before we started recording) or some other reason?

C: I've been struggling to remember things for about a week, so...

M: Ok.

C: I've been feeling sleepy all week.

M: Sleepy, got it. Ok, then we'll just move on. After innovation, you note "future-thinking".

C: Yeah.

M: What is that about? Do you see some relation between innovation or future-thinking, or are they separate?

C: They're kind of separate, since there were children, and children are kind of our future.

M: Hm. So you would say it was future-thinking because there were pictures of children?

C: Well, ha ha, yes. In a way. Since the child was exploring and, kind of, when you're a child and you're exploring you think about the future you know. In a way, I think.

M: Yes, I see. And then the last thing you've written is to "savour life". So is that, what caused that in your mind?

C: Well, I think the main reason I wrote that was because he started off bored at the office, then you had the spinning top? And then came the dog(?), and just "this I enjoy. This is what life's about". Those little things you know. The tiny little things. And then there were all these pictures of happy people, and it's like "these people savour life, they're satisfied".

M: Ok, nice. Then I think we can move on to your viewing with only sound, and here I'm a little surprised by how few things you've written down.

C: Yes! It was... uncomfortable. Very uncomfortable.

M: The first word you wrote was "uncanny". And then you wrote "uncomfortable".

C: Yes.

M: Are they connected to you then? Since you mention discomfort first, yet you write uncanny?

C: A bit connected, yes.

M: Can you tell me what was uncanny first then?

C: Uh, it's kind of, it was kind of... I don't remember exactly; struggling to recall. It was kind of, in the commercial it was kind of "you've got to come home". I mean it was kind of... It felt a bit like I was receiving instructions. It felt really wrong.

M: That's interesting. Do you have any thoughts as to why? Instructions not withstanding?

C: Umm. The way they said it was so joyful. And to me that was a little scary.

M: ...Ok. Something tells me that if we further down this thread it becomes a study more about psychology than anything else, which is not what this is supposed to be about. But if you want to, you can.

C: It's like people are just so happy, they're really a bit scary.

M: Hm.

C: Since, it's... in my head there's no one who is happy all the time. But in the commercial it's like they're constantly happy, which made me a little scared. It felt a bit unreal. Felt a bit like there's something mechanical to it in a way.

M: Fake?

C: Yes.

M: Ok. If I may juxtapose it with what you wrote about the first viewing with just images, where you even noted that there were people who were bored. Would you say that made it feel more honest to you?

C: Huh?

M: That it felt more honest when there were pictures of bored people in the commercial as well?

C: Yes. It was much better kind of, since they're bored but they're still ok. You've got to accept that life has plenty of bad things in it but it's ok. That's allowed. It's natural.

M: Think ahead and so on as you wrote in your first notes, yeah.

C: Yeah.

M: And then you wrote about discomfort. You've probably gone a bit into it already insofar as it relates to it being uncanny, but do you have anything else to say about it?

C: Hmm. It would have been even less comfortable without the music, but it's my impression that they were trying to hide how... uncomfortable it was, in a way.

M: Truly then. So you think the music was something that made it better?

C: Yes, but... it's like if you have a burnt cake and you try to cover it in marzipan you know?

M: Ok! So lots of topping, eh? To use an example from a book I read once, there were somebody with recipes on cakes that looked wonderful but tasted horrible and vice versa. One example was fish cake covered in marzipan. Like that?

C: Oh no! Who would do that? Ha ha...

M: A bit like that?

C: Yeah, a bit like that.

M: Ok. So... were there any noticeable changes to that mood in your second viewing?

C: No I just felt really like "Ueegh" through the whole thing.

M: So it was pretty consistent then.

C: Yeah, but especially near the beginning since it was so unexpected.

M: Hm. That's interesting to hear. Something tells me that what's to be said about it is already said. If we move over to the full viewing, there things appear much more positive from your notes.

C: Yeah it was somewhat positive.

M: So the first thing you write is about it being cozy. If we compare it with "people who are bored", I have to wonder what made this time cozy, especially since just the sound made it "uncanny".

C: Because it was just so... No, I thought it was cozy, following the sound. So they were bored, but I thought about nice things, which was cozy.

M: Ok, then it sounds like you're saying that... maybe that the sound seemed less dishonest when combined with the imagery?

C: Mm!

M: That's definitely interesting! This is going to be exciting to compare to the other interviews. Then the next thing you've written is about comparing things.

C: Connecting things.

M: Right, my bad. So connecting things, what do you reckon that came from?

C: There are several points in the movie where there's like some kind of connection, like how it starts and ends with the tree you know. The spinning thing and... it's like there's a common thread throughout it.

M: Ok.

C: So it's kind of like a connection throughout the whole... universe! Ha ha! Yeah.

M: So it's just that things connect?

C:... Yeah.

M: Would you say that this is true of the commercial as a creative work more so than it is for, maybe the story it tells or something? I don't know exactly...

C: Ummm, I'm not really sure.

M: No, ok. The next thing you've written is just a big word that stands by itself: "Life".

C: Ha ha ha ha! No, what was I thinking? Oh right! No, it was just, since there were, they were doing things that... I could have been more elaborate on that point. They said things

like, they did things like for example go for a walk, with the kids, or run around the garden. The kind of thing you look back to and you think “that was my life”, “that was fun”.

M: So, it sounds a bit like you’re connecting it to what is usually called nostalgia. Would you agree with that interpretation?

C: Yeah, it’s a bit nostalgia-like. Yeah.

M: Is there something else other than nostalgia you see in it? Keeping in mind how you earlier wrote about “future-thinking” with just the images to go off?

C: I think I see a bit of... Umm, I regard nature as kind of “life”. And there was a lot of nature in the parts where there were children running and they were walking and so on.

M: Right.

C: Yeah.

M: And then you’ve written...

C: (Difficult to make out)...

M: And then the next thing you’ve written is “homely”. And that’s a pleasant thing to write down, but it’s not just cozy like you wrote earlier on this same viewing, so, since you’ve written both, what made it homely now?

C: Umm. Because suddenly there was a house in the picture, and there was this... “now we’re going home”.

M: Hmm.

C: And it was a bit... “I wish I was home”, and then “hey, I *am* home!” And that was a bit cozy.

M: Aww. Well, sounds like you got a positive experience out of the last viewing, with both sound and images.

C: Yeah.

M: But I’m really surprised by the difference between “just sound” and “just images” and “both” in your case. Do you think you can say anything about why that was?

C: Hmm. I think the reason there was such a difference between with images and just sound... may have been because I’m a very visual person. Hmm. I don’t really know.

M: Hm. No, then it doesn’t sound like there is much more to be said there. Then I’m thinking I should bring back up that connection-thing you wrote with both sound and images. You were talking about a common thread and such. And it’s trying to tell a story, you alluded to as much when you mentioned it, so: What would you say that story is?

C: I think maybe because it was like... “buy a house”? It’s kind of what...

M: That’s probably the intention of the commercial at any rate.

C: Yeah, I’m not sure. Maybe... You ask such difficult questions.

M: I try.

C: ... Huh. No, maybe... It’s so hard. Can you repeat the question?

M: Well, it was about the common thread. If you could say what kind of story the commercial is trying to tell?

C: Hmm. Maybe that, it’s the small, repeated things in your life that... make you who you are.

M: Ok. I think that’s good enough for me. So unless you feel like there’s something unsaid that should be said, we can stop the interview here. Is there anything like that in your view?

C: Hm?

M: Do you feel like there’s something that should be said that you considered writing down?

C: Hmm. I think it was a bit unique that they were trying to sell houses, but mostly used pictures of nature to sell it in this commercial. I found that very interesting.

M: Ok.

C: And then with just sound, it was like, there was this slight, chirping of birds is wrong, but it wasn't the sound of houses I'd say. It was interesting to me how much focus there was outside of the house, in trying to advertise for houses.

M: Right.

C: Yes.

M: Ok. I realized there was something else I wanted to ask about while you answered the last question, but I forgot it before you finished so I'm afraid I can't.

C: No, go ahead.

M: No, see, I forgot what it was before you were even finished responding to the previous one, so I can't. Unfortunately.

C: What a shame. Tragic.

M: It happens, unfortunately, but thanks a lot for your participation. This is valuable data, and it will be exciting to contrast with others. I'm going to end the recording... now.

Daniel

Notes for participant Daniel:

Første delen, med video uten lyd :

Enn mann som tenker mye, som er litt urolig. En mann som driver med en byggeprosjekt. Byggeprosjekten ser ut som huset til familien. Eller noe som har betydning for hans familie. Jeg lurer på om betydningen av snurren. Jeg har en følelse som det prøves å vise frem husene som miljøvennlig eller tilpasset naturen.

Med både video og lydden :

fokus på hjemmen. Noe å lande på når du er urolig.

Fakta at hjemmen er stedet hvorav du går ut i verden. Noe som gir deg styrke til å gå ut i verden.

Hjemmen, stedet hvor alt begynner, drømmene enda.

Med bare lydden :

Jeg føler en fokus på en heim, men bare det. Hvorav jeg følte en større tilknytting til familie og barndom. Tilknyttingen ga mer mening til talen om hjemmen. Jeg fikk et større inntrykk med video sammen med lydden. Og bare videon ga meg større inntrykk en bare lydden.

Interview with participant Daniel

M: Ok, thanks a lot for participating.

D: No problem.

M: It's very nice of you. So, for the first viewing, the first thing you write is "a man who thinks a lot, who is a bit uneasy". Can you say anything more about that, say, about why?

D: Yes because I felt like he had a problem on his mind, and was thinking a lot about it. He seemed like he had a lot on his mind and it made him uneasy, and he had many problems he had to solve. Which made him think a lot.

M: Hm. Ok. The next thing you write is "a man engaged in a building project". Is that the same man, first and foremost?

D: Yes, the same man.

M: Ok, so he's just engaged in a building-project, is there anything else you want to say?

D: Yes, it made me think his challenges seem like they were related to the project, and made me think it was his project or his company, or something like that.

M: Ok. Then you say the building-project looks like the house of the family, *or* something of significance to his family.

D: Yeah, like that's what I was thinking when we started seeing children, like "ah, it's a personal project", kind of.

M: Hm. So a personal project.

D: Yes!

M: Run by him, his building project?

D: Exactly, yes exactly.

M: Right.

D: And then, but then, I started seeing later on that there were more houses, a whole neighborhood, so maybe it's more like his company? It made me a bit uncertain.

M: Ok, then I'll continue by asking: you said it was the same man who was uneasy and who led the project. Are there any other men near the beginning?

D: Yes, there was another man, but I didn't pay much attention to him. I thought he was somewhat insignificant in the greater context, in a sense.

M: Right. I just wanted to make sure. Then you write that you ponder the significance of the spinner?

D: Yes.

M: Now it's called a spinning top, but that's not very important here. But do you have any thoughts about the spinning top? What made it catch your attention?

D: Well, throughout the three different viewings I couldn't grasp how or why it was put there at all.

M: But you thought it had some significance, or you wouldn't have noted it.

D: Yes, exactly! And I got curious, like why is it in focus? I couldn't see any signs that told me anything about it.

M: Ok. That's unfortunate, but it will have to do.

D: Is it your video?

M: It is not my video, but I have spoken to the composer.

D: Ok.

M: The next thing you write is that you've got this feeling that the video is trying to show houses, try to say the houses are ecologically good, or in accord with nature.

D: Yes, since I saw the houses playing out in the garden, I saw the man touch rocks and (impossible to make out). Not (see previous) but grass and such. So I thought: "aha, maybe they're trying to show how they build it in an ecological manner or in accord with nature. A kind of vision, a main message about how "what we're doing is in harmony with nature", kind of.

M: Ok, do you think you changed your view on this from viewing to viewing?

D: No, but, *but*, with only sound, I had no thoughts about that.

M: Ok, that's worth noting. On the topic of only sound, let's move on to discussing the viewing with both sound and video.

D: Sure.

M: So you start with "focus on home".

D: Yup, yes that's I think because when I saw him, I thought he was kind of busy and so on, and when he comes home, I see "Oh, that's what it's about, not a house, but about home" kind of.

M: Mm.

D: And it made sense with the family and so on. That it was home, family, children, project, and so on.

M: Yeah. "Something to land on when you're uneasy", you wrote?

D: Yeah, that's something I kind of stopped thinking about, actually. When I saw "oh, that's home", and then it made sense that he was interested in the place.

M: Hm. So do I understand you correctly now, that you thought the place that was shown eventually was important because it was his home?

D: Yes, that's how it was. His home, kind of.

M: Ok. Past, future, or both?

D: Future. Future.

M: Future, ok. The next thing you wrote was roughly "fact is that home is the place you go out into the world from".

D: Right, like that.

M: Yeah.

D: Yes, it was kind of "you must have a good home so you feel safe and strong enough to go out into the world".

M: Mm. Right, but then it's a home you're coming *from*, right?

D: Yeah, like that.

M: So then it is past.

D: That it is, that it is.

M: So not just future.

D: It was kind of like in a way you, "you must build yourself a good and cozy home so that you can feel safe where you're from to go out into the world", kind of.

M: Right, ok, I see. Then you write, on that note, "something that gives you strength to go out into the world". That seems to be connected to what you just said.

D: Yeah, absolutely.

M: Hm. And then you write "home, where everything begins".

D: Yeah, that's what I felt, since, it was kind of, yeah, childhood, the dreams, your family, (?) brothers, and everything starts in your home.

M: Can you identify any emotion in this?

D: Uuh, emotions... Ummm, I think maybe some, I was I think more uneasiness was what I felt actually. Throughout the video.

M: Unease you said?

D: Yes. Unease. I think that was, that was it. I felt like it was the thread throughout the video more than security, I guess.

M: So more unease than security, you felt that was the thread throughout?

D: Yes, like that, yes.

M: Hm. Very well.

D: Maybe because, see I think they were trying to, I don't know, if the goal was to try to convince the viewer that home is someplace safe, but the man seemed so distracted or uneasy that I felt like there was some kind of concern to him all the way through, that was the thread: concern.

M: Hm. Ok. Then I think we'll move on to the viewing with only sound. And here you write that you feel a focus on "a home", but only that.

D: Yes. I felt, it was really a bit more, I don't know, not the house but home more generally? But yes, only that.

M: Hm.

D: And that in itself didn't really make sense, it didn't make as much of an impression as with the connection to family, to childhood, and all of that.

M: Hm. Then you write about how you felt a stronger connection to family and childhood? Your childhood? Your family? Or a future family or someone else's childhood?

D: It's more childhood and family in the abstract, generally. I didn't feel any personal connection to the video like that.

M: Ok, so it was really abstract then.

D: Yes, a kind of speech, a kind of speech about “home”. It is a bit of why, kind of.

M: Hm. You said you didn’t feel any connection to it yourself, but more abstractly you did?

D: Yes!

M: Was that connection then due to – can you specify if it was the voice or the music, or was it kind of both?

D: With just sound I didn’t really think much about the music. I didn’t get very much out of it, but I think it contributed to the sense of unease or concern?

M: You think so?

D: For me, for me.

M: Since you say that, was it all the way through, or was it more at some times than others, and if so, where?

D: It was probably more near the start of the video, but it impacted me for the entire video, in a way.

M: It sounds a bit like you’re describing what’s called a “priming” effect.

D: Yes! Yes.

M: Well, that’s too bad. Oh well, then you describe how you got a greater impression of the video with sound.

D: Yes, well more than with just sound. The sound was what made the least impression on me, actually.

M: Ok. Why do you think that was?

D: I don’t know. There, there wasn’t anything in it for me to relate to in a way. There was some more distance between what he said and me. It was almost like in class or a lecture or something like that.

M: Ok, yes, and then you also write that just the video made a bigger impression than just the sound.

D: Yeah.

M: Seems like there’s great differences between them, too.

D: Yeah.

M: With video, you describe what sounds almost like a story?

D: Hmm, yes, yes, yes, absolutely.

M: With a small injection of “what is the deal with that spinning top”?

D: Yes, actually.

M: Whereas with just the sound, as you wrote here, just an abstract focus on home. But I just noticed you mentioned connection, which you wrote on just sound, made more sense with the speech.

D: Yes. When there was both video and sound, it seemed like the speech fit better. It really suited the video, sort of.

M: Hmhm? Well, surely that was their intention, so that’s probably a good thing.

D: Absolutely.

M: Is there anything else you feel like mentioning here?

D: Eehm, I must... I don’t know, I have to say that I don’t know if it’s because I learned that it was a company dealing with wood or something, but I, I must say that I didn’t really get the purpose of the whole thing. I think it was most likely meant to make people want to build their own houses, but... it was, yes. Out of the blue I wonder what the purpose of it all is, in a sense.

M: Yeah.

D: Because I know, you know, that it feels good to have a home that’s nice to live in and so on.

M: So you’re wondering how that ties into the...?

D: The organization and what they're trying to accomplish with all of this.

M: Yeah.

D: But it needs, it kind of needs a (?) here.

M: So, if you were to try to retell the story of the commercial, how would you go about that? Just out of curiosity?

D: Uuhm... Maybe...maybe...I don't know, maybe make it a bit more clear. You have to, you have to you know, build yourself a house, and you need to make a house that *you* want. Is this any good, you know. It has to be suited to *you*, you know.

M: Ok, I think you misunderstood my question.

D: Huh?

M: I think you misunderstood the question a bit, but that's fine.

D: Well what was it supposed to be? Can you repeat it?

M: If you were to retell the story of the commercial, how would you do that? So the story the commercial presents, not the message the commercial is supposed to try to get people to take away from it.

D: Right I see, ok... Uuh, maybe make it a bit more clear that he builds *his* house, in a way.

M: Hm. No, I think you misunderstood again.

D: Well?

M: Retell, as in explain how you perceived the story that was told, say what it was, repeat it in your own words. Not to criticize it, not to evaluate how well it did what it tried to do.

D: Oh, right. I get it. Ok. So to retell the story as I understood it? Ok. So it starts with a man who builds his own house for his family, and he speaks to what's most likely his father, his project, and how it's something he's invested in, plays with his family and all of that. And then we end with it finished, and it asks if you want to do it like the man in the story.

M: Right. That was a good answer to the question.

D: Yes, it was.

M: Now, I wonder if you can describe any emotions you got out of the video without sound?

D: Without sound? Ok, so it starts with unease. After there's a sense of satisfaction.

M: Satisfaction?

D: Yeah.

M: Ok. Is that all?

D: I think that was all of it, yes.

M: Was it different with sound on top?

D: When I had sound... yes, I have to say that when I started seeing the child's drawing, that it made it feel more like this is sweet, kind of. This is (?). When I got to seeing the family, and so on.

M: With sound then?

D: With sounds, too, yes. And I noticed that with sound, it helped make it more, kind of... emotional. Not different emotions, but a bit more intense.

M: Ok, great. Was there anything you felt like was lost with only sound?

D: Yes. The whole story in itself, actually. Like, yes. Yes, it was, I felt much less personally involved without the video. Yes.

M: Right. I think I'm happy with the interview now, so thanks a lot for your participation, and then we stop the recording.

Potentially relevant note regarding participant Daniel: He reported off the record that he believes that him not sharing the dream of a home like that in the commercial might have influenced his response, particularly when it got abstract.

Eric

Notes from Participant Eric

Refleksjon om filmsnutten som helhet, med både lyd og bilde. Som et helhetlig inntrykk, syntes jeg filmsnutten spiller på det jeg anser som en av de viktigste følelsene for oss mennesker, nemlig det å føle seg hjemme i verden. Musikken er sentimental, og bildene spiller på skjønne naturomgivelser. Som helhet virker det som filmen prøver å forene mennesket med naturen, der naturen er vårt hjem. Dette kommer også til uttrykk ved at byggematerialet er av tre. Kort sagt reklameres det for det autentiske liv.

Filmsnutten uten bilde.

Når man hører kun på lyden, så vet man ikke at det er en reklame man hører på. Det høres mere ut som en refleksjon om hva et hjem er.

Kun bilde og ikke lyd

Uten lyd ser det mer ut som en reklame fra et arkitektkontor.

Interview with participant Eric

M: And we're on.

E: Yeah.

M: First of all, thank you very much for participating. There was a bit of trouble to get this organized, but at least now we're doing it.

E: Yeah, now we're doing it.

M: So the first version you watched was with all the elements of the commercial. The first thing you write is "as a whole, I think it first and foremost plays on what might be the most important feeling for us humans, that is, feeling at home in the world." Ok. That was well put. Do you have anything more to say about that?

E: Uuh, no I think that's... possibly the most important feeling we have as humans, that it's what we're always trying to do; To feel like we have some kind of connection to the place where we are.

M: Mhm?

E: And... and... maybe I didn't mention it in the text, but particularly how it plays on it by showing a country-side environment. And that the man who provides the voice, he has a dialect. So it isn't advertising the *city*, it's not the *city* that's home. It's out in nature. In those surroundings, so I see that it's a kind of – and that the materials they're using are wood. Uhm, and, that is kind of trying to... trying to unite the human with the natural, then? Yeah.

M: Ok. When you explain the impression of the whole and what you think it plays on, it sounds a lot like you're evaluating it as somebody's work. Is that right?

E: Yes. Uuh, yes, maybe I looked at it more like that, than I necessarily said what I felt. Maybe I used – ha ha – my head, than my feelings.

M: Don't worry. In a way I don't think you can avoid doing a bit of both, and I'll say that I've read things that make me believe – let's just say that what's going on in your head impacts what you feel, too.

E: Yes, -

M: But I thought it was worth noting. What were you about to say?

E: Yeah, and I obviously also noticed that the experience of the videoclip changed when certain elements of it were removed.

M: Mhm?

E: And, but as a whole, then, it sort of shows nature, and is more about feeling at home in the world, and it's very natural. It's not advertising a house made of concrete. It's more of a wooden house. Which has something to do with nature. And then there was the dialect, so there were many small elements here that, that, I thought of like "get, get the people out to the countryside! Come on!"

M: A real analysis here, isn't it?

E: Yeah.

M: And then you write about the music that it's "sentimental"?

E: Yeah.

M: Can you say any more about that?

E: That's a bit difficult to...-

M: Was there anything particular you noticed that was sentimental, perhaps?

E: There are, maybe, those, bright – now I notice I'm not exactly a music-expert, but those bright, light tones? Ehm. Maybe a bit melancholic, too? I don't know? I think so anyway? And...and... it's difficult to put words on emotions from music, but there's something that seems...maybe some kind of longing? That's the first thing that hit me. When listening to the music in itself, anyway.

M: You think so?

E: Mhm.

M: Ok. Then you say the images play on beautiful experiences with nature. I'm just going through your notes point by point, trying to break up the sentences so we can get some more depth.

E: Right.

M: So you've mentioned something about this already. Can you think of anything more when it comes to those experiences it played on?

E: Ehm, well there's, there's also... now I didn't write this, but there was a place where you could see kids, and a place where you could make a future, and... and if I remember correctly there was the ocean as well? Ehm, and... I don't know if there's anything more to mention than that.

M: Right. I don't believe it was the ocean. I believe it was a fjord?

E: Right, a fjord, yes. That may be.

M: But there's not really much of a difference.

E: No.

M: The ocean is also a fjord.

E: Ha ha.

M: I mean a fjord is also part of the ocean.

E: Yeah, and water.

M: And it's water, yeah. Ha ha.

E: Ha ha.

M: Then you proceed to write that "it seems like the film is trying to unite humans with nature"?

E: Mhm!

M: How so? Earlier you said that humans were home in nature?

E: Yeah, or... yeah, in a way. I mean, more that... it's there where a home *is*. Ehm, that's also why I thought they were using materials that were more... wood, I guess. Wood is also something... I think we humans experience as more natural than, concrete boxes.

M: Yeah.

E: Yeah.

M: Ok. Yeah, and apropos this, it's almost exactly what you wrote.

E: Yeah.

M: Both that nature is our home, and that it's expressed through how the building material is wood. So, "the authentic life". You've been very analytical here, but what made you think about the authentic life?

E: I'm thinking more what's experienced as genuine and real, I guess. Something that flows from what's natural, not what's artificial. Ehm, that it's... that it... Simply put, it plays more on what's natural, and not on what's...kind of... what should I say? ... Yeah. That's a more natural way to live, that I feel like... that I feel, when I watch this video.

M: Very well. Then I think we can move on to what you wrote about the clip without video? And you're still writing in sentences. You're the only one to do that thus far.

E: Yeah? Ha ha.

M: "When you're listening to only the sound you don't know that you're listening to a commercial."

E: Mhm.

M: That... I think you're right about that, but... was there something there that might have still suggested it was a commercial, let's say?

E: ... Yes... But still no, since it kind of tells... when I heard, really... when I first saw the clip with both images and sound, I didn't really hear what he said.

M: Ah, so it's clearer?

E: Yeah, clearer, but also, it kind of removes a lot of elements, you couldn't see where they were building for example, but it speaks of how home is a place you're always drawn back to after some kind of hero's journey, you're always coming back home, and then... it's a place you always return to. So it makes me think it's more of a reflection on what a good home is, than a commercial. I couldn't really see...see the commercial in it when I only listened to... the speech and the music.

M: Apropos that, about the speech, you didn't just call it a home right now, but a *good* home.

E: Yeah.

M: So does it kind of put up a positive pole? Is that right?

E: Yes, I would say it does that.

M: Ok. You didn't write anything about the music on this viewing. Is there anything you feel like you can say about that experience? Maybe you noticed something more this time?

E: Eh, no... I... Uuh. The only thing I can say is that the music was more consistent with the message, without really understanding what that means. There was something that just fit, in a way I can't explain. If it had played hip-hop, it would have been very different... Or metal, it might not have matched the same message, but I can't really explain why, but I think it was, well in tune with the rest.

M: Ok, then I'd like to- to take your example of metal here, what kind of music would be the worst match for this message?

E: Eeh... No, I don't know. It might have to be something like norwegian black metal I guess. I think -

M: (Muffled laugh.)

E: that would've been very, poorly placed, to put it mildly (stifled laugh). Yeah, that would've been a poor match. Or it really depends on... it really depends on what the commercial is aiming at. I mean, what's the intention behind the commercial. And if the intention was to show that it would be a horrible experience, then metal would have matched well. But in this case, I don't think - is it called black metal? In norwegian? Is it black metal?

M: There are many subcategories of metal. One of them is black metal.

E: Yeah, I think that's-

M: Another is death metal, and many more.

E: Ehehehe, I would have loved to watch the film with black metal. I think that would've been a poor match.

M: Turning this around then, what kind of text do you think would match the music the worst?

E: Eeh, “what kind of text would match the music poorly?” Eeh... I don’t know... Ugh, now I’m a bit worried about coming off as a bit politically incorrect here...

M: Don’t worry, that’s allowed.

E: I don’t know. Maybe a bit like, broken kebab-norwegian?

M: (Stifled laughter.)

E: Or... no, that’s not the worst match. No, this is a bit harder. I’ll take back the kebab-norwegian since it could have fit in a different context. It might have... It might have fit the least with something like the language you would speak in the city. Something like western Oslo? With regard to the videoclip’s message, that is. And it might also have been a bit... wrong? No, I don’t know.

M: Now, I wasn’t exactly thinking about the speaker and the dialect with that question, but more about its contents.

E: Oh, then I misunderstood you completely! No, the content? No, that might have been... a warmongering speech would have been a horrible fit... Uuh, with that music. It doesn’t give you an urge to fight or anything. The music really doesn’t.

M: No.

E: So if the text was aggressive it would’ve been really misplaced.

M: That’s a good answer, I’d say.

E: Mhm.

M: Right, so there doesn’t appear to be much more to say about the clip without images... Is there anything particular you remember? Any special moments that you took note of?

E: So without images?

M: Yes?

E: Eehm. Yes, it was something special when he mentioned how home is a kind of point you’re always drawn back to. That I felt was special. It’s like you go out, and then you always come back. It’s like... not an eternal return, but a return, back. Yeah.

M: Yeah. Ok. Apropos this, it might be a good question to ask about all the viewings, so was there anything special you took note of, or maybe more than one thing you noticed in the viewing with all the elements?

E: Not that I can think of right now. No. No! Not right now.

M: Hm. That is... interesting to note. So there was something special without images, but there wasn’t when you had the pictures as well?

E: Yeah, since... when there is no picture, the... yeah, as I said, it sounds more like a reflection about home. I wonder if when I saw everything at once there were a bit too many impressions for me to digest all at once. So I didn’t notice all the elements at the same time. So it was a bit difficult-

M: I see.

E: To sort them. Yeah.

M: Very well. In that case we may as well move on to the last viewing?

E: Yes?

M: And there you write, in a brief summary, that “without sound it looks more like a commercial for an architect’s office”.

E: Yeah.

M: Ok.

E: Yeah.

M: So it looks like a commercial then. That’s worth noting to begin with.

E: Yeah.

M: For an architect’s office. Can you elaborate?

E: No, it was mainly when he... drives around, and then he looks up at the almost finished construction of that building, and he looks at it, and it seems like he... likes to... is interested in the process proceeds and so on. And then creating a home. And then there are some pictures of these like... these modern wooden lego houses. And... which might be a bit... "in" in our time, that time of architectonic (?). No, I think it looked like a commercial. For an architect's office or a company that constructs buildings. And I didn't really get... I saw that they played at the country-side surroundings and so on, but not quite as... deep-feeling as when you have just... the sound or with sound and image.

M: No.

E: Yeah.

M: Ok. Then I had a question in mind, just one second. Were there any moments you took note of in the architect-commercial, then?

E: Eeuh, no it was mainly when he looked at... looked at the almost finished construction of the building. And that's where I felt like it could be a commercial for an architect's office.

M: Ok. It seems like you thought of it more as a commercial or just analytically. Were there any emotions there as well?

E: I mean, yeah... Let's see, aside from the analytical...? Yeah. It's really what I've touched on earlier. That... that... that it really shows... that it feels, feels good to live in surroundings like those. And that it, yeah, back to the impression from the whole, it seems like they're trying... no, not that "they're trying"! I feel like there's a kind of genuine "what we humans wish for", and maybe what I will wish for myself also. Later. And to feel some kind of connection.

M: But it wasn't important enough to write down?

E: No, I don't believe I'd thought of it by then.

M: Ok, that's worth noting then.

E: Yeah.

M: Yeah, you don't have any more notes, and no more questions spring to mind. You've been very detailed in what you've written, and in your elaborations when asked, so I'm happy with this interview. Thanks again for participating. It went by pretty quickly. Then I'll stop the recording... now.

Fred

Notes from participant Fred

Første runde (både lyd og bilete):

Nært og kjær, filion minner om bygda, smått romantisk og idyllisk i musikken. Spinnebassen er leika frå ei enklare tid, noke livet som voksent ikkje er. Ope mark, bevegelse og oppdaging av verda på heimstaden.

Andre runde (ingen lyd, berre bilete):

Mann som arbeider har det travelt. Å designe hus er komplekst som vist på pc-en. Barnet som teikner hus er enkelt, og smilet syner optimisme, eller type framtidstru. Spinnebassen snurre som eit teikn på at liv går framover/det driver fram.

Tredje runde (lyd, ingen bilete):

Heim er slagordet, plassen for vår første fase i livet, heimbygda. Fiolin som byrjer først viser forsiktig start, det norske, ei lukka verden. Trommer kjem og skaper rytme, framgang. Å ta "svevet", å distansere seg frå heimen, utvikle seg sjølv, framgang. Slutter med å kome heim, som at det var målet frå starten av.

Interview with participant Fred

M: Yeah, ok, so the first thing you saw was with both sound and image?

F: Yes.

M: Then you wrote – the first thing you wrote was “near and dear”. Was that a reflection – did you write this in the order of your thoughts or have you written with the entire thing in mind? I can’t tell.

F: Ehm, you can say that the first round was a bit more about impressions of the whole, whereas the latter two were more in order, they were written in the order that the video or the sounds came, I guess.

M: Yes, ok. Since we’re on that topic, do you have any thoughts as to why? Was it conscious, or?

F: Eh, really it was because... it was easier to observe things in order you might say. Eh, when it came to the second and third listening. And... And also, what could you say? You could say that the first round, when you have both sound and image, it became... the message was more holistic, whereas I felt that it became more... they separated a bit more – when listening to just sounds or just the image, it split itself up into sequences as they were presented, and that made it a bit important to note that, to reflect it.

M: Yeah, ok. So the first thing you wrote was “near and dear”, what made you think about that?

F: Well, it has to do with... it starts with that, you know the violin in the opening? It’s what made... for me, it really made... when I think violin I think “villager”, in a way? I think a bit trollish nature... it’s Norwegian at any rate. Eh, but outside of the city. Ehm... There is... it’s a careful start... In what I kind of... You get a calm atmosphere I guess is what I’m trying to say, with such a careful start. When it enters with the violin, it’s near and dear. And then I think, When the violin begins carefully, it will also be... it’s often like how the village is, and it’s of a calmer atmosphere, with that impression.

M: Right, ok. So that’s why you thought “near and dear”?

F: Yes.

M: Very well. “Vilion reminds me of villages”? Now, I don’t recognize vilion.

F: No, that was a spelling mistake, it’s violin.

M: Ok! Ok, that’s the violin then, and then you write about how it reminds you of a village. Right.

F: Yeah.

M: So you’ve basically already spoken about that. Is there anything more you could say about that, do you think?

F: Nothing more, well you could say... eh, that it is, I see it as a kind of instrument that manifests the very soundscape of what a village should be. Eh, ehm... Yeah.

M: Sounds like you really took note of the violin.

F: Yeah.

M: Ok. But since you really noticed the violin, I’d like to ask, since there was certainly more going on than just the violin. Did you take note of what was said at all?

F: It was what... yeah, ok. It’s good that you point to that, since it comes back to “near and dear”, since it is mentioned, “home”. Eh, and that is kind of a recurrent word in the video, that together with the violin kind of manifests the village to me, so putting them together - in addition, it’s new Norwegian, so... Ah, then it’s...

M: Ahaha.

F: Out of a deep valley or innermost in the fjord. Away from people, you might say. Ehm, so, eh, that was a word that resonated with the violin.

M: Yeah. Then you wrote “slightly romantic and idyllic in the music”. The idyllic I believe you’ve mentioned already, and from what you say, it sounds like you mean national romantic?

F: That was the point, yes. Eh, that when it is romantic, it... it's already well established after all, that national romanticism for Norway is this typical, "*Bridal Procession on the Hardangerfjord*", and there you've got the fiddle (violin in folk music), and so that's the kind of image I envision when I hear... when I kind of get "home" combined with a violin. It becomes a bit... it's a bit like when you see a sun over the hills, or a... a house in a small neighborhood, I suppose.

M: Yeah.

F: We're coming back to that later in the video, with... we can talk about that when we get there.

M: Sure. Then you mention the spinning top?

F: Yes. I thought it was somewhat – I might be reading a bit too much into it, I guess, but as far as I see it, in the first... scene I was about to say, but in the first sequence with the spinning top, it's spinning. It's being played with, someone is providing rotation, it's something that moves forward. And... it complements the text... It provides a forward motion, or it shows the progression, it shows the progression that happens in the text, notably. Not so much in the video. Now I'm mostly noting the spinning top with regard to what's being said. And then there's this about home, around the time when he speaks of flying out, and betting on yourself, so you get momentum, you explore the world.

M: Yeah. And precisely what you wrote about it was that it was "a toy from a simpler time, something that adult life is not".

F: Yes. Ehm, and there you might say that... eh, we're getting to... we're not that far off from where we see the two older guys, who seem like they might be father and son, and the son shows this spinning top. And, what was a simple toy has now become... the inspiration for what he's doing, right. Then... it's about building houses, and I noticed that it was wooden. And the spinning top too, is wooden, so... Eh, so there is a certain point in that as well, that something small, or something small like a spinning top made of wood would be something you'd be dealing with later in life. Ehm...

M: I suppose. Then you write "Open plains".

F: Yeah, and then we're getting back to the idyllic elements, with the open plains, where the child gets the opportunity to move around, freedom, ehm. I'd say it's the stark opposite of having to walk around the city streets waiting for traffic lights, waiting for traffic lights to turn green so you'd be allowed to cross the road.

M: Yeah. Wasn't there a scene earlier in the commercial where something happened in a city street, too?

F: ... Yes, eh...

M: Do you recall?

F: Now I'm getting unsure, since I'm thinking about the scene where the man's sitting in a car?

M: Yes.

F: In the city. In the city, notably.

M: So that's in a street.

F: That's a street.

M: That's *in* a street.

F: That's *in a* street. There are rules surrounding it.

M: So it's not open, then.

F: Not open. Freedom is... Eh, I mean you have freedom as an adult, but not the freedom to move, if that makes sense? As the plains try to illustrate, then. The opportunity to explore, exploring the world.

M: But you mentioned the children regarding the plains. Maybe that has some significance?

F: Yeah, that's got to do with how the child has... the desire to explore, to discover, the desire to run. It shows how... What was play becomes the first step towards... towards distancing yourself... managing... taking care of yourself!

M: Independence then?

F: Independence.

M: Ok, then you write "motion, exploring the world". "At home".

F: Yeah. You might say exploring the world near home. I mean, the parents are there, or at least the father is there. And the child gets to run, explore, what's under watch in a sense, that's home, where you could feel safe.

M: Yeah. Any more to say about that?

F: No, I feel like I've gotten that point out.

M: Yeah, it does sound like that when it comes to the first round, so maybe we should move on to the second one?

F: Yeah.

M: Actually, one last question first. Is there something you took note of that you did not feel like writing down, that you haven't already mentioned?

F: That would have to be that this was a company. I thought at first that this might be a promotion of a municipality or something, right? That (?), but it was in fact a firm, working wood to produce houses made of wood. But that's not something I – that's something I kind of undermined... here. I didn't really notice that this was a video designed to promote the building of houses, and I really compartmentalized it for the remaining rounds. I didn't put any weight on it.

M: And that's fine. I note from how you talk about it that you expected it to be one thing-

F: I expected it could be more about selling the product, you could say, that when it is a private company, or a commercial actor you'd expect them to dare promote themselves just a *bit* more aggressively to the hypothetical buyer. But in this video I didn't feel treated like a customer. I just observed a video... that was pretty nice. That shows Norway, I was about to say, or it shows the village, one's home. Eh, that could be used in any context whatsoever, by a municipality that wants... or to get people to move home, I was about to say.

M: Right. Do you think there's a connection between these things? See, to me it sounds like you expected it to be one kind of video but found out while watching it that it was a different kind of video. And that makes me think, right away, that you may have tried to figure it out while watching. Is that correct?

F: Yes. Ehm... well, I didn't have any... I've never watched the video. I had no preconceptions. I didn't even notice the account that uploaded it, I only saw the title, "*På tide å komma heim nå. Heilt heim.*", ehm... and then... Eh, I think my surprise was mainly that it was a commercial actor. Since I expected, as the video progressed, it was just at the end there, that they showed... this "Ry county", that it was a company. Before that I really expected it to be an appeal to make people move home, a bit like, typical municipality commercial. You have this kind of thing. I've come to know some, due to my studies. So I thought it was so recognizable, with the whole "yes, move back to us, return home to Ry county" - as it was here. I was a bit surprised that it was... yeah, a company.

M: It really doesn't sound like a focus. I mean, you didn't even deign to write it down, right?

F: No. It was so small, so minimal, or minimalistic of the people who made the... It seems wrong to even call it a commercial when there is so little commercial about its message, but there is that. Yeah. No, but... It's not something I took note of in the other two listenings either.

M: Maybe especially not when there was just sound, and nothing to see.

F: Precisely.

M: Then we might as well move on. You've said way more than expected about the small thing you didn't feel like writing down. So the second round was with just the images.

F: It was just images, yes.

M: The first thing you write there is "a man at work, being busy".

F: Ok, it might be that what's coming here... yeah, those notes might be affected by how I see that it's a commercial for a company in one way, but I don't think the connection is as strong as expected. With that, it also shows... I think it... when there's just images it brings forth the emotions more. It's like... it's very focused on houses, and how the child is drawing a house. But the man here is complicated, he's busy, he gets into a car, lays back...

M: Right, too, but there's at least one scene before this, you said these notes might be much more sequential than the first viewing, but you've left out the first scene. So I wonder if you have any thoughts as to why?

F: ... No, then it would have to be that I didn't... it's not something that stuck with me. Ehm... no.

M: Very well. Then you write "To design houses is complex, as is shown on the pc".

Now I'll admit that I haven't noticed any PC's here, but what made you decide to write this down?

F: What made me write this down is that... in that scene with the man who seems a bit tired, the video very deliberately films a movement towards a PC, showing the features of what would become a house. That just stuck with me, how you could see different measures, and you could see... eh, degrees, angles, different things that make it difficult to put together a house.

M: Ok.

F: It was a short second, but it was something that kind of remained in my mind, and personally things that have to do with technology, they catch my interest very quickly.

M: So you think this is just a personal thing about you?

F: You can absolutely say that. Eh, yeah.

M: Right. So the next thing you write down is about the child drawing a house, and how it is "simple, and the smile shows optimism or faith in the future".

F: Yes, that about the drawing, it's shown as... this little girl, she's drawing, she's drawing with some pride. She's having fun, but it is a... counteraction to what the man did when trying to make the house earlier in the video.

M: In a way, yes.

F: Ehm, and it shows a bit with that... I want to say, had one known how difficult it was there wouldn't be much of that faith in the future.

M: Oof.

F: Eh, and that's just my impression of what adult life is compared to a child's, ehm... yeah. But that optimism, it sits there with the drawing of the house.

M:... Yes. But now I want to talk a bit about emotions again. Would you say these were emotions you *saw*, that you could tell where supposed to be in the scene, or would you say these were emotions flowing through you yourself?

F: Ehm...

M: And if it was a bit of both, was there more of one than the other?

F: I will say... I may have put a bit much emotion on especially this child, but I wouldn't say that it's just emotions I see in it. I suppose the first viewing colored the second a bit since I'd know what was coming. I still had some of the text in the back of my mind, and I could imagine where the music sat relative to the video being played, so if the goal was to produce an emotion from the first viewing, it was still there in the second one. Ehm...

M: So you... you don't feel like you can separate them if there were?

F: With the exception of this about the kid, and I suppose with the man's complicated... it might be that he was having the time of his life, but it definitely looked busy. So, it's probably most, what you could say there's most emotion to here is the person, but I feel like the descriptions of the things in the video, they... ehm... Oh well. Now I kept reading, and I saw the spinning top.

M: Yeah, I think –

F: There's nothing indicating that it isn't tied to emotion. Or no, there's nothing that indicates it would be connected to emotion, but it's what my mind caught. So it might be most accurate to say a bit of both. There's certainly excess weight of emotions.

M: Excess weight? In the video? Was that with or without sound?

F: Eh, also without, but that was because I recognized it from the first listening, and I put the emotions into the video even though they weren't in...

M: Ok, if you're that convinced about it I can only assume you are correct. But about the spinning top, that's the last thing you write about with regard to the second viewing, and there you write that it's a symbol of how life goes on. I think you said something like that already with regard to the previous viewing, but was anything different this time?

F: Ehm... Well, I didn't have the music or the background sounds to support what I said, but... With that exception, I'd say it was very similar... Yeah. The spinning top was wooden, it spun, and that about moving forward is just how I connected it, feelings based I guess.

M: Mhm. But the spinning top, if I remember correctly that's about 10 seconds out into the about 45 seconds long video. Did you really find nothing worth noting in the remaining 30 seconds of the second viewing?

F: Well... Eh... What I... I feel maybe that... ok. One thing I regret not writing that might be mentioned, about how right at the end when they show the neighborhood, they pan out to show the Ry county fjord, the village, in a way that kind of completes... the point, I guess... about how... Ehm... I mean it gives this... video here a kind of... idyllic ending, with regard to the imagery that is shown. And it's something that... it is nice to look at, it draws you towards it you could say.

M: Right, or to use a loan-word, it's attractive?

F: Attractive might be better to say, I mean... you kind of get the question: "Could you go there?"

M: Ok, that was one thing you didn't write... for the second round, or would you say it goes for the first as well?

F: You have to ask that question again, since there was some lag.

M: Did you regret not writing it first and foremost the second time, or do you feel like you should have written it the first time as well?

F: Ehm.

M: Was it clearer the second time is what the question was I guess.

F: ... It was... It was in a way... yes. I think it was clearer the second time, when you separated the sound and the images. Eh, when you only saw images or the video. The message wasn't necessarily equally clear, but...

M: But it wasn't necessarily about the message, but about what you pick up on.

F: Yeah.

M: So... it isn't exactly the message that this is about, here.

F: No.

M: But very well, it sounds like we can move on to the third viewing now. And there the first thing you write is "home is the slogan".

F: ... Yes. It starts off with a calm voice. A bit... of an older man who says "home", and it is... it takes you somewhere, I mean the narrator's voice, carries indications of being calm, and... I mean, when that voice is conjoined with him saying "home" first...

immediately you're kind of... immediately you're kind of in a village, or an area that isn't... that is you're supposed to go home to yourself, lower your shoulders... when that's the opening word, it draws the atmosphere back towards... Eh...

M: Right. Then you write some more about "home". "The place for our first phase in life, the home town". Does this follow from the first word, or was it later, too. I'm not sure how to understand it.

F: You can understand it like you... since he continues to talk about what a home is, he tries to define a home, and it is until... that note is until he starts speaking of the flight, that we'll return to. In the meantime it's about the first steps, one's home town.

M: Ok. Then you write about the violin that starts with a careful start, and you mention the Norwegian as a closed world. Any more to say about that?

F: It is largely the same as the first time around. It's a bit of an atypical Norwegian instrument, and you get this sense of the village, and in a hometown adolescence might be a bit closed off, and you are isolated from the surrounding world in a way. And that's what I relate it to.

M: Yeah. Is the careful start you mention also about childhood, then?

F: Yes, about... small steps.

M: Small steps, right.

F: And then I suppose we move on to the next sentence in a way, where they get older.

M: "The drums come in and create rhythm, progression", right.

F: Yeah.

M: So that's about late adolescence or something then?

F: Well, it brings it forward, and I wouldn't say the intensity grows a lot, but it reveals a velocity to the video that shows a certain intensity from one's home, where the climax is the flight into the world.

M: Right.

F: And the drums don't stop it, but they continue and they continue and they continue, and we get back to it at the end. That...

M: "The flight distances itself, distances itself from home"? "Forward motion", more forward motion, yeah?

F: Yeah.

M: Now we have two sentences in a row that end with comma, forward motion.

(stifled laugh).

F: Yeah, I'm aware of that, it was more of a note than a proper sentence and I apologize for that.

M: No, that's not a problem at all, it's just a little weird to see. I'm treating them as notes with my questions, I'd say. So the flight, you've mentioned some things about that already. And then you elaborate: Distancing oneself from home, developing oneself'.

F: ...Yeah.

M: Is there more?

F: That's what I connect, when it comes to that segment. I connect it to... and he is, really quite clear, that the flight is away from... eh...eh...home, I mean you stand on your own legs, and... now it's you who is to carry yourself forward, in a way.

M: Right. Finally you write "ends with a return home, as if that was the goal right from the start".

F: Yeah, and here's the point about how the drums don't continue before, I mean they don't stop before you pan out and reveal the neighborhood, the house. As if that was the goal from the start? Yeah, from childhood to establishing phase. Eh... In life, then. So it's about growing up, exploration, and then you return home. Back home is kind of the goal to reach, you could say.

M: A bit like... are you familiar with the hero's journey?

F: Yeah, a bit like that.

M: Like that. You really took note of the drums. You've said more about them than anyone else I've spoken to. Did you take note of anything else in the music after the intro?

F: I feel like there was something else along the way that I can't really put my finger on, about the music, that I didn't note, that I can't think of, besides the violin and the drums, but if there was, it wasn't very impactful on the video. But I feel like I heard a sound in there somewhere, but I'm not entirely sure. Ehm, it's only because you ask that I wonder if there was something more in there that I didn't catch.

M: Well, there are many ways to think about it, but if it's just because I ask then I think we should leave that there. So... were there any other emotions you took note of, or were there any emotions that were special to this viewing?

F: Ehm... Of the personal emotions, I... I got a bit nostalgic, and... I felt some longing or nostalgia for a time that was a bit simpler, than when you live by yourself, with a private economy, things to worry about for yourself, agreements, times, school, work, whatever it is in a way. Before it was just simple with school and free time. So a simpler time. That would be the emotion that carried through. But I wouldn't say it was the most gripping video per se, either.

M: Of course. It doesn't need to be that either. But it's worth noting. Ok, with that I think... well first and foremost we've been going for an hour since we started, which is the maximum length I said it would take, but we have also just barely covered everything you wrote, so I think we'll end it here. Thank you for the interview, and I'll stop the recording.