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Musicking Poulenc's ruins in Stellenbosch

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This article investigates several performances of a flute solo (written by Francis Poulenc) as presented by the author in Stellenbosch, South Africa.¹ *Un joueur de flûte berce les ruines* was written in the 1940s, 'discovered' in the late 1990s by Ransom Wilson and published in 2000 by Chester. The title of the solo carries an unidentified reference to the 'serenading' of 'ruins'. This title, the shrouded originating circumstances of Poulenc's composition, as well as its only-recent appearance, are central to the subsequent argument for music curations 'after sound' (Barrett). Douglas Barrett's notion of 'critical music' directs this reflexive article enquiry. Curations 'after sound' take place when music compositions operate on platforms of socio-critical arts practice. 'Musicking', proposed by Christopher Small, probes the question: 'What's really going on here?' The article asks this question by reflecting on the intentional juxtapositions of time, place and context that occurred when the author presented the solo on performances respectively titled 'Die Vlakte', 'Roesdorp', and 'Portrait'. The article analyses aspects of films by Aryan Kaganof (2016) that responded to the 'Roesdorp' performance and suggests that the films manifest as Rancière-ian 'aesthetics as politics': they expose and intertwine layers of complicity, critique, confusion and

1 It is recommended that you access the online version of this article where video and audio clips of these performances are included. The online version can be found at the following web address: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/aa/index>.

care. A fleeting juxtaposition of silence and echo as metaphorical extensions to the notion of 'after sound' concludes this article enquiry.

Keywords: Musicking; critical music; flute; Poulenc; ruins, Stellenbosch, Kaganof, aesthetics as politics

1. Introduction

A composition for flute solo entitled *Un joueur de flûte berce les ruines* ('A player of the flute lullabies the ruins') was written by Francis Poulenc in the 1940s, 'discovered' in the late 1990s by Ransom Wilson and published in 2000 by Chester. The introduction to the Chester publication, written by Wilson, states that 'almost no information about this little piece has yet come to light' (2000). The current article's primary intent is to explore contemporary performance contexts of the music. However, in the process of the enquiry, more information on the origins of the solo did 'come to light', as will be demonstrated.

The Poulenc flute solo is so very brief that a discussion of its content may amount to much ado about nothing. However, when the solo is analysed amid curated contexts of 'musicking', famously formulated by Christopher Small (1998), and 'critical music', as suggested by Douglas Barrett (2016), layers of 'information' do 'come to light'. This article does not illuminate the solo's music content, nor propagate its merit, and the article also does not primarily intend to engage with the composer's biographical details based on archival documents, as the publications of Schmidt (1995, 2001), Southon (2011, 2013), Lacombe (2013), and others, have done. However, the article does engage with aspects of Barrett's 'delegated performances' (2016:134), and thereby we learn more about the capacities, as well as the tensions, that arise from the immersion of classical music into contexts of socio-critical arts practice.

I have mentioned the brevity of the solo. A fleeting indulgence of musicological approaches that may seek significance in the music 'itself' would require an act of gentle evasion: Poulenc's flute solo sounds folk-like and lacks the witty dissonance that this early-20th Century French composer is sometimes known for. The solo may even be judged as sentimental utterance.² However, this article contends that the analysis of marginal art's contextual signification, amid interventionist curation, is able to comment powerfully on process to produce significant knowledge.

2 Musicologist Christopher Moore describes Poulenc's 'lifelong dedication to tonality' as 'an ostensibly "regressive" aesthetic strategy' (Moore 2014:1).

The shrouded originating circumstances of Poulenc's composition, as well as its only-recent appearance, coupled to a title that does not divulge *what* Poulenc's ruins are, gave the author licence to 'critically' appropriate the music, as this article explores. The article threads together the author's three curations that were, in every case, quietly content about not knowing what Poulenc's ruins are (or, as will be shown, were).

Un joueur de flûte berce les ruines by Poulenc has been performed in France and in the United States by flautists such as Ransom Wilson (2000) and Mimi Stillman (2013). The solo (that I call, for short, *Poulenc's ruins*) has also been played in Stellenbosch, South Africa, with myself as the 'player of the flute', on many occasions. In this article I select three occasions on which I played *Poulenc's ruins* in Stellenbosch in order to tease out 'musicking' in potential acts of 'critical music'. The three occasions are presented under the headings of, respectively, *Die Vlakte*, *Roesdorp* and *Portrait*. The reflections on these events present an analysis of who the 'actors' were and what the 'props' were, in order to begin to investigate the intentions, implications and impact of presenting the Poulenc classical music on these platforms. From a discussion on 'communal acts after sound' (Barrett), I suggest that the solo became immersed in communal contexts that operate beyond the posing of a singular aesthetic object, thereby re-situating itself as 'critical music'.

In the ensuing discussion, the *Roesdorp* event is discussed at greater length in comparison to the other two events, as this curation evolved from a detailed conceptualisation that comprised several classical music compositions, improvisation, and a brief talk, all focused on a specific theme.³

Two short films were produced by Aryan Kaganof that each responded to the *Roesdorp* event. The article concludes with an analysis of various moments in the films. My analysis addresses some of the ways that the filmic medium was an appropriate medium with which to comment on structural historical violence, for Kaganof's filmic method does not only document the curation, but, instead critically engages in multiple layers of artistic comment. These suggestions are left to the reader's judgement, as well as to the reader's invitation to view the films, available on open access and online (Kaganof 2016a and 2016b).

Below, I discuss the notions of 'musicking', and 'critical music', as proposed by Christopher Small and Douglas Barrett.

3 *Die Vlakte* comprised (only) the flute solo as a response to protest events, and *Portrait* was a conventional concert event that included the Poulenc solo as a critical comment on aesthetics and taste, with socio-political comment underlying, but not overtly stated. *Roesdorp's* conceptualisation was more complex and layered.

2. 'Musicking'

In the late 1990s, when musicology had invested itself in critical social theory as analytic, musicologist Christopher Small asked: 'What's really going on here?' in his (re)definition of 'music'. He defined music not as noun – aesthetic object, but as verb, as socially significant action. He proposed that music be demarcated as 'to music', and as 'musicking' (1998:10). Small's investigation focused on a symphony concert performance, thereby revealing the context of Western musicology from which he proposed 'musicking'. His probing of 'what's going on here' was informed by shifting musicological discourses that included the cultural criticism, as Susan McClary reminds, that Western musicology opened up to (McClary 2002:xi and McClary 2011:6). Cultural criticism included the seminal contribution of Lydia Goehr who, in her philosophical treatise of the early 1990s, indicated the process whereby classical music compositions ('works'), had become transcendental and immovable objects sounding from 'the canon' of an 'imaginary museum of musical works' (Goehr 1994:8). Goehr's analysis contributed to the process of dismantling the autonomy of the Western music composition as 'work'. Thereby, cultural criticism in musicology increasingly extended to analyses of process.⁴ Small's probings, therefore, remind us to investigate contemporary musicking as social signification, in the demand to know what is going on here.

3. 'Critical music'

Douglas Barrett 'seeks to reimagine music' as 'critical music' in a publication entitled *After Sound* (2016:1). I suggest that criticality (as research orientation) incorporates rebellion (against) and activism (for) change within a broadly defined notion of emancipation. Criticality heralds modes of debate and transparency. These modes are endorsed by Barrett's call for critical music to engage with 'reflection, reflexivity, intention and enunciation' (2016:3). For Barrett, critical music occurs 'after sound', as 'radical collective formations' – communal acts

4 Numerous examples of approaches within 'new' musicology analyse process (rather than product) in music and music-making to indicate that (Western) music products and societal process are mutually, consequentially linked to one another. Timothy Taylor, for example, succeeds in indicating how 'the classical music ideology' (2007:3-4), came about through processes of colonialism, imperialism and globalisation.

that engage body, space and time (2016:167).⁵ Critical music happens when 'the outside floods music's proper interior' (2016:50). This latter phrase perhaps summarises Barrett's argument, although the phrase here is focused on differing interpretations of John Cage's 4'33". Barrett subscribes to those 'critical' interpretations of music that act out sound as nonautonomous and 'socially engaged' and that make use of 'discursive', 'conceptual' and 'activist' strategies (2016:59). Barrett's analysis, situated firstly in Western music's classical and new music, thereafter proceeding to cross-disciplinary music, argues for a widening of music's artistic and social partners. His analysis provides some useful tools with which to explore contemporary musicking.

4. *Poulenc's ruins* in Stellenbosch

On three occasions in 2015 and 2016, I performed *Poulenc's ruins* on platforms of rebellion and as forms of activism in Stellenbosch. Below, I briefly describe these three events. My observations are reflexive, situated in experience and therefore 'legitimate', as musicologist Susan McClary declares of experience-based scholarship (2002:22).⁶

4.1 *Die Vlakte*⁷

In 2015 I played *Poulenc's ruins* on the pavement in front of the Stellenbosch University Arts and Social Sciences Building (formerly called the *BJ Vorster Building*, or the *BJ*). On campus that year, OpenStellenbosch, an activist student group, reminded its followers of the *BJ*'s symbolic connection to apartheid white supremacy, linked to academic spaces that excluded those whom had been exiled from town and from academic centres. Forced removals of several decades before, and still-prevalent exclusion, were central to mobilising the waves of protest. The *BJ* is built in an area formerly known as Die Vlakte. The building is a six-storied, white-washed gigantic structure with a flat roof. After

5 This list reminds of Jacques Rancière's mention of contemporary art as 'redistribution' of the relations between 'bodies, times, spaces and images' (2009:22–23). Rancière is here setting up an argument of contrasting understandings of politics in his exposition towards 'aesthetics as politics'. In my understanding Barrett sees Rancière as exemplary of 'relational aesthetics work emerging in the 1990s' (2016:132).

6 Susan McClary comments that 'our own reactions' are 'legitimate'; 'socially constituted – the products of lifelong contact with music and other multimedia' (2002:22).

7 I use *Die Vlakte* ('the plain') in italics to refer to the performance of *Poulenc's ruins*. The performance and its filming took place on 20 August 2015, and is documented in emails between me, José and María (22–24 August 2015), as well as in the *Jiráfica* film, a film in production phase (at the time of writing this article).

forced removals in the 1960s, the Vlakte area was subsequently redeveloped as part of the white inhabitants' town centre, landmarked by up-scaled commercial franchises, residential developments and the university's buildings, including the *BJ*.

My rendition of Poulenc was presented in allegiance with the protest campaigns, in remembrance of the harm left by the legacy of apartheid. At the time, a filmmaker from Ecuador, José Cardoso, was tracing the history of Die Vlakte. In discussion with him, I suggested that he film such a performance of Poulenc, to use in the film if he so chose. On the day of the performance, the audience amounted to a few collaborators and friends of José and his wife, photographer María Fernanda García. Perplexed bystanders such as students and lecturers hurrying past on their way to their 2 pm classes and appointments formed part of the setting. The performance was included in the film that José was making, titled *What the soil remembers*.

Clip 1: *Poulenc's ruins* from *What the soil remembers*, *Jiráfica/ Fábrica de Cuentos* (film in progress at the time of writing).⁸

In this brief clip the filmmaker juxtaposes history with the present when he inserts black and white footage of a marching band.⁹ He also inserts a map that shows the location of families' homes before the houses were torn down, or the families evicted.¹⁰ When Cardoso shows *Poulenc's ruins* in colour, the *BJ* building stands as a dire monument to apartheid's socio-political engineering of people, as was drawn up and applied by ministers like Vorster *et al.* The title of the film, with its reference to the memory of the soil, is dramatised when the flute player turns away from the *BJ* and, instead, plays to the soil. The original title of the flute composition ('*A player of the flute lullabies the ruins*') is enacted and sounded when the flute's music connects the ruins of Die Vlakte, a building, and communal memory.

8 To view the clip, please access the article online at the following web address: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/aa/index>.

9 The filmmaker is perhaps here alluding to the Wesleyian wind band that played in Die Vlakte. This band had three brothers (Bokkie, Fred and Ikey Ortell) who played prominent roles in the band. Bokkie Ortell lived adjacent to the site where the *BJ* was later built (Giliomee 2007:104).

10 This version of the film notes two of the families' surnames (of families who lost homes) incorrectly. The corrected versions should perhaps be 'Theunissen', and 'Kannemeyer'.

4.2 Roesdorp¹¹

Later that same year I performed the Poulenc composition in the Rupert Museum, playing as I walked towards the mural panel of flowery tiles by Michele Nigrini titled 'Colour Symphony'. On this occasion, I was not playing alone, as artist and musician Garth Erasmus simultaneously improvised on a porcelain instrument that he called 'voëltjie'. Garth's music-making on various instruments throughout our programme recalled the erasure of Khoi-San society and culture, as well as recent memories relating to country-wide forced removals. Our performance, together, signified a dialogue between classical composed music and re-imagined Khoi-San indigenous improvisation so that innovative forms of dialogical music were created.

The *Roesdorp* event was filmed by Aryan Kaganof, who produced a short film titled *Kreun* ('groan', April 2016), and then a subsequent film edit, *Khoisan ghost kreun* (September 2016). The performance was attended by members of the public and especially by members of the Stellenbosch Arts Association who, at their year-end function, hosted the annual Huberte Rupert Memorial Lecture. In 2015 Garth and I presented the ninth such lecture through a brief talk and through rebellious soundings of several compositions-with-improvisations as we were remembering the eradication of 'Roesdorp', a community of people, buildings and businesses that had existed up until 1971 in close proximity to the area that subsequently housed the Rupert Museum in Stellenbosch.¹² The people of Roesdorp were evicted when the town centre was re-designated for white residences and businesses. A few historic houses of Roesdorp remain to house a catering company and restaurants, but memory of the word Roesdorp, as well as memories about Roesdorp as a recognised part of central Stellenbosch, are disappearing as people who lived there 50 years ago are now getting old.

11 I use *Roesdorp* ('rust town', a colloquial expression formed (by its former inhabitants) from 'Roux-se-dorp', from one of the prior owners of the area) to refer to the Poulenc-and-voëltjie item (and the remainder of the programme) that was titled *Memory wrapped in the lament I hear*, the latter formulated from the writings of Maurice Blanchot (1957:71). The event took place on Wednesday 25 November 2015 at 6 pm, in the Rupert Museum in Stellenbosch. In subsequent blog coverage and communication the event came to be referred as *Kreun*, correlating to one of the film titles. Entry to the event was free to all who attended. The programme also included flute compositions by Edie Hill, Bongani Ndodana-Breen, Roelof Temmingh, and Paul Hanmer. NewMusicSA commissioned Paul Hanmer for a composition for Garth and me, and NewMusicSA commissioned Aryan Kaganof for a filmic response to the event.

12 Roesdorp existed in sections now divided by a highway. One section, adjacent to the Eersterivier, was demolished and replaced by De Oewer security housing complex. The other section, flanking the Victoria Bridge in Aan de Wagenweg, was largely demolished and replaced by business offices (notably Distell), apartment buildings, and a sports complex for the nearby boys' gymnasium.

4.3 *Portrait*¹³

In March 2016 I performed *Poulenc's ruins* in the Fisser Hall, Stellenbosch Konservatorium, inserted as a provocative link between the music of Poulenc's piano and wind sextet (premièred 1940) and the sextet by Ludwig Thuille (1880). The solo's insertion was intended as aesthetic comment on 'ruin', thereby perhaps creating occasion for reflection on the ideological position of the composer in wartime France, but also for reflection on the supposed preferences of audiences in concert halls.

In a concert themed and titled *Poulenc portrait*, the Thuille was designed to contrast Poulenc's 'Les Six' aesthetic with the very aesthetic to which Poulenc objected – the emotionally indulging, overriding Austro-Germanic sounds represented by the music of a Romantic composer such as Thuille. The concert's title was therefore ironic in its inclusion of Thuille's composition. During the concert programme that evening, I played the music in the aisle among the audience and then returned to join my colleagues on stage where we played the four protracted movements of the Thuille sextet.

The performance was part of the annual Stellenbosch *Woordfees* (translated as 'word festival'), and was co-funded by the Endler Concert Series of that year. The hour-long concert was recorded by a student at the Stellenbosch University Music Department's sound studio for the Endler Concert Series archive.

With the above three synopses, the question follows, 'What was really going on here?' The synopses provide clues about intentions, implementation and impact of the events. These three aspects can perhaps be investigated by a focus on those whom Christopher Small calls 'actors' and on (what I term) 'props'.

5. Actors

Small's actors who help 'in any capacity' to make musicking happen include roadies, ticket sellers, musicians, composers, and listeners. To the list Small adds the cleaners who clean 'after everyone else has gone' (1998:9). I did not meet the cleaning staff who cleaned after the concert events, but I am familiar with the cleaners who made *Portrait* possible as they have had extended periods of service (coinciding with my study years) at the Konservatorium.

13 I use *Portrait* to refer to the performances of *Poulenc's ruins* on a concert titled *Poulenc portrait*. The concert took place in the Fisser Hall, Stellenbosch, on Wednesday 10 March 2016, at 8 pm. The concert was hosted by *Woordfees* and the Stellenbosch University Music Department Endler Concert Series. The programme consisted of: Trio for oboe, bassoon, piano, op 43 (Poulenc); Woodwind and piano sextet (Poulenc); Flute solo (Poulenc) and Woodwind and piano sextet (Thuille).

Actors at the three events also included festival organisers, publicity people, people with whom I had to sign contracts (for the festival production), those with whom financial budgets had to be discussed, and funders (Woordfees and Endler Concert Series, as well as, for *Roesdorp*, NewMusicSA, the National Arts and Culture Board, the Stellenbosch Arts Association and the Rupert Art Foundation). The festival event had ticket sellers and sound technicians. *Die Vlakte* and *Roesdorp* had filmmakers. For *Roesdorp*, the actors included a committee member from the Stellenbosch Arts Association (archaeologist Sona Buys) who had initially extended the invitation to me to participate in the annual event. Also present at *Roesdorp* were the curator of the Rupert Museum (Robyn-Leigh Cedras), the director of the museum (Deon Herselman) and the staff members who oversee security and who host visitor tours there. In the films made by Kaganof, a museum staff member (Gert Kordom) is filmed as he silently watches me from an adjacent foyer area.

Actors who were acknowledged in *Roesdorp*'s printed programme, and who attended but did not play a public role at the event, included Adrian Jacobs, Wallace Adams and Shaikh Yusuf. Adrian was the person who first told me of the existence of Roesdorp. 'Uncle' Wallace (as he is known) took me to his birth home in Roesdorp. Shaikh Yusuf (who is a leading activist figure amid former residents from *Die Vlakte*) told me of the Muslim families who lived and owned businesses in Roesdorp. Actors as authors who had provided me with information on the town's history included the historian academic Hermann Giliomee (2007), and writer Hilton Biscombe (2006), the latter whose committee-written account of the histories of apartheid's exiled people in Stellenbosch included a single paragraph on 'Roesdorp', historical mention of which I had not found documented elsewhere.¹⁴ If the notion of actors (who help to bring about musicking) is extended to include members of the public who attended the event, then aspects of mutual curatorial participation are brought into play. Audience actors included members of the Arts Association, as well as people who attended the event for its topic of enquiry, including their personal relation to histories of eviction and racial relocation in Stellenbosch.

A list of the actors as described above exposes that music-making bodies were placed in spaces in which they are not usually found. My body on a pavement (*Die Vlakte*), together with my playing off-stage (*Portrait*) and Garth's body playing Khoi-San instruments together with a classical flute (*Roesdorp*), and both of us musicking within a habitually silent art museum, are examples of what I call 're-placing'. Re-placing metaphorically refers to the perceived

14 Wallace Adams's memories of Roesdorp are included in the book edited by Hilton Biscombe (2006: xxiii–xxiv).

'placing' of a person in society, determined in South Africa by notions of class, race, education, equality, the type of labour one does and, indeed, the type of music and art one engages with. Re-placing, and place (in particular) also speak to the architectural structures that carry signification. In our events, the BJ, the pavement, the art gallery and the concert hall each signify inclusion and exclusion of people in relation to built structures and built-up areas. The list of actors also exposes economic and social systems such as the alliance of arts with capital-generation underscored by legalese, and the plausible exclusion of audiences on account of unequally spread material resources.¹⁵

Gert Kordom's silent gaze at the Rupert Museum (imaged in the Kaganof films) perhaps alludes to histories of inclusion and exclusion and the silences that surround some of these histories. The list of actors exposes the necessity for taking up trails of memory and documenting these before older generations are no longer able to recount 'what [was] going on here'.

6. Props

For these performance events, the props included the composition itself (music based on the score) and a flute. I played *Poulenc's ruins* on alto flute so that the sounding pitch was lower than the pitch intended by the composer, and I performed from memory and therefore did not use the score or a music stand. A prop that was not implied by the composer was the *voëltjie* that Garth played during *Roesdorp*. His improvisation therefore turned the solo into a duo.

Poulenc's score does not specify details for setting, such as the setting of a pavement and an art gallery. With *Roesdorp* we faced and approached the Nigrini panels on the walls while playing a composition that makes titular mention of 'ruins'. Nigrini's artwork (*Colour Symphony*) employs a colour coding theory that (perhaps unknown to her) aligned with Anton Rupert's strategies of colour coding for marketing brands of cigarettes (this information was relayed to us by the museum director). Our music 'about' ruins protested against the societal systems of communal human colour coding and classification that apartheid had invested in. In dissent, *voëltjie* sat and sang 'in a high tree', as Garth conceptualised the music, with some irony.

'Equipment' pertaining to technical aspects (cameras, recording devices) as well as material related to 21st Century art industry systems such as event management (emails, electronic signatures, cashless ticketing and internet

15 Barrett proposes that critical music heed the 'call for a resolute exit from the economic [...] circuits of the art world' (2016:15). I have not further explored the consequences of his notion in this article.

publicity) were also not specified by the Poulenc-ian score. Audience-related props included chairs for the seated events, and, in the Rupert Museum, food and wine served after the event. *Roesdorp* and *Portrait* had poster publicity, and programme notes to explain and to indicate the order and content of the music. *Roesdorp* included a nine-minute talk that I delivered on the conceptualisation, intent and history of the area, and the latter aspects relied on information supplied to me by people who had lived in Roesdorp. The talk was presented in Afrikaans, so I distributed a printed English version to audience members not conversant in Afrikaans.¹⁶

The list of props at *Roesdorp* (that included carefully prepared publicity material and the talk) attest to my perhaps overly-meticulous planning and directing that I sensed were necessary to provide some security for Garth and me. We were realigning classical and improvised music in innovative relations to one another, and in relation to a socially engaged topic, and we could not foresee how this would play out. The intent and implementation were conceptually designed, but then, in performance, intuitively created, improvised by Garth in particular.

The list of actors and props reveal that *Poulenc's ruins* became immersed in three events that were more than flute-and-score. The events engaged body, space and time and rearranged these properties to perhaps transform the musicking events into 'radical communal acts' 'after sound', and to perhaps manifest as Barrett's 'critical music'. Critical music curations uncouple from perceptions of sound as autonomous product and resituate themselves to engage communal acts of protest such as (in Barrett's examples) campaigning for breaking silences on HIV/Aids, gender and sexual identity, worker conditions in a sugar factory, financial speculation and student debt (2016:1-2). Critical music affects and infects environment (beyond the infatuation of hearing 'sound itself') and forms radical processes as communal acts 'premised upon collaboration, participation, community-based practices, and similar models of social engagement' as Barrett suggests (2016:131).

I suggest that radical communal acts after sound were made possible by musicians and filmmakers who worked conceptually, but more so by people who were willing to share their stories and memories, and even more so by the very audiences who attended the public events. I describe some of these processes below.

16 Aryan Kaganof posted copies of the event invitation, poster, programme notes and translated version of the talk delivered on 'kagablog'. See <http://kaganof.com/kagablog/category/films/2016-kreun-vir-roesdorp/>

7. Radical communal acts after sound

Collaboration, 'after sound', enabled communality to surface in ways beyond my expectations, also as networks and friendships of people that enabled the Poulenc events and operated beyond 'the Poulenc itself' (or the composer himself, or the flautist herself, or classical music itself).

The communality that emerged from *Portrait* was based on several years of presenting concerts together. The insertion of *Poulenc's ruins* into our programme elicited provocative discussions among ourselves that perhaps enhanced group cohesion and vulnerability to one another. These discussions explored musician and audience tastes, discourses on classical music aesthetics and the importance of using sounds (also of classical music) as a tool of protest and critical investigation.

From *Die Vlakte* and *Roesdorp* there emerged a different form of communality, partly because these events were drawn into local and national activist movements that had poignant agendas beyond the analysis of composer style, taste or aesthetics. I describe the collaboration that emerged from *Die Vlakte* and *Roesdorp* in order to locate those aspects of harm that continue to pervade personal and communal relationships as an aftermath of structural violence. I also describe collaborations to indicate communal, shared energy.

In 2015 one of the issues that sparked nationwide protests among student movements was that of access to university education amid the apartheid history of unequal opportunities. In Stellenbosch the agenda was localised, also by OpenStellenbosch campaigns, to a negotiation for bursaries for descendants of Die Vlakte, as documented in the *Jiráfica* film. Filmmakers José and María were in Stellenbosch for 18 months on María's master's programme in visual arts. While living in Stellenbosch they not only made friends across still-lingering class and race boundaries, but were also drawn into the student protests. José seized the opportunity to produce a film on a story that had been documented only in private films (such as those produced by Hilton Biscombe) and he therefore created a network of people telling-acting their stories, and documented the stories in his film.

The Poulenc pavement performance drew me into the community of people involved with the film project. I came to know people and hear stories that I had not previously met (or heard). The negotiations with the university necessitated several public 'Vlakte reunion' meetings held by descendants of Die Vlakte in Cloetesville, two of which I attended as an outsider. I perceived these meetings as near-impossible attempts by the meeting overseers to deal adequately with the university bursaries that had, at the time, been promised to the sprawling

community of Vlakte descendants.¹⁷ At these meetings I saw the divisive discussions that surfaced when the meeting began to talk about whether to share (or withhold) the scholarships with people who could not prove that they were descendants of Die Vlakte residents. Prior to the start of the second meeting (that I attended), I played the flute in the meeting hall as improvisation in order to sound and connect with some of the complex emotions that I had observed and felt. I then also publically invited members at the meeting to attend the *Roesdorp* event.

Adrian Jacobs was the central person in sparking the *Roesdorp* conceptualisation. I was preparing for the memorial lecture and was unsure of theme, context and concept. When Adrian and I met, I had not heard of Roesdorp. We were complete strangers to one another when we happened to talk early on a June winter's day on the porch of a house (where he was doing a maintenance project for a local historical houses organisation) at an address where my grandmother had rented quarters in the late 1970s and 1980s. Hearing of my grandmother, Adrian told me of *his* grandmother, his upbringing in Roesdorp, and how he and his friends had walked the streets from Luckhoff Primary School in Banhoekweg, down Ryneveldstraat (past the porch where we were standing) to his home in Roesdorp. His phrase that 'this was in the time when the town was still meant for us' was scripted at the opening of *Kreun*.

I lost track of Adrian, searched for him in church and school communities for several months, and finally managed to get hold of him a fortnight before the November performance. Through looking for him, I met several people who had lived in Roesdorp, including Uncle Wallace (Adams), as he is known, who took me to his former house in Aan de Wagenweg (Roesdorp). When, in the spring of 2015, we stepped into Uncle Wallace's house that he had left as a 37-year old man, he commented that this was his first time back, and that it still had the original dimensions, despite fittings that showed that it was now a catering business. A few months after *Roesdorp* I again visited Uncle Wallace, and Adrian (and his wife, Olga) at their respective homes in Idasvallei and Cloetesville,¹⁸ this

17 By September 2017, seven such bursaries had been awarded, as reported in the university media site <https://www.matiemedia.org/stellenbosch-university-gives-back-descendants-die-vlakte/>

18 Idasvallei, also known as Idas Valley, and Cloetesville are two areas further away from the town centre that were designated racially by the Group Areas Act of apartheid legislation. Most of the residents from Die Vlakte were removed to these two areas when Die Vlakte was declared for white residential, business and academic use on 25 September 1964. Before then, Die Vlakte was deemed a controlled area ('beheerde gebied'), i.e. it was, at the time, not delegated to a particular racial group (Giliomee 2007: 199–200). The bulk of the process of forced removals from Die Vlakte occurred between 1969 and 1971 when the Department took over the programme from the Stellenbosch town council (Giliomee 2007:202–203). Evictions from Roesdorp also occurred as late as 1971.

time to deliver Aryan Kaganof's film of the event to them. In Olga's sitting room was a large framed black and white photograph of *her* birth home in Roesdorp.

The history of Die Vlakte and of Roesdorp is littered with the scars left by a violent, inhumane socio-political system. Scars were left on those who were deported and on the succeeding generations who never were able to live in the town centre. Uncle Wallace recounted some of his many stories, and said he was proud of how his children and grandchildren were able to make their way ahead – despite all. And yet he regretted that his children seemed not to want to hear the stories of forced removals in Roesdorp, Die Vlakte, De Wet se gang, the 'Ryns'-pastorie, Coachman's Cottage, the area around Du Toitstasie, the Gaiety 'bioscope' in Banhoekstraat, Forlees-kafee, or about Markstraat, Hertestraat and Ryneveldstraat, or about destruction at Die Slag van Andringastraat, or the demolition of hard-earned schools and churches.¹⁹

The scars I perceived, and that we 'played about', and that elicited curations that we intended as communal critical acts, carried historical, communal and personal tensions. I was aware of material imbalances (Adrian's and Uncle Wallace's homes are much smaller than my own), and of educational imbalances (I had just completed my doctoral dissertation, and Adrian and Wallace were construction workers) that were partly the result of our separate histories. Through thinking and playing into these histories I increasingly realised that our music-making demanded exceptional levels of artistry as forms of tribute and respect to people and their stories, rather than as artistry for the sake of art itself. The respect emanating from co-actors such as Garth, Aryan, Paul, Wallace and Adrian informed these processes of careful and caring artistry. In the process valued friendships were made possible, and strengthened.

A closer examination of a scene in the films by Aryan Kaganof provides a further example of caring and care taken. In the film I am shown in discussion with the composer Paul Hanmer. Kaganof does not realise this, but we are talking about how I had designed compass directions in relation to the concept for Hanmer's

19 These buildings and events in Stellenbosch carry histories of forced removals and brutality. They are intentionally referred to in Afrikaans. The buildings (where they still exist) have become heritage sites, thereby acknowledging their colonial history and commercial value, but documentation of apartheid history has not consistently been incorporated in public signage. For heritage sites, see South African Heritage Resources Agency and the Stellenbosch Heritage Foundation.

commissioned composition.²⁰ I was playing 'east' and 'south' when engaging with Roesdorp's existence and disappearance; I was facing 'west' to indicate the edge of the town's 1970s limits (as well as to face the audience); and I was walking out 'north', to Cloetesville and Idasvallei, when Roesdorp's eviction sounded, while shouting, '*Kom julle!*'. Aryan slows the tempo in the images of Paul and me. He shows my hands in various directions, and then he shows how Paul takes my one hand and holds it while I continue to point. Through slowing the tempo of the scene, Aryan inserts a moment of caring, empathy and vulnerability. He makes apparent human interaction, as compassion, amid a platform of critical art.

My perception of audience members as musicking actors in this event suggested forms of participatory mutuality that, if analysed, could pose as examples of radical communal acts that are brought about by collaboration, participation and community-based practices, as Barrett suggests (2016:131). Audience members responded to the *Roesdorp* event through a variety of perceptions and emotions. Garth and I noticed that some were deeply touched and also disturbed by the memories recalled. We also noticed that many were silent and reflective. However, the *Roesdorp* event ended with the Arts Association's announcements, followed by a reception of food and drinks. The context of wine and food, and mingling, as an aftermath to topics that had evoked memories of ruin, harm, bitterness, and devastation, was imaged in the films as a disjoint between urgency, and cultured socialising. Kaganof's critique of high culture focuses on sparkling wine glasses and interrogates definitions of what constitutes a sense of class, pride and caring in human lives. His repeated images of tall-stemmed glasses are perhaps poignant for their capacity to interrogate 'what's going on here'.

8. Tension of knowing, and not-knowing

Throughout this article I have evaded the origins of *Poulenc's ruins* and thereby refused to investigate reflexively on having appropriated the music as I did. Barrett's notion of critical music certainly legitimates 'appropriation', 'misuse' (2016: 55, 58) and 'subversive', 'against-the-grain performances of the score' (2016:134). Barrett, for example, describes the re-curating of a 1970s score by Pauline Oliveros into a 2013 production (2016:161–167). The 2013 production

20 Hanmer, Paul (2015) "... *ma Wanne kommie druiwe?*" (Music). Copyright: Brown Man's Bluff Music. Composition for flutes and improvised *blik'nsnaar* and music bows. Commissioned by NewMusicSA for Marietjie Pauw and Garth Erasmus on the occasion of *Memory wrapped in the lament I hear*, a sound curation on forced removals (up to 1971) from Roesdorp, Stellenbosch. Première of composition: 25 November 2015, on occasion of the ninth Huberte Rupert Memorial Lecture, presented by the Stellenbosch Arts Association at the Rupert Museum.

carries a different agenda to initial intent, takes place in a different place, and (for Barrett) attests to effective curation that not only engages 'after sound' but also engages 'after time'. Barrett's use of labels (misuse, appropriation) are firstly intended to challenge absolute music, a category that reigned from Beethoven to Berlioz, including Schaeffer and Stockhausen, and that aligned with 'abstract expressionism' (2016:2) as separated from societal engagement. My intention to align *Poulenc's ruins* with rebellion against abstract expressionism (Poulenc resituated in place, context and time) is therefore in order. My intention to place Poulenc's music into new contexts of Barrett's 'delegated performances'²¹ (2016:134) is also in order. However, my re-aligning of Poulenc as critical music was based on not knowing, precisely, to what Poulenc's ruins alluded.

When Ransom Wilson published his foreword to the first publicly available edition of *Un joueur de flûte berce les ruines*, he observed that he had assumed 'like most flute players' that Poulenc had never written for solo flute, and that (at the time of publication) 'almost no information about this little piece has yet come to light' (2000). This 'information' gave me licence to use the music in various contexts.

At one concert (not discussed in this article), I alluded to the possibility that the score's date (1942) could be taken as Poulenc's personal comment on the 'ruin' of as many as 13 000 Jewish Parisian people who were rounded up by the French Vichy government in the summer of 1942 at the Vel' d'Hiv' and transported to the Nazi death camps. My reference to this event was no doubt far-fetched, as the round-up at the velodrome remained publicly unacknowledged until the admittance to 'collective responsibility' by President Jacques Chirac as late as July 1995 (Martin 2003:161–4). Poulenc, therefore, may not even have been aware of these events, living during wartimes when 'options were limited, and values were fluid', as Robert Gildea notes of French society at large (2002:403–4). Indeed, Poulenc's musical activities attest to collaboration on both sides of the German *versus* France/European war, but also straddles the factions of the internal war

21 The notion of 'delegated [art] performances' was originally coined by art historian Claire Bishop for the purpose of describing contemporary 'social practice' works. The term was applied to critical music by Douglas Barrett in a reasoning similar to the one that Seth Kim-Cohen makes of cochlear music (in relation to retinal art). Barrett engages Kim-Cohen, but indicates subtle shifts from Kim-Cohen's 'idealist' analysis, and contrasts this to the 'materialist' notions of Christoph Cox (2016:135–137). Elsewhere in my work, I discuss curating as critical 'meaning-making', based on Kim-Cohen's analysis (Pauw 2015: 5–6).

of France's old cultural guard *versus* newer cultural guards, aspects that scholars Carl Schmidt (2001), Leslie Sprout (2013) and Philip Nord (2015) articulate.²²

Late in 2016, I found evidence that revealed the nature of Poulenc's reference to ruins. My former idea of Parisian Jewish deportations as having potentially inspired Poulenc to write the solo turned out to be absurd, for *Poulenc's ruins* was written well before the 'round-up' of 1942. In 1995 (two years before Ransom Wilson's discovery of the Poulenc score) Carl Schmidt published a catalogue of Poulenc's music that included an entry on the flute solo (1995:323). The entry indicates that the solo was composed in 1940 or 1941 and provides details of two dedicatees, as well as the number of copies that had been traced in the form of separate greeting cards containing the scored music to two friends of Poulenc, the one dated 1941 and the other dated 1942. (The latter version, dedicated 'to Madame Paul Vincent-Vallette, in great respectful tribute, 1942' (my translation),²³ was also the manuscript that Ransom Wilson had found in late 1997.) Wilson was therefore not aware of the Schmidt 1995 catalogue when he stated that 'almost no information' on the solo was available at the time (Wilson, 2000).

The Schmidt catalogue entry lists two manuscripts, but the author's subsequent biography on Poulenc (Schmidt 2001) refers to the inclusion of the solo in an album titled 'Ruins de Tours, 1940', created by artist Marie Thérèse Mabille. Poulenc met Mabille in the Touraine region where, in 1927, he had purchased a summer mansion in the village of Noizay, 27 kilometres to the north of Tours.²⁴

22 Carl Schmidt's biography argues that Poulenc was not a Nazi collaborator (2001:278–9), but scholarship by Sprout and Gildea point to a more complex analysis of allegiance. Leslie Sprout paints a somewhat complicit picture of Poulenc in a chapter entitled 'Poulenc's wartime secrets' (2002:1–37) and Philip Nord sides with music as absolutist (and somewhat absolved) when he claims that 'composers, too, took sides in wartime France, but when it came to music, the most abstract of the arts, that's a claim sometimes hard to pin down' (2015:740–2). Robert Gildea maps his central claim for the inclusion of an array of complex narratives about wartime France by referring to the analytic of 'boundary crossing' (2002:1–12).

23 Schmidt states that the (1942) copy was 'purchased through Hartnol from the Sotheby London sale of 9–10 May 1985, see Sotheby 1985, Lot 182' (1995:323). This was also the copy that appeared in the collection of Frederick R. Koch, whom Yale flute professor Ransom Wilson describes as a Yale graduate and collector of 'manuscripts, mostly by French composers'. The (Koch) collection arrived at the Yale Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in 1997 where Wilson was alerted to the arrival of the manuscripts and the catalogue entry that he found 'highly puzzling: a work for solo flute' (2000). The 1941 'greeting card' was dedicated to 'Monsieur Charles, with my very faithful and cordial memories' (my translation) (Schmidt 1995:323).

24 The mansion was called 'Le Grand Coteau'. It was 'a large house with ample property' where Poulenc often went to weather out the winter—and the war. Mabille drew a sketch of this home (Schmidt 2001:156).

It is now evident that *Poulenc's ruins* referred to a very specific event that occurred between 16 and 20 June 1940. Daniel Schweitz (2009) describes how French forces positioned themselves in the Tours Municipal Library on the evening of June 16, broke fire on advancing German forces on the morning of the 17th, and were answered with a devastating German bombardment of Tours. A raging wind blew and the town was in flames for three days. Scraps of incinerated paper from the library's historical manuscripts and books were found 43 kilometres away, as a letter written by a Georges Collon (2 October 1940) reported (Schweitz 2009:190). Poulenc wrote a brief solo to sound his personal and communal feelings of loss at this destruction. The score, lullaby or serenade, had somehow made its way on to Marie Thérèse Mabilille's album.²⁵

Poulenc used the word 'berce' in the solo's title, which translates as 'lullabies', or 'serenades', and which can perhaps be equated with lament, given the context. I had, however, extended the connotational references by equating lullaby with lament, protest and rebellion. At the same time, I was keeping the unidentified reference to 'ruins' as an open-ended, useful reference.

By the time I came to the evidence of what the ruins alluded to, I had musicked *Poulenc's ruins* many times, content in knowing that *I did not know* what his ruins were. Knowing more, I wondered whether I would again play the music in contexts of lament, revolt, activism and critical aesthetic comment. Rather than answer that impossible question, I can only, now, suggest that this article enquiry allowed me to trace the musicking of *Poulenc's ruins* from its existence as a composition of absolute music, to its realigned participation as a form of critical music. For the musicking I emerged more curious, my sense of classical musician identity, body, place and time realigning, and my appreciation of the meshwork of communal acts and community networks strengthening. The tension between knowing and not-knowing enabled these processes.

25 Nicolas Southon provides context, using the phrase 'a soufflé l'idée' that translates as 'breathed the notion': It was to Mabilille, a photographer and printmaker, that Poulenc breathed the notion of an album that remembered the ruins at Tours (Southon 2013:142). Elsewhere Southon (2011) compares this album to another, visually similar album produced by Mabilille in 1946 (in which Poulenc wrote a preface) and of which 100 copies were released. Southon concludes that 'several dozens' of the 1940 'ruins' album were perhaps also released (email from Southon to me, 24 October 2016). Jean-Michel Gorry, a Tourian historian and musician, notes that the 1940 album consisted of 13 plates engraved on wood, and that the Poulenc solo is engraved on one of these (email from Gorry to me, 12 October 2016).

9. After sound: '[...] close your eyes and just take in the soundtrack'²⁶

I suggest that Aryan Kaganof's films of the *Roesdorp* event are radical edits that explore 'what's really going on here'. His documentation and critique of *Roesdorp* as curation engage with the material to perhaps accomplish more than our curation could have achieved. His art films comment on the limitations of the event, and on limitations of art as socio-political engagement amid structures of historical, societal harm. In order to substantiate observations such as these, I comment on the filmic portrayal of *Poulenc's ruins* (Clip 2, below). I also extend my comments to scenes in the film that lament ruin (as the Poulenc solo does), but that do so through incorporation of material beyond the Poulenc solo.

The films by Kaganof on *Roesdorp* did not include the sensational or representational. (He did not include my talk in the films, a talk that could well have framed the sensational, or a talk that could at least have drawn out questions of representation as I was not speaking as one who had experienced forced removals.)²⁷ Furthermore, Kaganof creates a sense of delirium by refusing to document, instead creating anew. The sense of delirium and strangeness may alert viewers to a heightened state of enquiry and awareness, as well as critical viewing and hearing of the material, or, on the other hand, may leave viewers perplexed.²⁸ Confusion and disorientation is evident when the sequence of events is not based on the original sequence, and when image and sound are redistributed in non-alignment to one another. (In *Khoisan ghost kreun* for example, I am, shown walking, playing Poulenc, but the flute is not heard in the sound collage. However, when we are in reality playing Roelof Temmingh's solo (music that followed *Poulenc's ruins*), a faint rendition of Poulenc is heard, thereby sounding the solo as an apparition-like memory). The resulting delirium, as distance, intensifies the filmmaker's critique.

26 The full quotation reads: 'Don't look at the visuals; close your eyes and just take in the soundtrack' (email from Garth Erasmus to me, 31 October 2016).

27 The single reference that Kaganof makes to my talk is the inclusion of Adrian Jacobs's words at the opening of *Kreun* (and these words are not in *Khoisan ghost kreun*). Jacobs's words (that include the word 'Roesdorp') are therefore also the only reference to the conceptualisation of the curation (focused on the history of Roesdorp) in the films.

28 Scholars and musicians attending a conference and who watched this film as introduction to my paper, expressed their perplexity at the Hearing Landscape Critically Network gathering, Oxford, 21–22 April 2016.

Clip 2: *Poulenc's ruins* from *Khoisan ghost kreun*, Aryan Kaganof, African Noise Foundation²⁹

One of the themes that Kaganof addresses critically include his acute comment on the impact and tradition of Western classical absolute music. Kaganof perhaps points out that this music, as classical music ideology, is focused on its own sense of art-ness, thereby disconnecting from its inherent political signification. Criticism in these films surface through various filmic mechanisms, including the disruption of time sequence, and the dis-alignment between audio and video. In so doing, 'proper position' is not given to music by composers, played by flautists, for music does not sound at the proper time, for the proper length, or in the composed and curated sequence. In addition, the 'works' are not credited appropriately in the film credit section. When Garth and I played our music, we began at the beginning (of our planned programme) and played to the end: we played the five compositions-and-improvisations as we had decided to. Our listeners heard a singular delivery of sound, unable to interrupt or respond while we delivered it, and only at the very end did we invite applause. However, despite our programmed delivery, the film response disrupts intentionality and narrative. The film makes use of fragmentation, splicing and overlaying (of imported material) to do so, as I illustrate below.

The soundtrack incorporates new material into the films, and 'real' material from the curation, but material is sequenced as shards of disturbance and includes music, noises and poetry (*Kreun* sounds Garth's voice speaking 'off-stage' as recorded before the performance at *Roesdorp*). In *Khoisan ghost kreun* there is the insertion of a rapper belching commentary over a megaphone to an audience gathered in a hallway.³⁰ In both films the voice of a Springbok Radio announcer³¹ is inserted, with her reference to 'our men on the border' (the South African Border War, 1966–1989) and the announcement of 'first, a little music and then we proceed',³² upon which marching band music is played. In *Khoisan ghost kreun*, the soundtrack is harsh and machinistic, interfering with, deafening and

29 To view the clip, please access the article online at the following web address: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/aa/index>.

30 The rapper did not perform at the *Roesdorp* event. Garth identified the rapper as Jethro Louw, a musician and poet who works with Garth in a trio called *Khoi Khonnexion*. Garth notes that with the rap text, 'I recognise some verbal references to instruments I've made. The pieces that he is doing here are all familiar from KK [*Khoi Khonnexion*] days.' Garth comments 'The passageway is from the old section of Cape Town station... *die gang is die ou Nie-Blanke gedeelte van die stasie...*' (the passage is the Non-White section of the station) (email from Garth Erasmus to me, 31 October 2016).

31 The radio announcer was Esmé Euvrard (1919–1993).

32 Translated, from Afrikaans, by author.

covering up the sounds of the flute and Khoi-San instruments. The films sound 'white-noise', a helicopter-like blade thrashing, high pitched slices and blunt drones, often in pulses that suggest moaning, or grinding, or wheels turning. The films sound an abattoir of bodies sent to their slaughter. In Kaganof's films, 'the outside floods music's proper interior', as Barrett observes of critical music. As a rasping lament, Kaganof uses sound itself to counter sound thereby bemoaning the enmeshment of high culture with extermination and subjugation. With the subsequent edit of *Khoisan ghost kreun*, Kaganof produced 'a version of *Kreun* that takes it into the ghetto or at the least rips the ghetto into that terrible space of "art" that is really the desecration of art and the despoiling of culture – a death building if ever there was'.³³

Kaganof's method of filmmaking has been described as 'transgressive' and 'underground' with 'guerrilla' tactics that are similar to those of Pierre-Luc Vaillancourt's label, *Cinéma Abattoir* (Rannou 2010, online). Kaganof uses terrorist tactics to attack a master terrorist enemy. The master enemy operates through murderous perceptions of race/class/high art/industry/classical music ideology. Kaganof exposes these primal violences: his films use violence to expose violence. His method sacrifices whatever it is needed to sacrifice, whether it be unknowing audiences, or committee members adjusting their clothes behind the scenes, or sparkling-clean wine glasses, or classical flute compositions that (had) demanded to be heard as programmed.

Kaganof's films end with silence and silencing. Towards the end of *Khoisan ghost kreun*, Garth's own composition, *Bone Flute*, is inserted to play over the hymn tune that Hanmer indicates for the flute.³⁴ The film responds with visuals of the megaphone rapper (as previously mentioned) and then the screen turns black. On the black screen, the radio programme and its music continue, thereafter a bell tolls, and then a 13-second silence (still with a black screen) sets in. Silence becomes the critical consequence of 'after sound'. The film's redistribution screams violent catharsis: a *kreun* – a Khoi-San ghostly *kreun*; a silence. The day after *Roesdorp*, Garth and I were unwilling to say much. Garth finally wrote to me, saying only '*dit spook nog*' (it still haunts). It still haunts.

33 Email from Aryan Kaganof to me (14 October 2016).

34 *Bone Flute* was composed, played and recorded by Garth Erasmus earlier in 2015 and appears in both films. The instrument for this composition is a plastic pipe. Hanmer's score indicates that (my) flute plays an ornamented version of a 'Methodist hymn tune', as conclusion to the composition. I experienced this hymn melody as a critical comment that invited ambiguity. However, Kaganof's insertion of *Bone Flute*, that replaced the hymn tune, comments powerfully on the violences of cultural transfer.

Clip 3: *Bone Flute* from *Khoisan ghost kreun*, Aryan Kaganof, African Noise Foundation³⁵

What's really going on here? Jacques Rancière's notions of 'aesthetics as politics' remind that aesthetics is a distribution 'of the sensible tying [art] to a certain form of politics' (2009:44) and that we need to understand 'the paradoxical constraints that weigh on the project [...] of "critical art", a project which arranges [...] either an explanation of domination or a comparison between what the world is and what it might be' (2009:44). Barrett is sceptical of Rancière's notion of the 'distribution of the sensible', a notion that, for Barrett, relies heavily on sense; the same mechanism, Barrett suggests, that is employed by ideology (2016:150–1). However, Rancière identifies the categories of 'appearance, work [and] play' as 'the proper categories of the distribution of the sensible' (2009:31). This 'sensory experience' 'appears as the germ of new humanity, a new form of individual and collective life' (2009:32). Rancière's art as 'politics or meta-politics' (2009:36) springs from 'the very distance' (2009:23) of art to ideological functions, functions described as 'messages and sentiments concerning the state of the world', and representations of society's 'structures', 'groups', 'conflicts' and 'identities' (2009:23). Rancière's understanding of aesthetics as politics is therefore not sensational ideology, as Barrett appears to suggest. Rancière (2009:23) maintains that

Art is not [...] political because of the messages and sentiments it conveys concerning the state of the world. Neither is it political because of the manner in which it might choose to represent society's structures, or social groups, their conflicts, or identities. [Art] is political because of the very distance it takes with respect to these functions, because of the type of space and time that it institutes, and the manner in which it frames this time and peoples this space.

I sense that Kaganof's art transcends Barrett's notion of music/art as 'critical'. Kaganof does 'more than simply acknowledge the existence of the social' (Barrett 2016:134); he engages with aesthetics as subversively entangled politics; 'a practical-critical *doing*' (to use Barrett's words). Kaganof's films suggest a very distance to functions of ideological messaging and representation and they institute a redistributed space, time, frame and being-human. The films are able to operate 'after medium', thereby achieving Barrett's sense of affecting 'even its medium' (2016:134). In Kaganof's work *medium gives way*: *visuality* and *aurality* of film are obliterated in order to access the ultimate groan – a

35 To view the clip, please access the article online at the following web address: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/aa/index>.

'sensory experience' that 'appears as the germ of new humanity, a new form of individual and collective life', as Rancièrè claims of aesthetics as politics (2009:32). The groan is a guttural death-row threnody for the germ of caring humanity that has not sprouted.

I suggest that Aryan Kaganof's films penetrate the spaces of damage that haunted the real Roesdorp and the curated *Roesdorp*. These films are both engaged and distanced: they form a part of a body of radical communally produced art – actors, props, all – that respond to societal violence. In the films, strands of complicity, critique, confusion and care are perilously, hauntingly, intertwined.

10. Conclusion: After sound, silence, and echo

This article set out to reflect on intentional juxtapositions of time, place and context that musicking *Poulenc's ruins* entertained when I immersed the solo into contexts of rebellion, activism and aesthetic critique. Douglas Barrett's notions acted as vector to apply Christopher Small's question, so that tools emerged that help to probe the intention, implementation and impact of these performances in Stellenbosch. My reflection on 'actors', 'props' and 'communal acts after sound' illustrated some of the tensions, and possibilities, that emerged from the events.

The initial enquiry that focused on the 'use' of the flute solo in contexts of ruin, and that happened to find information on the nature of Poulenc's reference to ruin, was thereafter extended to a broader analysis of film as critical medium. In the article I took a closer look at the films that Aryan Kaganof made in response to one of the Poulenc events. I suggested that the films manifest as Rancièrian 'distribution of the sensible' and that they are political because of 'the very distance' they take. Kaganof's films invoke the ghostly ruins that persist in the histories that layer the soil of a town like Stellenbosch. In so doing, the Kaganof films emit a groan that dissolves into intentional silence, after sound.

Critical theory has had much to bear upon musicology, and this article contends that the process is mutual. Critical social theory gains, from an exploration into musicking *Poulenc's ruins*, that musicking is a way of asking, and becomes a way of knowing. Musicking asks, 'What's really going on here' and thereby exposes knowledge. The knowing gained from this article enquiry is socially constituted, and listens to and interprets actors, props and radical acts of communal art that let go of obsession with sound, and immerse in 'acoustic territorialisation in which the disintegration and reconfiguration [...] becomes a political process' as Brandon LaBelle articulates to indicate that margins and centres enmesh and shift through sound (2010:xxiv). Musicking listens to the 'internal disruptive capacities

of vibration', as Ashon Crawley observes (2015, online).³⁶ Musicking's concern for vibrations of sound and their infection of society is at the same time aware of the power of sound as trickery. Nicholas Cook (1998:128), in a publication for popular readership, written at the time of the Small publication on musicking, warns that

[...] music is not a phenomenon of the natural world but a human construction. It is, *par excellence*, the artifice which disguises itself as nature. That is what makes it not only a source of sensory pleasure and an object of intellectual speculation, but also the ultimate hidden persuader.

Cook's reminder of music as 'hidden persuader' underscores that musicking tricksters, bewitched audiences and sceptical theorists must ask themselves 'what's really going on here'. The remaining clip of *Poulenc's ruins* is artifice. This performance did not happen, at least not as a duo: this recording of my rendition of *Poulenc's ruins* in the Fismar Hall in March 2016 was a recording that I happened to acquire after the *Portrait* curation.

Clip 4 *Poulenc's ruins* from Endler Concert Series archive (March 2016), Channel shift edit recording³⁷

A recording technician explained that the different channels had shifted during the editing phase, thereby producing the sound effect.³⁸ The trickery here persuades of a solo-turned-duo, using echo to comment on many things, including sound after sound.

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36 Crawley further notes that if 'sociality were inflected through such vibration, what we are called to consider is the ongoing sound, the ongoing echo, the ongoing verve and materiality of otherwise modes of living into the world'. Crawley writes these words in response to Shana Redmond's publication (2014) on Black African freedom songs that she calls anthems. Redmond writes *Anthem* as metonymic for new sounds that may 'inspire and mobilise the making of a world in which it will be safe to be different' (2014:19).

37 To listen to the clip, please access the article online at the following web address: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/aa/index>.

38 Email from Gerhard Roux to me, 14 June 2016.

ticket-buyers, listeners, roadies and cleaners – all people who make musicking happen and who help to stage ‘what’s really going on here’.

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- CLIP 2 AND CLIP 3: KAGANOF, A TO PAUW, EM: INBOX, 21 NOVEMBER 2016.
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