

UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

WAITING

SOUNDING MULTIVALENT PERFORMING BODIES

WITH/FOR

IN TRANSDISCIPLINARY ARTISTIC PRACTICES

BAUBO

— A CASE STUDY

PH.D. DISSERTATION THESIS
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ABSTRACT

This doctoral thesis by practice and written dissertation is an attempt to articulate a theoretical and methodological approach on the design and facilitation of non-hierarchical transdisciplinary processes of collective improvisation and composition, grounded on the acknowledgment of each person's positionality. Framed by prefigurative pedagogies and intersectional feminism, it explores how collective transmedia ethnographic poetry, as a medium and a social practice, engages with shared struggles of gender, sex, race, and class. The transdisciplinary artistic practice emerges through relational knowledges between the collaborators of this research and their expression of their positionality. Shaped by its means, it orients toward a genealogy of politics that prioritises equitable access to material and immaterial resources. Improvising and composing poetry collectively, as a lived and situated experience, underscores intersubjectivity and corporeality, questioning power structures and normalised hierarchical identities. It enacts a politics of (un)learning and experimenting across artistic mediums, prefiguring egalitarian relationalities within the social fabric.

Tuning into the notion of *prefigurative politics* as defined by anthropologist David Graeber, this research wishes not only to problematise existing structures and mechanisms of power within the field of music education, but to explore *prefigurative pedagogies* that embody personal, collective and anti-hierarchical values on (un)learning in a transdisciplinary artistic context. The practice comprises both personal and collective reworkings and enactments of relevant literature and methodologies from the fields of music and arts education, sociology, philosophy and decolonial studies that were rehearsed during the fieldwork of this research, to explore "why the kind of social relations" the post-capitalistic (democratic) societies are based on that manifest in the processes of learning and creating art "are unnecessary" (Graeber 2004, 84). The fieldwork and analysis of this practice-based research explores diversity within its context as a "decentralised form of organisation" (Graeber 2004, 84) with an aspiration to contribute to the practices and thinking of counter-institutional politics of transdisciplinary arts pedagogies.

Queer theory and intersectional feminism provide a theoretical and methodological framework to the practice of composition and improvisation that are understood as a praxis of affirming points of interrelation. The design and facilitation of a series of collaborative workshops, the documentation of the fieldwork and the implementation of interviews with the individuals engaged in the workshops, alongside the analysis of the qualitative data, assumed that the researcher shifts roles; from an insider to an outsider, a collaborator to a facilitator, an interviewer to an interviewee, and vice

versa, with the wish to foster junctures of bi-directional learning. Drawing from Lise Vaugeois's argument in relation to the potentiality of music education as "a site for the development of social justice" (Vaugeois 2007, 177), the fieldwork of this research has been imagined and rehearsed as a territory where a conversation on how, informed by our positionalities, we may collectively develop non-hierarchical relationalities and prefigurative pedagogies that point to more egalitarian and just communities.

Foregrounding the emergence of lived experience and the agency of individuals to articulate their personal signification of it, this doctoral thesis and written dissertation rehearses methodologies of collective improvisation and composition that challenge the notion of *authorial reinstatement* (Bishop, C., 2012). Acknowledging that non-hierarchical relationalities do not promise the self-erasure of the facilitator/researcher, but examine a just distribution of knowledge and power, I consider how, as a researcher and facilitator of an transdisciplinary learning process, I apply an intersectional lens in my practice, with the aim to prioritise collaboration rather than participation, collective unlearning rather than learning, and subversive rather than canonical methodologies of collective improvisation and composition. The body of artistic practice and written dissertation of my research are presented together as an integrated whole open up to conversations and welcome diverse reflections and observations; a piece of work written "only at the frontiers of our knowledge, at the border which separates our knowledge from our ignorance and transforms the one into the other" (Deleuze & Guattari 1994, 21).



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