
Provoking, Disturbing, Hacking: Media archaeology as a framework for the understanding of contemporary DIY composers' instruments and ideas

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The article is a discussion of works by two Danish composers who both, with self-constructed instruments, challenge computer music as genre, the understanding and use of conventional technology, and the music's relation to history. At first glance, the use of homemade instruments appears to be a common characteristic. But, when one takes a closer look, different discourses and various discussions of media and materiality are revealed. In the article the various positions are unfolded through discussions within the theoretical field of media archaeology – a science with its roots in media studies, but also an important framework for the production and understanding of a variety of DIY practices.

The overall purpose with the article is twofold: on the one hand it illustrates how theories from the field of media archaeology contribute interesting perspectives to discussions of artistic work within the area of DIY. On the other hand, it also serves as a critical discussion of media archaeology as not necessarily the solution to every aspect of artistic practices. The two artists are Morten Riis and Goodiepal.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article is a discussion of works by two Danish composers, Goodiepal and Morten Riis, who both, with self-constructed instruments, challenge the genre of computer music, and what they believe is the conventional use and understanding of technology and history. At first glance, their fascination with homemade instruments appears to be a common characteristic. But, when one takes a closer look, different discourses and various discussions of media and materiality are revealed. One is reflecting his intention through a close investigation of a certain media, the other addresses the issues on a more conceptual level.

In the article the two approaches are unfolded through discussions within the theoretical field of media archaeology – a science with its roots in media studies, but also an important framework for the production and understanding of a variety of

DIY practices. To follow the intentions of the work of the two composers, I will focus on two among several branches of this colourful field: According to Morten Riis his work is closely related to the German discourse around media archaeology, which obviously also will be part of my discussion of his work. Goodiepal has not claimed any particular influence from the theoretical field. In this case, I have chosen to discuss his work within imaginary media, which, as I will show, serves to lead to a qualified understanding of his conceptual thoughts.

The overall purpose with the article is twofold: on the one hand it illustrates how theories from the field of media archaeology contribute interesting perspectives to discussions of artistic work, within the area of DIY. On the other hand, it also serves as a critical discussion of media archaeology, as not necessarily the solution to all aspects of artistic practices.

I will begin with an introduction to the theoretical field of media archaeology within the German discourse. My introduction will of course not be a detailed report, but is a presentation of the concepts that I will bring into dialogue in relation to Riis' work. Later I will turn to the work of Goodiepal and discuss this in relation to a different field of media archaeology named Imaginary Media.

2. THE THEORETICAL FIELD OF MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGY

Media archaeology is far from a pure theoretical field, but has within recent years emerged as a flourishing and important framework for the production and understanding of DIY media-art practices. Recent translations of German texts and English writings within the field have of course had influence on this growing tendency. As an example, the 2012 Transmediale – a leading annual international Berlin-based festival of art, technology and culture – featured 'Media Archaeology' with seminars, keynote-presentations and concerts. Among many interesting events, Finnish media theorist

Jussi Parikka's performance-lecture accompanied by live-coding and the Danish composer Morten Riis' *Steam Machine Music*, performed at the opening, should be mentioned. Also notable was Goodiepal's performance-installation on the lower floor of Haus der Kulturen der Welt just outside the entrance to the main exhibition. All three events were attended by a large and very attentive audience.

2.1. A theory of past and presence

Media archaeology has its roots in media studies, mainly referring back to the German media theorist and professor Friedrich Kittler (1946–2011), and his inspiration from the French philosopher Michel Foucault's (1926–84) thoughts on archaeology as 'methodology for excavating conditions for existence' (Parikka 2012: 6) and as 'an epistemologically alternative approach to the supremacy of media-historical narratives' (Ernst 2011: 239).

In an interview, Jussi Parikka has explained that, media archaeology and Foucault

both agree that the search for true origins in continually spiralling-backward proto-histories is a wasted effort. They also agree that the construction of linear histories runs the risk of leaving important statements, objects, and networks of power in neglected margins. Media archaeology is linked to Foucault's archaeology through an analysis and interest in subaltern discourses, local knowledge, and a questioning of progressivism. (Hertz 2010: n.p.)

So a basic intention within the field of media archaeology is to look for neglected genealogies to construct and write micro-histories – isolated histories, and often histories of the forgotten. This approach can be both an explicit and, even more often, an implicit political manifestation. As an example, Parikka's own research on computer viruses as the aspects that actually control our way of defining and designing our digital behaviour is a good example of this (Parikka 2007).

When it comes to narration, the media archaeological approach has the same intention as Foucault, to avoid teleological and great narratives, but is instead 'interested in excavating the past in order to understand the present and the future' (Parikka 2012: 2–3).

In this manner, I would say, that media archaeology really does not differ from many other academic disciplines. One quotation I often have returned to (e.g. Groth 2010) is from the American ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman, who also stresses the fruitful and necessary relationship between past and presence:

The present ... is ongoing, but once inscribed in ethnography, it is marked by the syntax of pastness. The past, in contrast, is frozen in a timelessness, from which it must be wrenched to be synthesized into the presentness of history. The disjuncture between past and present makes it increasingly difficult for fieldwork to examine either, but

necessary to examine both ... History can no longer be recuperated into teleological narratives that 'once happened' and now can be told again and again in their inscribed versions. History, too, forms in a temporal space, contested because fragments of the past remain in the everyday of the present. (Bohlman 1997: 249).

This is just one of many examples of how Foucault's thoughts have been echoed and taken further into different disciplines.

But where media archaeology – especially the German media theory, so to speak (discussed in Parikka 2012: 63–89) – differs from other disciplines is in the interest and belief of avoiding discourses, and to focus on materiality in a very pure sense, which tries to avoid cultural discourses.

2.2. Materiality and time travel

The German media archaeologist Wolfgang Ernst stresses, among other things, that media archaeology is not interested in an excavation of symbolic transcriptions, but in the physical representations of past – and presence. It is physical appearance that interests him, and this concerns both physical apparatuses as well as recordings of sound. Ernst has explained it this way: 'Different from notational transcription into musical scores, technical signal-recording of cultural articulation allows for the electro-physical measuring of recorded events and for digital analysis done by "sampling". This exposes the cultural event to experimentation, thus enabling a non-hermeneutic analysis of cultural articulation on the sub-philological, even sub-alphabetic level' (Ernst 2010: unpagged). So it is in the physical appearance of the object that this media archaeologist finds his object of research, and will by taking this approach try to avoid a hermeneutical level to take the understanding of media a step deeper.

Ernst believes that the material media even have the ability to de-contextualise the experience of the media themselves. Although with a few reservations, such as 'we are certainly not in the same historical situation like Pythagoras, since the circumstances, even the ways of listening and the psycho-physical tuning of our ears, is different', he still – with an almost mysterious tone – characterises Pythagoras' monochord as a time-machine, which 'lets us share, participate at the original discovery of musicological knowledge, where the actual experiment allows for communication across the temporal gap' (Ernst 2010).

But, he notices, this is only possible with micro-performances, and not with the re-enactment of larger historical events. Taken a step further, this also means that the performances Ernst talks about do not take any sort of audience into account, but are an investigation between researcher and media. I will get back to this in my discussion of Morten Riis' artistic practice.

2.3. Musical barrels' direct connection to the computer

Another aspect, in which media archaeology differs from traditional media theory is in the conventional standpoint that the Gutenberg press techniques of the sixteenth century are a forerunner to the computer. Instead media archaeologists stress that there is a fundamental difference between the two media, which is to be found in the media and technologies themselves. So even though the book has been the dominant medium for storing and transmitting knowledge for half a millennium, it cannot, as the computer does, process data on its own.

Instead media archaeology goes back in history and draws parallels to 'early musical automata and musical composition games such as those designed by inventor and scientist Athanasius Kircher in the 1660s [were] a direct predecessor of algorithmic computer music' (Riis 2012a: 58). These machines, such as the computer, relied on automated processes that systemised the musical content and performance practices. However, from a media archaeological perspective, the connection does not lie in the programmability of the cylinders and the programmability of modern computers, 'but instead in the regular revolutions of the pinned musical barrels and the constant clock frequency in modern CPU's' (Riis 2012a: 58).

As I see it, the crucial thing in this statement is the investigation of the question of time-processes within the machines and the circuits of contemporary technology. Parikka has characterised it as going 'under the hood', and in this way the archive is expanded into actual materiality – machines and circuits. Media archaeology then moves from historical time into what is defined as machine time.

It is by this opening-up of the machines, looking at all that is inside, that the symbolic is avoided in favour of the technological, the mechanical and the mathematical. With a reference to Kittler, Parikka explains that this is exactly where 'the science- and technology-oriented sciences of culture' differ from the 'the studying of human actions and structures of meaning: for Kittler and his like, it is mathematics and engineering that concretely construct worlds through modern technology' (Parikka 2012: 67).

3. ARTISTIC RESEARCH

So, it is in the excavation of media and by interacting with media that media archaeology unfolds itself. Therefore it is very understandable that the field has never been a pure academic discipline, but has, from its early phases in the 1980s and 1990s, also been a field in which media artists have been able to investigate the materiality of media, media history, media awareness, media critique and the newness of media,

among other things. We especially find these tendencies within the so-called DIY movements.

3.1. Morten Riis: media archaeology as artistic research

The Danish electroacoustic-music (EAM) composer Morten Riis received in December 2012 an artistic research PhD degree for his dissertation *Machine Music: A Media Archaeological Excavation*, accompanied by the artistic work *Steam Machine Music* – a homemade instrument constructed from Meccano toys and activated by a steam-engine (Riis 2012b). Riis' main interest is to be found in the investigation of musical and mechanical mistakes or failures: 'It is instability itself, which is the fundamental element in the performance of Steam Machine Music', Riis has written (Riis 2012a). His intention is to let the material speak for itself, trying not to evaluate the mechanical failure normatively, but as something that brings a certain amount of quality to the performance.¹

Riis' theoretical ideas are several, with points of departure in German media studies – Kittler, and especially Ernst – and the intention to make a de-contextual excavation of the material to more or less let it speak for itself. By this Riis, among other things, challenges the existing writings on electronic music history:

I propose a different way of grasping the history of electronic music and its machines. A history that is not driven by the traditional genealogical urge to tell the story of how electronic music always has been stimulated by the invention of new technologies ... I, on the other hand, propose an alternative way of telling the story of machine music by shifting focus to all the bi-products of these machines. The sounds of failure are just as important as the sound of when things went right. Failure and breakdown are not phenomena exclusively associated with modern digital computer music; the malfunction of machines is a constantly continuing factor for the use and existence of technology, and this thesis will examine some of these inevitable errors of the machine through the pre-electronic case of mechanical music. (Riis 2012a: 15, also see Riis 2013).

3.2. Three media archaeological excavations

In the following I will discuss Riis' practical work and relate it to his theoretical point of departure to raise a question about the relationship between practice and theory.

¹Riis' work can also be seen in relation to the tendencies discussed in 'The Aesthetics of failure' by Kim Cascone (2000) in which this field is discussed by drawings of parallels between works from the historical and the neo-avant-garde, and contemporary work by self-taught and academic composers.

I have mainly become acquainted with Riis' work through three different mediations:

1. An online audio/visual production of *Steam Machine Music* (2010): a close-up video of the steam machine and Mecano toys in action.²
2. An audio production, *At interviewe maskinen* (To interview the machine) (2011): an audio production produced as a radio programme.³
3. Live performance of *Steam Machine Music* (Transmediale 2012): a live performance of Riis working with the machine, reading a statement into a microphone and a live close-up video of the machine and Riis.

The first two of these appear online and are mediated or performed through the audience's laptop or other online audio-visual device. Even though these productions previously have been part of other frameworks (a performance and an exhibition), in these formats, the design of the sound and picture appears extremely precise and well adjusted to the media in front of us. And, with this perfect and precise framing, we as an audience, have no problems experiencing the appearance of a failure and to understand it as a designed failure. The failures are aesthetised or staged, so to say, and Riis' intention is hereby clearly communicated.

Listening to the beginning of the audio production *At interviewe maskinen* I find direct references to Ernst. With a very dry and non-emotional voice Riis reads his introduction and questions to the machine, which answers him with various kinds of noise. Very concisely Riis introduces the programme:

This radio programme will be designed as one of radio's classic genres – the personal portrait interview. A list of questions will be asked, which I, as the interviewer, have prepared for my guest. Hereafter, these questions are to be answered by the guest to the best of its abilities, and these answers will cause new, more improvised questions, which at the very end will result in a dialogue. But what makes this portrait interview different from most other interviews being transmitted is that the person being interviewed is not a person, but a machine.⁴

²Appears online Morten Riis's webpage: <http://www.mortenriis.dk>.
³This production was made for the exhibition 'Kunst og Æter' at Gallery Overgaden, Copenhagen, in 2011. Listen online at <http://soundcloud.com/lydwerk>.

⁴The production is originally in Danish, transcribed and translated by the author of the present article. The original text is: 'Denne radioudsendelse vil tage form som én af radioformatets klassiske genrer, nemlig det personlige portrætinterview. Der vil blive stillet en række spørgsmål som jeg, som interviewer, har forberedt til min gæst. Disse spørgsmål vil dernæst forsøgt besvaret af gæsten efter bedste kunnen, og de svar der følger, vil afstedkomme nye, mere improviserede spørgsmål, der i sidste ende vil munde ud i det, man vil kalde en dialog. Men hvad der måske adskiller dette portrætinterview fra de fleste andre, der bliver udsendt i æteren er, at personen, der bliver interviewet ikke er en person, men derimod en maskine.'



Figure 1. Morten Riis performing *Steam Machine Music*, Transmediale 2012 (photo: Sanne Krogh Groth).

The very straightforward text, as a clear communication of what is going to happen, is supported by a similarly precise audio design, in which not even noise seems to be left to chance, but is designed to fail. It is almost as if Ernst himself could have been the director:

In the micro-physical close reading and close hearing of sound, the materiality of the recording medium itself becomes poetical. Instead of philological hermeneutics, the media-archaeological ear (or microphone) is required here. The media archaeologist, without passion, does not hallucinate life when he listens to recorded voices like the notorious animal Nipper when listening to 'His Master's Voice'. The media archaeological exercise is to be aware that at each technologically given moment we are dealing with media, not humans, that we are not speaking with the dead but dead media operate. (Ernst 2010: n.p.)

Both in the audio/visual production and in the audio production, intention, material and performance correspond smoothly and unproblematically, almost melting together. The material works perfectly both as a material in itself and as carrier of a more symbolic utterance, and what could be left as an unanswered question is elegantly communicated either by text or by causal actions such as refilling the machine's petroleum or starting it again after a breakdown. In this way the intention of a non-hermeneutical intention is communicated successfully. Or, in Riis' own words: 'a complex shifting between material physicality and symbolic pre-determinacy is unfolded' (Riis 2013)

With these very convincing productions in mind, my expectations of Riis' performance in Berlin were sky-high. But, when it came to this third mediation, to me the communication appeared a bit more obscure, and the concreteness that was almost magical in the previous examples now became almost too concrete and too realistic. Presented as a live performance (Figure 1), the piece raised more questions than it answered, and the questions raised were to me not to be answered within the discourse of

media archaeology. Instead I wondered: what was the specific role of Riis as performer? How could he in this specific live situation show awareness of the live audience? How would he convince us that he, as a performing scientist, would bring the machine into dialogue? And why was the setting (lighting, clothes and appearance) as it was?

Rationalising after the performance, I wonder if it might have clarified the performance if the theatrical situation in itself had been addressed in the same careful manner as the media and the machine were, if he had taken the same sort of control of this new mediation as had been taken of the audio and audio-visual productions

I'm very enthusiastic about Riis' work, and my intention with these questions is not to create a scathing critique of his work, but to raise a question concerning the consequence of his theoretical point of departure. From this point of view I will question to what extent media archaeological excavations are suitable to live performances.

Returning to Ernst, I believe we can find traces within media archaeology itself. As written above, Ernst stresses that the actions with media only work in the small scale, and that larger re-enactments aren't possible. Ernst does not define what larger re-enactments means, but one thing is sure: he never reflects on a performative excavation to take place in front of a live audience.

Following Ernst this closely – from theory to performance – can be problematic, and acting out his ideas in live performance also needs to bring in additional theoretical issues relating to the field of performativity or performance studies. I'm not saying that 'time-travel' and going 'under the hood' aren't suitable for live performances. But, placing and enacting a theory the main purpose of which is to avoid discourse, time and space, into discourse (the institution presenting the performance), time (a fixed theatrical time) and space (the actual and fictitious space of the performance) can be problematic, if these issues are not carefully treated and addressed.

4. ACTIVIST COMPUTER MUSIC: GOODIEPAL THE WARRIOR

I will now turn to my second example, to an artist who in some ways raises the same issues as Riis but in a very different manner.

Among the artists on the contemporary Danish computer-music and sound-art scene the musician and composer Goodiepal (Gæoudjiparl van den Dobbelsesteen or Parl Kristian Bjørn Vester) is undeniably the most controversial and provocative. This statement is applicable whether we consider him as musician and performer, or as teacher, lecturer and mediator of thoughts on computer music.

Goodiepal advocates a new computer music of the future – Radical Computer Music, which is not dependent on existing or imminent software and technologies, but which is executed, for example, by working with handwritten scores not readable by existing computer technology. In this way Radical Computer Music encourages utopia and dialogue with artificial and alternative intelligences. Goodiepal has presented and discussed his work through his teaching at DIEM at the Academy of Music, Aarhus, in various lecture-performances and installation-performances, in art/book publications, and in the construction and deconstruction of mechanical instruments, musical media and computer hardware.

Goodiepal's various acts can be identified and discussed in comparison to previous avant-garde movements such as the Fluxus movement's work with scores and media, and to previous discussions within the field of electroacoustic and computer music, in which technology, future and utopia also have been frequently addressed (e.g. Broman 2007; Groth 2008, 2010). The artist himself addresses both discourses. In performance-lectures, arguments and examples from all times (past, present and future) are presented – often without a temporal linearity.

His appearance is most probably as an autobiographical performer with extreme subjective utterances, but it is of no doubt that he at the same time raises relevant and general questions for computer music discourse in general. His work can therefore fruitfully be interpreted both through theories of performance and performativity, but also in a framework of computer music theory and history.

However, and inspired by Morten Riis' work, in this article I mainly wish to discuss Goodiepal's recent work in the light of media archaeology,

Riis used to be a student of Goodiepal's when he taught at DIEM, Aarhus, Denmark. Similarities among the two are their desire to hack and construct instruments in order to question existing orders, structures and genealogies. It is in their way of expressing their concepts that differences appear.

Goodiepal's overall intention, or one of them, is to challenge technology – not only, like Morten Riis, to interrogate it, but to challenge it, so it can develop artificial intelligence. One of his suggestions is to create scores that are unreadable to the computer – scores that in their aesthetic output very much remind us of concrete poetry and graphic scores from the 1960s and on. Basically, he wants to bring utopian thinking back into the arts, into human thought, as opposition to letting our actions being unconsciously structured by predefined technological systems and behaviours. Besides this, he has not only been challenging technological media systems, but has also been challenging institutional systems to such a degree that it has had personal consequences.



Figure 2. Goodiepal at his performance-installation *MORT AUX VACHES EKSTRA EXTRA – THE GÆOUDJI SYGNOK GIVE AWAY!*, Transmediale 2012 (photo: Sanne Krogh Groth).

Goodiepal has an interesting and dramatic history including a long (and relatively) popular performance/interview on Danish National Television, a dramatic dismissal from DIEM, a police report for breaking into the same institution and – according to Goodiepal himself – death threats from White Power.

4.1. Performance-installation

When I interviewed him in 2012, I asked Goodiepal about his relation to media archaeology, to which he promptly answered: ‘I’ve done that for years.’ And he has – hacking computers, re-shaping and decorating records, building instruments and performing his thoughts on utopia and artificial intelligence.

The interview took place in his performance-installation, in the lower floor of the Haus der Kulturen der Welt during Transmediale 2012 (Figure 2).

The installation consisted of all of Goodiepal’s personal belongings, which he had decided to give

away to the visitors of Transmediale, with the promise to listen to his lectures on Radical Computer Music online as the only payment. However, one was not allowed the freedom to choose what to take home. On the floor, he had marked a square in which he placed the objects that were next to be taken. When the object was gone, a new one was placed there. The objects ranged from old books, records and ordinary household objects to art works such as homemade music machines, which definitely were not only of aesthetic, but also of economical value. While the visitors circled around the spot in order to be there for the right catch, Goodiepal got a chance to talk to the visitors about his project. During these conversations one could learn about Radical Computer Music and his ideas about the music of the future. One could also learn that Goodiepal – because of the death threats – now wanted to leave Denmark for good, to cycle (!) around the world, and that this was the motive for giving up his personal physical belongings.

4.2. Imaginary media

To unfold Goodiepal’s performance-installation within a media archaeological context it makes sense to leave the so-called German path, and turn to the field of imaginary media.

Imaginary media is an overall theory, but merely a field that celebrates ‘weirdness in media culture and its non-linear pasts, and using that weirdness as a methodological guideline for further investigations concerning our normalized assumptions about more docile bodies of mainstream media’ (Parikka 2012: 45).

In comparison to the theories of media archaeology described above, imaginary media does not have the intention only to focus on actual material and physicality of the media. Instead, and besides the imaginary, it has also been characterised as a study of the illogical. In the article ‘On the Archaeology of Imaginary Media’ the Dutch new-media theorist Eric Kluitenberg writes: ‘The archaeology of imaginary media is an attempt to shift attention somewhat away from history of the apparatus and to focus on the imaginaries around technological media – communication media in particular – of both realized and unrealized media machines’ (Kluitenberg 2011: 48).

Being a part of the broad field of media studies, imaginary media brings in topics such as science fiction and spiritual media, among others. Important in relation to this article, though, is the opening of a discussion about the relationship between our media imaginaries and real media. Kluitenberg continues: ‘The transition between imaginary and actual media machines, in terms of their signification, can be almost seamless. Thus the imaginaries of imaginary media tend to weave in and out of the purely imagined and

the actually realized media machineries. Because impossible desires can never be fully realized or satisfied, imaginary media exceed the domain of apparatuses (realized media machines) and their “histories”. They articulate a highly complex field of signification and determination that tends to blur the boundaries between technological imaginaries and actual technological development’ (Kluitenberg 2011: 48).

Imaginaries of what forthcoming technology is to bring are a topic not so far removed from the discourse around the early days of electronic music. The Swedish musicologist Per O. Broman’s book *Kort historik över Framtidens musik* (Broman 2007) and my own research concerning the establishment of the EMS studio in Stockholm in the 1960s and 1970s (Groth 2010) both show how important thoughts about the ‘music of the future’ were in the discussions of electronic music in the 1950s and in relation to the establishment of the EMS studio. The leading idea was that the most advanced technology could not only help, but could make contemporary composers bring us music that would be of greater relevance than ever. The visions were impressive, but unfortunately they also led the EMS project into countless technological problems. The actual technology, hardware as well as software, that was around at the time did not match the imagined utopia.

4.3. Media without media

Utopian expectations to technology are among the similarities between Goodiepal’s ideas and the thoughts from the 1950s and 1960s referred to above. However, a fundamental difference is also to be found. Where the discourse around technology among the pioneers was embedded in the generally optimistic expectation of technology typical of the time, Goodiepal’s thoughts on artificial intelligence take for their point of departure a critique of the present interaction with technology. In order not to let hardware and predefined software systems control our behaviours – which he believes is the case at the moment – Goodiepal wants to challenge the systems to gain back the control not only over technological systems, but, as a true avant-gardist, also over cultural and institutional systems. His strategy for this is to insist on the imaginary to such an extent that he gives up materiality completely.

The performance-installation at Transmediale was a manifestation of this. By giving away all of his personal belongings, he clearly demonstrated that things doesn’t matter – or at least that things doesn’t matter to him. At the performance, he also demonstrated an awareness of his performative situation with an audience that might not immediately take the same standpoint as him and turned this awareness and disagreement into his favour. Playing with our desire for materiality, he made us circle around the

installation in order to capture our time and attention, to get the chance to talk to us in person about his thoughts on the imaginary.

The imaginary came into focus and the only medium that was left was himself, presenting his thoughts, dreams, utterances and imaginations.

5. DISCUSSION AND ENDING REMARKS

Media archaeology is an expanding theoretical field, especially as the framework for artistic research. Its rather unconventional approach to the investigation of the history and materiality of media is interesting, and brings in a framework for discussions of fascinating and new aspects of ongoing discussions within electroacoustic music.

As written in the beginning of the article, my intentions were to highlight the work of two composers who both operate within the fields of electroacoustic music and DIY. The point of departure was in their common interest to create homemade instruments and in their intentions to raise a critique and discussion about computer music, and the present understanding of technology and history. This critique is also to be found in the heart of media archaeology, and with this fundamental similarity a platform is constructed for an appropriate discussion.

Even though the combination of media archaeology with aesthetic practices, as shown, is not an unproblematic cocktail, it does raise enlightening questions for the existing discourse concerning our present use of media and our understanding of media history. Bringing in theories from the field of media archaeology my excavation of the two EAM composers has unfolded similar theoretical and ideological issues, such as their circling around a critique of the existing narratives related to and ordinary use of digital media.

When it came to practice, though, these issues were expressed very differently. In the insurances on a close excavation of materiality, it can be said that Riis operates on a micro-level, digging deep into the functions and dysfunctions of media. On the other hand, Goodiepal operates on a conceptual or macro-level to such extent that he almost avoids concrete media. But what is then presented? As written, it made sense to discuss Goodiepal’s performance within the framing of imaginary media – a discourse that allows the blurring of borders between the imaginary and the real. When it comes to performance, this approach is not far from the idea of the theatrical event as such, in which negotiations between spectator, performer, space and setting are based on, if not an imaginary, then a convention or agreement among the participants that, in this frame, we expect and understand more than is actually presented. This basic comparison might be the reason why Goodiepal’s ‘imaginary

performance' had a greater impact on me as a spectator than Riis' 'media archaeological' excavation had. Maybe, if the imaginary had been addressed more explicitly, the theatrical situation would also have been strengthened.

So, media archaeology is not the solution to all aspects of DIY, but as showed it can operate as a useful framework, which enables to both investigate productions, intentions and ideologies of DIY composers.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

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