

Abstract

The Festivalization of the Contemporary Music Festival Market in the Netherlands

The festival sphere is changing in the Netherlands. Traditional festivals rely solely on their line-up. Therefore, when the festival organisation does not invest enough capital into a few very well-known headliners, ticket sales go down. This resulted in declining ticket sales in the Netherlands in 2012, and Lowlands did not sell out for the first time in ten years in 2014. This left room for other organisations to fill. *Best Kept Secret* festival's first edition was in 2013, and you could go down the rabbit hole at *Down The Rabbit Hole* for the first time in 2014.

These festivals use different strategies to engage and entertain their visitors. At traditional festivals, artworks, performances and other forms of side programming are not (or hardly) represented. PinkPop, for instance, features a "Chill Out" avenue, in which the visitor can rest and take a moment. In addition, Jan Smeets, *PinkPop* initiator, remarks that décor and side programming are barely of importance to him and therefore the festival. In contrast, side programming is of key importance to *Down The Rabbit Hole*. The immense quantity – and quality – of the side programming fits perfectly with the vision and goal of their festival: to be surprising and hide mystery and secrets in nearly every corner of the festival. As booking agency MOJO states about the festival: 'Three days and nights of breaking the routine, cutting your coat according to your cloth and the focus on infinity in the idyllic forest oasis at the lake, far away from the through-through-through of the everyday'.¹

I describe the way in which the approach of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, a contemporary, medium-sized music festival, differs from (older) traditional festivals in three different ways, which all try to engage and entertain the visitor. The first dimension is performance artwork *BOSMOS* at *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2014, which I analyse using Roland Barthes'², Gilles Deleuze's³, and Laura Marks'⁴ theories amongst others. Secondly, I elaborate on the extensive diversity of *Down The Rabbit Hole*'s side programme and decor, and the way in which it fits with their goals and motives, matching the objectives of Joseph Pine's and James Gilmore's *The Experience Economy*.⁵ Lastly, I explain the way in which *Down The Rabbit*

¹ MOJO (2016) 'Down The Rabbit Hole', in: MOJO (addressed: August 25, 2016): <http://www.MOJO.nl/festivals/down-the-rabbit-hole/>.

² Barthes, Roland (1980) *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (translated by Richard Howard) New York: Hill and Wang: 20-60.

³ Zdebik, Jakub (2012) 'Introduction: What is a Diagram?', in: *Deleuze and the Diagram; Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organization*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

⁴ Marks, Laura (2002) *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

⁵ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press.

Hole uses the online environment to tell their story, using theories by Frank Rose⁶ and Henry Jenkins.⁷

⁶ Rose, Frank (2012) *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

⁷ Jenkins, Henry (2006) 'Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in an Age of Media Convergence', in: *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*. New York & London: New York University Press: 152-172.

1. Affectival

The Festivalization of the Contemporary Music Festival Market in the Netherlands

1.1 Introduction

The Dutch Contemporary Medium-Sized Music Festival Market is Changing

Nothing is certain when visiting a festival in the Netherlands in 2016. The surprising effect has been made into the main theme by the organisation of *Down The Rabbit Hole*. Their festival slogan reads: 'we are here, tumbled *Down The Rabbit Hole*, at the source, in the sunken forest, all is loose! Where you are who you are and when no one can see you.'⁸ The festival organisation wants the visitors to feel as though they really tumbled through a rabbit hole, into an Alice in Wonderland-like world, where psychedelics and confusion - as themes - reign. Not a single visitor raises an eyebrow anymore when coming across a couple of grown-ups building sand-castles out of mud, when there are artworks scattered all around the festival site or whether there are trees growing on top of the entrance gate. In addition, there are innumerable activities and parts of the side programme of *Down The Rabbit Hole* in which visitors can engage themselves, which all seem to follow a distinctive idea: a staged experience.

Best Kept Secret is organised by booking agency Friendly Fire, and first took place in 2013. *Down The Rabbit Hole* is organised by another, bigger booking agency, MOJO Concerts, and took place for the first time in 2014. Those festivals appear to use other strategies to target their audience. The look and feel of their festival site is also different, and is more specifically geared towards a central theme. They engage and entertain their visitors in another way. In addition, they have a smaller, specifically targeted audience. I am not trying to find an answer to why those festivals are changing in appearance, programme and target audience. I do notice that they change, as opposed to festivals that I will call "traditional" in this thesis. What I consider to be as more interesting is what those changes are, and I use *Down The Rabbit Hole* as a case study in order to study the specificities of contemporary festivals.

The festival market in the Netherlands is growing, and ever-changing. Sales of bigger music festivals with well over 150.000 unique visitors,⁹ such as *PinkPop*, are under the pressure of newly emerged festivals such as *Down The Rabbit Hole* and *Best Kept Secret*. The latter houses between 50.000 and 80.000 visitors unique visitors, and keeps attracting more visitors every year. Traditional festivals like *PinkPop* have the capacity to house about

⁸ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2014) 'DTRH', in *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: March 9th, 2015) <http://downtherabbithole.nl/dtrh>.

⁹ Unique visitors are visitors per day. So when a festival is held over three days, one visitor is three unique visits.

60.000 people per day. About 20.000 people can attend *Down The Rabbit Hole*, and approximately 25.000 is *Best Kept Secret's* capacity per day. Traditional festivals speak to a bigger audience, but appear to be extremely dependent on its main acts. For instance, *PinkPop's* ticket sales nearly doubled from 2013 to 2014, because they booked *The Rolling Stones*. In 2014, 194.000 visited Landgraaf to attend *PinkPop*. Another example of the unpredictable ways of keeping a festival successful - and sold out - is *LowLands*. In 2014, after being sold out for almost 10 years straight, the festival did not sell out. It unleashed a gigantic hype over social media. Why was it not sold out? The common denominator was that the hype has ended, and that those same headliners as the last 10 years were not so popular anymore.¹⁰ The latter shows that this dependence on popular headliners has downsides as well.

As researched by Respons, a public events' research centre, the festival market is experiencing an upward trend from 2013 onwards.¹¹ The year 2012 saw the first decline in the number of festivals organised since the Festival Monitor started keeping track of the number of festivals and its visitors. In 2012, there were 708 festivals. In 2013, 774 festivals got organised and in 2014, 801 festivals were held. In 2015, according to the Festival Monitor 2015, there were 837 festivals - 572 of them being music festivals - organised, which got visited by 23.300.000 people. In 2012, there were 708 festivals, attended by 19.700.000 visitors.¹² Free festivals received even more visitors (about 68,5% of all the visitors went to free events) and smaller festivals, with an emphasis on experience, gained popularity. In 2016, *Best Kept Secret* and *Down The Rabbit Hole* were both sold out. For Arne Dee, policy employee at Vereniging Nederlandse Poppodia en Festivals (VNPF), the growth of the festival market has several different points of inquiry; but one thing is sure. People visiting a festival expect to get their money's worth in the decor, big productions, a qualitative line-up, and, most importantly, an uplifting experience.¹³ It is easier for smaller festivals to direct their aim at a specific share of the market, because their target audience is clearer. According to Dee, these organisations house more attention for cultural quality, the local element, and mise-en-scene; they are more creative and inventive, and less dependent on booking expensive headliners. They tend to offer *more* than just the stage and the headliners. Festivals try to sell an experience to their audience, now more than ever in a festival market that is more competitive than ever before. That is why Joseph Pine and James Gilmore's

10 Stoffels, Twan (February 6, 2014) 'IK SNAP WEL WAAROM LOWLANDS NIET IS UITVERKOCHT', in: *Noisey (music by vice)* (addressed: August 15, 2016): <http://noisey.vice.com/nl/blog/ik-snap-wel-waarom-LowLands-niet-is-uitverkocht>.

11 Respons (2016) 'Over Respons', in: *Respons* (addressed: August 15, 2016): <http://www.respons.nl/algemeen/over-respons>.

12 Respons (June 9, 2015) 'Festival Monitor 2015: Meer festivals, meer bezoekers', in: *Respons* (addressed: August 15, 2016): <http://www.respons.nl/nieuws/meer-festivals-meer-bezoekers-de-festivalmarkt-blijft-groeien>.

13 Jong, Marieke de (August 1, 2014) 'Festivals weer in de lift door aanboren nichemarkt', in: *NU.nl* (addressed: July 5, 2016): <http://www.nu.nl/festivals/3842650/festivals-weer-in-lift-aanboren-nichemarkt.html>.

theories of *The Experience Economy*¹⁴ will be of central importance in this thesis, supported by the bodily dynamics which is an effect of affect, as theorized upon by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. This new way of organizing music festivals appears to be successful on paper. What exactly are the features that express the differences between contemporary festivals and traditional festivals?

¹⁴ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press.

1.2 Two Case Studies to Map the Changes

Performance Project BOSMOS and *Down The Rabbit Hole*

This thesis will explore the contemporary festival - particularly *Down The Rabbit Hole* - in two ways. The first one, as described in the first chapter, delves deep into the concept of side programming, or to be more specific: the relation between the visitor and one particular performance project at *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2014; BOSMOS. The side programme at a festival entails everything that is not part of the main programme. The main programme for music festivals are the artists. Ergo, the side programme includes everything including film, theatre, performance, sculptures, workshops and art. This lack of a fixed interpretation leaves potential for entrepreneurs, and can generate a great deal of diversity on the festival site. The second case study is the way in which *Down The Rabbit Hole* uses its festival site, as well as online (social) media to extend the experience of their event. In this way, I try to give an analysis on three different dimensions on which the organisation operates. The first dimension is at the smallest level, in which I try to show the inner dynamics of one single part of side programme of *Down The Rabbit Hole*. The second dimension is the actual festival site. Which tools, props and activities are used by the organisation to elaborate upon the festival theme? The third dimension is the online strategies used to extend the story on web 2.0.

One of the main features that are represented at contemporary music festivals are art routes, performance art and sculptures. Festival *Grasnapolsky* at Radio Kootwijk featured an art route called *WENTEL* last year.¹⁵ *WENTEL* is a project by Sonja Volmer,¹⁶ which lets the visitor experience the world as if it were upside down by making use of mirrors fixed right underneath participants' eyes. By doing so, the art route alters the senses immensely. A sculpture can be found on nearly every festival, and is made more and more into an attraction on its own. *Best Kept Secret* has made its entrance gate into a sculpture. The name of the festival is spelled out in bright, shiny, silver letters through which you need to walk to the festival site and *Down The Rabbit Hole's* entrance gate is provided with running water and vegetation in the form of trees and grass. It projects light both inside and outside the festival site, by means of twisting and turning psychedelic looking shapes into different colours and sizes. The first chapter will mainly revolve around *BOSMOS*,¹⁷ exposed at *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2014, by BOSMOS (Lennart Bakker, Lars Unger and Wilco Alkema). *BOSMOS* is an interactive work of art. The audience is invited onto the set to participate in giving the performance a specific meaning. At the same time, it is a performance of a set of "songs".

15 Grasnapolsky (2016) 'WENTEL', in: *Grasnapolsky* (addressed: August 15, 2016): <http://www.grasnapolsky.nl/act/wentel-sonja-volmer/>.

16 Volmer, Sonja (2016) 'WENTEL', in: *WENTEL* (addressed: August 15, 2016): <http://sonjavolmer.com/WENTEL>.

17 Alkema, Wilco, Bakker, Lennart & Unger, Lars (2014) *BOSMOS*. Performance, Beuningen.

Meanwhile, lamps are used to shine light upon sculptures and trees which find themselves in the forest adjacent to the festival site of *Down The Rabbit Hole*; the organisation (the band as they like to call themselves)¹⁸ tends to use sounds, music, light, projections and objects as instruments. This audiovisual performance speaks to more than one sense, unlike most of the performances featured on traditional festivals. Therefore, the performance art triggers a more visceral response in the visitor and the art project can be regarded more as a “total” experience, speaking to all the senses.

The senses can alter one’s understanding of its surroundings, and can cause affect to arouse. I used three theories to support my thought. First, I stress that punctuating moments, caused by lights and sounds interspersed with silence and calmness, have a distinct effect on the visitor. I use Roland Barthes (1915-1980) findings on photography in *Camera Lucida*.¹⁹ However, *BOSMOS* is not a still, “concrete” work of art. It is rather a dynamic, real-life performance which is never thoroughly finished. Those punctuating moments which arise, can be caught in one single moment, or in a series of moments. To understand those moments, it is important to get a grip on the notion of the diagram, specified by Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and Félix Guattari (1930-1992), as described by Jacob Zdebik in *Deleuze and the Diagram; Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organization*.²⁰ Lastly, I used Laura Marks series bundle of essays *Touch*, to stress that *BOSMOS* takes up a specific place in the programme, alongside the main programme. Moreover, as this is one of the central points of Marks’ theories, *BOSMOS* has not just one focal point, but multiple. These three theories elaborate on each other, and expose the possibilities for music festivals, amongst others, regarding side programming. Finally, *BOSMOS* by BOSMOS shows the usability of side programming to extend the experience a festival may want to stage. Side programming is a viable tool to create a compelling experience, triggering multiple senses.

According to the above, one specific part of the programme can play a role in the experience of the festival. However, such performance art is a part of something bigger; *Down The Rabbit Hole* is ought to have a huge side programme, and evincive decor. *Down The Rabbit Hole*’s experience is present in every single decision the festival organisation makes. The entrance gate is seen more as an attraction than what it actually is; a checkpoint for entrance passes. The fences surrounding the festival site are not bare fences, or banners referring to the festival programme, but are covered in turf, to extend the feeling that the visitor find themselves in another world; the magical world of Alice in Wonderland, which is full of surprises.

One of the main differences between a traditional festival, and *Down The Rabbit Hole* is that the latter transforms its abstract space, into a distinctive place. Using the different

18 Interview with Lars Unger (March 31, 2016).

19 Barthes, Roland (1980) *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (translated by Richard Howard) New York: Hill and Wang: 20-60.

20 Zdebik, Jakub (2012): 1-24.

parts of the side programme that the festival organisation uses to stage the experience, and by making use of Henri Lefebvre's theory of the Spatial Triad, as described by Andy Merrifield in his chapter 'Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation', in the book *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*.²¹ A threefold use of space, in which people perform, can thus be made into an experience. Features of the festival can contribute to that transformation. In addition, as stated by Pine and Gilmore, positive cues have to be emphasized, and negative cues have to be eliminated. An example of such a positive cue is the naming of the different locations after rabbits. The elimination of negative cues is the transformation of the entrance gate to a flora and fauna. There are innumerable features and activities at *Down The Rabbit Hole* who all transform those cues into something that fits well within the proposed theme of the rabbit hole, and Alice in Wonderland's magical world.

The final dimension of festival organisation is online strategies, which may have repercussions which influence the outlook on the actual festival site. Important to note is that the audience is participating in organizing parts of the festival. *Down The Rabbit Hole* used social media to ask the audience what they think about their line-up (who are they looking forward to see at the festival this year?), to host an art contest and to let the audience organise their own after-party at the festival. These are just a few examples of how the Internet has an influence on the way the festival is organised, and the way in which the festival site is allocated. Moreover, these Internet based communications have the objective to immerse and engage the festival visitors before and after the actual festival. To elaborate on different ways in which the festival organisation may do so, I used Frank Rose's *The Art of Immersion*.²²

To stress that the way of storytelling has changed in contemporary festivals - and is continuously changing - I also used the notion of media convergence, which I felt plays a central role in which contemporary, medium-sized festivals organise themselves. The term was coined by media scholar Henry Jenkins, and I use his chapter 'Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in an Age of Media Convergence' in his book *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*.²³ MOJO Concerts, as the organiser of the event, is not the only instance that is telling the story of the festival, and a lot of changes have occurred because of that. *Down The Rabbit Hole*, for instance, does not have to book very expensive headliners, but can handpick an act known to very little people - their target audience.

21 Merrifield, A. (1993) 'Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation', in: *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. New Series, vol. 18: no. 4: 516-531.

22 Rose, Frank (2012) *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

23 Jenkins, Henry (2006) 'Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in an Age of Media Convergence', in: *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*. New York & London: New York University Press: 152-172.

1.3 Method

I derive my conception of what a festival actually is from the Festival Monitor. They state that

it is an organised, temporary happening, attended by an assembly of people, who find themselves on a specific site or facility just for the festival. A festival is characterized by (at least two) different forms of events, like a performance, market and a fair - consecutive and/or simultaneously - which are presented as a unity.²⁴

This is a very broad conceptualization, but the festivals I am addressing do fall within the confines of this conceptualization. So, then, what is the difference between what I term a contemporary, medium-sized music festival and a traditional festival? I regard a traditional festival as following the lines of the first ever music festival organised: Woodstock festival in 1969. Woodstock attracted over 400.000 attendees, due to their slogan ('Peace & Music'), and their headliners being (amongst others) Jimi Hendrix and The Band. The festival was immensely popular, and it paved the way for other festivals to emerge. Ergo, a traditional festival is a festival attracting at least more than 100.000 visitors, and does so because of the artists they book. Every day features different popular artists, and there is little to no side programme for two reasons. The focus of the festival is the main programme, and very often there are no other (or very little) activities present at the festival site, especially when there is a headliner playing a set. Secondly, a qualitative side programme is expensive. Traditional festivals like to spend their budget mainly on artists and crew.

What I understand as being a contemporary, medium-sized music festival, is based on the following reasons. Firstly, the festival market declined for the first time since the existence of Respons' Festival Monitor in 2012. Fewer festivals were being organised, and less people were visiting than in 2011. The general consensus was that the festival market had reached its peak in The Netherlands. To make matters worse, *LowLands* did not sell out two years later in 2014, after being sold out for ten straight years. With a decreasing market, and classic strategies of established festivals declining, this opened up the market for new indicatives. In 2013, *Best Kept Secret* had its first edition and in 2014, *Down The Rabbit Hole* opened its gates for the first time. Both festivals kept on growing. Both have a capacity between 20.000 and 25.000 visitors per day now. Apart from the main programme, which consists mainly out of a qualitatively curated programme made out of artists who are all less known than bands that play traditional festivals, they organise a vast majority of other activities: an extensive side programme. The latter may enhance crafts, workshops, theatre performances, a food line-up, and interactive activities. The interesting thing about the side

²⁴ Respons (2016) 'Factsheet Festivals', in: *Respons* (addressed: August 15, 2016): <http://www.respons.nl/uploads/Factsheet-Festivals-2016.pdf>.

programme is that it is promoted in the same way as the main programme. For these contemporary festivals, the side programme is actually not really something on the side, and just as important as the artists who are headliners. For instance, the *Down The Rabbit Hole* app features movies, theatre plays, and dance classes alongside the main programme.

I have structured my thesis into three chapters, because the changes in festivals appear on every organisational level. The first being a theoretical exposition of one specific cultural object, which is one definite part of the side programme. The second chapter will elaborate on the festival site, and its completion through its programme. This chapter describes the way the festival site is structured, and the vast majority and diversity of the side programme. The third and last chapter elaborates on the online strategies used by the festival organisation to tell their story.

On the one hand, this will be a qualitative research, as described by Liora Bresler and Robert Stake in their chapter 'Qualitative Research Methodology in Music Education', in the book *Music Teaching and Learning*.²⁵ Qualitative research entails a particular interest in a specific occurrence, and it very much intertwined with its surroundings: its context.²⁶ Ergo, it is important to consult as many different sources as possible. Therefore, information is derived from a triangulation - or circulation - of information. This kind of information consists of observations, as well as literature and interviews. In this way, a specific image can be depicted, which subsequently can be analysed. The analyst, in this case, is framing the cultural object. In a certain sense, the analyst is digging into the discourse of a specific cultural object, to use a term coined by French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984). To speak with Bresler and Stake: 'In the *qualitative paradigm* there is a range of positions, from the idealist belief that social and human reality are created, to the milder conviction that this reality is shaped by our minds'.²⁷ The cultural object is a construct. Many different kinds of information (from different sources) give a more compelling overview of the specific cultural object. Qualitative research has two features, on which I base my information, findings and observations. To start, it is holistic. Elaborately put, every single part belongs to the whole, and only makes sense in that way; all parts are connected to the whole. The whole cannot exist without its parts. That is why I have made the choice to look at three different dimensions of the festival *Down The Rabbit Hole*: a specific part of the side programme (*BOSMOS*), the whole side programme (other viable examples), the festival site, and its online appearances. Qualitative research is mostly empirical, and its natural setting is very important. Therefore, observations will play a central role. Those observations need to be

25 Bresler, Liora & Stake, Robert (1991) 'Qualitative Research Methodology in Music Education', in: *Music Teaching and Learning*. New York: Macmillan: 75-88.

26 Idem: 75.

27 Idem: 78.

thoroughly described. Secondly, qualitative research is very interpretive, 'different meanings that actions and events carry for different members'.²⁸

Therefore, I have used three sources for the first chapter. I have conducted an interview with one of the makers of the *BOSMOS*: Lars Unger. Unger is the initiator - self-proclaimed "scenographer" - of the performance. As part of the organisation, he has, according to his fellow artists, a specific view on the performance. I asked him questions about their intentions with the project, and tried to check whether my theories and hypotheses matched with their objectives. This gave me a specific angle.

Secondly, I immersed myself in all the different festivals I am addressing, and I have been to *BOSMOS* at *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2014. Participant observation is also one of my sources. I use *Participant Observation* by Danny L. Jorgensen.²⁹ This kind of research is well known in anthropology and sociology, but has not been appropriated to the fullest in cultural analysis. In this theory, the researcher him part of the performance, and you can use observations, supported by theories. As described by Bresler and Stake: 'Action can be better understood when it is observed in the natural setting.'³⁰ Participant observation is one way to create an image of the cultural object that I am addressing, which is as Total as possible. Put by Jorgensen:

the methodology of participant observation seeks to uncover, make accessible, and reveal the meanings (realities) people use to make sense out of their daily lives. In placing the meaning of everyday life first, the methodology of participant observation differs from approaches that begin with concepts defined by way of existing theories and hypotheses.³¹

The final sources of my first chapter are imagery that I have found about *BOSMOS*, and its soundtrack, which I got access to through their music writer Wilco Alkema. In the third chapter I have used Internet sources, such as blogs, apps and websites containing information about the festival. In the first chapter I regard *BOSMOS* as being the cultural object; the second and third chapter handles *Down The Rabbit Hole* as a cultural object. Both chapters contain elaborate observations about what features the object displays, on which I base my analyses in the line of qualitative research. Therefore, the observations that I make are not objective, they are rather an accumulation of subjective observations, made into a convincing and thoughtful whole.

Observations I have made will be analysed in the light of affect in the first chapter. I try to follow an affective course in the form *and* content of the thesis as far as academic logic

28 Idem: 79.

29 Jorgensen, Danny L. (1989) *Participant Observation*. London: Sage Publications.

30 Bresler, Liora & Stake, Robert (1991): 79.

31 Jorgensen, Danny L. (1989) 'The Methodology of Participant Observation', in: *Participant Observation*. London: Sage Publications: 15.

allows. I have incorporated imagery and the soundscape of the festival into the first chapter, which will have the form of a multimedia essay. By doing this, I hope to appeal multiple senses at the same time, just like *BOSMOS* did. The third chapter uses an abundance of hyperlinks to help me tell the story of *Down The Rabbit Hole*. Frank Rose writes about Internet entrepreneur Evan Williams, when he notices that hyperlinks are one of the most important nodes in telling a story: 'hyperlinks, and electronic media in general, do change the way we read and the way we think'.³² It is all about branching, and nonlinear storytelling. To replicate this hyper connectedness in my thesis, I incorporated hyperlinks to different media.

This is where network theory kicks in. The growing profusion of links makes the brain analogy not only fashionable but inevitable. Neurons and synapses, nodes and links - figuratively speaking, the electrochemical jelly within the skull is being replicated on a far vaster scale by billions of brains connecting electronically. If each node on a network has only one connection, the distance from one node to another can be great.³³

However, when each node on a network has more connections, the distances can be way closer by. The latter is to stress that information in our day and age is denser and more connected than ever. I want to use this interconnectedness to bring more depth in this thesis.

*Inevitably, because this is the way networks work, Williamsstyle hyperconnectedness will assume a life of its own, unpredictable and emergent. Right now we're experiencing the first rush of excitement, experimentation, and fear. Through Twitter and Facebook and Blogger and Flickr and Youtube, we're becoming increasingly engaged - engaged with TV shows, with the brands that advertise on TV shows, with one another.*³⁴

I want the readers of the third chapter of this thesis to delve as deep into the core of the matter as possible, and I want to help them accomplish that. Following this train of thought I included links to the majority of sources that I have used.

32 Rose, Frank (2012) 'Forked Paths', in: *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 112.

33 Idem: 218.

34 Idem: 220.

2. Chapter 1

***BOSMOS* within the context of *Down The Rabbit Hole* festival as an example of side programming in the light of experience economy**

2.1 Introduction

Contemporary music festivals are changing. This is apparent through a majority of upcoming new features, as well as certain aspects that are decreasing. These new features ask visitors to bear a different relationship with their surroundings. This relationship, and what it does with the visitor, will be the key to this chapter. This is recognisable in different kinds of outlets, forms and projects. Examples of changing features are programming, another implementation of aesthetic and another vision, story or meaning. The contemporary music festival is becoming much more of a concept than before. In this chapter, side programming is the main example. Most of the times, side programming - which it already implies - is something that is located at another place, that speaks to a different, smaller audience. Side programming is a very broad term, and is used by festivals to introduce a range of varying activities and programs to the festival ground. For instance, *Best Kept Secret* has its own line-up in the offering of food, you can build your own raft on *Down The Rabbit Hole* and these festivals are not afraid to put less popular artists on their bill. What I see as most interesting, is the advance of art routes (and other art related practices as performances) on festivals. These routes are used to give a more sophisticated character to the festival, apply for subsidies, and on the other hand to give a more diverse offer of activities to the visitor. Often this means using the natural environment, invested by cultural, artistic objects, and audio/visual impulses. A regular forest makes a person experience certain feelings. A forest furnished with cultural objects can care for another bodily response. As I argue below: a more intense experience, which could be conceived as affective. The fact that these kinds of experiences are available is striking, because they have not been featured in festivals before, and alter the overall feel of the festival.

In this chapter, I argue that these art routes, more than other features on festivals, can affect your feelings, your way of going about, and your overall experience in that certain time and place. To support that thought, I am using three theories, which will logically elaborate on each other. First - using Roland Barthes' *Camera Lucida*³⁵ - I will stress that these art routes can be seen as activities that punctuate the normal understanding of a visitors' surroundings. When Barthes describes the notion of the studium and the punctum, he does so by addressing photographs, which are still images in contrast to a real life event. The latter is always in motion, and is never in a solid state, nor finished. Therefore, a real-life

³⁵ Barthes, Roland (1980) *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (translated by Richard Howard) New York: Hill and Wang: 20-60.

event cannot just contain a single vanishing point or punctum, but rather has to be analysed through its dynamism, its capacity to move and its potentiality. Secondly, I will use the notion of the diagram - derived from Deleuze and Guattari, as described by Jacob Zdebik in *Deleuze and the Diagram; Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organization*.³⁶ The diagram can function as a fluctuating process between static structures: 'the diagrammatic process could be imagined as a physical state or system being atomized into incorporeal abstract traits and then reconfigured into another state or system.'³⁷ The diagram can help to contemplate upon something that has no final shape; like life itself. Essentially, life is a follow-up of moments that may or may not be punctuating. Thirdly, I will use Laura Marks' theory of hapticism - as explained by herself in her series of essays, called *Touch*³⁸ - to elaborate on the fact that punctuating moments, as brief as they may be, exist in certain moments only, to vanish the next, never to be finished. These events care for a rupture in a person's normal understanding, a fissure in one's experience of the festival and the changing nature of the event will also provide for disruptions within the performance itself. Moreover, these points in time disclose a specific kind of feeling within the visitor. In this way, I argue that these art routes, of which *BOSMOS on Down The Rabbit Hole 2014* will be my main focus, constitute a part of the altering vision, aesthetic outlook and completion of contemporary music festivals. These art routes are one of many thinkable examples of another way of programming in festivals. In light of the above, how do these manifestations of side-programming function in the entirety of the festival, when analysed through the notion of the experience economy, as described by James Gilmore and Joseph Pine in *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*?³⁹

³⁶ Zdebik, Jakub (2012): 1-24.

³⁷ Zdebik, Jakub (2012) 'Introduction: What is a Diagram?', in: *Deleuze and the Diagram; Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organization*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group: 1.

³⁸ Marks, Laura (2002) *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

³⁹ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Welcome to the Experience Economy', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 1-25.

2.2. The Object: *BOSMOS*

A disturbing art route and performance



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BOSMOS is an art project by Lennart Bakker, Lars Unger and Wilco Alkema which was exposed at *Down The Rabbit Hole* in 2014. Their artist collective is called BOSMOS. The performance was only open after sundown, because projections do not work during daytime. One of the consequences is that the majority of the visitors are already intoxicated with narcotics. There was no clear sign indicating the entrance to the passage into the woods which is called *BOSMOS*, it was only recognisable when a visitor was informed by a fellow festival goer as to the meaning of the big line in the corner of the festival terrain signified *BOSMOS*. *BOSMOS* is the name of the artist collective that created the specific art route. Standing in line, people often did not even know what they were waiting for. In small groups, people were able to enter the project, and immerse themselves in a world that was supposedly on a festival, and at the same time behind the borders of it. The visitors found themselves inside a forest, in something that seems more natural than “inside” the borders of the festival. Simultaneously, they were confined by having to wait in a line first. Moreover, the forest could be viewed as less natural, because the visitors knew that the path they were

⁴⁰ Alkema, Wilco & Unger, Lars (2009) *Bosmachine*. Performance. Photo: Renske Bakker.

walking was a path taken many times before them and many do so after. By all means, that was the intention of the makers. The realm is made out of technological traits *and* the pre-existing natural environment. The visitors that were present, the light beams, the other objects and the soundtrack added another experiential level to the forest. The makers themselves, represented by Lars Unger, refer to their project as a concert, BOSMOS as a band, and the different songs as states in their set.⁴¹ Therefore, their project could be considered a show, the sounds as a set list, and their use of multiple sources (sounds, music, lights, projection and objects) as different instruments.⁴² Coming from the discipline of theatre, their intention was to have a performance, without any human key players.⁴³ They sought an option in which music, sounds, images and lights could be of key importance.⁴⁴

Once one walked the beaten path to an open spot in the middle of the woods, one finds a small hut made out of pallets. On those pallets, a person could sit and watch a performance that started at the beginning of the act; a drummer who drums heavy patterns, underneath a kind of army tent hide-out; accompanied by a bright light show onto either the natural environment (bushes, trees, plants) or objects that were placed by the creators themselves, which in itself may well be a light source (bulbs, fluorescent tubes, spotlights, white squares tied to a frame, and other shapes that were floating through the air or sitting somewhere in the natural context). The projection of light forms different textures, which differ from time to time and seem to have no (chrono)logical story to tell at all. This performance was underscored by a pre-set mix of sounds, which at times is very eclectically put together and at other times almost acoustic sounding. The performance varied through a dynamic set of different pitches, textures and rhythms. All these occurrences seem to have no fixed pattern at all, and care for an indefinable series of states, “without” an end. This specific performance was their longest ever performance.⁴⁵ Moreover, these audio/visual impulses, and the tactile experience of being in a forest, speak to multiple senses. The latter is interesting in particular, because activities on traditional festivals are mostly artists playing their music. Ergo: traditional festivals mainly seem to speak to the auditory senses, whereas contemporary festivals seem to incorporate activities that influence more than just one sense. In this conception, the creators did not want to choose between visual arts, theatre or a concert, but instead wished to reside in the midst of it all.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Interview with Lars Unger (March 31, 2016).

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

2.3. Roland Barthes; Studium/Punctum



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When French philosopher Roland Barthes explains his notions of the studium and the punctum, he does so by addressing photography; using photographs made by Koen Wessing, William Klein and Charles Clifford to name a few. The photographs they make, for Barthes, all disclose a certain feeling that cannot be pinned down, and that is what makes photography particularly interesting for him: 'I was interested in Photography only for "sentimental" reasons; I wanted to explore it not as a question (a theme) but as a wound; I see, I feel, hence I notice, I observe, and I think.'⁴⁸ Barthes finds a special quality of photography in these "sentimental" reasons: a photograph can interest a spectator in a particular manner. It can prick, pierce or disturb a certain common understanding of that same photograph. This quality of photography is a dynamic between the world as disclosed by the photograph and something in the photograph 'which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces [the spectator]'.⁴⁹ Both are qualities inherent to the photograph, but what would not function without a spectator watching the depicted scene. The first is bound to place and time, and a certain understanding of the spectator towards it

⁴⁷ Alkema, Wilco & Unger, Lars (2009) *Bosmachine*. Performance. Photo: Renske Bakker.

⁴⁸ Barthes, Roland (1980): 21.

⁴⁹ Idem: 26.

and could thus be considered the discourse disclosed by the photograph, whilst the latter is something that very intensively interests the spectator:

In this habitually unary space, occasionally (but alas too rarely) a “detail” attracts me. I feel that its mere presence changes my reading, that I am looking at a new photograph, marked in my eyes with a higher value. This “detail” is the *punctum*.⁵⁰

This function of the photograph on a sentimental, emotional, experiential level is rather than on the visual level, as Barthes explains:

it is best to look away or close your eyes [...] I may know better a photograph I remember than a photograph I am looking at, as if direct vision oriented its language wrongly.⁵¹

This sentimental, emotional and experiential level is especially present with visitors of festivals. They immerse themselves in another world, outside of the normative world (which is often within the confines of a city, while the person studies, works or consumes his time in another way). I will come back to this experiential level of festivals below, which is very powerful, because it evades everyday life.

When a visitor of *Down The Rabbit Hole* immerses him- or herself in the art-project of *BOSMOS*, the visitor finds himself in a natural environment, enlightened by technological objects. A natural environment is different than a photograph, however, I think that analyzing this particular environment with Barthes’ theory proved to be fruitful. I believe that his way of analysing photography can also be applied to other fields; in this case art within a festival setting. Such an event as this may not be a still image, but it should be seen as a series of still images. Therefore, every single moment in a human’s life can be object of Barthes’ theories.

⁵⁰ Idem: 42.

⁵¹ Idem: 53.



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BOSMOS reveals a dichotomy – or co-presence – between two different elements. These elements, which for *BOSMOS* are the natural environment and the technological objects that have been put in the woods, bear a dynamic relation between one another.

Barthes explains that a photograph has a dual function, or in his words: ‘a co-presence between two different elements.’⁵³ On the one hand, he explains, a photograph contains a studium. The studium should be conceived of as a body of information, which speaks through the photograph, and thus through the photographer:

the first, obviously, is an extent, it has the extension of a field, which I perceive quite familiarly as a consequence of my knowledge, my culture; this field can be more or less stylized, more or less successful, depending on the photographer’s skill or luck, but it always refers to a classical body of information.⁵⁴

For *BOSMOS*, the forest – the natural environment as it is – would be the studium. The visitors would recognize it, and their personal knowledge would tell them that this is a forest in De Groene Heuvels. This environment speaks through the moment, but also through the

⁵² Alkema, Wilco & Unger, Lars (2009) *Bosmachine*. Performance. Photo: Renske Bakker.

⁵³ Idem: 25.

⁵⁴ Idem: 25-26.

creators of the art-project. After all, they made the choice for this specific location. Barthes explains that spectators are trained to recognize the studium in a photograph. A festival visitor can also recognize a forest, once immersed in one. This is the element out of the photograph (or in this case a real life event), that interests the spectator, but not exclusively. Barthes describes this as 'a kind of general, enthusiastic commitment, of course, but without special acuity.'⁵⁵ In this sense, the spectators of *BOSMOS* did not wait in line to see a regular forest. However, this does make up for the context in which the other element that Barthes describes to photographs can emerge. Put differently: the studium is being aware of information disclosed by a photograph, or environment. In other words, the studium – the common knowledge and interest depicted by the artist – enables the other element – the punctum – to take part in a dynamic interplay with the studium. The studium is the transmitter, through which a specific detail can emerge and punctuate the spectator, or in this case, the visitor.

The construction of the wooden pallets, the installation of several different projectors, other light sources and the performance of the drummer is accompanied by a soundtrack through speakers installed in the midst of the forest. This immersion of the project in its direct environment creates an interplay between one and the other. It disturbs the unity of the forest, yet does not completely alter, or subsume it, due to the fact that the forest remains in existence and stays – excluding minor damage from visitors – completely intact. This is what Barthes would denominate as the *punctum*; the exact detail (or the multiplicity of details) disturbs the studium: '[a] photograph's *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me).'⁵⁶ Barthes' analysis leaves a lot of room for creativity, that accident which pricks Barthes' can differ for every single spectator or visitor.

The fact remains that all these technological intrusions of *BOSMOS* in De Groene Heuvels cannot be reduced to one detail. The distribution of the artefacts and the dynamic character of the projects' lighting effects on its surroundings make it completely subject to change and are therefore not reducible to a unity either. The sounds, lights, and therefore also the forest – the studium – are constantly changing. In other words, they engage in such a way with the forest, that it may seem unrecognizable at times, to be recognizable again when the projections accompanied by the beats of the drummer and the preset sounds get less dense. The punctum in this case may not be a detail, it remains something that cannot be reduced to a closed-off unity and in this way thus functions as a co-presence and an interplay.

It is very important to notice that *BOSMOS* is not necessarily telling a story. Just as Barthes is not necessarily telling a specific story with his theory of the studium and the punctum. Rather it is a confluence between two different elements, out of which the spectator

⁵⁵ Idem: 26.

⁵⁶ Idem: 27.

can distil his or her own, personal story. The punctum may thus be very poignant to someone, while it leaves another visitor unmoved. In 'The Death of the Author'⁵⁷ Barthes explains that the author either is, or should die (metaphorically speaking), in order for (in this case) the reader to be able to construct its own story, depending on his own knowledge about a certain time and place (discourse). In other words, Barthes explains that the author resides within a specific person: 'the voice of a single person, the *author* 'confiding' in us'.⁵⁸ Every single visitor experiences the depicted scene of *BOSMOS* in a different fashion, because every visitor's experience is personal, as well as subjective. Or as Barthes explains: 'Last thing about the *punctum*: whether or not it is triggered, it is an addition: it is what I add to the photograph and *what is nonetheless already there*'.⁵⁹ The punctum is the co-presence – the alteration of the forest – and is subject to the visitor, which I call the Author of his own experience and story. Every visitor tells his or her own story, and designates their own punctum.

⁵⁷ Barthes, R. (2010) 'The Death of the Author', in: *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Leitch, V.B. & Cain, W.E. & Finke, L.A. (eds.) New York/London: W.W. Norton & Company: 1322-1326.

⁵⁸ Idem: 1322.

⁵⁹ Barthes, R. (1980): 55.

2.4. Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari; the Diagram



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Each visitor is different than the next, and every experience they may derive from a performance is inevitably different than the experience of others. Therefore, a punctum cannot be found in one specific moment in a real-life event, but rather must be sought in multiple moments which may differ for every person. They must be sought in possibilities, and form a map of movement within that performance. The diagram can help to come to terms with the changing, altering nature of things (and their eventual dynamism). Barthes' theory of the studium and the punctum is a viable tool for analyzing one specific occurrence - as if it were a photograph. A performance asks for a more elaborate exposition of those moments. That is why it is important to understand the notion of the diagram to the fullest.

Deleuze and Guattari's oeuvre has a specific outline, all their texts stem from and react against a certain philosophical tradition. Social theorist and philosopher Brian Massumi explains in the foreword of his translation of *A Thousand Plateaus* that Deleuze's and Guattari's thoughts, systems and theories are basically a "philosophy of difference".⁶¹ This

⁶⁰ Alkema, Wilco & Unger, Lars (2009) *Bosmachine*. Performance. Photo: Renske Bakker.

⁶¹ Massumi, Brian (2003) 'Pleasures of Philosophy', in: Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Pierre-Félix (1980) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Continuum: x.

philosophy of difference goes against a long tradition of State philosophy.⁶² As explained by Massumi:

“State philosophy” is another word for the representational thinking that has characterized Western metaphysics since Plato, but has suffered an at least momentary setback during the last quarter century at the hands of Jacques Derrida [(1930-2004)], Michel Foucault [(1926-1984)], and poststructuralist theory generally.⁶³

State philosophy, for Massumi, as the name implies, is a philosophy that is subject to the logic of the state. It enables and rectifies the State to function the way it does, organising hierarchy, creating order, and using different structures. The way in which power flows is from the top to the bottom, and the structure is pyramid like. The top of the pyramid decides the way in which the whole is structured. The pyramids are structured according to “universal truths”, which are decided upon by the State:

In thought [State philosophy's] end is truth, in action justice. The weapons it wields in their pursuit are limitative distribution (the determination of the exclusive set of properties possessed by each term in contradistinction to the others: *logos*, law) and hierarchical ranking (the measurement of the degree of perfection of a term's self-resemblance in relation to a supreme standard, man, god, or gold: value, morality). [representational thought is the] rational foundation for order.⁶⁴

Deleuze and Guattari identify this kind of order structured thought as the “arborescent model” of thought: ‘the proudly erect tree under whose spreading boughs latter-day Plato's conduct their ideas’.⁶⁵ In opposition to that, as Massumi argues, Deleuze and Guattari came up with the term “nomad thought”,⁶⁶ which

does not immure itself in the edifice of an ordered interiority; it moves freely in an element of exteriority. It does not repose on identity; it rides difference. It does not respect the artificial division between the three domains of representation, subject, concept, and being; it replaces restrictive analogy with a conductivity that knows no bounds. [...] They do not reflect upon the world but are immersed in a changing state of things.⁶⁷

For Massumi, Deleuze and Guattari build their thought upon circumstances, which can differ greatly for one and the same occurrence. The concept exists only in those exact

⁶² Ibidem.

⁶³ Idem: xi.

⁶⁴ Idem: xi-xii.

⁶⁵ Idem: xii.

⁶⁶ Ibidem.

⁶⁷ Ibidem.

circumstances at a specific time and place. Those circumstances are the switches which enable (Deleuze uses a lot of terms throughout his oeuvre for this movement) forces, sensations, intentions, inner dynamics, screams, spasms, hysteria, movements⁶⁸, systoles, diastoles⁶⁹, spastics, paralytics, hysteresis⁷⁰, lines of flight, (de)territorializations, planes of consistency and connectivities⁷¹ to occur and move in a certain direction. What it all comes down to in Deleuze and Guattari's work comes back in their oeuvre under different names, multiple times, in the form of their work, as well as in the content. Their work does not follow a single direction; it is rather a conglomeration of directions, enumerations and repetitions in which multiple terms signify the same, or in which one term signifies a multiplicity of meanings. In this way, their texts are structured in a cyclical manner. As Massumi explains:

The reader is invited to follow each section to the plateau that rises from the smooth space of its composition, and to move from one plateau to the next at pleasure. But it is just as good to ignore the heights. You can take a concept that is particularly to your liking and jump with it to its next appearance. They tend to cycle back.⁷²

Multiple terms and thoughts cycle back through the whole oeuvre. They repeat themselves in innumerable ways, in an unpredictable fashion. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, they explain the notion of the "rhizome", which functions using a seemingly random assemblage of plateaus through lines of flight, in which multiple plateaus form at the same time, without any form of linear structure, constantly moving, and changing its outlines (like a map that has not been finished, nor will it ever)

⁶⁸ Deleuze, Gilles (2013) 'Athleticism', in: *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (translated by Daniel W. Smith) New York: Bloomsbury: 9-14.

⁶⁹ Deleuze, Gilles (2013) 'Recapitulative Note: Bacon's Periods and Aspects', in: *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (translated by Daniel W. Smith) New York: Bloomsbury: 20-24.

⁷⁰ Deleuze, Gilles (2013) 'Hysteria', in: *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (translated by Daniel W. Smith) New York: Bloomsbury: 34-36.

⁷¹ Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Felix (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus* (translated by Brian Massumi) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 12.

⁷² Massumi, Brian (2003): xiv-xv.



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Deleuze's theory of the diagram resembles the form of the rhizome I sketched above. These kinds of theories can help to form a different perspective on a depicted scene. A perspective that differs from the way you and I are used to looking at objects as subjects, investing them with meaning and putting them in an hierarchical order of importance or validity. Deleuze and Guattari's writings invite the viewer to enter one single figuration⁷⁴, rhizome⁷⁵ or diagram⁷⁶ in countless sorts of ways. In addition to that, the "object" that is entered is always moving and transforming, and has a different context for every single visitor, at any different place in time. In this way, Deleuze and Guattari's writings are as real as life itself. In this sense, Deleuze and Guattari's theories will form an elaboration on the notions of studium and punctum I derived from Barthes. What Deleuze means by the diagram, and in what way this proves to be fruitful in combination with Barthes' studium and punctum, and lastly why this demonstrates to be a viable theory to go into more depth about *BOSMOS* and the functioning of festivals overall, follows below.

⁷³ Alkema, Wilco & Unger, Lars (2009) *Bossmachine*. Performance. Photo: Renske Bakker.

⁷⁴ Deleuze, Gilles (2013) *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (translated by Daniel W. Smith) New York: Bloomsbury.

⁷⁵ Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Felix (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus* (translated by Brian Massumi) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

⁷⁶ Zdebik, Jakub (2012) 'Introduction: What is a Diagram?', in: *Deleuze and the Diagram; Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organization*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group: 1-24.

Jakub Zdebik explains that Deleuze uses the notion of the diagram throughout his work, as he does with almost all his notions. The term 'diagram' may signify a multiplicity of meanings. This corresponds with the meaning that the word diagram signifies; it is never fixed, nor completed. What elements of *BOSMOS* care for a representative function of the theory behind the diagram? In what way can *BOSMOS* be conceptualised in terms of the diagram? What does this, in turn, mean for the contemporary festival?

Zdebik explains that '[a] diagram is commonly understood as a drawing conveying information about something incorporeal.'⁷⁷ He generally describes that a diagram is a plan, map or a graph. A diagram is something that gives an insight in what something *may* become. He gives examples of architecture that is not yet built, terrains not yet travelled or relations between variable quantities. Point being: a map of a terrain not yet travelled can only plan what it looks like, and a blueprint cannot guarantee the final outlook of architecture. Instead, they are (pre)representations of something that is about to emerge, or not. They are the manifestations of potentiality:

In a conceptual diagram, the lines marking out a space are abstract traits. The diagram thus does not represent, but rather maps out possibilities prior to their appearance, their representation. This new dimension lies between the visible and the articulable, and therefore traits are not exactly pictures or written language.⁷⁸

The diagram is the invisible made visible, but not yet real, because it is only potentially there. Therefore, generally speaking, the diagram, finds itself being only present between two opposites: the existent and the non-existent (or: *not yet* existent): 'the diagrammatic process could be imagined as a physical state or system being atomized into incorporeal abstract traits and then reconfigured into another state or system.'⁷⁹ The diagram deals with organisation, it finds itself on the verge between transformations, as transformations: '[t]he diagram allows a glimpse of the state that comes before the formation of an object, and of what goes into its formation.'⁸⁰

As I sketched by describing Barthes notions of the studium and the punctum, there is a co-presence of two elements in *BOSMOS*. On the one hand, there is the forest has always been there, and that guarantees the time and place of the event, relying on the knowledge of the spectator. Then there are all these projections of light, other objects present in the forest, and sounds that seem to pierce, punctuate or diffract the forest. In *BOSMOS*, the punctum, or

⁷⁷ Idem: 1.

⁷⁸ Ibidem.

⁷⁹ Ibidem.

⁸⁰ Idem: 2.

the piercing moment, or the moment of transformation, can be several different things, because the visitor has different impulses. The punctuating moment, the moment of transformation from the actual forest to something that has been structured (or come up with) by the artists and the other way around, relies on different disciplines, different details and different moments. It is rather a superimposition of possibilities on one another, and none of them is the real punctum, or diagram:

A diagram is not specific, but it is pure abstracted function – so that it can pass from one system to the next without the need to follow any similarity of form and it can intermingle with other functions, giving two incongruous systems their respective operative fields. In this way, the diagram is not merely a simple model that traces similarities between things, but is also a generative device that continues working once embodied.⁸¹

The systems that Deleuze describes, in the case of *BOSMOS*, can be visual, auditory, audiovisual or applicable to other senses, such as touching and smelling. Because the impulses are multi-sensual, the function of the co-presence should not solely be sought in the punctum, but also in the diagram. The different piercing moments can be the diffraction of light on the trees, the altering nature of the auditory underscore, or the fact that one stumbles through the woods while experiencing the event. The diagram, in this case, could function as an overall scheme, a plan of all transformations being able to alter the unity. It is a virtual map behind things, that changes from form to form (materials) but also in different abstract functions: '[the diagram] displays the amorphous passage from one structure to the next: from the virtual to the actual, the abstract to the specific.'⁸² The diagram could be conceived of as a possibility, and therefore a diagram is a map, or rather superimposition of maps, on which new maps are drawn. No map bears similarity to the actual, but they all have the possibility to do so. The diagram moves from one abstract system to the next and in-between a new one is made; the diagram is fluid and unstable; constantly changing, unlike the punctum; which is a viable tool of analysis for one particular detail in the dynamic entirety. Due to the multi-sensory impulses that *BOSMOS* inserts in the forest, it could be regarded as of as a diagram; and those impulses are superimposed on each other, designed to cause multiple tears in the visitors comprehension of the forest.

The *BOSMOS* performance can thus be viewed as a map, a possibility: '[m]aps are superimposed, and new connections are made.'⁸³ Affection will become much more probable in instances that people cannot predict. In other words: a visitor of the performance usually does not have a viable framework to make sense of all impulses that will occur, at least not in

⁸¹ Idem: 5.

⁸² Idem: 8.

⁸³ Idem: 12.

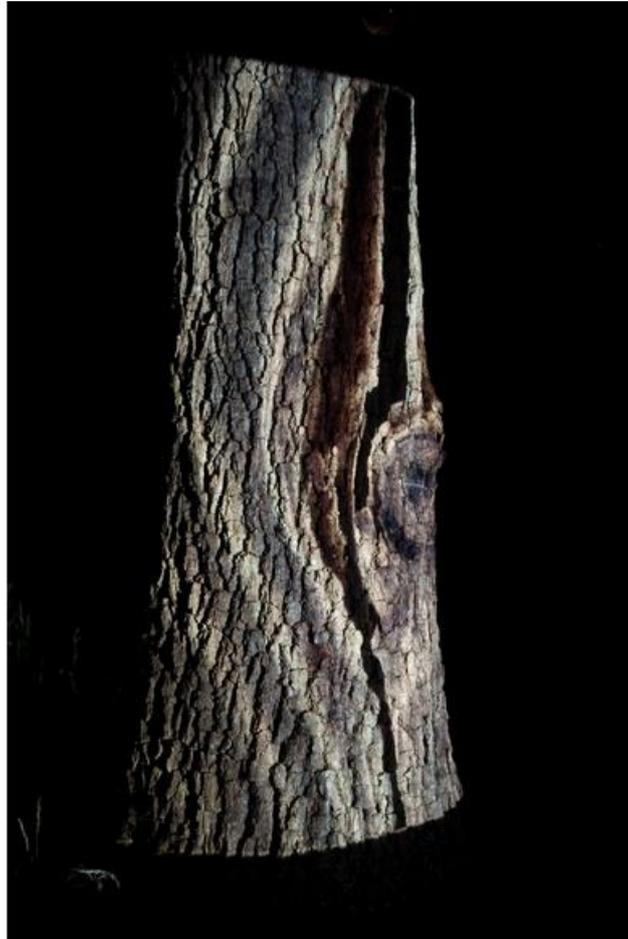
the same sense as someone who has the ability to foresee instances that will happen while walking on a street. In this way, screeching sounds and flashing lights do people's experiences out of balance. More often than not, these effects are strengthened by alcoholic beverages and other drug related materials and rely very much on prior knowledge of a visitor. For one, the impulses may be disturbing, for another they do not; it differs for every single person. In this certain way, *BOSMOS* proves to be as real as life itself, in its unpredictability, its improbable impulses and its occurrences. To stray from the point, if *BOSMOS* were a painting, it would be a Francis Bacon, because the workings of the performance are in the before-and after hand, it contains an hysteresis that will break off the work each time, interrupt its figurative course, and give it back afterwards.⁸⁴ 'Everywhere there is a presence acting directly on the nervous system, which makes representation, whether in place or at a distance, impossible'.⁸⁵ This is what Deleuze would term hysteria. This hysteria, which could be understood as an inner spasm, transcends representation, and is present in every single object. State philosophy does not support the latter, the preference to structure society in unity. This presence could be conceived as potentiality, which is the only actual thing present in a diagram.

However, when *BOSMOS* would only exist in potentiality, it would not actually be a performance. When certain changes in the outset have not yet occurred, they could be analysed as though they were part of a diagram, while they are part thereof. The latter stresses that it both is and is not part of reality at the same time. In addition to that, some impulses, changes in light projection and certain soundscapes have not yet occurred. It is an oscillation between the concretized and the potential. The concretized may then have a punctuating effect, or may influence different senses and come closer to the personal, as I outline below using Laura Mark's theories. Moreover, once the concretized has taken place, it already dissolves into something that is still not there, and "has been". The potential is open for interpretation, and differs for every single participant. However, this openness, and this empty vessel that is ready to receive purpose and meaning could very well be understood as a strategy of the experience economy, as it is not a fixed meaning, but rather something that a visitor has to experience itself. I explain the consequence of this thought in the conclusion of this chapter.

⁸⁴ Deleuze, Gilles (2013) 'Painting and Sensation', in: *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (translated by Daniel W. Smith) New York: Bloomsbury: 36.

⁸⁵ Deleuze, Gilles (2013): 36-37.

2.5 Laura Marks; Touch



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When Laura Marks explains haptic visuality in her introduction of her series of essays, bundled in *Touch*,⁸⁷ she addresses both video and cinema. I stressed above that an art route can also be seen as a series of still images. Her close analysis of film and video, and what it allows viewers to experience very much matches my affective and experiential approach of contemporary festivals: it enables me to put this specific performance, *BOSMOS*, in an experiential perspective. Marks states that different kinds of visual impulses can affect different kinds of experiences. Images in specific traditions invite the viewer to look at them in a certain manner. These images, in Marks' theory, are always screens. The projection of light upon objects in *BOSMOS* can be conceived as screens. I will come back to that assumption below. This theory very much helps to theorize upon the difference between traditional

⁸⁶ Alkema, Wilco & Unger, Lars (2009) *Bosmachine*. Performance. Photo: Renske Bakker.

⁸⁷ Marks, Laura (2002).

festivals and the kinds of multi-sensory festivals that I am writing about. This revolves around the notions of *optic* visuality and *haptic* visuality.

For Marks, hapticism is about 'touching, not mastering.'⁸⁸ Both notions imply a (power) relation between subject and object. The first is about depth and perspective, the latter is about flat surfaces. The first has a central focal point; the latter has the potential to have multiple focal points at the same time. In this sense, a headline performance on the final day of a traditional festival could be seen as a central focal point. A festival such as *PinkPop* has one headliner per day, in a time frame in which nothing else is happening, whereas a headline performance on a festival such as *Down The Rabbit Hole* has to compete with multiple other activities and performances, such as *BOSMOS* (which took place at the same time as the "main" programme). In the first instance, the visitor can rationalize upon the events taking place, because it is just one. The day advances towards that certain focal point, and reaches its climax during the closing act. However, contemporary festivals often incorporate multiple events at the same time. This takes away a colonizing overview of the festival. In this way the festival, and at the same time a performance such as *BOSMOS*, bear a more democratic relation between the subject and the object. The creators of the *BOSMOS* performance also strived to such terms of understanding.⁸⁹ In the scope of the performance itself, there was not just one key player, but multiple impulses were viable to become of key importance to a specific visitor. In this case, experiences derived from a headline performance or experiences derived from *BOSMOS* differ greatly. The first is something that may imply one, clear story, while the latter does not propose anything, but remains completely empty (open) to multiple understandings. This is what I explained above, using Deleuze's and Guattari's theories, and exactly this openness may be a fruitful opportunity for an economical strategy such as the experience economy.

Marks reverts to Alois Riegl and Wilhelm Wörringer through Deleuze and Guattari to describe the history of the sliding scale between optic and haptic visuality. Riegl describes an etymology, which Marks uses to 'describe how haptic visuality works in cinema.'⁹⁰ Riegl starts her expostulation in Archaic times, in which the vast majority of the visual arts were made out of flat surfaces, such as Egyptian murals and Greek pottery. The visual arts transformed itself into an art with perspective through the dark ages and into the Renaissance. This resulted in a certain way of depicting a scene, and that also involved another way of looking; a way in which a depicted figure can be *inside* a fictional space, as if there were multiple layers inside the surface. In this way, paintings in the Renaissance implied a fictional depth

⁸⁸ Marks, Laura (2002): xii.

⁸⁹ Interview with Lars Unger (March 31, 2016).

⁹⁰ Marks, Laura (2002): xii.

inside them, whereas figures in artistic expressions before the invention of the “Cartesian” perspective find themselves *amongst* other figures, the fore-, and background; all on the same, flat surface. The Cartesian perspective, for Marks, can be seen as a way to create a distance between the subject and the object, a way to colonize the visual and identify with a human subject who resides inside the flat surface. In addition, specified by Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright in their handbook *Practices of Looking*⁹¹: ‘In composing a picture using the geometric formula of perspective, the position of the observer is the central organizing principle. Yet at the same time the observer’s position is *hypothetical*.⁹² Space inside the flat surface is organised in such a way so that it makes sense from one perspective; from the perspective of a looking human subject. Or as art critic John Berger states: “every drawing or painting that used perspective proposed to the spectator that he was the unique centre of the world”.⁹³ This perspective, for Marks, is a falsification of the flat surface. She calls this end of the spectre ‘optical visuality’. It asks the viewer to agree with a depth which is really not there, and implies a humanistic angle of incidence, as if the world was built around human civilisation.

Marks intends to ‘restore a flow between the haptic and the optical that our culture is currently lacking’.⁹⁴ She wants to incorporate the haptic side of the spectre again, because our culture is way too focused on a ‘disembodied and adequated [...] post-Enlightenment rationality’.⁹⁵ Meaning that our culture is trained in making sense of everything around us, and ordering that (hierarchically) in space. Marks advocates for a ‘haptic critic’ [, whom] navigates a smooth space by engaging immediately with objects and ideas and teasing out the connections immanent to them’.⁹⁶ In this way, an occurrence may have multiple meanings, and can be invested with multiple experiences. Of course, something that is ordered hierarchically can also trigger different kinds of experiences: ‘optical representation makes possible a greater distance between beholder and object that allows the beholder to imaginatively project him/herself into or onto the object’.⁹⁷ Marks pleads for a sliding scale, with optical and haptical visuality at each side of the spectre,⁹⁸ in which both can trigger different experiences. The first implies a hierarchical kind of gaze, in which the subject can gain power over the object, and structure it to their liking: ‘visual mastery of an individual

⁹¹ Cartwright, Lisa & Sturken, Marita (2009) *Practices of Looking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁹² Cartwright, Lisa & Sturken, Marita (2009) ‘Realism and Perspective’, in: *Practices of Looking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 157.

⁹³ Berger, John (1972) *Ways of Seeing*, 18. New York: Penguin, in: Cartwright, Lisa & Sturken, Marita (2009) ‘Realism and Perspective’, in: *Practices of Looking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 157.

⁹⁴ *Idem*: xiii.

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁷ Marks, Laura (2002) ‘Video Haptics and Erotics’, in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 5.

⁹⁸ Marks, Laura (2002): 3.

viewer'.⁹⁹ The latter does not - and in a certain sense cannot - invite the viewer to gain control over the depicted.

Haptic space, while it may be considered abstract in that the line and form of the image do not set out to depict as much as to decorate, is concrete in that it creates a unified visual field only on a surface.¹⁰⁰

Nonetheless, they are structured in another manner. The things learned through optical visuality (the Cartesian perspective) are not worthless:

Rather it is to maintain a robust flow between sensuous closeness and symbolic distance, which we may also, following Peirce, call Firstness and Thirdness against our cultural tendency by taking distance through looking.¹⁰¹

Therefore, she rather navigates to a dichotomy, which may bring us back to the materiality, and haptic influences they may have on visitors and at the same time a certain distance. What does this materiality mean, and when does an image invite the viewer to relate to it in a (slightly more) haptical manner? In other words: when does a performance invite a haptical reading; or better: touching? Marks describes different qualities that moving images should have to invite a caressing gaze. A moving image should have changing textures, extreme close ups, a VHS like graininess which sets in motion a Rothkoesque abstraction made out of real imagery: 'the speed with which the images fade in and out and the brevity with which each shot remains in focus frustrate optical knowledge and, instead, invite haptic speculation'.¹⁰² In this sense, the changing projections in the performance of *BOSMOS* interrupt chances of the visitors' to gain control over the scene. The changing projected lights on tree barks and other objects, on top of the dark forest, hampers a central focal point, and a way of looking, depending on what Marks implied by optic visuality. Moreover, as Marks argues, 'disappearance and transformation of the image due to analogue synthesis and digital effects'¹⁰³ also punctuate a rational understanding and an empowered subject in relation to a passive object. One thing that is of key importance for Marks is the digital manipulability of images, which pulls the visitor's gaze away from one single point. Digital manipulation, extreme close ups and grainy like abstraction can hamper a sense of depth in an image. That is why Marks comes back to a term introduced by Riegl in her description of

⁹⁹ Marks, Laura (2002): 5.

¹⁰⁰ Ibidem.

¹⁰¹ Marks, Laura (2002) 'Introduction', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: xiii.

¹⁰² Marks, Laura (2002) 'Video Haptics and Erotics', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 10.

¹⁰³ Ibidem.

Late Roman Art Industry: the figure-ground.¹⁰⁴ The implication of the latter is that the figure is the ground, and that there is no visible distinction between the two; they *are* the same flat surface: 'the sense of space is contingent, close-up, and short-term, lacking an immobile outside point of reference'.¹⁰⁵ The figure, the fore-, and the background are all on the same plane. Coming back to Deleuze and Guattari, Marks proposes the term 'nonfigurative representation',¹⁰⁶ because '[h]aptic representation does not reinforce the position of the individual, human viewer as figuration does'.¹⁰⁷ For Deleuze and Guattari, and therefore also for Marks, this "smooth space" 'is a space of freedom before the hegemony of Cartesian space'.¹⁰⁸ Below, I argue that this/these smooth space(s) is/are comparable to the multiple flat surfaces that occur in the performance of *BOSMOS*: 'Part of the eroticism of this medium is its incompleteness, the inability ever to see all, because it's so grainy, its chiaroscuro so harsh, its figures mere suggestions.'¹⁰⁹

In a way, *BOSMOS* can be seen as the flattening of deep space. Projections are creating certain types of "screens" on different surfaces, such as objects placed there by the creators, and trees which were there all along. Multiple assumptions of what a screen is can be made. In this instance, I determine screens to be objects in space that reflect light. Because of the constantly differentiating and shifting projections, multiple screens are formed across the forest. They come into being, for a short time, and then fade away again. These screens may not be flat like the screens described by Marks, but they do deduct the visitors' chance to envision one single depth and focal point in their field of view. They do alter, and create multiple sights/impulses across the forest, which in turn invites a more haptic way of looking:

Haptic looking tends to rest on the surface of its object rather than to plunge into depth, not to distinguish form so much as to discern texture. It is a labile, plastic sort of look, more inclined to move than to focus.¹¹⁰

In this way the visitor ceases to colonize upon perspective and the surroundings invite a 'lingering, caressing gaze'.¹¹¹ Therefore this flattening, which uses multiple projections, invites the viewer to engage with its surroundings in another way: 'Visual variations are not formal

¹⁰⁴ Idem: 6.

¹⁰⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987) 'The Smooth and the Striated', in: *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (translated by Brian Massumi). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 493, in: Marks, Laura (2002): 'Video Haptics and Erotics', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 6.

¹⁰⁶ Marks, Laura (2002): 'Video Haptics and Erotics', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 6.

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁹ Idem: 11.

¹¹⁰ Idem: 8.

¹¹¹ Ibidem.

matters alone but have implications for how the viewer relates bodily to the image'.¹¹² Moreover, this multiplication of screens does not stop with surroundings; it also incorporates the subject as part of its performance. Therefore, the viewer cannot project him/herself into or onto another object, because the viewer is part of the *BOSMOS* performance itself as an object:

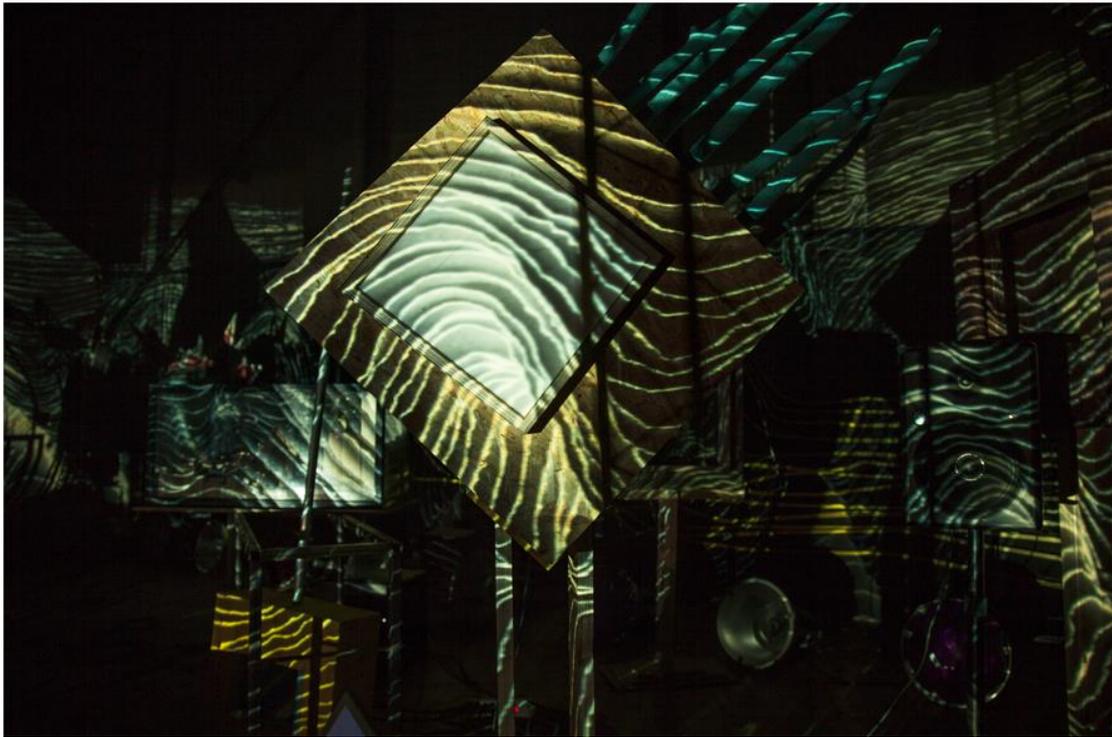
In a haptic relationship our self rushes up to the surface to interact with another surface. When this happens there is a concomitant loss of depth - we become amoebalike, lacking a centre, changing as the surface to which we cling changes. We cannot help but be changed in the process of interacting.¹¹³

That changing interaction between a person and its surroundings is the key of haptic visuality: 'In haptic *visuality*, the eyes themselves function like organs of touch.'¹¹⁴ They touch other objects as if they were bodies. Or more clearly, a multiplicity of bodies, functioning as screens, subject to digital manipulations of the projected lights, soundscapes, and live performed music.

¹¹² Ibidem.

¹¹³ Marks, Laura (2002) 'Introduction', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: xvi.

¹¹⁴ Marks, Laura (2002) 'Video Haptics and Erotics', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 2.



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denial of depth vision and multiplication of surface, in the electronic texture of video, has a quality of visual eroticism that is different from the mastery associated with optical visibility. Ultimately, the erotic capacities of haptic visibility are twofold. It puts into question cinema's illusion of representing reality, by pushing the viewer's look back to the surface of the image. And it enables an embodied perception, the viewer responding to the video as to another body and to the screen as another skin.¹¹⁶

In Marks' conception, images of optical visibility, invested with a Cartesian perspective, can be seen as illusionistic and falsifying. Perspective always directs the view to one certain point in depth. That is to say, in my case, that a festival headliner can be seen as the central focal point in the programme, whereas contemporary festivals have multiple performances programmed at the same time. Moreover, in a single performance, such as my case study *BOSMOS*, there are multiple focal points. And due to the projected lights, these focal points can be seen as screens, which are being manipulated in a digital manner. Whereas the first cannot represent the whole reality of the festival (being a single headliner), the latter cannot

¹¹⁵ Alkema, Wilco, Bakker, Lennart, Verhoef, Mark & Unger (2013) *Concrete Jungle*. Performance. De Lieve Vrouw, Amersfoort. Photo: Paalo van Eerten.

¹¹⁶ Idem: 4.

give you a realistic impression of the festival at all, because it is just one of many manifestations of the festival programme. It comes closer to the human body as a tactile, flat surface, as the figure-ground on which multiple experiences may arise. In this way, the figure-ground - the figures being screens, human ob-/subjects, the forest, and the supporting soundscape - is a multiplication of surfaces, which enables a visitor to derive more from the scene than just different, and personal experiences. In addition, the performance implies a multiplication of impulses on the senses, not only auditory and visual impulses play a role, but such an environment and performance also invites a tactile way of looking.

because haptic visibility draws on other senses, the viewer's body is more obviously involved in the process of seeing than is the case with optical visibility. The difference between haptic and optical visibility is a matter of degree, however. In most processes of seeing both are involved, in a dialectical movement from far to near, from solely optical to multisensory. And obviously we need both kinds of visibility.¹¹⁷

The latter states that to experience, and to withhold a certain meaning, both kinds of visibility are needed. In order to reach different objects, surfaces, impulses, a certain context has to exist. The context of *BOSMOS* is within a bigger festival with a number of side programmes, which all compete with one another. On top of that, the performance is embedded within the forest. Lastly, the lack of a key player, and the viewer (or moreover: participants) which a play a role in the performance is an important link. The projections that form multiple screens and surfaces are subject to multiple impulses on multiple senses. Marks' theories of hapticism, tactile, flat surfaces, optical and haptic visibility helps to make sense of the power relations that take place on these specific events. To summarize, traditional festivals ask their visitors to experience their festival in a manner that is different to contemporary festivals, such as *Down The Rabbit Hole*, which clearly uses *BOSMOS* to support their own vision of their festival, which is steeped more in a specific "openness" and "playfulness" than more traditional festivals like *PinkPop*. Their programming overall incorporates this kind of oscillation between haptic and optic visibility, and those two terms also play a definite role in a performance such as *BOSMOS*. They care for the closeness and at the same time the distance the performance invokes within its spectators.

¹¹⁷ Idem: 3.

2.5. Conclusion



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BOSMOS contains no particular objective or linear story. It seems that such a performance bears a certain “openness”, for everyone to attach (*or not!*) their own meaning. I come back to the relevance of this specific condition for a contemporary music festival in towards the end of this chapter.

Experience is indeed present in every visiting body of the performance, and each spectator derives another effect, meaning or story from the performed scenes. Light instalments, accompanied by the music of the drummer, soundscapes, different areas and textures of light on wooden and steel faces, which are emphatically placed within the natural environment. This insertion of the cultural (technological) world in nature unravels a dichotomy between the natural and the cultural. Impulses on different senses pierce through the environment, right into the senses of the visitor. In this way a majority of dichotomies rise to the forefront.

Firstly, one of the studium and the punctum. The studium is the normal circumstances of the forest, and the punctum is its time and place during a music festival, which are the light instalments, the sound escapades and the different relation to the surroundings that a visitor bears because of that. In this case, the distracting moment may be conceived as one specific moment, as if the visitor reflected on a memory of a specific event, namely that of a photograph. The theory of the studium and the punctum is a viable tool to analyse one

¹¹⁸ Alkema, Wilco, Bakker, Lennart, Verhoef, Mark & Unger (2013) *Concrete Jungle*. Performance. De Lieve Vrouw, Amersfoort. Photo: Paolo van Eerten.

specific moment. How can one moment disclose such heavy feelings? As Barthes asks himself: 'could I retain an affective intentionality, a view of the object which was immediately steeped in desire, repulsion, nostalgia, euphoria?'¹¹⁹ This question is related to the goal he described his *Camera Lucida* to: not to reduce the power (affect) in the Photograph, but he ought to reduce the Photograph to that affection.¹²⁰ For Barthes, those very specific moments which can trigger a punctuating affect in one single viewer was the answer to that: 'the photograph becomes "surprising" when we do not know why it has been taken'.¹²¹ In this way, the lack of information explaining the goal and vision of the *BOSMOS* project leaves the spectator completely open to wonder why some of the aesthetic choices were made. Those assumptions may differ greatly, because the information available to place this performance in perspective was not comprehensive. The extensive set of impulses offered by the performance (creating a new unity in the forest) did cause specific details to rise out of the scene: 'in this habitually unary space, occasionally (but alas too rarely) a "detail" attracts me. I feel that its mere presence changes my reading, that I am looking at a new photograph, marked in my eyes with a higher value. This "detail" is the punctum'.¹²² And as last additions to the punctum, Barthes lines up two important features. First of which is: 'The incapacity to name is a good symptom of disturbance'.¹²³ What the odd thing is exactly is best understood when the odd cannot be pointed out, and such an oddity can arise for different people under different circumstances. These oddities in relation to *BOSMOS* might best be understood using schemes or diagrams of the unity of the performance. The latter two assumptions are why the theories of Deleuze and Guattari are a helpful crossover from the unity of a Photograph, to the unity of real life. Both unities only exist in an oscillation (or on a sliding scale) between what is going to happen, and what remains underneath the surface and is only potentially there, or were already there. After all, what Barthes describes as the punctum in a Photograph is always already present.

Secondly, to make sense of multiple of those punctuating moments, I used the notion of the diagram in relation to Deleuze's stance in the tradition of philosophy, according to Brian Massumi. Their philosophy is important in my analysis, because it emphasizes that effects of a performance cannot be reduced to a single meaning, a single punctuating rupture, nor linearity, but rather must be sought in multiplicity, possibility and constant movement. The latter are all characteristics of the form and content of Deleuze and Guattari's writings. Their oeuvre is made out of loops of similar, seemingly inimitable arguments, terms and theories seem to cycle back in different forms and bearing other resemblances as well as differences.

¹¹⁹ Barthes, Roland (1980): 20-21.

¹²⁰ Ibidem.

¹²¹ Idem: 34.

¹²² Idem: 42.

¹²³ Idem: 51.

In this way, their work itself proves to be a superimposition of theories, all contributing something to the unity of the whole. As Massumi argues, you should indeed not read *A Thousand Plateaus*, from the beginning until the end, but rather linger in between, and venture your own path in the midst of different theories, just like *BOSMOS* gives the spectator the chance to be engaged with the performance in a way that could only soothe their specific person. Deleuze's oeuvre, and more specifically the notion of the diagram, helps to keep in mind that there is a specific way of thinking present in our society, which trickles from the top down and seems to keep existing due to a structured system. It invites the viewer to colonize upon objects, because they merely exist in order to be invested with meaning, and to be structured and spatialized in a hierarchical manner. During the 17th century Enlightenment, perspective was used to structure space around the human subject, as if it were only there to be organised in space (or on a canvas). As German art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) proposed in 1927, perspective, as developed from the Renaissance period forward, became the paradigmatic, spatialized form of the modern worldview associated with the rationalist philosophy introduced by Descartes in the seventeenth century.¹²⁴ When cultural geographer Tim Edensor writes about waste and that it matters, he is elaborating on Panofsky's findings about rationalism, and the Renaissance perspective which places the human subject in the centre. For Edensor, there is a place for everything; there is a certain social order of things. The latter are confined to places. Spaces are divided into 'discrete, functional, single-purpose realms [...] In this way, situated within a web of normative meanings and practices, objects (re)produce and sustain dominant cultural values'.¹²⁵ I will come back to this when addressing Marks below.

Such structures are of a State philosophical order, and are part of man-made systems as opposed to real life. In terms of the representational system of State philosophy, things are isolated from their contexts, and make up for a very linear and logical space. An open-ended view makes up for differences, and movement in between varying points:

State space is "striated," or gridded. Movement in it is confined as by gravity to a horizontal plane, and limited by the order of that plane to preset paths between fixed and identifiable points. Nomad space is "smooth," or open-ended. One can rise up at any point and move to any other. Its mode of distribution is the *nomos*: arraying oneself in an open space (hold the street), as opposed to the *logos* of entrenching oneself in a closed space (hold the fort).¹²⁶

The above quote explains that there are different options and different viewpoints possible. Some scenes invite a more distanced view, and offer a perspective in which the viewer can

¹²⁴ Cartwright, Lisa & Sturken, Marita (2009) 'Realism and Perspective', in: *Practices of Looking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 156.

¹²⁵ Edensor, Tim (2005) 'Waste matter – the debris of industrial ruins and the disordering of the material world', in: *Journal of Material Culture* 10(3): 312.

¹²⁶ Massumi, Brian (2003): xiii.

structure the depicted scene. Other scenes, or performances as *BOSMOS*, tend to resemble a diagram in its veins, and seem to bear more potential and more movement in it. *BOSMOS* invites the viewer to participate in a way of their choosing, because it does not falsely attempt to represent anything. It just is and goes about.

Finally, to use Laura Marks analyses and to elaborate on different kinds of perspectives on a certain scene, such an event may be best characterised by a dichotomy between optic and haptic visuality. It is a dynamic relation between rational distance and sensuous closeness. The latter is also apparent in the feelings a person may have when experiencing the art route. As Marks explains in one of her essays 'Loving a Disappearing Image'¹²⁷, taking the material account of such an event very seriously, the nature of life is one of decay, but at the same time, it pulls us closer to the material fabric of life itself. It is in the dichotomy that life makes sense: 'Loving a disappearing image draws us into a deep connection with all things, absent and present. "The grief you cry out from draws you toward union".'¹²⁸ It is a sentimental reaction to an occurrence of a material nature. Hapticism works in a similar way to what Tim Edensor describes as waste and ruins: 'When industrial sites are closed down and left to become ruins, they are dropped from [...] stabilizing networks'.¹²⁹ Social, spatial and material order is liable to fall apart when they are not maintained. When those orders disappear, objects which are left behind tend to return to a natural state of being, in which they are not part of a system (order) of man-made civilisation. They return to become objects with a new purpose, the purpose of materiality.

The return to materiality helps to understand Barthes: 'Last thing about the punctum: whether or not it is triggered, it is an addition: it is what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there'.¹³⁰ The objects, and the photograph as material are always already there, but function and meaning are invested afterward. The blind field of the photograph (what is not there in the picture), is potentially present because 'everything which happens within the frame dies absolutely once this frame is passed beyond'.¹³¹ These form the presence and the dynamics of the blind field of a depicted scene. 'The punctum, then, is a kind of subtle beyond – as if the image launched desire beyond what it permits us to see'.¹³² In this way, things that one does not (yet) feel, or has already passed, impulses that one does not (yet) experience, not cease to be the very fibre of which a performance such as *BOSMOS* is made. It creates openings in every corner, and enables the performance to appear bigger

¹²⁷ Marks, Laura (2012) 'Loving a Disappearing Image', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press:

¹²⁸ Idem: 110.

¹²⁹ Edensor, Tim (2005) 'Waste matter – the debris of industrial ruins and the disordering of the material world', in: *Journal of Material Culture* 10(3): 313.

¹³⁰ Barthes, Roland (1980): 55.

¹³¹ Idem: 57.

¹³² Idem: 59.

than it actually is, nor will be: 'However lightning-like it may be, the punctum has, more or less potentially, a power of expansion'.¹³³ This lightning-like time span invoked by *BOSMOS* in short instances in the flux of constant movement and changes cares for something that pulls the viewer closer to its core. It seems to make the performance tactile at times, something that Marks' terms as erotic:

The ability to oscillate between near and far is erotic. In sex, what is erotic is the ability to move between control and relinquishing, between being giver and receiver. It's the ability to have your sense of self, your self-control, taken away and restored - and to do the same for another person.¹³⁴

Just as an intimate relation with another person, a performance can trigger this by pulling close by, only to let go the next moment. It is a process of interacting with other surfaces, just as a spectator in *BOSMOS* can participate in numerous ways and derive their own meaning out of the whole:

In a haptic relationship our self rushes up to the surface to interact with another surface. When this happens there is a concomitant loss of depth - we become amoeba like, lacking a centre, changing as the surface to which we cling changes. We cannot help but be changed in the process of interacting.

The latter is also a consequence of opening up your view, and resisting representational thought, and colonizing perspectives that are the norm of viewing a scene. Things are not objects that are just present to attach meaning to by us (subjects). Rather, objects, and subjects find themselves on a horizontal plane, and interact with each other in an intimate manner. In *BOSMOS*, for example, the human participants do form screens as much as their surroundings.

Now, how do these different relations between a performance on a festival relate to the festival in its entirety and to their goal, vision and outlook? How do these schemes inside the performance of *BOSMOS* relate to the experience economy as described by Pine and Gilmore?

Experience is the most valuable asset to contribute to an object for Pine and Gilmore: 'when [the customer] buys an experience, he pays to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that a company stages - as in a theatrical play - to engage him in a

¹³³ Idem: 45.

¹³⁴ Marks, Laura (2002) 'Introduction', in: *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: xvi.

personal way.¹³⁵ A customer buys something that is really not there, which is added to the object by the seller. In this conception, *Down The Rabbit Hole* guarantees the following:

WE ARE HERE, TUMBLING *DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE*, AT THE SOURCE, IN THE
SUNKEN FOREST, ALL IS LOOSE! WHERE YOU ARE WHO YOU ARE WHEN NO ONE
CAN SEE YOU¹³⁶

The experience they are selling throughout their festival comes down to '[a] frontrunner line-up on the stages and equal measures of thrill in and around those tents',¹³⁷ you can 'spin a record, cook a meal, build a raft, hip a hop'.¹³⁸ Moreover, the festival goer can

meditate in the forest, lie down in the green pasture, swim for a bit, help build the tower, strum by the campfire, discover hidden discos... Have a ball with brand-new bands or finally see that classic artist in full swing. Build your own party and celebrate, enjoy what you do, all with an open mind.¹³⁹

In other words, a visitor can find his own path, and involve him- or herself in a quantity of occupations of their choosing. The crux of this proposed experience is to do all of that, whilst keeping an open mind. An open mind does not appear to be a definite experience. However, it very much is. This "open-mindedness" that reigns over the festival organisation and the visitors, enables the festival to become as diverse as possible. In turn this attracts visitors, seeking an experience which fits their inner self. This allows the festival to put down a certain vision and goal, which may in turn care for a more diverse offering of cultural objects, in which visitors, different organisations and the festival organisation come closer to an efficient way of organising an event that attracts as many people as possible, using as little as possible resources (capital). This might be the reason the festival only offers passe-partout tickets and organises a competition for artists to come up with mind-blowing new public projects (*Down The Rabbit Hole Grand Prix*¹⁴⁰), or asks the audience to come up with their own idea for an after party. In essence, these are all ways to minimize investments that they have to make themselves, and to outsource the investment of capital to the public domain, as

¹³⁵ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Welcome to the Experience Economy', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 2.

¹³⁶ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2014) 'DTRH', in *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: March 9th, 2015) <http://downtherabbithole.nl/dtrh>.

¹³⁷ Ibidem.

¹³⁸ Ibidem.

¹³⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁰ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) 'nieuws', in *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: April 12th, 2015) <http://downtherabbithole.nl/nieuws/rabbit-hole-grand-prix>.

well as coming up with new ideas. At the same time, the latter gives the audience the idea that they have a definite role in shaping the outlook of the festival.

Contemporary festivals as objects themselves do not differ from traditional festivals that much. Whereas their aesthetic outline, vision and goal do:

The newly identified offering of experiences occurs whenever a company intentionally uses services as the stage and goods as props to engage an individual. While commodities are fungible [interchangeable], goods tangible, and services intangible, experiences are *memorable*.¹⁴¹



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The project *BOSMOS* itself almost seems empty, a specific meaning of the performance is nowhere to be found. In this respect, the performance is open for a visitor to attach their own meaning to. Of course, this still remains to be a specific implementation of a meaning into their performance. A recognizable effect is that customers value being immersed over duration of time. It results in the offering of the 'resulting experience, rich with sensations,

¹⁴¹ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999): 11-12.

¹⁴² Alkema, Wilco, Bakker, Lennart, Verhoef, Mark & Unger (2014) *BOSMOS*. De Groene Heuvels, Beuningen. Photo: Ingeliese de Vries.

created within the customer'.¹⁴³ No two people can have the same experience, and that is why one should experience it. 'While the *work* of the experience stager perishes upon its performance [...], the *value* of the experience lingers in the memory of any individual who was engaged by the event'.¹⁴⁴ Experience itself lacks tangibility; the value lies within the remembrance, and remains long afterwards. Experiences, derived and staged as if they were actually there to be attached with meaning by a visitor, create an image that fits well with contemporary festivals. *BOSMOS* is an example of the diversity housed by *Down The Rabbit Hole*, which has an elaborate side programme. More importantly, it is an example of the rhizomatic use of space at the festival site. *BOSMOS* has no real centre, multiple focal points and is open for every kind of interpretation. The festival organisation uses the same strategies to structure the actual site, as I elaborate below.

¹⁴³ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999):12.

¹⁴⁴ Idem: 13.

3. Chapter 2

Festivallization of Festivals

How contemporary music festivals use specific strategies to stage an enriching and immersive experience

3.1. Introduction

Side-programming takes up a major part of the difference between contemporary and traditional festivals, because there was no (or very little) side-programming on traditional festivals. I explain that an art route or performance can very well guarantee diversity, rupture one's understanding, and even stage an enriching experience. However, this all takes place within a certain organisation, and finds itself within the broader context of the festival location. Moreover, the festival exists beforehand and afterwards, through social media contact, the people involved and its publicity. Afterwards, as I have explained in the first chapter, such an experience lives on in the minds of the visitors - or for Pine & Gilmore: customers. Finally, the concept of the festival lives in different kinds of cooperative organisations. Stage or prop builders want their audience to experience something, the music program has to fit within the story, social media outlet should not deviate from the theatrical experience, as also the names for different locations on the festival terrain and so on. This does not seem as big of a difference in comparison to traditional festivals. However, all these factors come together to stage an experience, not only to form a festival.

3.2.1. Pine & Gilmore: The Experience Economy; The actual festival site transformed

The difference is in the way the organisation wants to sell their product. Traditional festivals appear to deliver a service, whereas contemporary festivals customize their product to their audience, and stage an experience. I will elaborate on those exact differences in this chapter. I return to underlying theories, while making use of Joseph Pine and James Gilmore's theories of *The Experience Economy*,¹⁴⁵ in order to analyse the ways in which festivals transform the festival site into a theatre. What is the theme, from which impressions, cues and sensations emerge?¹⁴⁶ Which choices do festivals make to stage a worthwhile experience for customers, which follows the lines of the proposed theme? What aesthetic elements are featured now, which were not emphasized in traditional, older festivals? In which ways do those aesthetic elements and choices reach the audience? I use Pine and Gilmore's theories to analyse the aesthetic outlook and content of the online media channels and applications, the location itself (the stage setting) and the programme in particular. However, there is more to staging an enriching experience nowadays. Social media can take on a major part of an immersive experience.



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¹⁴⁵ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press.

¹⁴⁶ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'The Show Must Go On', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 59.

¹⁴⁷ *Down The Rabbit Hole*, (2016) 'DTRH', in: *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: August 4, 2016) <http://downtherabbithole.nl/dtrh>.

For instance, when entering *Down The Rabbit Hole*, one has to pass through a gigantic gate, made out of cogwheels. These cogwheels transport water from one side to the other, vegetation and bright lights; all mounted on a structure made of steel bars. In this way, elements of nature are mixed with human-made features. When walking through this gate, one can imagine jumping into a rabbit hole. In the night time, the lights installed on the top of the gateway create patterns on the grass. These patterns twist and turn to intensify the feeling of psychedelics, as if the visitor used a confusing drug right before entering the festival site.

The festival site is mostly surrounded by natural boundaries: water to the west, the camping terrain to the north, the forest to the east, and the fences that are needed to demarcate the rest of the festival site are coated with turf. These natural borders intensify the feeling of nature. Most traditional festivals have campings off-site, which include a thirty-minute walk. At *Down The Rabbit Hole*, camping is allowed right next to the festival site, which enhances the unity of the festival world for the time being; it immerses visitors more in the festival, because they do not have the feeling that they ever have to leave the site. Finally, following the theme of the festivals, the three stages are thematically named after different rabbit races: the main stage is called 'Hotot' after a rabbit bred in Hotot-en-Auge in France, the two smaller stages are called 'Teddy Widder' and the 'Fuzzy Lop', which are two lesser known rabbit breeds.

Inside, there are ample ways in which the visitor can find his inner child, goof around and enjoy playful activities. The festival site is equipped with opportunities to hula hoop, build rafts ('Watershipdown'), jump on trampolines, dig your own hole in the ground ('Kuilie Kuilie') or give your own - musical or theatrical - performance at the fireplace ('Vurige Veldje'). Prior to the festival, there was also the chance for the festival visitors to organise their own party ('Porto-Party'), which was decided upon by the festival itself. For the artistry types, there was the chance to get subsidized to install your own art at the festival site, through the art competition 'Rabbit Hole Grand Prix'. Next to that, different caterers are specifically selected to match the theme of the festival, and are announced as 'top class acts at *Down The Rabbit Hole*: the immensely diverse menu!¹⁴⁸ And 'no worries: breakfast, lunch and supper are held all day and night.'¹⁴⁹ In this way, even food is made to have no structure, and to maintain within the theme.

¹⁴⁸ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) 'Lekker Eten Op DTRH', in: *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: July 27, 2016): <http://downtherabbithole.nl/nieuws/lekker-eten-op-dtrh>.

¹⁴⁹ Ibidem.

3.2.2. Henri Lefebvre: The Spatial Triad:

Constructedness of spaces explained

The point of this chapter is to argue that contemporary festivals use as many features as possible to trigger impressions which relate to the proposed theme. A necessary trait in order to execute positive sensations (which follow up on cues, impressions, and finally the theme) is to eliminate negative cues:

Ensuring the integrity of the customer experience requires more than layering on positive cues. Experience stagers also must eliminate anything that diminishes, contradicts, or distracts attention from the theme. Guests to most constructed spaces - malls, offices, buildings, or airplanes - find them littered with meaningless or trivial messages.¹⁵⁰

The constructedness of the festival site is recognizable, but after all, it is a festival site in which not all the negative cues can be eliminated. One still has to pay with money, see certain kinds of backgrounds (back stages), and personnel wandering about. One still has to charge his or her phone or use the toilet; the latter all being things that do not necessarily belong to the themes that *Down The Rabbit Hole* proposes in staging their experience. However, negative cues are reduced to the bare minimum. As I have stressed above, the festival terrain (and its potential) has its boundaries. Although most of the boundaries are natural, the ones that are not are made to appear as though they were, for instance by using turf to cover up fences. It is important to notice that a festival terrain is not the place of psychedelics, nature, and freedom itself, but that there are multiple impressions staged that try to aim the focus of the visitor towards these themes. Those multiple impressions transform a space into something that can convey a message, a story, or an experience: a place. As I will argue in the following chapter, using Henri Lefebvre's *Spatial Triad*, that an organisation can use spaces to impose ideology in such a way that the visitors will re-enact them. Some of the impressions are cleverly covered and themed, others are less amendable. However, festivals as *Valkhof Festival* make use of toilets by an organisation that calls itself 'The Plees To Be'. The latter even capitalizes on the time one spends on waiting in line to use the toilet. That is to say that even toilets can be the site of theatre. Moreover, toilets are also part of commercialization and customization. I return to the topics of commercialization and customization below, because - in the words of Pine and Gilmore - customization is one step up the ladder.

¹⁵⁰ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'The Show Must Go On', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 55.

3.3.1. Stepping up the ladder: Economic Progression at the Festival Site:

In what way does *Down The Rabbit Hole* make efforts to stage an experience? What kind of experience is the result of their affordances? I will elaborate on the aforementioned description of the festival site and analyse them according to Pine and Gilmore's contributions to the "Emerging Experience Economy," as they term the progression that was going on around the turn of the century. They sensed a tipping point in the economic sector, because a mere commodity could be transformed into an experience. Once coffee has been eaten by a Loewak (feline creature), a regular coffee bean is changed to Kopi (coffee) Loewak, which is one of the most expensive beans available. Likewise, thinking about painting, a painting made by me would be less profitable than a painting made by pupils of Rembrandt, which in turn are way less worth than paintings made by Rembrandt himself. In both instances, what makes the difference? Both goods - coffee and a painting - do not seem so different at first sight. It is the underlying storyline or meaning that makes the commodity into a good, then into a commodity, and finally into a service. A service is an addition on top of a good, which makes it customised for a client.¹⁵¹ When those services are embedded in a theatrical surrounding, the progression to an experience can be made. Imagine buying your own Rembrandt at a Christie's auction, in the midst of world's largest art collectors, or drinking your own cup of Kopi Loewak whilst being on a holiday in Indonesia. Ergo, when goods are not merely mass-produced, but also customized for certain groups of clients, they can become services.

Goods are standardized for anonymous customers, while services are customized for a particular individual [...] Goods are inventoried, while services are delivered on demand [...] Finally, goods are tangible, while services are intangible.¹⁵²

At the same time, when a service becomes '*specific* to individual consumers [...], *particular* in its characteristics [and] *singular* in its purpose to benefit this customer, it may transform into an experience.'¹⁵³ The latter occurs only whenever the service is customised towards a specific target audience. Whereas goods are of an industrial nature, tangible, standardized, manufactured, and bought by a user, services are delivered on demand, intangible, customized, and brought to the client by a provider.¹⁵⁴ Experiences are staged, memorable,

¹⁵¹ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Welcome to the Experience Economy', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 5.

¹⁵² Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Get Your Act Together', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 71.

¹⁵³ Idem: 70.

¹⁵⁴ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Welcome to the Experience Economy', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 6.

personal, and become clear over duration and is being sold to guests.¹⁵⁵ These theories are viable to prove that festivals organise themselves in another way, and analyse the ways in which contemporary organisations in the musical industry try to sell their products.

¹⁵⁵ Ibidem.

3.3.2. The actual festival site;

Different ways of engaging the visitor

The festival site itself has a very distinct feel and outlook, as I have described above. The recurrent theme is all-encompassing, and the festival site resembles a big playground. Multiple attractions are featured in which the visitor can actively participate and the majority of featured activities are all themed. What do these different ways of engagement trigger within the customer? Keeping active participation and engagement in mind: what is the difference between contemporary festivals and more traditional festivals? What makes contemporary festivals this compelling, taking staged experiences into account? To explain the way in which the experience gets staged, for Pine and Gilmore, I make use of Lefebvre's findings on spaces, places, and the spatial triad.

'Staging experiences is not about entertaining customers; it's about engaging them'.¹⁵⁶ For Pine and Gilmore, there are several different experiential dimensions which can engage a customer with a product. These four different aspects are absorption, active participation, immersion, and passive participation. They classify different types within those realms. An 'escapist' immerses himself, and actively participates (think of someone wandering off into nature, choosing his or her own destination, directing his or her own story). An aesthetic immerses itself in a passive manner. For instance, when one is visiting a museum and loses itself in different kind of artworks featured. The other end of the spectre is absorption, which can be passively executed as in entertainment (the couch potato), or actively (which is educational, the participant actively engages itself to learn).¹⁵⁷

These four categories can be applied to different kind of staged experiences. The most compelling experience occurs when all four dimensions are featured.

When all four realms abide within a single setting, then and only then does *plain space* become a *distinctive place* for staging an experience. Occurring over a period of time, staged experiences require a sense of place to entice the guests to *spend more time* engaged in the offering.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Setting the Stage', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 30.

¹⁵⁷ Idem: 30-31.

¹⁵⁸ Idem: 42.

3.3.3. *Down The Rabbit Hole's* mental map and the spatial triad

Henri Lefebvre and Kevin Lynch

In other words: applying features that trigger experiences that could be ranked under each of the four dimensions transforms a random, arbitrary, or anonymous space into a distinctive, engaging and experiential place. There is an important difference between space and place, which is Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre's (1901-1991) point of inquiry in his *The Right To The City*.¹⁵⁹ To explain his theories I use another Marxist philosopher's findings - Andy Merrifield - on Henri Lefebvre, in his chapter 'Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation', in the book *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*.¹⁶⁰ The transformation from a space to a place is one in which the intentions of the organisation and other involved parties make the difference. In other words: places are not neutral, while spaces are. Places differ from each other.¹⁶¹ Lefebvre's theory is about *Spatiology*; the relation between space and place (the general and the particular) is important. What decisions create a transformation and a difference at a contemporary festival site?

Lefebvre has written theories about a spatial construction called the *Spatial Triad*.¹⁶² This triad contains three fluxes that constantly influence each other and produce space. Space is divided in three particles. Firstly, there is the *conceived* space; this is a produced space by the ideology of the "professionals and planners" such as engineers. This is a very abstract space, because it conceives the ideology in its practice and thus is space with an order and knowledge in signs and codes. This is space as it supposed to look and function, structured by the organisation. In the case of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, the organisation guarantees all the right and themed props, stages, and activities for the audience to engage with. In other words, at a contemporary festival site as *Down The Rabbit Hole*, the organisation plays an enabling role. The way in which the audience is supposed to participate is decided upon. At the same time, this decision implies the active participation of the festival visitor, as I have described in the first chapter of this thesis. The next element of the spatial triad, *perceived* space, is a spatial practice of that imposed ideology. Audiences perform the rules that are proposed in space. In this way, when festival visitors use the opportunity to organise their own Porto-Party, wander about the festival terrain and do some engaging activities, lie around in your own dug "rabbit" hole, eat and drink your way through the large amount of food and drink stands, or either watch (part of) a show, visitors are abiding. People are perceiving ideology, most of the times unconscious, and performing it. In my case study of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, conceived and perceived space overlap greatly. The last particle of

¹⁵⁹ Lefebvre, Henri (1968) *The Right To The City*.

¹⁶⁰ Merrifield, Andy (1993) 'Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation', in: *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. New Series, vol. 18: no. 4: 516-531.

¹⁶¹ Idem: 516-517.

¹⁶² Merrifield, Andy (1993): 523-524.

the spatial triad is particularly interesting when regarding the experience economy. When do those conceived or perceived spaces become *lived* spaces? In other words, when does an organisational practice become a personal experience? This space functions on personal experienced space, dreams, and memories. Hence, this “knowledge” resides inside the human body. The subject moves from place to place in certain personally known *networks*.¹⁶³ The latter is also of key importance in urban city planner Kevin Andrew Lynch’s theories on mental mapping in the chapter ‘The City Image and its Elements’, in his book *The Image of The City*.¹⁶⁴ Residents of cities use their personal knowledge to create a mental map, to navigate through their city. Usually, there are five different elements present in those maps: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks.¹⁶⁵ Paths bring the residents from one place to the other by foot, bicycle, or car. Edges are ‘boundaries between two phases, linear breaks in continuity.’¹⁶⁶ Districts are identifiable spaces with boundaries, with certain characteristics; districts are able to be entered. Nodes are either convergences of paths as a concentration thereof. Therefore, they are related both to paths and districts. Landmarks are external points of reference. A highly identifiable structure would be suitable to be a landmark. In this fashion personal thoughts get connected with objects, which reside within spaces. Thus, your house is not just your house, it is your *home* and nobody else’s. In this conception, a house is a space, and your home is a place. For a festival site this could mean that customers who have visited the festival in earlier instances know certain (festival) site specific features. For instance, they could bring their swimming shorts to swim in the adjacent lying waters, know their shortcuts between the Hotot and Teddy Widder, or memorize a certain place because you experienced something very personal as meeting your significant other. People communicate with each other and more often than not meet at landmarks (as the rabbit statue or the entrance gate). People travel through paths, and then bump into each other at nodes. People may want to fulfil a specific need to relax, and go to the “Idyllische Veldje”, or people may find that they have just entered the district of the “Ruige Veldje”. Point being: those dialectics of space transform a space, in this instance: the Groene Heuvels, into a place, which, due to a structured and themed map by the organisation, is very suitable to transform into a mental map; a mental map about a place in which there are three different practicing forces, which all have a definite effect upon the festival site. To stage a rich and compelling experience, the spatial triad has to function to the fullest. This triad can be used very well to map the actions taken to transform a specific site. Moreover, the way in which people perform and live conceived space also cares for the specific experience a customer lives when visiting the festival.

¹⁶³ Idem: 524.

¹⁶⁴ Lynch, Kevin (1960) ‘The City Image and its Elements’, in: *The Image of the City*. Massachusetts: MIT Press: 46-83.

¹⁶⁵ Idem: 47-48.

¹⁶⁶ Ibidem.



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¹⁶⁷ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) 'Plattegrond', in: *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: September 9, 2016): <http://downtherabbithole.nl/plattegrond>.

3.3.4. Four Experiential Realms

The total experience by Pine & Gilmore

Then, how do the four dimensions that Pine & Gilmore proposed function within this space? If space is transformed into place by the staging of an experience, how do these performances and abidings of the organisational and spatial ideology work? In other words, what spatial strategies make *Down The Rabbit Hole* into a distinctive place, and not an anonymous space? At *Down The Rabbit Hole*, the visitor can engage him or herself in different activities located at the festival site. Experiences derived from activities organised in space can be manifested in four different dimensions mentioned above. Please keep in mind that the four experiential realms are only categorisations; they often overlap.

[The escapist] involve[s] much greater immersion than entertainment or education experiences. In fact they are the polar opposite of pure entertainment experiences. The guest of the escapist experience is completely immersed in it, an actively involved participant.¹⁶⁸

The escapist is actively immersed, and can change the course of the experience. In this way, staging your own party at the festival site, building your own raft or engaging yourself in other activities: 'rather than playing the passive role of couch potato, watching others act, the individual becomes an actor, able to affect the actual performance.'¹⁶⁹ The audience can actually determine (at least a part of) the festivals look, feel, and program. And the latter is exactly the organisational purpose. Another example of escapist strategies is co-determining the line-up, because of frequent social media - primarily FaceBook - inquiries from the festival organisation to the guests (and very often also visitors amongst themselves, which does not remain unnoticed by the festival organisation in such a connected, linked society). Lastly, the audience (visitor, participant, and customer) influences the way the festival site looks. When very few tickets have been sold, the festival site looks empty and not cosy at all and the other way around. In other words, the escapist does have a lot of impact on the contemporary festival actual look and feel.

The aesthetic is passively immersed. They cannot influence the outcome of the event. The guest in this kind of experience just wants to be there.¹⁷⁰ Examples of aesthetic experiences are when people are visiting a museum, go to the cinema, or visit a festival. However, their immersion is not completely without impact. More often than not the audience can influence the outcome of a concert, by applauding (and in this way asking) the artist to perform another song, in the form of an encore. Moreover, they can also influence an artist's

¹⁶⁸ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Setting the Stage', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 33.

¹⁶⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁷⁰ Ibidem.

set by simply not turning up. The latter would primarily be categorized under escapism. At the same time, another part of the audience often proves not to partake at all, and passively immerse, enjoying the proposed experience. Those would be categorized as aestheticians.

The other end of the axis encloses absorption. With immersion, the guest goes into the experience. The visitor visits a museum, cinema, or festival, and is actively or passively connected with the experience. With absorption, the experience goes into the customer. The guest that is passively absorbing the experience is for instance the couch potato, who lies around and is switching between different channels on his television set. The latter is classified as entertainment. The active participating experience in absorption is the educational realm. A guest may partake in discussions in the classroom, for instance. In a festival setting, the entertainment realm may either be the guest that visits shows, vaguely paying attention, because he or she lies in the grass. The educational aspect can be the fact that a visitor improves his or her musical knowledge; by diving into the line-up and the performances of the festival or that the visitor involves himself deeply in a conversation at one of the many food stands.

By providing experiences which could be categorized under each of the four experiential realms, a rich, diverse, and demanding event is staged. In this respect, contemporary festivals delve deeper into the organisation of events than traditional festivals. Pine and Gilmore's point: 'Set the stage by exploring the possibilities of each realm'.¹⁷¹ Each of the four realms ask for another kind of immersion of the visitor: 'While guests partaking of an educational experience may want to *learn*, of an escapist experience to *do*, of an entertainment experience want to [...] *sense* [...] those partaking of an aesthetic experience just want to *be* there.'¹⁷² Put differently: these four experiential realms all answer to different needs of the audience in space. In answering them, a total experience could be triggered.

The sweet spot for any compelling experience is [...] a mnemonic place, a tool aiding in the creation of memories, distinct from the normally uneventful world of goods and services. Its very design invites you to enter, and to return again and again. Its space is layered with amenities - props - that correspond with how the space is used and rid of any features that do not follow this function.¹⁷³

The four experiential realms take place in space, and those realms are all performances of invitations to act in a certain fashion. Therefore, they are a product of the Lefebvre's spatial triad. When space becomes lived space through the spatial triad and a specific occurrence, four realms come together and form an experience. Put differently: space is structured in a

¹⁷¹ Idem: 40.

¹⁷² Idem: 35.

¹⁷³ Idem: 43.

specific way, because *Down The Rabbit Hole*'s organisation wants to pursue their goals: to let their audience play, fool around, find the inner child and discover their new favourite artist.

3.3.5. Experiences:

Site specific features which transform the festival into a theatre

These last applications are met in a greater manner at contemporary festivals. The transformation from space to place and from service to experience finds itself in the accumulation of differences. Then, in what specific ways is the festival site equipped with props and amenities to provide those experiences? Keeping The Experience Economy in mind, what important features does the festival site of *Down The Rabbit Hole* bear?

The first step is envisioning a well-defined theme¹⁷⁴ [...] At its best, theming an experience means scripting a story that would seem incomplete without guests' participation.¹⁷⁵ [...] The key to successfully theming an experience really lies in determining what will actually prove to be compelling and captivating.¹⁷⁶

For *Down The Rabbit Hole*, it means exploring, adventure, and entering unopened doors. In other words, the journey *Down The Rabbit Hole* is not made without visitors doing so. The story is completed when visitors explore new food, make new friends, and discover new music and activities. *Down The Rabbit Hole* encourages its visitors to involve themselves in previously unexplored activities. On the one hand, to make people spend their money. On the other hand, part of their program is not known beforehand - even amongst their target audience - so they have to urge their audience to try new things. Lastly, trying new things fits perfectly with their vision. Tumbling *Down The Rabbit Hole* and experiencing a world that is psychedelic, mysterious and unknown; one has to try new things. Now, where does a compelling experience manifest itself? Pine and Gilmore find that to stage a successful experience, the staged event - and all the strategies and organisation supporting the latter - should be conceived as a theatre.

Formally, a *role* is the part one or more workers play. It is divided into functional *responsibilities* to support the acting out of the [script=processes]. Contributing as much to the success of the enterprise's on-stage performance are many back-stage activities, some of which are completed before the performance (designers setting the stage) and some during the live performance (stage managers and crew getting the act together). Although usually associated only with those on stage, the terms *actor* and *role* apply equally to all workers and their responsibilities.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'The Show Must Go On', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: **47**.

¹⁷⁵ Idem: 48.

¹⁷⁶ Idem: 49.

¹⁷⁷ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Now Act Your Part', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: **140**.

Thus, in line of their theory which I outlined above, *everything* should be themed. In this way, everyone participating in the creative process of the event is an actor. As they write, the processes which make up the event, is the script that would function as the basis of the play. They developed a theory in which they wrote the different roles and functions of theatre, because they cleverly dodge paradigms that made up the processes in service and manufacturing based economies:

Theatre provides a new framework of particular value when seeking to stage experiences. Embracing the theatre model prevents the misappropriation of old economic paradigms, such as data “mining” and service “factories,” which run the risk of perpetuating work practices out of sync with the competitive demands of the emerging Experience Economy. The manufacturer of goods or extractor of commodities does not engage the customer.¹⁷⁸

Pine and Gilmore sum up different principles in which a festival site can provide a thematically appealing atmosphere. An organisation has to alter a guest’s sense of reality; ‘a reality other than every day.’¹⁷⁹ Even better is to completely transform one’s sense of reality. ‘The richest venues possess themes that *fully* alter one’s sense of reality by affecting the experience of space, time and matter.’¹⁸⁰ The latter is the goal of *Down The Rabbit Hole*: to alter the sense of one’s reality. The festival is meant to feature ‘adventure, confusion, surrealism and psychedelics, since the upswing of pop culture in the liberated sixties the inspiration for (psych)rock, artists, designers and filmmakers... There’s good company, so get ready to tumble... It’s A Campingflight *Down The Rabbit Hole!*’¹⁸¹ Moreover, the (ab)use of alcohol and other mind altering can also greatly alter one’s sense of reality, although the latter might not necessarily be inclined by the festival organisation. Lastly, the festival takes place far away from the visitors’ homes, on the Groene Heuvels in Beuningen. The way in which an event themes itself has to ‘integrate space, time, and matter into a cohesive, realistic whole.’¹⁸² Or in the case of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, a confusing and psychedelic whole. A vast majority of the activities is adapted to these themes. You can watch Powaqqatsi¹⁸³, the second part of the Qatsi-trilogy, which are documentaries scored by a hypnotising, psychedelic Philip Glass soundtrack. There are after parties featured bearing names as ‘Fuzzy Fever: Voodoo Night’, in which the organisation states that the Fuzzy Lop

¹⁷⁸ Idem: 139.

¹⁷⁹ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) ‘The Show Must Go On’, in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 50.

¹⁸⁰ Ibidem.

¹⁸¹ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) ‘DTRH’, in: *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: June 16, 2016): <http://downtherabbithole.nl/dtrh>.

¹⁸² Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) ‘The Show Must Go On’, in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 50.

¹⁸³ Reggio, Godfrey (1988) *Powaqqatsi*. United States: The Cannon Group.

stage will be haunted: 'angry ghosts, masks, obscure garments, laughing skulls and grinding skulls will make you dance in a purple haze of forging fire and black magic.'¹⁸⁴ The winner of the Rabbit Hole Grand Prix, 'Periscopista',¹⁸⁵ is an installation floating on the water, which lights up at night to be controlled by a participating audience. The art project brings the psychedelics to the adjacent waters of *Down The Rabbit Hole*. Maybe one of the most interesting (and daring) examples is the 'Wilde Haren x Desperados' stage. This stage operates in utmost mystification. Therefore, its line up is never announced. The festival visitor has to "find" their way to the docked ark, in which the actual event is always a surprise, because it is never announced beforehand. The visitor can engage itself in the performance art of 'Club Gewalt', which is, according to the site, everywhere and nowhere at the same time. 'They sing better than Mariah Carey, have found Elvis in a cupcake and they will find Atlantis.'¹⁸⁶ Or take part in another performance: 'De Dansers' tell stories which lay bare the essentials of the human body and soul by dancing.

'While the theme forms the foundation of an experience, the experience must be rendered with indelible *impressions*. Impressions are the "take-aways" of the experience; the congruent integration of a number of impressions affects the individual and thereby fulfils the theme.'¹⁸⁷ At the same time, 'ensuring the integrity of the customer experience requires more than layering on positive cues. Experience stagers also must eliminate anything that diminishes, contradicts, or distracts attention from the theme.'¹⁸⁸ All the above mentioned activities, or impressions for Pine and Gilmore - on top of the music program, have something in common with one of the festival themes. But they would not necessarily make sense outside of that story. Would an average grownup build a castle made of clay in his backyard? Would a normal person dig a hole for no apparent reason? Would he also build a raft to challenge the adjacent waters?¹⁸⁹ Would he jump a trampoline or try hula hooping? I guess not, but these activities do form the foundation of the story that is *Down The Rabbit Hole*. As Pine and Gilmore state: 'Themes are strengthened by creating multiple places within a place.'¹⁹⁰ To come back to Lefebvre, different places with their own ideologies and with their own proposed set of rules of how to behave. Moreover, a part of the performances and activities which are featured at the festival site are not known yet prior to the festival; the line-up of the Wild Haren stage being the perfect example. Crucial to telling a compelling story, or

¹⁸⁴ One event, one app (2016) 'ontdek', in: *Official Down The Rabbit Hole festival app 2016*.

¹⁸⁵ Biersteker, Thijs (2016) *Periscopista*. Installation art. De Groene Heuvels, Beuningen (June 27, 2016): <http://periscopista.com/>.

¹⁸⁶ One event, one app (2016) 'ontdek', in: *Official Down The Rabbit Hole festival app 2016*.

¹⁸⁷ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'The Show Must Go On', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 52.

¹⁸⁸ Idem: 55-56.

¹⁸⁹ Matze, Arthur (2016) 'Op Down The Rabbit Hole Lijkt Al Het Absurde Ineens Volkomen Normaal', in: *Noisey; music by vice* (addressed: July 29, 2016): http://noisey.vice.com/nl/blog/down-the-rabbit-hole-2016?utm_source=noiseyfbnd.

¹⁹⁰ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'The Show Must Go On', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 51.

staging an enriching experience, is to guarantee the unity of the whole. Festival themes are psychedelics and confusion, and the music program and side program all follow those guidelines: 'The theme must drive all the design elements and staged events of the experience toward a unified storyline that wholly captivates the customer. That is the essence of theme; all the rest simply lends support.'¹⁹¹ The story is in this case the sum of its parts. One of the parts of the experience - the story - for Pine and Gilmore is memorabilia. These are specific cues that trigger impressions, linked to the theme. Adding certain smells - the smell of food from the food stands, certain sights and sounds - the *Down The Rabbit Hole* entrance, and drinks can help to enrich the experience. 'Services turn into engaging experiences when layered with sensory phenomena.'¹⁹² At contemporary festivals, food merchandising is also regarded as part of the line up. For instance, *Best Kept Secret* featured a vast majority of different, all independent food stands (abiding new sincere rules of 'green' and biological, to leave as less of an ecological footprint behind as possible). They regard the food on their festival as central, and also feature videos on their website which contain the owners of a food stand explaining their choices and their creative process.¹⁹³ Memorabilia can also exist in the form of official merchandise of the festival itself, a group picture taken by the official *Down The Rabbit Hole* photographer or an autograph or set list of your favourite artist, or even consumption coins. This year visitors received a mysterious token, which came in different executions. They obviously - or do they? - mean nothing on their own, but they do contribute to the theme of confusion. *Down The Rabbit Hole*, and other contemporary music festivals as well, use every possible way to tell the story of their event and immerse their visitors as much as they can.

These experiences are targeted to a (slightly more) marginal audience. The traditional festival *PinkPop* has to book very well-known acts to sell their tickets, while more experiential festivals as *Down The Rabbit Hole* and *Best Kept Secret* sell part of their tickets because they stage such a compelling experience. This enables the organisation to make more distinctive choices about the line-up, story, side-program and decor. Actually, the audience is paying just for that experience. *Best Kept Secret*, for instance, can book acts that are wholly unknown to the audience, because their story is that the acts that they book are worthwhile, *because* they are less known. Moreover, they even claim that they have kept them secret for the audience, as their own little surprise: '*Best Kept Secret* wants to bring over illustrious headliners, exciting newcomers and cutting-edge revisionists, as well as enthralling secret shows and live sessions held in surprising environments.'¹⁹⁴ Lastly, to show that experiences can be staged in very different ways, *Best Kept Secret* keeps their story to a

¹⁹¹ Idem: 52.

¹⁹² Idem: 59.

¹⁹³ *Best Kept Secret* (2016) 'Menu', in: *Best Kept Secret* (addressed: July 29, 2016) <http://www.bestkeptsecret.nl/en/info/>. <http://www.bestkeptsecret.nl/menu/>.

¹⁹⁴ *Best Kept Secret* (2016) 'Info', in: *Best Kept Secret* (addressed: July 29, 2016) <http://www.bestkeptsecret.nl/en/info/>.

bare minimum, with a heavy emphasis on a qualitative and lesser known line-up of artists and food. Their stages are thematically called One, Two, Three, Four and Five in order to not distract their visitors from the actual product they are selling: the present of the artist which was formerly kept secret from its visitors.

3.4. Conclusion

The Festival Site

In staging an enriching, engaging, and entertaining experience, one thing is of key importance to Pine and Gilmore: the transformation from a plain, abstract and ordinary space into a distinctive place. To prove that different choices at the festival site itself and on the Internet set the transformation in motion. I use the theories of Henri Lefebvre, as theorized upon by Andy Merrifield in his article 'Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation', in the book *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. For Lefebvre, there are three different kinds of spaces that form the theory of the Spatial Triad: conceived, perceived, and lived space. Conceived space is space as it is meant to be used by visitors, made up by professionals and planners. When conceived space is actually performed by the target audience, it becomes perceived space. Lived space occurs when visitors recall places after experiencing personal events. Personal events cause the visitors to create personal narratives, related to specific places. An example of conceived space is the enabling role of the organisation of the festival (in this case *Down The Rabbit Hole*), who came up with a theme, and decent decor and props. The latter all being geared towards a trip *Down The Rabbit Hole*. It is important to notice that a name, theme and decor of a festival determine a certain ideology; which make visitors act in a certain manner. Next to that, the slogan is implementation of the theme - feeling free and letting loose - to determine the way visitors should be acting at the festival site. In this way, the festival site becomes a perceived space. Lastly, lived space is made of the visitors' memory. Personal experiences can transform a house to a home and *Down The Rabbit Hole* to a place of extraordinary happiness, freedom or euphoria. Following the plenty of offerings the festival site bears, the visitor has innumerable chances to create different experiences, whereas the visitors of traditional festivals have to settle for the experiences they derive from the music alone.

The main difference between the spatial triad at *Down The Rabbit Hole* and a traditional festival is that *Down The Rabbit Hole* makes effort to transform a space, de Groene Heuvels, into a place, by making distinct choices about their decorations. To speak with terms of Pine and Gilmore, they set the stage and transform their enterprise into a theatre. Everything is themed at *Down The Rabbit Hole*, and every small bit of text (on social media) is written in a specific themed language. Every corner of the festival site is covered with a different activity. The "Kreeftenkerk", an addition to the festival with respect to the last editions in the form of a church where the visitor can enjoy a comprehensive meal, features surprise performances (including Seasick Steve, who apparently was not booked by organisation MOJO, but went to the festival on his own behalf) and dinner performances by the Dutch rapper Fresku. In another corner you can build your own raft, which was featured this year again in the spirit of tradition, because it was also featured in the two previous

editions. Yet another corner of the festival site features a gigantic hammock, which makes the visitor feel as though he or she is the shrunken Alice in Wonderland, before she drinks the magic potion. And in yet another outpost of the festival site, “La Salón”, you can learn ‘ballroom dancing to unpredictable music.’¹⁹⁵ Nearly every square meter of the festival houses another activity, of which the majority is not listed in the official program.

Down The Rabbit Hole transforms into a rather bizarre midnight funfair after sundown. You can experience something different in every single location, and you stumble upon another spontaneously thrown party around every corner. You’re jumping rope between containers, ballroom dancing on old indie-hits or watching Jameszoo and Johan Gijsen awaken spirits amidst several piles of skulls. [...] Everything fell into place this year, despite of the fact that all this craziness felt a bit forced the foregoing editions. The side program was put together with an awful lot of care and love. Above all, and it was incredibly funny.¹⁹⁶

At *Down The Rabbit Hole*, the side programming is immense whereas traditional festivals are more specifically geared towards the main program, and to its headliners. *Down The Rabbit Hole* houses surprises all over its festival site, whilst *PinkPop* has three stages and very little to no side program at all. In any case, all the surprises at *Down The Rabbit Hole*, which may feel surreal to festival visitors, match the theme of going *Down The Rabbit Hole*.

In addition, the transformation from space to place is invigorated by the four experiential realms as described by Pine and Gilmore. Different activities can engage visitors in distinctive manners. Due to the quantity of the side program at *Down The Rabbit Hole*, they can answer to the needs of all the four experiential realms. Escapist needs are met in people wanting to escape the drag of everyday life. The escapist can organise his or her own after party at *Down The Rabbit Hole*, by coming up with a plan beforehand and turning it in. And, as stated by the festival organisation, none of the features made up by visitors are impossible to realize. One of the parties, thrown by Valkuil B.V., is one of the dullest and awkward office parties one can imagine. For a random visitor, what remains inside is a total surprise, and this meets the theme of the festival.¹⁹⁷ On the other hand, the aesthetic is immersed passively. People who are engaged in a passive manner can turn up everywhere, and they would just as well be present at a traditional festival like *PinkPop*. The aesthetic is the person who enjoys the scenes of a festival, whilst having no impact on it. The last experiential realms are immersive. The visitor immerses him or herself in an experience. The other two experiential

¹⁹⁵ One event, one app (2016) ‘ontdek’, in: *Official Down The Rabbit Hole festival app 2016*.

¹⁹⁶ Pisart, Timo (June 29, 2016) ‘De tien magische momenten van *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2016’, in: *3voor12* (addressed: August 9, 2016): <http://3voor12.vpro.nl/nieuws/2016/down-the-rabbit-hole/Magische-momenten.html>.

¹⁹⁷ Middelink, Egbert (June 25, 2016) ‘DTRH16: Verrassende feestjes en awkward moments’, in: *3voor12*. (addressed: August 4, 2016): <http://3voor12.vpro.nl/nieuws/2016/down-the-rabbit-hole/DTRH-zaterdag/DTRH16--Porto-Parties.html>.

realms are of an absorbing nature: the experience goes into the visitor. Actively absorbing experience is educational, passively absorbing experience is entertaining. Once all of the four realms are staged, an experience can be worthwhile, according to Pine and Gilmore. The diverse set of (side) programming and activities enable the visitor to engage him or herself in different ways.

What are the site specific features that utter a visitor to experience the tumbling *Down The Rabbit Hole*? The first and foremost feature is the surprise effect. Part of the program is not known beforehand, the line-up of the hip-hop stage Wilde Haren being the best example. The side program is immense, every corner of the festival houses another activity. It matches the theme of the festival, which is very important according to Pine and Gilmore. To stage a compelling experience, positive cues need to be foregrounded, and negative cues, if possible, have to be eliminated. Positive cues are all activities and decor that match the proposed theme, negative cues are personnel, for instance, that distract the visitors from the staged theatre. A good example of eliminating negative cues at *Down The Rabbit Hole* is that all the fences are covered in turf, so that it is still linked to the natural, which is very apparent in Alice's wandering. An example of a negative cue which is transformed to a positive cue is the entrance gate. The gate is serving a purpose that is needed at the festival site, the checking of wristbands: entrance passes. Normally, this is a very dull activity, but *Down The Rabbit Hole* made their entrance gate into proverbial rabbit hole, including projected lights, running water on cogwheels and trees growing on top of it. The festival organisation leaves no stone unturned when it comes to transforming the space into a distinctive place: A Campingflight *Down The Rabbit Hole*.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, its majority of activities enable the visitors to engage themselves in four different ways. The aesthetic realm can be met while watching the installation art of Periscopista. However, when a visitor is standing in the centre, right across from the floating art, and makes certain movements and sounds, the installations art mimics your gestures. The latter implies the escapist experiential realm, being able to alter the outcome of the event. Moreover, the Periscopista piece itself is of experiential nature. Thijs Biersteker won the Rabbit Hole Grand Prix, and was put into place to expose his artwork at the festival, changing the outcome and outlook of the festival site itself. Lastly, there are the Porto-Parties, which are to be figured out by the visitors. The visitor can wander through the entertaining realm by lying around and enjoying the many psychedelic themed movies that are screened in the Tramontana (an entirely "green" building, in which a visitor can also charge his or her mobile phone), just like *Ex Machina*, *Labyrinth*, or *Liza, the Fox-Fairy*. And a visitor can be educated by talking to his peers, and learning a thing or two about the program, or new ways of producing food. In addition, you can also learn how to speak - to be able to tell your story at the "Speakers Corner": 'follow a

¹⁹⁸ MOJO Concerts (2016) '*Down The Rabbit Hole*', in: MOJO (addressed: August 9, 2016): <http://www.MOJO.nl/festivals/down-the-rabbit-hole/>.

workshop storytelling in the Church next to Hotot. Professionals prepare you for your moment in the spotlights, because everyone at the Speakers Corner knows: listening is silver, speaking is gold.’¹⁹⁹

At traditional festivals, themes and different realms are also met. *PinkPop*, for example, houses his pink colour (mainly hats) as the theme of their festival. The ‘pink’ in the name refers to ‘Pinksteren’ (Pentecost). However, the reference back to Pentecost is hardly made. Moreover, the date of the festival does not even collide with Pentecost anymore, because it is harder to book artists that early in the festival season.²⁰⁰ The four experiential realms are featured at *PinkPop*, but in contrast to *Down The Rabbit Hole*, *PinkPop* houses little to no side-program. Its main focal point is the ‘pop’ in the name. The most well-known artists are booked for the highest prices. In 2014, approximately four million euro was spent on getting The Rolling Stones to Landgraaf.²⁰¹ *PinkPop*, being the oldest festival in the Netherlands, had declining ticket sales back in 2004. Jan Smeets decided that they had to invest in “bigger” artists, and teamed up with MOJO Concerts - the same booking agency that organises *Down The Rabbit Hole* - to book them. In the following years, ticket sales tripled, as did the wages for the artists.²⁰² That is to say, budget at *PinkPop* is spent mainly on the program, not as much on extracurricular activities or a side-program. The last two care for a diverse and surprising effect at *Down The Rabbit Hole*, it engages and entertains the audience. Put differently, these two festivals have other strategies. *Down The Rabbit Hole* flourishes in putting up an extensive side programme, and *PinkPop* relies very heavily on booking headliners.

¹⁹⁹ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) ‘Speaker’s Corner’, in: *Down The Rabbit Hole* (addressed: August 9, 2016) <http://downtherabbithole.nl/programma/speakers-corner>.

²⁰⁰ *PinkPop* (2016) ‘History’, in: *PinkPop* (addressed: August 9, 2016) <http://www.PinkPop.nl/history/>.

²⁰¹ Kuiper, Amanda (June 7, 2014) ‘Hoe *PinkPop* een miljoenenbusiness werd’, in: *nrc.nl* (addressed: August 9, 2016) <http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2014/06/07/hoepinkpop-een-miljoenenbusiness-werd-a1501428>.

²⁰² Ibidem.

4. Chapter 3

Festivallization and Democratization of the Online Environment of *Down The Rabbit Hole*

Online, participatory strategies immerse festival visitors

3.1. Introduction

Down The Rabbit Hole's content which is featured on-site, beforehand and afterwards reaches the audience via the Internet. [Their website](#), [Twitter](#), [FaceBook](#) and [Instagram](#) account are different outlets which market a new addition to the line-up, a new action, ticket-alert, and so on. Pine and Gilmore's *The Experience Economy* does hint towards any industry discontinuities such as the digitization and direct-connection potential of the Internet that might be exploited to the company's advantage:²⁰³ 'The Internet is the greatest force for commoditization known to man.'²⁰⁴ However, they do not elaborate in what exact ways digitization does help to guarantee an immersive effect. Frank Rose's *The Art of Immersion* explores the ways in which the digital age blurs all kinds of barriers, especially between the author and the audience, and therefore the concept of storytelling. Stories have always been told, but storytelling changes as technology does. For instance, Charles Dickens wrote stories in newspapers - which emerged due to the invention of the press, in which his audience had to wait for a week until the next bit of the story was told. However,

as each of these media achieved production and distribution on an industrial scale, we saw the emergence of the twentieth-century mass media - newspapers, magazines, movies, music, TV. And with that, there was no role left for the consumer except to consume.²⁰⁵

This market domination of the entertainment industry by multinational conglomerates did not last very long. With the emergence of Internet to a global scale - accessible to the masses, everything changed. The Internet, in its essence, does not feature linear stories. It is up to people how, when, and where those stories are being listened to, or how they are being written (created). The last strategy implies one of the most important alterations which came along with the Internet: it is participatory. The audience does not merely listen, but they can tell stories just as well as big corporations. But while the latter are exclusive, because they make a very clear distinction between the storyteller and the audience, the former is inclusive, and more democratic. Of course, the reach of big corporations is much bigger, but

²⁰³ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Now Act Your Part', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 146.

²⁰⁴ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Welcome to the Experience Economy', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 10.

²⁰⁵ Rose, Frank (2012) 'Prologue', in: *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton Company Inc.: 2.

they can be contested, or even altered by the audience. In short: Internet is changing entertainment. To delve deeper into the effect of immersion, I also make use of Henry Jenkins' theories about audience participation and media convergence. In what ways do social media, and audience participation enhance an immersive feeling within the visitor? Does this immersive feeling contribute to the overall theme of the festival?

Please note that I use different terms which all denote similar meanings. The texts I use in this chapter originate from different fields of inquiry, and a variety of backgrounds. In my writing, I switch between them, in order to follow the appropriate terminology of the theorists I am addressing. For Pine and Gilmore, who address events as though they were theatre plays, the festival ground would be the theatre, accomplices are actors, and they are staging an experience. For Rose, who I am using to address every way in which the message comes across *outside of* the festival site, there is a story that is being told. Stories can be told either by organisations, or by a participatory audience.

3.2. Social media & Internet, what happens prior to / after the festival?

The role of the audience by Henry Jenkins and Frank Rose

Themes are not only represented on posters, programme books, magazines, and on the festival site, but themes are being shared on the Internet and several similar media. Those physical examples (a vast range of events, which I portrayed above) immerse visitors, because of the experience that is staged. They seem to immerse the visitor in another world – a rabbit hole - that is ruled by hairy creatures; rabbits and needs a hallucinatory trip to visit. The experience that is staged is overwhelming in quantity - every corner of the festival houses another activity, and is formed on the basis of recurring themes as confusion, mystery, and psychedelics. How are those experiences, or those stories, told via the ways of the new media? Frank Rose, whose primary objective is to write about digital culture, has written on new online strategies which are being used to tell stories, in his book *The Art of Immersion*.²⁰⁶ In his point of view, new media force multinational conglomerates and other organisations to tell their story in another manner:

As mass media have become augmented by social media, storytelling of every sort has changed. No longer do we consume stories as they are told to us; now we share with one another in ways that weren't possible before. All sorts of stories – journalism, entertainment, advertising, history. [...] our roles have shifted and expanded. The role of the broadcaster is not just to speak but to listen; the role of the audience is not just to listen but to speak.²⁰⁷

The power roles in these new strategies are shifting from top-down to bottom-up, or rather meet halfway. Moreover, it is also important to entertain the customer, because he can choose to spend his money elsewhere:

For centuries, Western commerce had been built on a clear proposition: I give you money, you give me something of value. But like a rug merchant who invites the customer in for tea before discussing his wares, marketers were now beginning to sense that the customer had to be engaged and entertained. [...] "I believe all marketing is heading in that direction [...] this is a new way of telling stories".²⁰⁸

American media scholar Henry Jenkins has written about the digression of multinational conglomerates, and the progression of audience participation, which he terms media convergence, in his article 'Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in an Age of

²⁰⁶ Rose, Frank (2012) *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

²⁰⁷ Rose, Frank (2012) 'Introduction', in: *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.: xix-xx.

²⁰⁸ Rose, Frank (2012) 'The Dyslectic Storyteller', in: *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 27-28.

Media Convergence', in the book *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*.²⁰⁹ Stories are not only being told by the multinational conglomerates anymore, but increasingly by the participating audience. The latter is also the case at the actual festival site, as I stressed above. Then, how are the stories of *Down The Rabbit Hole* told, and what does this mean for the actual story? How is this story, supported by the actual experience of the festival, more immersive than a traditional festival?

²⁰⁹ Jenkins, Henry (2006) 'Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in an Age of Media Convergence', in: *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*. New York & London: New York University Press: 152-172.

3.3.1. Henry Jenkins and Frank Rose's field of inquiry

The actual media outlet

Imagine yourself being a visitor of *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2015. After a music-filled, intoxicated, and tiring weekend, at the last moment, the dates of the next festival are already announced. The festival had not even passed wholly yet. Next, a vast majority of activity rules over social media linked to the festival. Visitors can see themselves featured in official photographs, after movies or want to find out their self written article or photograph featured in the collaborative paper ("Het Gat"). [The first post \(July 3rd\) after Down The Rabbit Hole 2015](#) on their FaceBook timeline is the following:

Plunge into the Groene Heuvels one last time..... The #DTRH15 after movie is done! We hope to see you next year at the next edition of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, from June 24 till June 26. You can sign in to the FB-event here: <http://on.fb.me/1Kx78NA>. In the meantime, keep in touch via Twitter <http://bit.ly/1f9W5FR> and Instagram: <http://bit.ly/1LM26gh>.²¹⁰

[Down The Rabbit Hole 2015 - Official Aftermovie](#)



The after movie is filled with images put through a kaleidoscopic filter, to enhance the psychedelic theme of the festival. The first continuous shot is made out of images of the festival and its waters, all moving outwards to the edges of the frame, implying an inwards

²¹⁰ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (July 3, 2015) 'FaceBook Post', in: *FaceBook* (addressed: July 3, 2016): <https://www.FaceBook.com/DTRHfestival/posts/714628765309636>.

motion. The latter hints to the visitor, who is travelling to *Down The Rabbit Hole* one last time: 'Plunge into the Groene Heuvels one last time.'²¹¹ The movie is scored by artists that played the festival that year. In addition, festival visitors were invited by the FaceBook post to follow the progression to the next edition right away. Other after movies are also shared, [of specific stages as 'Wilde Haren' stage](#) and [the secret rave in the forest](#) organised by Het Blauwe Uur, featuring De Staat. The texts supporting these videos range from "where you there?" to "in case you missed it." Featured images are bits of dancing people, all obviously having a very good time. [Posts with photographs of official photographers](#) are shared on online channels, with words as "can you find yourself?" These updates via several different social media are kept up to schedule in a prompt manner. There is not one week in which no material is shared. In this way, once one is following the social media of the festival, there is hardly a way not to think about the festival at least once per week.

[Examples of next posts on FaceBook are the announcing of additions to the line-up of the next edition:](#)

Tumble into the third edition of *Down The Rabbit Hole* from June 24 till June 26 and prepare for a weekend full of adventure, turmoil, surrealism and psychedelics.²¹²

After which a list of artists' names appear in an official high-definition trailer. The trailer is full of turning, twitching and moving figures (especially circles, moving in circular manners) and flickering lights. The colour ranges from different shades of purple, to orange, blue, yellow, and pink. Those figures, movements and colour themes seem to come back throughout all their announcements, artwork, logos, and merchandise. It is an all-encompassing theme which lingers through all the official channels of *Down The Rabbit Hole*. The logo, and in this way the brand of the festival, are the different kinds of figures (and combinations thereof); those guarantee a recognizable feature for the audience, which is confronted with the logo in magazines (for instance: [Subbacultcha!](#) who create a programming guide every year), social media feed, and several posters scattered about in urban areas.

The last contributions to their social media channels are [ticket winning actions from pop music venues all across The Netherlands](#), which ask their visitors to choose their favourite artist from the line-up. In this respect, they are including the audience to tell the story about the programme and they get to know the audience's preferences. Secondly, [the festival organisation asked the visitors of the prior edition to vote on their festival](#), as they were nominated for the ['Best Medium-Sized European Festival'](#).²¹³ Lastly, there are two

²¹¹ Ibidem.

²¹² *Down The Rabbit Hole* (December 10, 2015) 'FaceBook Post', in: *FaceBook* (addressed: July 3, 2016): <https://www.FaceBook.com/DTRHfestival/posts/776062059166306>.

²¹³ Spaan, Debbie (2016) 'De shortlists voor European Festival Awards 2015', in: *Festileaks* (addressed: July 5, 2016): <http://festileaks.com/2015/11/de-shortlists-voor-european-festival-awards-2015/>.

actions which imply the impact of the audience on the content of the festival. There was the [Down The Rabbit Hole Grand Prix](#), which was actually an art contest shared on social media channels, to come up with your own public project for the festival:

Come up with, design and realize a public project on *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2016, using a €50.000,- budget. Think of a clever and relevant idea for the festival and win the money to actually execute it! Artists, designers, architects, game developers, interaction designers, performance artists, filmmakers and other creatives: make a proposal! The angle is wide; we are looking for something that hints towards an (interactive) installation, performance, sculpture, (themed) area or like minded creative project that will be available during the whole festival weekend. The project needs to bear similarities with art, popular culture and festival experience and will be visible/accessible for an audience at least as big as 500 people. Preference goes out to projects that actively engage the visitors.²¹⁴

In other words, the festival organisation has a certain amount of capital available for the audience, to come up with a way in which they can co-create an area of the festival site. The audience is given a chance to take up part of the role of the organisation. Another example is the “[Porto-Party](#)”, which allows the audience to come up with their own version of an after-party at the festival site:

Do you want to host your own party at *Down The Rabbit Hole*? Bring it on! At our new Porto-Parties, the best party animals may indulge themselves in a theme of their dreams. You decide upon the *music*, the *program*, the *dress code*, the *decor*, and the content of the *refrigerator*. Just one rule: nothing is too crazy for Porto-Parties.²¹⁵

Empty cabins at the festival site are made available by the festival organisation. Once your application is approved, the applicant and a team of professionals from the festival organisation set up an event, which stems from his or her own ideas.

Down The Rabbit Hole also produced [an app to install on your mobile phone](#). This app enables you to easily remain updated about (changes in) the festival program, receive a notification fifteen minutes before the start of an artist which a visitor added to their personal festival program, read additional information about parts of the programme which are not completely clear at first sight, and read social media (Twitter, Instagram and FaceBook) input in the app.

²¹⁴ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) ‘Rabbit Hole Grand Prix’, in: *Nieuws* (addressed: July 24, 2016): <http://downtherabbithole.nl/nieuws/rabbit-hole-grand-prix>.

²¹⁵ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) ‘Geef je Eigen DTRH Party’, in: *Nieuws* (addressed: July 24, 2016): <http://downtherabbithole.nl/nieuws/porto-parties-geef-je-eigen-dtrh-party>.

Finally, a festival organisation cannot have enough ways to share their story with the audience. The Internet also features a range of media on which *Down The Rabbit Hole's* stories can be told, and their themes can be shared. [Songkick features the line-up of Down The Rabbit Hole](#). They merged with another website called [CrowdSurge](#) in 2015 - 'the largest artist ticketing service in the world',²¹⁶ both Songkick and CrowdSurge have the same dream: 'every show should be a sell-out'.²¹⁷ If an organisation makes an effort to put their line-up on Songkick, their specific event will automatically appear in other websites and apps which feature the mentioned artist: Spotify. In this way, an organisation will also reach people who have never heard of one specific event, but do listen to the music on Spotify.

Spotify can also be used to create a playlist of the artists featured on the festival. Especially festivals which have a lesser known line-up tend to create one, [as did Down The Rabbit Hole](#), in all its editions.²¹⁸ People can get acquainted with the line-up in a very approachable manner, because there is just one or two songs per artist featured. In other words, every artist is equally represented in the Spotify playlist. More often than not, these songs are amongst the more well-known and "catchy" songs of the artist. The *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2016 Spotify playlist includes 'Morning Dew', by the National, 'Evil' by Savages and 'Korean Bodega' by Fun Lovin' Criminals. However, also the recently hyped artist Car Seat Headrest's 'Something Soon', cult-band Parquet Courts' 'Outside', and Woods' 'Sun City Creeps' are all represented. Lesser known acts as Daughter and White Denim are also included with two songs each.

[The line-up is also featured on Festivalinfo.nl](#); the biggest website in terms of giving an overview of all the big and small festivals in The Netherlands and Flanders. On its own, this site is visited the most of all the sites which try to provide information about musical activities. They also write festival(p)reviews, and they try to cover the full array of news and whereabouts about their featured festivals. In addition, [radio station 3FM also covers the festival](#), by installing a radio stand at the festival site, by interviewing visitors, bands and the organisation and by playing music of artists who are going to perform at the festival. Finally, [3voor12, a news website about all things music, also covered the festival](#), by making Snapchat compilations - made out of snaps people made at the festival site - recording shows of artists, writing reviews about specific shows and by sharing news about the festival. Innumerable other websites also feature news and the line-up of *Down The Rabbit Hole*.

[The Snapchat endeavours of 3voor12](#) tie in with a whole new way of sharing news: people wanting to create - and more important: share - their own story. For instance, people are creating their own stories on different blogs. For instance, Tbeest, a music blogger, wrote

²¹⁶ Songkick (2016) 'About', in: *Songkick* (addressed: July 29, 2016): <https://www.songkick.com/info/about>.

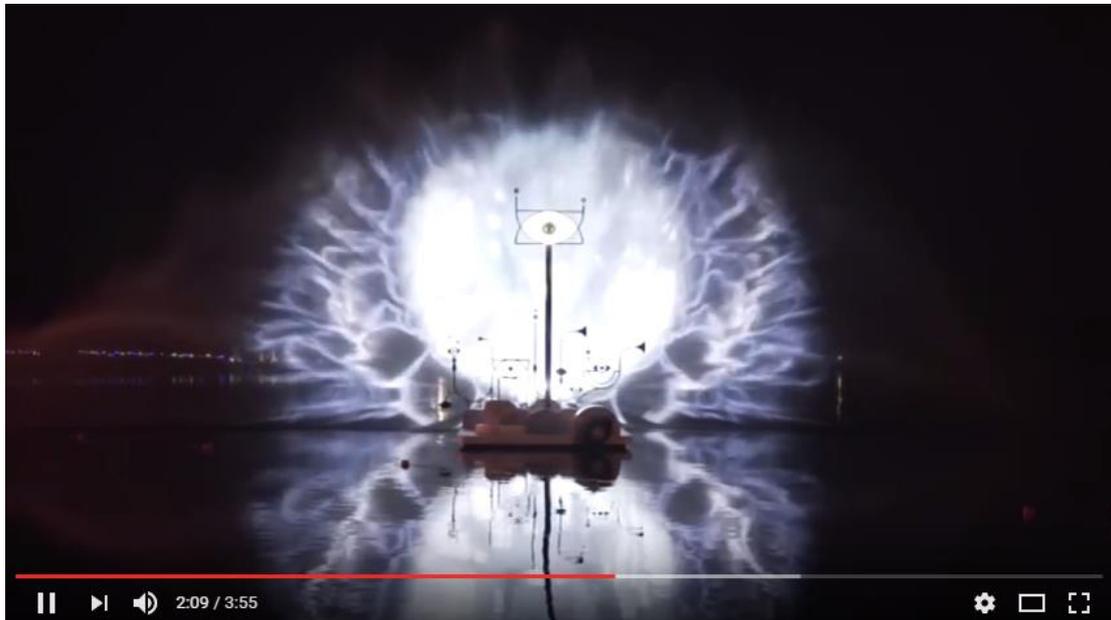
²¹⁷ Ibidem.

²¹⁸ *Down The Rabbit Hole* (2016) 'DTRH Festival Playlist', in: *Spotify* (addressed: July 29, 2016): https://play.spotify.com/user/dtrh_festival/playlist/20fZrm4df1vqbidX2TfRZZ.

a review about the whole weekend on his blog [T-BEEST'S MUZIEKBLOG](#).²¹⁹ He writes about the postponing of the opening of the camping site (which was delayed until Friday, instead of opening on Thursday), about the lousy weather, and about his personal favourites and artists he enjoyed less. [Amsterdam Ad Blog](#)²²⁰ wrote about *Periscopista*, the art project that won the *Down The Rabbit Hole* Grand Prix. The installation art actually reacts to the audience's efforts as can be seen in the video below:

The visuals responded to the movements of the crowd thanks to motion capture cameras, and the audio subtly changed as crowd noise picked up, using microphones. The installation is modular and adaptable, so according to [artist Thijs] Biersteker it can evolve over the years to come.²²¹

[PERISCOPISTA - Interactive Mist Installation](#)



People also like to share pictures they have taken and memories they have created on their own social media, and people's stories are being published in [the festival newspaper 'Het Gat'](#). People dig their own holes into the ground, and people build their own castles with clay on the festival site or craft their own artwork or raft.

²¹⁹ Tbeest (July 2, 2016) 'Gezien: *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2016', in: *T-BEEST'S MUZIEKBLOG* (addressed: August 2, 2016) <https://tbeest.wordpress.com/2016/07/02/gezien-down-the-rabbit-hole-2016/>.

²²⁰ Amsterdam Ad Blog (July 14, 2016) '*Down The Rabbit Hole*', in: *Amsterdam Ad Blog* (addressed: August 2, 2016) <http://www.amsterdamadblog.com/inspiration/down-the-rabbit-hole/>.

²²¹ Ibidem.

3.3.2. Deeper

Down The Rabbit Hole's multimedia story

What does this mean for the story that is *Down The Rabbit Hole*? In other words: who is actually telling the story? Frank Rose writes about new ways of storytelling, which emerged because of the coming of age of technology in the origination of Internet.

In a command-and-control world, we know who's telling the story; it's the author. But digital media have created an authorship crisis. Once the audience is free to step out into the fiction and start directing events, the entire edifice of twentieth-century mass media begins to crumble. Mass media were an outgrowth of nineteenth-century technology - the development of ever more efficient presses and distribution networks, which made publishing such an expensive proposition that it made sense only on an industrial scale. Movies and television accelerated the trend. But now the Internet has reversed it. An author can still speak to an audience of millions, but the communication no longer goes just one way. Newspapers and magazines don't just report events anymore, they become forums for discussing them. Movies and TV shows cease to be couch potato fodder and become catalysts for the imagination. Ad people [...] begin to realize they need to stop preaching to consumers and start listening to them. That's what "sense and respond" means - a dialogue.²²²

Following Rose's train of thought, contemporary festivals line-ups are not just stages on which new artists are made into the next big source of income for multinational conglomerates, but they rather are a dynamical force field in which the audience also decides upon whether something is good or not. The Internet is enabling the audience to participate upon whether the festival line-up fits the theme, and if it is any good at all. After all, writing a bad review is way easier since everyone has access to the Internet, after all. Prior to festival editions, the organisation cleverly puts FaceBook polls on their page, asking what artists they would like to see on the next edition or what they are looking forward to the most.²²³

In one way, this seems like a colonisation of audience participation. On the other hand, this is exactly the role organisations nowadays are deemed to perform: not to determine the tastes of the audience, but to co-create a line-up which answers the needs of an audience that has a very versatile and deep taste in music. They actually need the audience to participate on different levels of organisation to make their event into a success. By asking what the audience thinks about the line-up, they can determine more directly whether their efforts were successful. The latter would not be possible on a big scale without using the Internet. As Frank Rose writes about back stories in *Avatar*, these kinds of

²²² Rose, Frank (2011) 'Control', in: *The Art of Immersion*. London: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 83.

²²³ *Down The Rabbit Hole* FaceBook (April 19, 2016), addressed: August 2, 2016: <https://www.FaceBook.com/DTRHfestival/photos/a.449122275193621.1073741828.408875872551595/840517009387477/?type=3>.

information would not be available without Internet.²²⁴ In contrast to *Avatar*, *Down The Rabbit Hole* is not trying to stage a fictional universe, but it is trying to create a kind of deeper experience using multiple media. In other words: these media are deployed to explore elements of the story that the festival itself cannot.²²⁵ New media such as Spotify are used to let the visitor explore the artists beforehand, the official *Down The Rabbit Hole* app can be used to make a schedule for the festival itself and discover and get to know more about the different activities and artists at the festival and the map in the app can be used to orientate on the actual festival site. All of the ways in which the story of *Down The Rabbit Hole* is told feature themed images, and most of the times also themed texts that match content of the festival itself. Spotify features a header, 3voor12 tips, tricks and reviews feature photographs of the festival site by their official photographer and the official app's layout resembles the overall theme of the festival. These new media are used to create a world that surrounds the actual product which is deeper than the festival site itself. Themes and content are enlarged, looked upon, (p)reviewed and exposed to grasp the attention of the audience.²²⁶

²²⁴ Rose, Frank (2012) 'Deeper', in: *The Art of Immersion*. London: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 67.

²²⁵ Idem: 55.

²²⁶ Idem: 57.

3.3.3. Alice In Wonderland;

A story

Multinational conglomerates can no longer control the stories they are trying to tell. With bottom up initiatives as Napster (as I describe below), consumers avoided multinational strategies and forged their own tactics. Hence Frank Rose: 'Movie studios and television networks are no longer able to control what happens in the stories they present.'²²⁷ Stories have been around since human existence, and stories have been retold by different people and organisations. Frank Rose states that storytelling is central to human existence: 'We use stories to make sense of the world and to share that understanding with others.'²²⁸ And storytelling evolves with technology; every new invention is paired with a new way of telling stories. In ancient times, stories were orally conveyed, and stories, and ways of telling them, changed in the course of time. In the twentieth century, stories have been adapted by different organisations as a way of co-telling a story. The name *Down The Rabbit Hole* refers to a well known story, which originated as a book by Charles Ludwidge Dodgson, also known as Lewis Carroll, written in 1865: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.²²⁹ The story is about a little girl, called Alice, who is bored to death. When she is being surpassed by a white rabbit, which is walking on his hind legs and is wearing a pocket watch and an overcoat, she decides to follow it. He jumps down his rabbit hole, and she trips and tumbles all the way down as well, and eventually she falls right past all kinds of different objects like mirrors and closed doors of different sizes and shapes, which also seem to move as she finds her way right next to them. She advances through a small door and reaches a garden, where the rest of the adventure begins.

Disney adapted the story in 1951²³⁰ and made it into an animated movie. The story was given a new form, and was immensely popular throughout the world. The story has made appearances all over popular culture, from musicals, to theatre plays, movie adaptations and artworks. The confusing and illusionistic themes of the book (and later on the animated movie) made it a part of popular culture, as stated by academic writer Will Brooker in his book *Alice's Adventures: Lewis Carroll in Popular Culture*.²³¹ Moreover, its supposed relation to the usage of drugs made it even more popular. The book 'addresses a reader on the less specialist, interested-layperson level, because the notion that Alice has some relation to hallucinogenic drugs is common enough in journalism and popular culture to provide a satisfying moment of recognition.'²³² The latter being one of the points of interest of

²²⁷ Rose, Frank (2011) 'Control', in: *The Art of Immersion*. London: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 87.

²²⁸ Rose, Frank (2011) 'Prologue', in: *The Art of Immersion*. London: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 1.

²²⁹ Carroll, Lewis (1865) *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. London: Macmillan.

²³⁰ Geronimi, Clyde, Luske, Hamilton & Jackson, Wilfred (1951) *Alice in Wonderland*. United States, Burbank: Walt Disney Productions.

²³¹ Brooker, Will (2004) *Alice's Adventures: Lewis Carroll in Popular Culture*. New York: Bloomsbury.

²³² Idem: 176.

contemporary festival visitors. Making a trip on drugs is as if you are taking a trip *Down The Rabbit Hole*, which makes it a decent theme for a contemporary festival. *Down The Rabbit Hole* tells the story of Alice in its own way, by making the festival a literal trip *Down The Rabbit Hole*. In other words, it wants the festival visitor to crawl into the skin of Alice and to let him or her experience the tumbling and the illusionistic garden. Moreover, their aim to use Alice her story to tell theirs, was a choice for possibility. The trip *Down The Rabbit Hole* can be analysed in a vast majority of ways, and invites the audience to perform and live their own. In the stories' level of popularity, and its numerous other adaptations, this story resembles the rhizome, of which *Down The Rabbit Hole* as event is one of the pathways; one of the numerous nodes. The festival organisation cleverly extends the popular story into multiple new meanings. Not by telling the story directly to their audience, but by letting the visitors experience it for themselves.

[Disney - Alice in Wonderland \(1951\)](#)



Different tents are called after rabbit species; Teddy Widder, Hotot and Fuzzy Lop. Right outside of the festival gate, the organisation placed a gigantic rabbit ([a psychedelic remake of Miffy, the cartoon rabbit](#)). This, following the logic of everyday life, is quite odd. However, this does trigger the audience to participate. There is no dress code for *Down The Rabbit Hole*. However, [people do dress like rabbits](#).²³³ People are not asked to weave rabbit themes through their writings, but they do anyway. [Belgian music review website damusic.be wrote in metaphors](#): 'Kerewerom Vlaamse Reuske, om het in konijnentermen te houden, terug naar

²³³ Matze, Arthur (2016) 'Op *Down The Rabbit Hole* Lijkt Al Het Absurde Ineens Volkomen Normaal', in: *Noisey; music by vice* (addressed: July 29, 2016): http://noisey.vice.com/nl/blog/down-the-rabbit-hole-2016?utm_source=noiseyfbned.

de Teddy Widder, voor knuffelkonijn Alex Vargas.²³⁴ In addition, a very common phrase amongst visitors, the organisation, and other people involved is that they are not reachable by phone, because they find themselves in a rabbit hole for one weekend. Another very common phrase used by (mainly) visitors on social media, is that they are going back into their rabbit hole, to sleep, after the festival ended. These may not look very convincing. However, they do contribute to the feeling of immersion of the festival visitor. They are re-enacting festival themes. In addition, they are, in a way, an execution of the proposed theme. For Frank Rose, this is the new way of telling stories. The story, of which the initial author was Lewis Carroll, is no longer controlled by him. Technologies have changed, and the ways stories are told have changed with it. Since the latest technological innovation, the rise of Web 2.0 - which is a term used to denominate user generated content on the Internet, the story is not only told by big entertainment companies. The story of Alice is retold via the festival organisation and in turn by people who are actually tumbling *Down The Rabbit Hole* by merits of the festival.

²³⁴ Slycken, Stefaan van (June 28, 2016) '*Down The Rabbit Hole* wat het niet is', in: *damusic.be* (addressed: July 1, 2016): <http://www.damusic.be/live/down-the-rabbit-hole-2016/wat-het-niet-is>.

3.3.4. Media Convergence;

Dispersion of musical tastes and audience participation

Therefore, the progression of technology has changed the way stories are being told. In addition, media convergence has changed the way people listen to music. What impact does this have on the contemporary festival sphere? To be more precise, how does *Down The Rabbit Hole* or *Best Kept Secret* sell out without a “real” headliner from a major record label? The creation and popularity of more marginal music genres has increased, due to the easy accessibility of music on different formats (such as MP3), to be downloaded or streamed straight away from the Internet. Disruptive innovations which empowered the audience emerged due to media convergence, as stated in *Key Concepts in Creative Industries*: ‘[c]onvergence came to prominence when computers, telecommunications, and broadcast media converged technologically and thereby industrially in and after the 1990s’.²³⁵ The latter was also one way in which the audience proved to be very powerful against international music conglomerates.²³⁶

Media convergence and audience participation led to a new form of festival, because lesser known artists could also be listened to and are starting to gain more and more popularity at the margins of the music industry. As can be seen by the number crunch in the introduction of this thesis, large scale, traditional festivals have declining (or stable) ticket sales, whilst *Best Kept Secret*²³⁷ and *Down The Rabbit Hole* were both sold out this year, selling their maximum quantity of tickets. However, just to point out, *PinkPop* ticket sales are still way higher than *Best Kept Secret* and *Down The Rabbit Hole* combined, but the latter are growing exponentially since their incubation. In this way, media convergence - and with it the alteration of the music industry - paved the way for a concept for a festival which relies not only on the most well-known artists, but realize a festival with a line-up of artists which all find themselves in the margins of the music industry. These margins seem to grow in size, take advantage from the new ways of media and compete with former key players. As

²³⁵ Banks, John, Cunningham, Stuart, Flew, Terry, Hartley, John, Keane Michael & Potts, Jason (2013) ‘Convergence’, in: Chris Rojek (ed.) *Key Concepts in Creative Industries*. London: SAGE publications Ltd: 36.

²³⁶ The first website in which clever Internet users offered music for free was Napster. Music which was once hard to obtain in rural (and also urban) areas, or too expensive for a lion share of the popularity, was now available for free on the Internet. In this way, a majority of people who were first unable to enjoy the music of their liking, were able to do so now. Moreover, it is easy to delve deeper into the music one person likes via sites as Youtube, Spotify and in a broader sense Google; or by downloading music illegally. Downloading music for free hampered vinyl and CD sales to a bare minimum. It forced the multinational conglomerates to sue the creators of Napster, and to establish other strategies to sell their music. Napster, in this sense, could be conceived of as a countercultural act. Spotify and Tidal are some examples in which the music industry reacted in order to keep their market lead, by offering more convenient ways of streaming music for free with advertisements or for a monthly payment without ads. On the downside, a big part of the global population still did not have access to the music, because they also lack the financial power to connect themselves on the world wide web.

²³⁷ *Best Kept Secret* (2016) ‘Info’, in: *Best Kept Secret* (addressed: 01-07-16): <http://www.bestkeptsecret.nl/info/>.

Singaporean Information student Calvin Lam and Singaporean Information professor Bernard Tan write in their article 'The Internet Is Changing The Music Industry':²³⁸

The Internet is bringing new key players and business models into the music industry. Technological advancements and emergence of industry standards is accelerating such changes. Some key players in the music industry have readily embraced the Net, hoping to reap first-mover benefits. Others have been cautious about jumping on the Internet bandwagon.²³⁹

In this respect *PinkPop*'s regular headliners' music labels Metallica (Universal Music Group), Red Hot Chili Peppers (Warner Music Group) and Bruce Springsteen (Columbia Records) all had to choose whether or not to invest in online sales methods. Moreover, how would these new online sales methods look like? The article by Lam and Tan was written in 2001. As of August 2016, as stated by news reporter Stefan Raatgever in *Brabants Dagblad*, major artists as Metallica, Rolling Stones, and U2 are still uncertain about how to release their material.²⁴⁰ The last major attempt of a major record label (Island Records) to use another strategy to try to release their music in an efficient way was by releasing *Songs of Innocence*²⁴¹ by U2 for free on iTunes. Everyone that had the app installed on one of their computer devices was automatically hooked up with the new U2 album. 'This alternative idea for distributing new music was a PR-disaster, and is looked upon as a textbook example for how it is not supposed to be two years later.'²⁴² The classical way of releasing an album (vinyl or CD format) is outdated, hence a group of younger musical entrepreneurs.²⁴³ Retail sales have always been the prime income of records labels, and they still seem to struggle to find a solution to the problem of streaming. Ty Segall and Wavves, just to name a few artists that played *Down The Rabbit Hole* or *Best Kept Secret*, formerly have released their own material using new media. Wavves recorded his first albums in his garage and released it via cassette and mpfree, causing a gigantic hype that launched his solo-project into the music industry due to the Pitchfork Media platform.²⁴⁴ Ty Segall has its own label imprint on record label Drag City, called GOD?, and releases his own material, alongside with other bands that interest him. Preoccupations, which played *Best Kept Secret* this year, also debuted with a self-released cassette. The three aforementioned artists are all signed to major record labels as of now, but were not signed in a classical way, but rather pioneered their own way into the

²³⁸ Lam, Calvin & Tan, Bernard (2001) 'The Internet Is Changing The Music Industry', in: *Communications of the ACM*. Vol. 44, No. 8: 62-68.

²³⁹ Idem: 67.

²⁴⁰ Raatgever, Stefan (August 4, 2016) 'Voor de kids moet Rihanna streamen', in: *Brabants Dagblad* (August 4, 2016): 18.

²⁴¹ U2 (2014) *Songs of Innocence*. United States, New York: Island Records.

²⁴² Raatgever, Stefan (August 4, 2016).

²⁴³ Ibidem.

²⁴⁴ Bevan, David (March 4, 2009) 'Wavves', in: *Pitchfork Media* (addressed: August 3, 2016) <http://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/12783-wavves/>.

music industry to be signed later on. In this way, the power flows from the top down as well as from the bottom up. New media open new possibilities for artists to release their music, without the (direct) need for intermediaries as multinational record labels: 'Given the Net's low entry barriers, new entrants in the music industry are outpacing traditional record labels, which have limited experience with new technologies.'²⁴⁵ For this reason, contemporary medium-sized music festivals can make the choice to book lesser known acts, and sell their tickets because of that. Media convergence is the enabler to book artists that are hardly known by the masses. In this sense, the *Best Kept Secret's* line-up can be seen as a present kept secret for the audience the whole time. In the same fashion, a trip *Down The Rabbit Hole* can cause the visitor to discover artists whom are not represented at other festivals.

²⁴⁵ Lam, Calvin & Tan, Bernard (2001): 64.

3.4. Conclusion

The Festival (Web)site and Other Online Strategies

Frank Rose writes in his book *The Art of Immersion* that people are used to telling stories. Then, how does a festival as *Down The Rabbit Hole* bring its message across via web 2.0? Technology changes and storytelling changes with it. One of the things that have changed throughout the twentieth century is the way in which the audience can co-create a story. As I mention above, co-creation - engaging and entertaining - is already a big part of the activities and side programme at the actual festival site of *Down The Rabbit Hole*. Are those trends also represented on the Internet?

Down The Rabbit Hole houses different ways of connecting with their audience. They use Facebook posts supported by photographs, gifs, or videos to bring a message across. Visitors may want to dig through hundreds of official photographs to find themselves, or watch the official after movie to see themselves dancing, talking or just lying around in the grass. They use Instagram to share pictures. *Down The Rabbit Hole* features Spotify playlists. 3voor12 and 3FM are covering stories told about the festival and the actual festival. Their line-up is featured on different music websites and everything is kept into schedule. This is, however, also the case for traditional festivals. They also have their line-up featured everywhere, they also have news platforms writing about them (or even more so) and they also have a Spotify playlist to introduce their line-up to their target audience. Moreover, all major festivals feature their festival with applications for mobile phones, have ticket winning actions and feature fun facts about their line-up on social media. What, then, makes *Down The Rabbit Hole* so different from traditional festivals on the Internet?

First, *Down The Rabbit Hole* is telling a story that is told many times before, the story of *Alice in Wonderland*. Their festival site is adequately equipped to stage an enriching experience. It is rich in decorations and different activities and names refer back to either a rabbit hole, or right away to the story of Alice. In addition, once the visitor engages in drinking alcohol and/or using drugs, it may literally feel as though they have ventured through the same hole as Alice did in her story.

Secondly, the Internet itself has changed the ways in which festivals can be organised. Before the Internet, the majority of artists that are able to play festivals as *Down The Rabbit Hole* and *Best Kept Secret*, were not able to release their music due to too less attention from multinational music conglomerates as Sony, Universal, and others. Artists can - to a certain extent - release their own material now, and a vast majority of smaller labels have come to the forefront. Often times, those DIY (Do It Yourself) strategies reach music platforms, for instance *Pitchfork*, that launches the artist to a bigger audience without having to invest in the mentioned artist. In this way, Wavves - a band that played *Best Kept Secret* in

2013 - released his first music on cassette and gained much attention because of it. All without the help of a major record label. Contemporary music festivals can exist, using a smaller budget and booking less known artists for a smaller, cleverly targeted audience, because web 2.0 opens a vast majority of possibilities. In contrast, both traditional and contemporary music festivals use online strategies to market their offerings. Both use the Internet in different ways to their advantage. Ergo, traditional festivals use the Internet to hyperlink their information into other websites. Subsequently, the Internet allows *Down The Rabbit Hole* and *Best Kept Secret* to book artists that would formerly not be as well known.

4. Conclusion

Changes and possibilities in the contemporary music festival sphere

At traditional festivals, artworks, performances and other forms of side programming are not (or hardly) represented. *PinkPop*, for instance, features a “Chill Out” avenue, in which the visitor can rest and take a moment. In addition, Jan Smeets, *PinkPop* initiator, remarks that décor and side programming are barely of importance to him and therefore the festival.²⁴⁶ In contrast, side programming (to which *BOSMOS* belongs) is of key importance to *Down The Rabbit Hole*. The immense quantity – and quality – of the side programming fits perfectly with the vision and goal of their festival: to be surprising and hide mystery and secrets in every corner of the festival. As booking agency MOJO states about the festival: ‘Three days and nights of breaking the routine, cutting your coat according to your cloth and the focus on infinity in the idyllic forest oasis at the lake, far away from the through-through-through of the everyday’.²⁴⁷ The festival sphere has changed in the Netherlands. As I explained in my introduction, traditional festivals rely solely on their line-up. Therefore, when the festival organisation does not invest enough capital into a few very well-known headliners, ticket sales go down. *Down The Rabbit Hole*, amongst others, have other strategies to engage and entertain their visitors. These two terms are of crucial importance in this thesis. Pine and Gilmore are not the only ones to use these terms, addressing the key dynamics of the experience economy. Frank Rose’s plea about the new way of storytelling in the age of digital convergence also uses them.

I describe the way in which the approach of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, a contemporary, medium-sized music festival, differs from (older) traditional festivals in three different ways, which all try to engage and entertain the visitor. These three different parts of the contemporary music festival all bear their own dynamics and therefore operate on different levels of organisation. I have structured this conclusion in the same way as I have structured my entire thesis, from the smallest dimension to the biggest. I sum up the most viable findings in this conclusion. At the end of the conclusion, I clarify an overview of best-practices, and a brief synopsis of the opportunities which are not seized yet.

These three different dimensions all house features which were not present in traditional (older) festivals. Performance artwork *BOSMOS* at *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2014 or *Periscopista* at *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2016 would have never been represented at a

²⁴⁶ Kuyper, Amanda (June 7, 2014) ‘Hoe *PinkPop* een miljoenenbusiness werd’, in: *nrc.nl* (addressed: August 9, 2016) <http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2014/06/07/hoepinkpop-een-miljoenenbusiness-werd-a1501428>.

²⁴⁷ MOJO (2016) ‘*Down The Rabbit Hole*’, in: *Mojo* (addressed: August 25, 2016): <http://www.MOJO.nl/festivals/down-the-rabbit-hole/>.

traditional festival. Those two are not the only examples of artworks or performances that take place at contemporary festivals. In fact, summing up every single piece of side programming that took place at *Down The Rabbit Hole* throughout the years, would take a few pages. Moreover, those parts of the side programming are rich in diversity. Therefore, every piece of the festival site features surprising acts, objects to gaze at and things to do. *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2016 featured a few parts of side programming in which the audience determined the look of the festival site. *Periscopista* was the result of an art exhibition project, and the Porto-Parties are parties which house initiatives of the visitors themselves. On top of that, every specific area of the festival terrain is the site of theatre. All those different locations have their own goals and visions, whereas a traditional festivals focus solely on their artists. Lastly, the name, goal, and vision of *Down The Rabbit Hole* are not intrinsically linked to music, but to another world. This other world can only exist in the weekend the event takes place and/or beforehand and afterwards on web 2.0. The world featured in the name and aesthetics of the festivals refers to a world full of surprise and wonder. These kinds of activities are of vital importance to *Down The Rabbit Hole*, and are in lesser extent present in traditional festivals as *PinkPop*.

The first level is the smallest. In this thesis, I analyze one specific segment of the side program of *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2014; the year the festival was first organised. *BOSMOS* is a performance artwork by BOSMOS. Through three different theories I show what kind of inner dynamics such an artwork brings along. What can such an artwork – as part of the side program – trigger within a visitor what a traditional festival (or a part of the traditional festival) cannot? How does this function for the festival within the confines of the experience economy?

This piece of performance art can have a visceral effect on its visitors, who are meant to interact with the piece. As described by initiator Lars Unger, the project was meant to provide audiovisual information, to leave an impression on the guests. Guests can decide for themselves what they want to do with that information.²⁴⁸ In addition, this specific project was different from anything they have performed before. It got accompanied by a live drummer, the audience could enter during the entire performance, and the performance has no “real” (thought out) beginning, nor ending.²⁴⁹ These last three features were specifically organised for the performance at *Down The Rabbit Hole* 2014.

I have used Roland Barthes’ *Camera Lucida* to portray that *BOSMOS* bears an inner dynamic between understanding and interrupting moments. The actual props used by *BOSMOS* to stage their performance at the festival can cause specific moments to emerge and interchange with one another. At one time, visitors find themselves in a forest, to be

²⁴⁸ Interview with Lars Unger (March 31, 2016).

²⁴⁹ Ibidem.

subsumed by a dense interplay of audiovisual impulses the next moment. The latter hampers an understanding of the forest on itself, it transforms it into something personal, and is always an interplay between the visitor, its surroundings, and its personal interests as moments and interests that are always already present in the object. Notions of the rhizome and diagram, by the likes of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, are useful tools to come to terms with the changing, altering nature of things and their dynamism. *BOSMOS* can be entered in innumerable different ways, by an indefinite amount of people, throughout the whole time span of the performance, which knows no actual beginning, nor ending. This accounts for the fact that such interplay between the visitor and the performance, as the performance itself, is never finished. It opens up the object for multiple interpretations. Experiences derived from the performance can engage a visitor bodily. Using Laura Marks' findings on hapticism in her book *Touch; Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Projections of light on trees and other objects placed in the forest by the organisation at *BOSMOS* flattens real life space. In the dark, these projections look as if they are flat, and open the surface of the forest to transform into the performance itself. Subsequently, multiple flat surfaces appear in the forest.

My reading of *BOSMOS* allows the visitor to enter the performance more freely, to his or her own liking. Moreover, it exemplifies a diagrammatic way of engagement. In this way, *BOSMOS* is one of the examples why contemporary medium-sized music festivals differ from traditional festivals. *BOSMOS* was not meant to mean anything, but did surprise a lot of festival visitors. The project is a micro-example of how the festival works in its entirety. The project works as if it were a rhizome. It features different centres around the festival site, and they appear to pop up in an arbitrary manner. Consequently, where *BOSMOS* has multiple focal points at the same time, the festival site does so as well. *BOSMOS* happens alongside the music programming, and a vast majority of other activities at the same time. These activities bear the name of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, and all contribute to its story in a unique manner. In this way, the festival site is as a city with multiple city centres, of which none is regarded as a point of main importance or relevance. *BOSMOS* allowed me to analyse a festival in a diagrammatic, haptic way and to apply these theories to the festival organisation to show that contemporary medium-sized music festivals definitely does not function in a linear manner of an arborescent kind of model, but rather works in a diagrammatic and rhizomatic fashion.

Therefore, one specific part of the side programming can arouse a visceral, almost bodily experience within the visitor, which appears to be affective and haptic. This is a micro-level example of how the festival functions in its entirety. Such a performance belongs to an elaborate side programming, which can lift the festival experience to a higher level. Good examples of eliminating negative cues at *Down The Rabbit Hole* is the transformation of the

festival gate into the proverbial hole, that gives way to a wonderland filled with mystery and surprise. In addition, also the confines of the festival site – which are usually fences at traditional festivals – covered with turf, to extend the belief that *Down The Rabbit Hole* is a world based in nature. The latter two are examples of one of the numerous ways in which a festival can make the choice to stage an experience, and to transform to a distinct place.

I have used Henri Lefebvre's theory of the spatial triad to describe the way in which ideology and the performance thereof can create distinctive features at a festival site. Most importantly, it is important to notice that a festival site is not neutral space. In this way, the festival organisation has made the choice to name the different stages after rabbit species, to remain within their festival theme and are not distracting their visitor at the same time. The turning point in transforming space into place is when perceived space becomes lived space. The latter occurs when very personal events take place at the festival site. In this sense, *Down The Rabbit Hole* has made its site equipped with many different landmarks, nodes, paths, districts and edges, to mark places in which a visitor can experience. For Kevin Lynch, spaces can also become places and people use the latter five features of an urban environment (or in my case a natural environment) to create mental maps. Therefore, in consultation with their visitors, *Down The Rabbit Hole* has made De Groene Heuvels into a distinctive place, which for most of the visitors will henceforward would be known as the festival site of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, on which they have experienced different events at different places at the festival site. The organisation has cleverly filled their site with many different features and activities (the side programming), to stage the overwhelming and compelling experience of a venture *Down The Rabbit Hole*. Most striking in the use of space at the festival site, is the quantity of activities hosted. *PinkPop* does host a small side program, however, these are all featured to serve a specific function. The 'Kalm aan laan' exists in order to let the *PinkPop* audience chill out, and the market is there to sell both official and non-official merchandise. The latter two examples are not specifically geared to staging an experience, while the activities of the side program *Down The Rabbit Hole* hosts do. Those activities are not serving a useful function directly, but are all hinting towards the overarching story of the festival. Moreover, the only place to be part of the story, is to experience *Down The Rabbit Hole* to the fullest. That is why *Down The Rabbit Hole* compels their audience to discover as much as they can at the festival site. The side program appears to be just as important as the musical program.

In contrast, traditional festivals, whose memories appear solely to be dependent on the acts that play their music, are way less equipped to transform the space of the festival into a distinct place. The cleverest way *Down The Rabbit Hole* uses its space is by virtue of audience participation. The interactive installation artwork *Periscopista* was chosen as the winner of 'Rabbit Hole Grand Prix', from a majority of other submissions by other artists. This shows the openness of the festival organisation to host events not only told by themselves. In

addition, last year's edition of *Down The Rabbit Hole* featured parties organised by the festival visitors themselves. These parties were called 'Porto-Parties' and were held in containers, provided by the festival organisation. The audience was invited to submit their wildest and most imaginative ideas. The most original ones were provided with the means to organise their own party on the festival site itself. Therefore, part of the story of *Down The Rabbit Hole* is told by the audience itself. The latter is new, because the organisation of the festival invites the audience to do so. Moreover, events hosted by the audience are also promoted via their official channels and are subsequently really a part of the festivals' official program.

In this sense, the audience has gained a lot of possibilities to participate in telling the story and sharing their memories. One of the most important ways is the emergence of web 2.0, on which the audience can upload their own content and can communicate with each other and big companies more easily. Frank Rose states that this emergence of the web has intrinsically altered the way in which humanity tells stories; it is not just the multinational conglomerates that are sharing their stories, but the market is opening up for bottom-up initiatives: audience participation. Organisations have to immerse their audience, and interact with them to keep them interested. Henry Jenkins writes about sliding power scales of those companies.

There are numerous different ways in which the festival organisation shares their story, and tries to extend its lifespan. The point here is also to engage and entertain the visitor. *Down The Rabbit Hole* shares after movies, official photographs, polls, organises events, and asks their visitors to organise own after-parties at the festival itself. This would not be possible without the existence of Internet. In essence, these online efforts of the festival organisation also work in a diagrammatic, rhizomatic fashion. Online media harbour links to other websites, who link to other online platforms and so on. In this way, a complex network of links comes into existence, which knows no actual centre, but rather exists out of several centres with branches and arches into others. In addition, the online story is not linear, but told by different people. The audience, professionals from the music world and the organisation are all telling parts of the same story. Lastly, the story does know a beginning (the first edition of *Down The Rabbit Hole* in 2014), but does not have an end. It exists out of possibility: 'The diagram is the abstract state of [...] processes as they are transferred from one system, or mechanism, to the next.'²⁵⁰ The story of *Down The Rabbit Hole* is never a fixed, closed-off entity, it is always in motion, and through the use of hyperlinks adds news admissions to its story, of every imaginable source. In this sense, the story always finds itself between the actual and the virtual: 'The diagram is that stage between the idea of the

²⁵⁰ Zdebik, Jakub (2012) 'Introduction', in: *Deleuze and the Diagram: Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organization*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group: 6.

building and the actual building. It displays the amorphous passage from one structure to the next: from the virtual to the actual, the abstract to the specific.²⁵¹ The diagram makes connections, interlocks frames and planes and very generative and should be seen as a superimposition of maps, through which new connections are made: 'The map should be perceived as lines and traits that connect the mental landscape to the outside world in an interweaving network.'²⁵² Hyper linking of information to other information works in the same way, it knows no end, but it is highly connective, and it invites the audience to participate, and impose their own contribution to the story of *Down The Rabbit Hole*.

However, the online strategies used by *Down The Rabbit Hole*, in my opinion, engage the visitor, but do not entertain them as much as possible. Moreover, all the online strategies used by *Down The Rabbit Hole* are also used by other festivals. *PinkPop*'s line-up is also featured on Songkick, and their performances are also covered by the likes of review websites 3voor12 and others. *PinkPop* also features official photographs in which people are invited to tag their selves, and *PinkPop* also features official after movies. *Down The Rabbit Hole* can explore possibilities to extend the range of their online story beyond sites which cover every festival in the Netherlands. There are endless possibilities for organisations to tell their story online, and to let the audience play a definite role in telling it, as Frank Rose describes in *The Art of Immersion*, as I also quoted above:

As mass media have become augmented by social media, storytelling of every sort has changed. No longer do we consume stories as they are told to us; now we share them with one another in ways that weren't possible before. All sorts of stories – journalism, entertainment, advertising, history. [...] our roles have shifted and expanded. The role of the broadcaster is not just to speak but to listen; the role of the audience is not just to listen but to speak.²⁵³

This new way of storytelling is more diagrammatic than it is linear, as I described above. On top of that, it opens up a world of possibilities for festival organisations. Frank Rose's *The Art of Immersion* is filled with examples of how the Internet can be used to engage and entertain the target audience of movies, games and organisations way before and after the actual event. James Cameron's movie *Avatar* was the first movie that used 3D technique to immerse the viewer as if they were really "inside" the movie, to let them experience his well-thought out, immensely detailed world of flora and fauna to the fullest.²⁵⁴ In addition, Cameron used an online environment to provide *Avatar* fans with information that could not be featured in the movie. In an online encyclopaedia, the audience could interact with

²⁵¹ Idem: 8.

²⁵² Idem: 12.

²⁵³ Rose, Frank (2012) 'Introduction', in: *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.: xix-xx.

²⁵⁴ Rose, Frank (2012) 'Deeper', in: *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 67.

information about the world in which *Avatar*²⁵⁵ takes place. Multiple media can disclose information that the movie itself cannot. *Why So Serious?*²⁵⁶ was an experiment by 42 Entertainment into the future of narrative, linked to the release of the new Batman movie *The Dark Knight*.²⁵⁷ It relied on the connectivity of the web, and staged a set of assignment for people to carry out. Participants would receive information via the browser or telephone, and receive new assignment to perform, depending on the choices they made beforehand.

Crucially, *Who So Serious?* was nonlinear. Like hypertext [...] it could lead you along different paths. Links can carry you deeper and deeper into a story, revealing levels of detail that would be impossible to convey in a single, two-hour movie. Or they can take you into alternate story lines, showing what would happen if you, or the author, made different choices along the way.²⁵⁸

In a diagrammatic, and 'networked world, information doesn't just travel from author to audience, or in a closed loop from author to audience and back again; it spreads all over the place, and more or less instantly.'²⁵⁹ This connectedness is the future of storytelling for Rose. One way of doing so is in providing an open-source environment for the audience to explore. The actual festival site is already established in such a way, but online, there are way more possibilities to stage such an experience. The online strategies of *Down The Rabbit Hole*, as of now, are still merely informative, they have to become *entertaining*. By exploring different ways of online storytelling, *Down The Rabbit Hole* is able to engage and entertain their (possible) visitors before and after the actual festival takes place. *Down The Rabbit Hole* could for instance create an open-source online environment in which the audience can interact with different bits of the program, festival site or organisation itself, provided with very detailed information and co-create their own content. In the light of *Why So Serious?*, *Down The Rabbit Hole* could organise a trail hunt, and connect people with each other. *Down The Rabbit Hole* could organise smaller, popup events throughout the year, mysteriously announced online at a wide variety of places. The exploration of different ways of storytelling for contemporary, medium-sized music festivals would be a point for future research.

These changes in the contemporary music festival sphere imply that the market is opening up for multiple possibilities. Nowadays, festivals do not have to book the most expensive headliners to sell tickets. They can also stage an enriching experience, because the interests

²⁵⁵ Cameron, James (2009) *Avatar*. United States: Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox.

²⁵⁶ 42 Entertainment (2007) *Why So Serious?* (addressed: September 5, 2016): <http://www.42entertainment.com/work/whysoserious>.

²⁵⁷ Nolan, Christopher (2008) *The Dark Knight*. United States: Burbank: Warner Bros Movie Entertainment.

²⁵⁸ Rose, Frank (2012) 'The Dyslectic Storyteller', in: *The Art of Immersion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 14.

²⁵⁹ Ibidem.

of the audience are more widespread now than ever, through the emergence of web 2.0. Actually, the experience is what people are wanting to pay for. Why see a fairly unknown artist at *Down The Rabbit Hole*, when you can also experience them in a music venue? The experience provided by *Down The Rabbit Hole* makes the difference. This experience flows through every single organisational level and determines the festivals' way of communicating, visitors' way of going about, and the festivals' decor. A lot of opportunities are seized, when it comes to the *Down The Rabbit Hole*'s themes and the operation thereof. In my opinion, this is something that very much influences the experience of visitors, and in this way can influence the value of a festival in a great manner.

The next step for festivals, and I feel as though that the market is already shifting in the direction, is to engage your visitors in such a way that it brings along personal progress. Pine and Gilmore predict that the next step on the economic ladder is that the customer is the product.²⁶⁰

[G]oods and services remain outside of the individual, while experiences actually reach inside of the individual to affect him in an inherently personal way, greatly increasing the value of the offering. But, no matter how acute an experience, one's memory of it fades over time. Transformations, on the other hand, guide the individual toward realizing some aspiration and then help to sustain that change over time. There is no earthly value more concrete, more palpable, or more worthwhile than achieving an aspiration.²⁶¹

In the organisation of future festivals, nothing will be 'more important, more abiding, or more wealth-creating than the wisdom required to transform customers. And nothing will command as high a price.'²⁶² Festivals may choose to draft a personal program on your personal, and musical preferences to stimulate your knowledge in music. Visitors will be engaged in such a way, that they will feel they have to come back to keep maintain their inner transformation and really keep up with the pace of the changing nature of music.

In contrast, a lot of online possibilities are not yet seized by festival organisations. The question for the online strategies of the organisation of future festivals is: how can a temporary music festival engage *and* entertain their audience throughout the year? In my opinion, this is where there is a lot of room for improvement for festivals in the nearby future lies. In short, both traditional and contemporary festivals use strategies alike to engage their visitors. However, these strategies do not entertain their target audience as much as for

²⁶⁰ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'The Customer Is The Product', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 163.

²⁶¹ Gilmore, James & Pine, Joseph (1999) 'Finding Your Role In The World', in: *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business University Press: 190.

²⁶² Ibidem.

instance the online environment staged by James Cameron, or the trail hunt *Why So Serious?*, initiated by 42 Entertainment Group.

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