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It's not Rocket 88 Science:

The Publishing Strategy and Reception of Rocket 88's Intermedial Music Biographies on
Porcupine Tree, Devin Townsend, and Opeth

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Abstract

Through the internet and digitisation new publishing strategies in book publishing are needed. One such strategy by the UK publisher Rocket 88 is analysed here. They have released a plethora of books on music, of which three are analysed here: *Time Flies: The Story of Porcupine Tree* by Rich Wilson, *Only Half There* by Devin Townsend, and *Book of Opeth* by Opeth. These books are released in an interesting manner, in that they come as both a Classic edition and a limited Signature edition, and these books often come with exclusive music as well. The design and production qualities are furthermore expansive and of high quality. This strategy is analysed by exploring how the materiality, paratextuality, and intermediality of these books contribute to the acquisition of symbolic and economic capital as seen in book reviews. The results show that, while some of these aspects of the publishing strategy seem somewhat effective, most of them do not have a significant effect.

Keywords: Book Publishing, Bourdieu, Symbolic Capital, Economic Capital, Paratext, Materiality, Intermediality, Reception, Music Biography, Rocket 88, Porcupine Tree, Devin Townsend, Opeth, *Time Flies: The Story of Porcupine Tree*, *Only Half There*, *Book of Opeth*

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Introduction and Theory

Various publishers of music literature publish their books in expansive ways. Genesis Publications, for example, releases books in lavish designs and with exclusive content, conveying an air of high quality. The prices show that sentiment; such a book can easily cost a few hundred pounds. *Wembley or Bust* by Jeff Lynne, for instance, costs either £245 or £495, depending on the edition. The book does come in its own box with a vinyl single of exclusive music (“Wembley or Bust”).

Another publisher that releases such books is Rocket 88. It is a relatively small London-based publishing imprint of Essential Works Ltd., a book production company. It is important to note that Essential Works are not a publisher themselves. Rocket 88 has been publishing books since at least the early 2000s, and has published books about the music and underground press of the sixties and of various bands such as The Clash and Sex Pistols. They have recently acquired a surge in popularity through their releases on the artists discussed in this thesis. The books discussed in this thesis are as follows:

Only Half There is the autobiography of Devin Townsend. Devin Townsend is a Canadian musician who has been making music since the early nineties. He first gained recognition by being the vocalist for Steve Vai for his *Sex & Religion* album. Townsend then started both a solo career and an extreme metal band called Strapping Young Lad (SYL). SYL eventually disbanded and Townsend started the Devin Townsend Project (DTP) afterwards. The DTP was recently put on a hiatus so that Townsend could focus on a number of different projects, including a symphony. Townsend is known for his use of ‘wall of sound’ production and for being highly diverse in his music. He has made music in the styles of extreme metal, pop metal, ambient, drone, new age and country rock, for example.

Time Flies is the unauthorised biography of Porcupine Tree, written by Rich Wilson. Porcupine Tree is an English rock band led by Steven Wilson (no relation to the author). The band started out as a joke by Wilson, but eventually turned into a serious band. Their earlier music was psychedelic and progressive rock, and around the turn of the century Wilson started focussing more on traditional song writing. This eventually led to a progressive metal sound which they continued until the band was put on an indefinite hiatus. Wilson has gone solo since then. He has also worked with Opeth and has contributed to *Book of Opeth* as well.

Book of Opeth is the “sumptuously illustrated oral history” of Opeth, featuring text written by the band, former members and people close to the band, and exclusive photos and artwork (*Book of Opeth*, Rocket 88). Opeth is a band from Sweden that started in the early nineties. Their sound is characterised by being dynamic, combining acoustic guitars with

distorted guitars, clean vocals with death metal vocals and incorporating a myriad of influences such as folk and jazz. Since their *Heritage* album (2011) they have let go of their death metal sound and focused on a more progressive rock sound.

Rocket 88 published these books in a unique fashion. *Only Half There* features an exclusive CD and *Book of Opeth* comes with an exclusive 7" vinyl single. *Time Flies* is released with four different book covers. All three books are released as deluxe Signature editions as well. These Signature editions come in a special box, feature exclusive photos or art prints, and are signed by the authors. The Signature edition of *Only Half There* also features an exclusive cassette tape with unreleased music. Such exclusive media can definitely incentivise the reader to buy one of these books, and it may even be the sole reason for them to buy it. It is possible that some readers are not particularly interested in the text itself and are only interested in the new music. The addition of these extra material media raises the question if these books are merely books, or rather an intermedial, multimedia format. Perhaps these publications will pave the way to more elaborate multimedia releases, which may contain texts, pieces of music, photos, and perhaps even more. Another point that this kind of publication raises is the extent to which it results in a successful brand image and financial profit for Rocket 88, which I will explore through Pierre Bourdieu's terms of symbolic and economic capital, respectively.

This leads me to the research question answered in this thesis: to what extent do the materiality, paratextuality, and intermediality of these Rocket 88 publications contribute to their acquisition of symbolic and economic capital? I will explore their publishing strategy in relation to the books' reception to answer this. I first outline the theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu's theory, that of materiality and paratextuality, and that of intermediality below, after which I discuss the book publishing theory in which to place those frameworks. The chapters analysing the books will follow a section structure similar to the one used below for the publishing theory, which is primarily based on the fifth edition of *Inside Book Publishing* by Clark and Phillips.

Bourdieu's Theory on Economic and Symbolic Capital

Bourdieu sought to develop a theoretical framework for the cultural field that would be free from the restrictions of subjectivism and objectivism, subjectivism being focussed on the idealistic experiences of the individual and objectivism focussing on the objective conditions outside of individual experience. His theory combines the two into a framework where "symbolic aspects of social life are inseparably intertwined with the material conditions of

existence, without one being reducible to the other” (Johnson 4). He developed the concepts of ‘habitus’ and ‘field’ for this. The habitus is a “set of dispositions which generates practices and perceptions” that the agent develops in childhood and keeps throughout their lifetime (5). The habitus thus gives the agent the means to act in certain ways in certain situations. This can happen in the field. The field is a “structured space with its own laws of functioning and its own relations of force,” such as the cultural field, the economic field, the political field, etc., which are hierarchically arranged for any social formation (6). Agents occupy different positions in these fields and compete for those fields’ resources, such as economic capital in the economic field or symbolic capital in the cultural field. Symbolic capital is the amount of prestige or celebrity the agent has acquired, and possession of symbolic capital does not guarantee economic capital and vice versa (7). To acquire such capital, an agent must have the relevant habitus to be a legitimate player in the corresponding field, and use that to generate profit in that field (8) (which can be prestige, meaning symbolic capital, in the cultural field).

Bourdieu’s theory can be applied to the literary field, as is demonstrated by Thompson in his *Merchants of Culture*. Thompson describes the world of publishing as consisting of multiple fields, such as trade publishing, higher education publishing, and illustrated art book publishing, each with its own features. This allows us to think of agents and organisations in relational terms, whose actions do not exist in isolation (3-5). These fields have key types of capital, of which the aforementioned economic and symbolic capital are the most essential. Publishers need economic capital to finance the various stages of production, and symbolic capital to build their brand and image. The accumulation of both these capitals improves the position the publisher occupies in the field, but these capitals do not always have to be equal. A firm with low economic capital can still build up significant amounts of symbolic capital, which compensates the lack of the former, and strive in the field (6-10).

Paratextuality and Materiality

The paratext of a work, as stated by Genette, is the number of features of a text that surround it and present it not as a bare text, but as a book, such as the title, illustrations, the author’s name, the book design, and even interviews (qtd. in Stanitzek 30). Dunlay argues as well that a book only becomes a book when the text is combined with physical features such as the cover and endpapers (427). The paratext furthermore is the “threshold” for people to either enter into or turn back from the work (Genette and Maclean 261). This threshold could also be the border between different media, such as between the text and the cover photograph or an

accompanying piece of music, making it an intermedial threshold (more on intermediality below).

Genette and Maclean divide the paratext into two distinct spatial categories into which a paratextual element is positioned. Those elements that are in the same space or close to the space of the work, such as the title and cover, are defined as the peritext. The elements that are placed at a greater distance from the work, such as interviews and other media coverage, fall under epitext (263-264). The paratext can be further divided into several other categories. One is its “substantial status.” This can be verbal (titles, interviews), but also iconic (illustrations), material (e.g. typographical choices), or factual (implicit messages, such as the sex of the author) (265-266). The “pragmatic status” tells if the paratext is addressed to either the general public, the readers, or critics and booksellers (266-267). Another category is the “illocutionary force,” which explains if the paratextual element conveys “pure information,” an “intention or interpretation” of the author or editor, an “undertaking” (e.g. autobiographies), “advice” or “injunction”, or a “performative” element (268-269). In short, the paratext guides and influences the reader of the text, and conveys the text’s identity (Stanitzek 32).

The discussions of paratext and of intermediality below call for the notion of materiality as well. Hayles’ definition of materiality argues that it depends on how the work uses its physical properties, on the user’s interactions with it, and on the way the work is interpreted (qtd. in Poletti 265). Genette and Maclean above called paratextual elements such as typographical choices ‘material’. This thesis then uses ‘materiality’ to indicate the material, meaning physical, paratextual (peritextual) elements of the books discussed here.

Intermediality

Intermediality can be generally defined as the relationships between media (Rippl 1). Kress and van Leeuwen explain the term ‘media’ as being the “material resources used in the production of semiotic products and events, including both the tools and the materials used” (qtd. in Thurlow 623). I will refer to these “material resources” as the material paratextual elements discussed above. For example, a book, an art print or a CD is such an element and a piece of media. Rajewsky identifies three types of phenomena that can take place in an intermedial framework. “Intermedial” instances show a crossing of media borders. “Intramedial” cases do not feature such a crossing. In “transmedial” occurrences a particular aspect appears across various different media (qtd. in Rippl 11). The type of intermediality relevant for this thesis is the intermedial kind, especially one as defined by Wolf, where

“intermedial relations” occur when “two or more media are overtly present in a given semiotic entity” (qtd. in Rippl 12). A type of discourse in this type of intermediality is “synthetic intermediality” as stated by Schröter, where the combination of several media forms a new medium called the “intermedium” (qtd. in Rippl 13), which is especially relevant for the *Book of Opeth* analysis.

Book Publishing

It must first be established what it is exactly that a publisher does and into which publishing sector Rocket 88 falls. De Prato sums up publishers as being

“at the core of the business. Their functions include the aggregation, presentation (reading, editing and designing), pricing and marketing of books and dealing with other parties in the value chain, including the technical intermediaries (printers, phototypesetting, binders, etc.) and a specialized workforce, in-house or outsourced (proofreading). They are also responsible for the ‘quality’ of the edited product and, even if they may not have to finance the initial content creation, their funding role nevertheless grants them a pivotal position.”

Publishers are seen as the primary customers of the authors, who are not always directly supported by the publishers. The author is normally under a contract and supplies them with the creative product (93).

Which publishing sector Rocket 88 belongs to would be the consumer publishing sector. They do not release any educational, academic, professional, or children’s and young adult works or any journals. The only similarity they have with these non-consumer markets is the focus on vertical communities (groups of people sharing common interests (Clark and Phillips 21)) but that is not mutually exclusive. There are, however, various characteristics typical of consumer publishing that I would not readily apply to Rocket 88. Clark and Phillips mention such characteristics as “high risk”, “high discounts” and “discoverability” (86). Since Rocket 88 is a small publisher focusing on a niche market, they do not have to take high risks concerning sales potential and advances to authors. They also do not have to depend on high discounts forced on them by retailers and the discoverability from retail exposure (although there can be discounts when buying directly from Rocket 88, though when buying via Amazon or Barnes & Noble, you will not receive a discount (*Time Flies – The Porcupine Tree Story*)). A reason that allows them to do so and still make a profit may be the shift towards “direct to consumer (D2C) marketing” among publishers and “investing in online vertical communities” (Clark and Phillips 87). It is also quite likely that acquisition of

economic capital is not their primary focus, but rather their passion is. Thompson states that most small presses focus on books about which the owner feels passionate, and lets one such owner explain (159-160). This same sentiment is also mentioned on Rocket 88's own website on their 'About Us' page, where they say they seek out projects to hopefully fulfil their own passions and those of their readers ("About Us").

Creating and protecting value in publishing

A publisher will want to make a profit or at least break even when publishing a text. This can be done by ensuring the text is sold at a higher value than the costs it took to produce it. A value chain comes into play here, which moves from the intellectual property to the editing, design, production, marketing and sales of the text (Clark and Phillips 106-107). De Prato depicts this value chain in a more streamlined way, where the chain moves from creation to the publishers, and from the publishers to distribution and reader institutions (93). The value associated with a book is generally understood in its amount of sales or its potential for sales, including the generation of both economic and symbolic capital (Thompson 10). One way Rocket 88 may be making a profit or breaking even is through the fact that it is a publishing imprint of Essential Works Ltd., a book creator, which should keep the design and production aspects in-house, saving expenses. Another way could be by selling the Signature editions of the books, which warrant a higher selling price. It further reinforces the brand image of Rocket 88 as a publisher that releases lavishly designed, high quality books, which in turn increases their symbolic capital and thus the value of further publications. Increasing "visibility and market reach" is another way of increasing value (Clark and Phillips 110), through social media and mailing lists, for example, which will be discussed below under 'marketing.' The inclusion of the exclusive media mentioned above contribute to "copyright defence" by "exploit[ing] the intellectual property rights in the author's work" (110) and legally protecting that. For example, Townsend's music is exploited for an exclusive CD in *Only Half There*, which is the only way of obtaining that music legally.

The internet further impacts how value is created by means of digital capital, which is a cycle of "brand," "co-creation of value" and "community" (111). The aforementioned use of social media and mailing lists is one tool for creating digital capital. Social interactions with publishers and authors, namely, have become more enticing for readers, and social media grants them more influence on what is being read (Kiernan 117). The creation of this capital and the overall influence of the internet thus call for different business models (Hetherington 382). Clark & Phillips mention the UK publisher Unbound as an example, which is a

crowdfunding medium for authors. It operates similarly to Rocket 88, in that you can get your name printed in the back of the book if you back the project early on (115). The Rocket 88 books have a 'Roll of Honour' at the back, where everyone who pre-ordered the book gets their name mentioned. Unbound is a crowdfunding platform where consumers can financially back the project early on to get it published, whereas Rocket 88 works somewhat differently. They have no crowdfunding, but they do initially gauge interest via their mailing lists (with no obligations whatsoever), after which consumers can eventually pre-order the book, entailing they pay for the book and get their name printed. This gives Rocket 88 an indication of potential sales.

The internet also acts as a new distribution channel, especially for e-books, bringing cheaper and more effective means of production and distribution upstream into the value chain. This means publishers can get rid of intermediaries and save costs (de Prato 94). New digital intermediaries can help publishers transition to digital (95), but Rocket 88 mostly still releases physical books, so they have less of a need for those. This is interesting, because the preference for biographies among consumers is for e-books instead of print books (Vassallo 25). Still, Rocket 88's books are not simply 'books', they are elaborate material products, and releasing such products in the digital age is a way for publishers to stay successful (Kiernan 115). They follow another strategy often utilised by (new) players in the industry due to the increasing digitisation of books, which is the serving of niche markets and communities (de Prato 97). Digitisation also threatens the central role of publishers as online distributors such as Amazon become more influential (98), but Rocket 88 is again quite safe from this, because of their physical releases mentioned above, which they distribute themselves and which sell out.

Design and production

The materiality and paratextual aspects of these books are a major selling point, especially in the case of *Book of Opeth*, as it consists of countless photographs and illustrations. The Classic edition of *Time Flies* is published with four different cover arts, and the Signature editions of all the books are housed in a box. This signals that the design and production aspects are held in high regard by Rocket 88. The cover design is normally designed to attract buyers and retailers (Clark and Phillips 201) by suggesting what the contents might entail (Phillips 19). Since these books are largely marketed towards fans of the respective artists, that could be less of a concern for Rocket 88, as these fans will already be familiar with the likely contents of the book. Nevertheless, considerable care has gone into the design of the

covers, showing an intention to create an appealing iconic paratext. This goes hand in hand with another part of the design process: picture research, which involves the collection of all kinds of illustrations (Clark and Phillips 202-204). Each of these books feature a number of photographs, indicating picture research has been carried out, or the photographs may have been provided by the artists themselves.

Marketing

The first step in marketing is understanding the market and targeting a particular audience (224-226). This can be made easier through market segmentation. The whole consumer market can be broken down into smaller segments, such as geographic and demographic segments. A relevant segment here is the psychographic segment, which classifies consumers by their “interests, aspirations and feelings,” and connects them with other owners of the book. Another applicable segment is the behavioural segment, in which brand loyalty is important (Phillips 20-21). Rocket 88 targets an audience of music lovers, specifically fans of the artists related to these books. They likely know that this audience enjoys collecting items relating to these artists or desire new music, which they incorporate in the production of the books. These consumers have the interests and brand loyalty of the aforementioned market segments. This brings “positioning” into play, the process of deciding how a product will fit in the market. Will the product be of high value and high quality, or of lower value and of a basic quality (Clark and Phillips 226)? This can develop a brand for the publisher or author, which can generate symbolic capital and increase sales. Once the primary segments and the positioning have been identified, a marketing plan is made which is divided into four headings collectively known as “the marketing mix”, namely ‘product,’ ‘price,’ ‘place’ and ‘promotion’ (227).

Marketing plays a major role in the development of a new product, concerning the initial idea of the project, the book title, the book cover etc. (227). An important marketing technique for this is author branding, as familiarity with the author influences the sales through their symbolic capital. The book websites and social media of the author pay significant attention to this. Rocket 88 created websites for each of these books, and most of these books were promoted on the artist’s social media as well. If the author developed a fan base, then those readers are targeted early in the promotion of the author’s next book (230). In the case of these books, the fan bases of these artists were already established. Rocket 88 opened a mailing list early on so fans could stay up-to-date with the production of the book. They furthermore introduced the concept of the Roll of Honour, where everyone who pre-

ordered the book gets their name mentioned in the back. Through these types of marketing over time and pre-publication awareness, a publisher can generate anticipation and demand “at the grassroots level” (Thompson 249-251).

Factors influencing the price can be the value as perceived by the consumers, their ability to pay the book’s price, and the pricing of the competition. Another mentioned factor that is significant here is the “uniqueness that can let it command a premium price” (231), which definitely applies to the materiality of the Signature editions. The “price elasticity” of a book influences if it is useful to lower the retail price to increase sales. Consumer books are typically price elastic (232).

The aspect of place as defined in marketing concerns the distribution channels, both physical and digital, and the online metadata of the book. Marketers need to assess and understand the market in which the book is sold and make it as efficient as possible. Since a substantial number of books are searched for and bought online, the metadata of a book must be correct and effective to ensure the biggest chance of the book being found and bought. This goes hand in hand with consumer reviews on sites such as Amazon and Goodreads, which can encourage sales as well (234). If a consumer has similar interests to the reviewer, they might be led by their recommendation (Weedon 121). One disadvantage, however, is that the physical product cannot be touched and handled online. This is an essential part of browsing (122), especially for such material-rich products as Rocket 88 books. Rocket 88 does try to mediate this by showing images of the entire package, and of the photos and pages within.

Promotion aims to make consumers aware of the company and its products, primarily takes place online. As is mentioned above, Rocket 88 created websites for its books to promote them, and uses the social media of both themselves and the artists to further create interest. This also involves trailers on YouTube where the artists talk about these books. Clark & Phillips mention that internet marketing has “huge potential for niche publishers,” which is certainly true for Rocket 88. Their books are not stocked in most bookstores, so they sell them directly to their market via communities and mail (237).

The following three chapters will each be a case study on one of the books mentioned. Each book will be described in further detail to get a clearer picture of their material and paratextual elements, and their degree of intermediality, through which the publishing aspects discussed above will be analysed more specifically. I will then look at the reception of each book by looking at both amateur and critic reviews to explore if Rocket 88’s strategy helps in acquiring symbolic and economic capital. I anticipate that their marketing strategy is effective

in that regard, and that the materiality, paratextuality, and intermediality of the products will have had a significant effect on sales, which should show up in the reviews.

1. Rich Wilson - *Time Flies: The Story of Porcupine Tree*

Time Flies: The Story of Porcupine Tree is the unauthorised biography of the band Porcupine Tree, written by Rich Wilson. It was released in December 2017. The book begins with detailing the early years of frontman Steven Wilson's career, including his various bands and his own small record label that he had before Porcupine Tree became a proper band. It then goes on to describe how Porcupine Tree's first album came to be released, how the original line-up was formed and how the first live performances had been. The rest of the book describes further album releases, tour schedules, band chemistry, and how the band's success had grown until their hiatus.

The materialistic paratextual elements of the book are as follows. The book contains eleven chapters, a 'notes' section and the Roll of Honour (where those who pre-ordered the book get their names mentioned). The middle includes 16 pages of photographs taken throughout Porcupine Tree's entire career. The book is 272 pages long and comes as a jacketed hardback. The jacket features the book cover. The Classic edition comes in four different book covers on a white background, while the Signature edition has just one cover with a black background. The Signature edition is housed in an exclusive presentation box signed by the author and is supplemented by three unpublished photographic prints. Unlike the other two books discussed here, this book does not feature any exclusive music. This is presumably so because it is an unauthorised biography. It is, however, the only book to have different book covers, perhaps to compensate for the lack of exclusive music.

1.1 Publishing Analysis

This section will discuss the publishing aspects in relation to the material, paratextual, and intermedial influences on symbolic and economic capital.

1.1.1 Creating and Protecting Value in Publishing

A value chain comes into play to ensure that the product will provide economic capital for the publisher. This chain moves from the raw text through editing, design, production, marketing and sales, and distribution (Clark & Phillips 106-107). These points are further discussed in the following sections, but various ways of adding value to the product are first reviewed here.

One way of adding value is to exploit the brand and symbolic capital of both the author (108-109), or which is more the case here, Porcupine Tree, and of Rocket 88 themselves. Porcupine Tree has been going for more than 20 years and have a solid fan base, which means the familiarity of those fans towards the band can be used to boost sales. Rocket 88 further promotes their brand by releasing a Signature edition next to the Classic edition. This Signature edition comes in an exclusive box with exclusive photographic prints, conveying a professionalism on Rocket 88's part for making high quality books. These material features add more value to the Signature edition, which also warrants a higher selling price compared to the Classic edition, adding to the potential profit of the book. Another way of adding value is by increasing visibility and market reach (110), which is done through a mailing list issued when the book was announced (see 'promotion' under 1.1.3).

The impact of the internet adds a digital dimension to value creation in terms of digital capital. This is created by a cycle of 'brand,' 'community,' and 'co-creation of value' (111). The brand of both Porcupine Tree and Rocket 88 is promoted through a dedicated website to the book and to the abovementioned mailing list. This mailing list is aimed at the community of fans of Porcupine Tree, and provides the option of having one's name added to the Roll of Honour if the book is pre-ordered. The inclusion of the consumer's name by them pre-ordering the book can be seen as co-creation of value, albeit more an increase of personal value for the consumer.

1.1.2 Design and Production



Fig. 1: The different book covers for *Time Flies (Time Flies – The Porcupine Tree Story)*

The book comes in four different cover artworks (see fig. 1), some of which look similar to artwork of various releases in the discography of Steven Wilson. One cover features vintage-style photographs of three boys, which are reminiscent of the photography used for Wilson's Incredible Expanding Mindfuck project, on releases such as *I.E.M.* (1996) and *Arcadia Son* (2001), or for his Bass Communion release *Loss* (2006). Another cover features a beaked woman, which can remind of the theme and video for Wilson's song *The Raven that Refused to Sing* (2012), featuring a raven. This familiarity with the iconic paratext can incline fans to buy the book, conveying a possible "intention or interpretation" of the paratext (Genette and Maclean 268-269). Consumers may possibly even buy multiple copies to collect these different cover artworks, generating more economic capital. The other two cover artworks and the signature edition cover artwork seem to bear no immediate resemblance to any Wilson project, however.

The Signature edition comes in a limited presentation box with exclusive cover artwork (see fig. 1) and three photographic prints. The website does not show what these photographs look like and what they depict, so the consumers would have to buy the Signature edition to find out. The production of both a Classic edition and a Signature edition plays very well into the way music is released today, especially the music of artists such as Steven Wilson. The last Porcupine Tree album *The Incident* (2009) and every solo album by Wilson to date has been released as both a standard edition (on CD, vinyl or Blu-ray) and a deluxe edition. These deluxe editions often come in a box, and feature an exclusive art book and exclusive music, similar to the release of the Signature edition of *Time Flies*. This production of different cover artworks and of a Classic and Signature edition plays into the urge of collectors among the fan base to collect every edition, which can promote sales and produce more economic capital.

A selection of photographs is featured in the middle of the book, showing photographs from throughout the band's history. It shows the band's first promo shoot, promo posters for live gigs, various band photos and live shots from throughout the nineties, photos of each band member during their landmark concert at the Royal Albert Hall, and two photos of Wilson after Porcupine Tree went on hiatus. The photos come from various sources. Most are from former manager Richard Allen's personal collection or were provided by former crew member Glenn Povey. These photos show periods in time that are discussed throughout the text and thus add a visual aspect to the whole. This iconic paratext enhances the verbal text, showing an intermedial relation, as defined by Wolf (qtd. in Rippl 12), where two mediums are clearly present in one object.

1.1.3 Marketing

The first step in marketing is to understand the market and the audience. The market and audience targeted for this book are mostly fans of Porcupine Tree and Wilson's work in general. The positioning of the book is decided next. *Time Flies* is positioned into being of high value and of high quality. Since there is no competition in terms of other Porcupine Tree biographies, Rocket 88 does not have to position the book as "the same for much less" and offer a basic product at a competitive price (Clark & Phillips 226). The activities of a marketing plan can then be placed under four headings in what is known as the marketing mix, namely 'product,' 'price,' 'place' and 'promotion' (227). Each of these four headings will be discussed below.

Product

A part of this heading is the initial development of the idea. This book is related in some ways to the other books discussed here, not only because it is published by Rocket 88 as well. All three books, and Rich Wilson's previous book at Rocket 88, the Dream Theater biography *Lifting Shadows*, share an overlap in their communities. All artists are considered modern progressive rock artists and share fans in their fan bases. This book came out after the other books, so Rocket 88 has already positioned themselves as a publisher relevant to the interests of these fans and developed symbolic capital through them. This interest can play a major role in the development of a new book such as this, as Rocket 88 knows there is a market for it. This furthermore creates a publisher brand that these consumers can keep an eye on, which also plays a role in the 'promotion' heading further on.

Author branding is another type of branding coming into play here, although for *Time Flies* it is not so much the author but the band itself that is the focussed brand. The author, Rich Wilson, is stated as the writer of the above mentioned Dream Theater biography on the book jacket, but other than that his image is not important. The important factor of author branding is familiarity with the author or their characters (230), which in this case is Porcupine Tree. This familiarity is utilised in the promotion of the book by exploiting the band's symbolic capital.

Price

Factors influencing the price of a book is how consumers perceive the value of the book and whether the consumers can pay for it. The Classic edition is a hardback book priced at £30,

which is a relatively reasonable price. The Signature edition is priced at £60 (*Time Flies – The Porcupine Tree Story*), which is a much lower price than the Signature editions of *Only Half There* and *Book of Opeth*. The differences in terms of content between these two Signature editions are not that drastic, while the price difference is (£100 and £250 respectively (*Book of Opeth*, Rocket 88; *Only Half There – Canadian Musician ...*)). A possible reason for this is that this book, unlike the other two, is an unauthorised book, which might either cut down the costs or make an expensive edition less appealing to consumers. The latter case might imply a lower symbolic capital that can be exploited for the book, so Rocket 88 has to balance that with their potential economic capital. Another reason might be that the latter two are listed as extremely limited (1,500 and 500 copies respectively), while this Signature edition of *Time Flies* is not. The limited nature of those editions gives it an air of extreme value compared to this edition, possibly justifying the higher prices. The Signature edition still warrants a higher price than the Classic edition due to the premium quality.

Place

The book is sold purely via online retail, namely via the Rocket 88 website and websites such as Amazon. This is the best option for the book, as the market is a narrow, vertical community, and this decreases any risks of the book not being able to sell in shops. This means the book needs a high online visibility, especially towards its market. This is done by creating a website for the book, an epitextual device, with all relevant information, reviews (allowing consumers to place a review as well as professional reviews), and the option to order the book. Those reviews, as well as reviews on websites such as Goodreads and Amazon, further encourage sales (Clark & Phillips 234).

Promotion

The primary aim of promotion is to raise awareness about the product and increase sales (235), which Rocket 88 does via online promotion. One way they do this is through the website dedicated to the book. The website has an accessible, easy to remember name, namely the band name with 'book' attached behind it: porcupinetreebook.com. This website shows all the relevant information on one webpage, such as the contents, the differences between the two editions, an FAQ and promotion for some of Rocket 88's other books, such as *Book of Opeth*. Another way they do this is by gauging initial interest via an email list. When a new book is announced, consumers can opt in to this list and be the first to pre-order the book, as well as get special discounts. Rocket 88 sent an email in June 2017 to these people, along with

a 15% discount code to be used at pre-order (Rocket 88, “Porcupine Tree Book”). This was not the only incentive to buy it early, as those who pre-ordered also got their name eternalised on the Roll of Honour. An additional way of online promotion is by utilising the social media of the artists, but this was not done for *Time Flies*, likely due to it being an unauthorised release. These ways of online promotion show the substantial potential it can have for niche publishers, as they can directly focus on the artist’s fans.

1.2 Reception Analysis

The efficiency of Rocket 88’s publishing strategy for *Time Flies* will be analysed by looking at professional and amateur reviews of the book, such as reviews on websites of official publications and on Goodreads. I count reviews for print publications and major websites as professional, while those on smaller websites, Goodreads and Amazon as amateur.

There are two reviews on *Loudersound.com*, the website of the company that currently owns the *Classic Rock*, *Metal Hammer*, *Prog*, and *Blues* publications. One of the reviews is from *Classic Rock*, the other from *Prog*. The review from *Prog* is written by Chris Cope, and begins by affirming the authenticity of the biography and applauding the first-hand knowledge of Rich Wilson (who is mentioned as a regular writer for the publication). The review for *Classic Rock* is written by Polly Glass, who gives a brief description of the book’s contents. Ian Abrahams has reviewed the book for the *Record Collector Magazine* website and calls it a worthy biography. The last professional review of the book is found on the website of the book itself, albeit a short two sentences. Mark Eglinton, co-writer of *Confessions of a Heretic*, the book on Behemoth frontman Nergal, complements the interviews and Rich Wilson’s storytelling, claiming it made him buy several Porcupine Tree albums.

These reviews mention nothing about the material or intermedial aspects of either the Classic or Signature edition, and the photographs are only briefly mentioned in Cope’s review. The reviewers also do not discuss any of the marketing aspects of the book, but that can be due to them receiving review copies and them not being a part of the target audience. Still, I would expect at least a mention of either the different book covers or the existence of a Signature edition, and Rocket 88 or any implications of their symbolic capital are not even brought up here. These editions are not as elaborately produced as the other two books, however, so perhaps the reviewers saw no need to discuss these aspects.

Goodreads features 13 reviews, of which 6 are textual. The only review to mention anything relevant is that of user Baal Of, who comments that the book is “beautifully designed and printed, with some nice photographs as well.” *Amazon.com* features only one review by user Phil Simon, which does not feature anything relevant either. Another amateur review comes from Jerry Lucky, who makes one minor comment on the design, calling it a “handsome ... sturdily put together ... hardcover.” One last amateur review appears on a forum called *ProgressiveEars.org* by a user called mozo-pg, divided into two parts. The first part of the review was written when the reviewer was halfway through the book and merely describes the content read thus far. The second part continues in this vein, but does end on the reviewer saying that the book is “an excellent and in-depth summary of the band’s achievements with an impressive array of source materials and quotes to back up the author’s central themes.”

These reviews only show a small portion of the total number of consumers, but it is not stated anywhere if these reviewers were reached through the mailing list or website, though, so if that had any effect is uncertain. These reviews do in turn provide additional promotion for the book, with the *ProgressiveEars.org* forum being a prime example of digital word-of-mouth, which can encourage further sales of the book. This means that the ‘brand’ element as discussed in 1.1.1 and the ‘product’ and ‘place’ sections in 1.1.3 have been influential in at least these specific sales of the book and Rocket 88’s publishing strategy in those respects has been successful. A noteworthy observation is that material and intermedial elements such as the design, exclusive photographs and the existence of a signature edition are barely mentioned in these reviews either. The design and photographs are only mentioned twice, once in a *Goodreads* review and once in Lucky’s review, so these aspects do not seem to have played a (major) role for these readers.

The almost complete lack of mentions of any material or intermedial features and of Rocket 88’s brand in these reviews do not imply any significant effect of the publishing strategy on Rocket 88’s symbolic and economic capital. The collection of reviews is of course not indicative of the entire consumer count, and thus provides only limited conclusions. *Goodreads* reviews, for example, can furthermore be said to be focussed purely on the text of the book and not the accompanying media, as the website focusses on the texts of books, although the design and media are part of the entire package. One element that does shine through in the reviews is the familiarity with the brand of Porcupine Tree, so at least their symbolic capital has been usefully exploited.

2. Devin Townsend - *Only Half There*

Only Half There is the autobiography of Canadian musician Devin Townsend. The Classic edition was released in October 2016, and the Signature edition in November 2016. The book touches upon various aspects of Townsend's life and career. The first few chapters describe his childhood and adolescence, detailing the music and life experiences that influenced him, as well as his relationship with his family. The book then moves on to Townsend's first few bands and his work for guitarist Steve Vai, before arriving at the two longest chapters of the book, where he discusses his bands Strapping Young Lad, The Devin Townsend Band, and his solo efforts. The chapters after these discuss his later career with various other projects, such as Devin Townsend Project. Townsend is, throughout the book, extraordinarily open about his creative process, beliefs, mental challenges and personality, providing a personal context in which to place his music.

The materialistic paratextual aspects are as follows: the book contains 21 chapters, as well as a 'Selected Listening' section, a discography section, information on the exclusive CD and cassette, and the Roll of Honour. It is 312 pages long and features a selection of photographs from throughout Townsend's career in the middle of the book. The book comes as a jacketed hardback, of which the jacket features the book cover. The Signature edition, signed by Townsend, comes in a different jacketed material than the Classic edition, and is housed in an exclusive box including an exclusive cassette tape and four cartoon prints drawn by Townsend. Both editions feature an exclusive CD.

2.1 Publishing Analysis

This section will discuss the publishing aspects in relation to the material, paratextual, and intermedial influences on symbolic and economic capital.

2.1.1 Creating and Protecting Value in Publishing

One way of adding value to the product is by exploiting the brand and symbolic capital of the author and publisher. The author, Devin Townsend, is a well-known musician with an established fan base. Their familiarity with Townsend can be used to further boost sales, especially since he himself is the author. The brand of Rocket 88 as a professional publisher providing exceptional design and production for their books is utilised here as well. *Only Half There* also comes in a Classic edition and a Signature edition. The Signature edition comes once again in an exclusive box and with art prints. Unlike *Time Flies*, the book has just one book cover, but comes with exclusive music. Both editions feature the *Iceland* CD, an

acoustic album of previously released Townsend songs recorded in Iceland. Townsend explicitly states in the book that this CD was recorded to add more value to it (262). The Signature edition is supplemented by an additional cassette containing old demo recordings called *Ancient*. This is especially tempting for Townsend fans, and increases the chances of selling the Signature edition. These Signature edition features again warrant a higher selling price than the Classic edition. The brand of ‘Devin Townsend’ is fully exploited with these two recordings, adding significant value to the book. This in turn could potentially increase sales and provide Rocket 88 with a greater economic capital.

The creation of digital capital is similar to that of *Time Flies*. This book has its own dedicated website and mailing list as well. This mailing list too was targeted at the Townsend fan base and offered a place in the Roll of Honour to pre-orders. The website also offered a sample of the music on *Iceland* in order to help convince consumers to buy the book. The website and mailing list further increase the visibility of *Only Half There*, which was amplified by Townsend’s social media such as Facebook and Twitter (see ‘promotion’ in 2.1.3 for more details).

2.1.2 Design and Production



Fig. 2: The Signature edition of *Only Half There*. The book on the right is what the Classic edition looks like (*Only Half There – Canadian Musician ...*)

The book cover (see fig. 2) shows a sketch of half of Townsend's head on the right-hand side, with illustrations of branches, bugs, and mushrooms in various shades of yellow on the sides of the cover. The showing of his face on the cover often happens with autobiographies, where subject and author are the same (Kratz 185). This shows Townsend being 'only half there' on the cover as well, conveying an "interpretation" intended by the author (Genette and Maclean 268-269) for the readers. The front hardback cover, when opened, encases the *Iceland* CD, which has the front cover on the disk. The box of the signature edition features the same book cover, but with Townsend's head more centred. The website for this book does show a glimpse of the cartoon prints accompanying the Signature edition, which was not the case for the photographic prints accompanying the *Time Flies* Signature edition (*Only Half There – Canadian Musician ...*).

The photographs in the middle show moments throughout Townsend's entire life. The first few photographs, taken by his family, show him as just a toddler, and the next few show him in school. The rest of the photographs display various moments throughout his career, such as promotional pictures with Steve Vai in the early nineties, photos with musicians he has collaborated with, and live show photos, with the last one showing his landmark show at the Royal Albert Hall in 2015. These photos are all taken by a myriad of photographers, with some being unknown. The function of this iconic paratext is the same as with *Time Flies*, showing an intermedial relation between text and photographs.

2.1.3 Marketing

The first steps of the marketing of *Only Half There* are similar to *Time Flies*. Rocket 88 targets the fan base of Townsend to sell this, and position the book as a high value and high quality product. There is again no competition in terms of other Townsend biographies. The previously discussed sections of the marketing mix will be discussed below in respect to *Only Half There* as well.

Product

A part of this heading is the development of the idea. Townsend explicitly states in the foreword to the book that his manager, Andy Farrow, suggested the idea to write this book (9). *Book of Opeth* was released before this book as well, and since Opeth and Townsend have an overlap in their fan communities, there already is an accumulation of symbolic capital which ensures that there is already an initial interest in this book. This familiarity with

Townsend as an artist plays into author branding, which was used to gauge initial pre-orders via mailing list and to promote the book.

Price

The Classic edition was originally priced at £40, but is at the time of writing discounted to £35. This shows a price elasticity of the Classic edition which can increase sales. The Signature edition is priced at £100 and is sold out. As is stated above, this Signature edition is more expensive than the *Time Flies* Signature edition. This Signature edition is limited to only 1,500 copies, which can warrant a higher selling price. The material aspects furthermore make the product more appealing and increase the potential for economic capital.

Place

The same epitextual devices are applicable here as for *Time Flies*: it is sold purely online via Rocket 88 and websites such as Amazon, and the online visibility is increased via the dedicated website and reviews on that website as well as on websites as Goodreads.

Promotion

The promotion for this book is done similarly to that of *Time Flies*: mostly online. The book has a dedicated website with a comparable web address: devintownsendbook.com. It has the same contents as the *Time Flies* website, with an additional sample of the accompanying *Iceland* CD. An email list was established as well. Rocket 88 announced this book as early as May 2014 on Facebook (Rocket 88, “Devin Townsend has always been ...”) with an opportunity to register for the mailing list. Rocket 88 sent the first email concerning pre-orders and a place on the Roll of Honour on 7 April 2016 (Rocket 88, “Official Devin Townsend book”).

One significant difference to the online promotion for *Time Flies* is that the social media of the artist was used. This is a clear example of epitext being used to exploit Townsend’s symbolic capital to promote his book, which can increase the potential for sales and economic capital. Townsend announced the writing of the book on 14 May 2014 on his Twitter (@dvntownsend, “We’re working on ...”), and he shared the pre-order link two years later on 6 April 2016 on Twitter as well (@dvntownsend, “Ok guys ...”). His Facebook page was also utilised to promote pre-orders on numerous occasions, such as on 7 April 2016 (Townsend, “The response to 'Only Half There' has been ...”). Rocket 88 furthermore published numerous videos on their Facebook page where Townsend is promoting his book,

explaining for instance how the title was chosen (Rocket 88, “Devin Townsend on aspects of choosing the book title #OnlyHalfThere.”). It is worth noting that physical promotion was additionally used. Townsend did a short acoustic tour through the UK in 2015, including a date at the Trinity Centre in Bristol, England on 15 October. The merchandise stand had small promotional flyers for the book.

2.2 Reception Analysis

The reception of *Only Half There* is analysed here by examining four professional reviews and various amateur reviews, mostly found on Goodreads and Amazon.

Polly Glass, who has reviewed *Time Flies*, has also reviewed *Only Half There* for the Prog section of *Loudersound.com*. Glass calls the *Ancient* cassette a significant release and the tracks on the *Iceland* CD beautiful, but finds the deluxe edition to be quite expensive at £100. Glass lastly comments that for an honest assessment of Townsend, this book “hits the spot.” Glass is the only one to comment on the price of the Signature edition, calling it a high price. Elliott Thomas has reviewed the book for HEAVY magazine, and the review for *BraveWords.com* is written by the executive editor of the book, Martin Popoff. His involvement surely gives him some sort of bias, and he does immediately disclose that he was involved with the book, and that it goes beyond his hopes for it. Popoff goes on to praise Rocket 88 for their “top-shelf design” and Townsend for his sincere writing. He ends by briefly complimenting the presentation of the whole book and saying that a deluxe edition is available. The last professional review is for *metal-rules.com*, which also features a separate review for the *Iceland* CD, both written by user Lord of the Wasteland. The book review starts by citing Townsend’s prolific nature in the music industry, after which the reviewer describes the two available editions of the book and states that Rocket 88 is “establishing itself as a “boutique” publisher,” considering the quality and price of the book. The CD is rated rather neutrally, with the reviewer calling it not much more than “a curiosity” for Townsend fans and saying it “serves its purpose as a nifty little bonus.”

The first amateur review discussed here is by Taylor Moorey, who says he ordered the Signature edition, got his name printed and finds the whole package beautiful, mentioning the cartoon prints and the music releases. The next amateur review is by Thomas Hatton for *Proglodytes*, who begins by admiring the aesthetics of the book and finds the book cover beautiful. He then mentions the *Iceland* CD and says he would have gladly paid the full price of the book even without the CD, but still finds it adds value to the entire package. Hatton is the sole reviewer commenting on the Classic edition’s price, which he would have paid even

without the CD, implying he finds the price reasonable. This is in contrast with Glass' comments on the price of the Signature edition, which she found to be (too) high.

The Amazon reviews are mostly on *Amazon.com*, it having six reviews, with an additional two on *Amazon.ca*. It is worth noting that these reviews do not mention anything concerning the material or intermedial aspects of the book, or Rocket 88's brand.

Goodreads features 21 textual reviews. User Chris Harris says he was able to back the book and got his name on the Roll of Honour. He and Taylor Moorey both mention getting their names in the back of the book, so the incentive provided by the Roll of Honour might have worked here. A review by user Jessica first mentions how fun the unboxing of the Signature edition was, and that the best part was opening the book and seeing the photographs. User Manda found the book cover one of the most beautiful she has ever seen and calls *Iceland* a "great CD." Another review comes from user Michael, who mentions the *Iceland* CD and finds the tracks beautiful.

Townsend's stream-of-consciousness writing style is a common theme in these reviews, which puts some people off. This can work against potential sales of the book, as even some Townsend fans find it off-putting. This writing style was bound to appear in a Townsend autobiography and should have come up at meetings at Rocket 88, as should the questions if a ghost-writer should be used or if it should become a biography written by another writer. Then again, the fact that it is written by Townsend himself gives the impression of a direct and an honest view on his life and career, which is more appealing and adds value (2.1.1) to the product through exploitation of his symbolic capital.

The material and intermedial book features that add value, such as the *Iceland* CD and the Signature edition, play a more significant role in these reviews than they did in the reviews for *Time Flies*. Polly Glass of the *Louder* review found the *Iceland* tracks beautiful and the *Ancient* cassette a noteworthy release, and Thomas Hatton of *Proglodytes* appreciated the extra value the disc provided, though he would have bought the book without it anyway. Taylor Moorey does mention the CD and cassette in his review, without any apparent judgement of them, and the *metal-rules.com* review merely calls the CD a "nifty little bonus." Goodreads user Michael finds the tracks on *Iceland* "beautiful" and user Manda calls the disc a "great CD." The opinions on the exclusive music in these reviews are fairly neutral, and it is not clear from the reviews if the disc was any incentive for these readers to buy the book. Hatton even says that he would have bought the book regardless of the disc. These reviewers do all seem to be Townsend fans, and the disc does not provide proper new material, and that may not be of great interest to them. These findings do not imply any significant effect of the

intermedial relation between the text and the audio on the acquisition of more symbolic or economic capital.

The design aspects get more attention as well. Martin Popoff praises Rocket 88's "top-shelf design," and the *metal-rules.com* review calls Rocket 88 a "boutique" publisher because of the quality and price of the books. Taylor Moorey ordered the Signature edition and finds the whole package beautiful, and Thomas Hatton admires the aesthetics and the book cover. Goodreads user Jessica enjoyed the unboxing of the Signature edition and found the pictures in the book one of the best parts, while user Manda found the book cover on the most beautiful book covers she has ever seen. These reviews do imply that the way Rocket 88 designs and produces their books creates a publisher brand that is connected to traits of high quality. This further increases the symbolic capital associated with Rocket 88 and their future publications.

3. Opeth - *Book of Opeth*

Book of Opeth is the biography of Swedish progressive rock- and metal band Opeth, released in April 2016. Opeth is listed as the author of the book, but the narrative structure is composed of pieces of text by various band members and collaborators. These pieces of text are alternated by numerous photographs of album recordings, photoshoots, etc. The book is 208 pages long and has three main chapters, which move from frontman Mikael Åkerfeldt's musical beginnings to Opeth's latest record (at the time of the book's release). It details the changes in band members, label switches, the development of their sound, and album recordings. After these chapters the book contains a section on Opeth's long-time designer Travis Smith and a section on the dedicated collector Alexander Skottene Twiss, along with a list of his collection. As with the other two books, this book includes a Roll of Honour at the back.

The materialistic paratextual aspects follow here. Both the Classic edition and Signature edition come as a large hardback with cloth binding and are printed on heavy-weight art paper (*Book of Opeth*, Rocket 88). They both come with an exclusive 7" vinyl single as well, featuring two live tracks. The Signature edition is signed by Åkerfeldt and is housed in a clamshell case, along with three art prints by designer Travis Smith. The Classic edition is limited to 3,500 copies and the Signature edition to 500 copies.

3.1 Publishing analysis

This section will discuss the publishing aspects in relation to the material, paratextual, and intermedial influences on symbolic and economic capital.

3.1.1. Creating and Protecting Value in Production

The symbolic capital exploited here are the author brand of Opeth and the publisher brand of Rocket 88. Opeth, like the previous two artists, is a well-known band with an established fan base that can be targeted. This Opeth brand is the primary selling-point of the book, with it existing largely of photographs of the band and their personal stories. The vinyl single contains exclusive Opeth music, again using the Opeth brand to create value for the product. This book therefore fully utilises its materialistic paratextual features to utilise Opeth's symbolic capital, and showing the Rocket 88 brand of them providing exceptional design and production to their books. The two previous books focussed mostly on the textual aspect, but

Book of Opeth is design-heavy and consists largely of photographs. This makes this book a prime example of an intermedial product, where the borders between media are crossed and combine to form one entity. The Signature edition comes in another lavish box along with three art prints, which conveys Rocket 88's professional design brand. The Signature edition is furthermore limited to 500 copies and this limited nature adds to the value as well. This, in combination with the previous exclusive extras, imply an even higher value for the Signature edition compared to the Classic edition, which shows in the pricing. The Classic edition is £40 and the Signature edition is £250.

The digital capital created for *Book of Opeth* is similar to the previous two books. This book received a dedicated website and mailing list, with an option to be included in the Roll of Honour as well. The website shows sample pages and photographs from the book to give an impression of the lush design, and a list of contributors to the text. These contributors consist of previous band members and contributors such as Steven Wilson (from Porcupine Tree of chapter 1). This can help convince consumers to buy the book by using another artist's symbolic capital. This website, mailing list, and the use of Opeth's social media (further discussed under 'promotion' in 3.1.3) further increase the visibility of *Book of Opeth* online.

3.1.2 Design and Production



Fig. 3: The Classic and Signature editions of *Book of Opeth* (*Book of Opeth*)

The cover artwork features the Opeth ‘O’ logo, and the background shows a forest invoking a mystical atmosphere, which is often associated with Opeth’s music by fans (see fig. 3). It also reminds of the art direction of albums such as *Morningrise* (1996) and *Blackwater Park* (2001). The function of this iconic paratext is similar to that of *Time Flies*, in that it incites a familiarity among fans and thus an “intention or interpretation” as Genette and Maclean argued (268-269). When opened, the front cover houses the vinyl single in a white paper sleeve. The box of the Signature edition is completely black with the Opeth logo on it, and the accompanying art prints show artwork for Opeth latest record at this point, *Pale Communion* (2014). The pictures in the book show a myriad of things, such as portraits, band photos, live photos, rehearsal and recording shots, album covers, etc. These pictures come from different sources, which are credited on a separate page (208). The text is intertwined with and seemingly subordinate to the photographs, which is an interesting intermedial relation, as it is normally the other way around. The pages of the book are printed on heavy-weight art paper in full colour, and the book itself has a “cloth binding with foil detailing” (*Book of Opeth*, Rocket 88). This ensures a high quality product that makes the pictures stand out well and conveys a high standard for production, implying prestige and demanding symbolic capital.

3.1.3 Marketing

The audience primarily targeted here are fans of Opeth. Earlier, Rocket 88 could additionally target the audiences of the books that came before (*Book of Opeth* before *Only Half There*, and those two before *Time Flies*) when marketing their next book, but *Book of Opeth* is the first of these three books to be released. The other Rocket 88 book that fits into the progressive rock- and metal community is Dream Theater’s *Lifting Shadows*, which was released almost a decade earlier in 2007. This could mean that the readers of *Lifting Shadows* might have forgotten about Rocket 88 or are not as familiar with them anymore, and Rocket 88 has less symbolic capital to fall back on, which could suggest that Rocket 88 has to target a newer audience for *Book of Opeth*, or put in extra effort to reconnect with those previous readers.

All books discussed here are positioned as being of high value and high quality, and this book is the chief example of that. The focus is on the artwork and photography and the book is printed with high quality material, even more so than the other two books. The marketing mix headers are now discussed below.

Product

The suggestion to write this book came from Opeth's manager Andy Farrow, which Farrow says in the introduction to the book (6), who also gave the suggestion to Townsend for *Only Half There*. The book is targeted towards Opeth fans, where the brand of 'Opeth' and the fans' familiarity with the band is used to market the book. The brand of Rocket 88 was less established at this time than it was during *Time Flies* and *Only Half There*, so it is mostly Opeth's symbolic capital being utilised here. This book, however, is the most invested in the design and the production compared to the other books, which immediately shows that Rocket 88 can produce high-quality products and thus further establishes their brand and symbolic capital on which they can build with the other publications. This was certainly a necessary step to take considering what I said above about having to (re)connect with readers.

Price

The Classic edition is priced at £40, and the Signature edition at £250. It is interesting to see that this Classic edition, while limited, is priced similarly to the other Classic edition books, while this limited Signature edition is priced much higher than the other Signature editions, of which the *Only Half There* edition is limited as well (limited to 1,500 copies). The additions to the Signature edition are three art prints, a box to house the contents, and a signed copy of the book, which is similar to the contents of the Signature edition of *Only Half There*. That edition got an additional cassette, however, but is priced much lower than the *Book of Opeth* Signature edition. The particularly limited nature of this edition could play a role in that. It could also be the case that, since it is the first of the three books released, Rocket 88 was gauging if this would be an acceptable selling price and a sustainable way to develop economic capital.

Place

This aspect is the same as with the other two books: the distribution channels are purely online via Rocket 88 and sites such as Amazon, with the online visibility being increased by epitexts such as the dedicated websites and online reviews.

Promotion

This was the first of these three books to be released, and was released years after the Dream Theater book, so the community around Rocket 88's books on progressive rock artists was likely not as existent as it is now. This can mean that promotion has been a major focussing

point for Rocket 88 in the publishing strategy for *Book of Opeth*, perhaps even more so than with the two other books. Opeth itself spent time promoting this book as well, exploiting their symbolic capital to increase sales potential. The dedicated website to the book, which is used to promote the book too, features a video of Opeth's lead guitarist Fredrik Åkesson flipping through the book and admiring the product (*Book of Opeth*, Rocket 88). The Opeth Facebook page shared a video on 25 March 2016 of frontman Mikael Åkerfeldt showing and discussing both editions of the book (Opeth (@opeth), "Mikael Åkerfeldt"). The book was announced as early as 19 March 2014 on the Opeth Facebook page (Opeth @opeth, "Official Illustrated History of Opeth"), with the page sharing a link to the Rocket 88 mailing list on 2 April 2014 (Opeth @opeth, "You may have"). Rocket 88 sent out an email on 23 July 2015 with an option to pre-order the book, which grants the buyer a place on the Roll of Honour (Rocket 88, "Official Opeth Book"). These uses of the website, social media, and email are clear instances of epitext that are being utilised to increase economic capital potential.

3.2 Reception Analysis

The reception of *Book of Opeth* is analysed here by observing six professional reviews and a substantial quantity of amateur reviews, which are all described and analysed in respect to section 3.1.

Two professional reviews are again found on *Loudersound.com*. One is once again by Polly Glass for the Classic Rock section. Glass argues that the photos in the book are "the stars of the show," and briefly mentions the existence of the Signature edition and the vinyl single. She further says that the story itself is not particularly gripping and that the book seldom digs deeper into the details. She finishes with calling the book "a nice read [and] attractively packaged." The other review is by Holly Wright for the Prog section. Wright echoes Glass' statement on the lack of depth of the story, and applauds Steven Wilson's entries compared to the rest of the text. Wright briefly mentions the binding of the book and the photos within, but mostly discusses the textual contents. The *Record Collector Magazine* website features a review by Alun Hamnett, who rates the book three stars. Hamnett says that some might find the price of the book problematic as it consists more of pictures than of text. He does say that many photos are rare, that the book comes with the vinyl single, and that the book is a lavish collector's item. The *Decibel Magazine* website has a review by Chris Dick. Dick mostly discusses the story of the book, and how it is not always interesting and lacks outside perspectives. He cannot comment on the physical qualities of the book, though, as he seems to

have received a digital copy. Dick does say that it seems to look professional and aesthetically pleasing. Alice Roques wrote a review for the *Rockrevolt Magazine* website, and states the opposite of some reviews above: Roques compliments the book for its information, coming from both the text and the pictures. *Loudwire* made a flip-through video of the book, where narrator Graham Hartmann says the exclusive vinyl is an excellent addition to a fan's vinyl collection, and that the book "feels like Opeth" and it "feels grand," further praising the overall design of the book as he goes through it. These professional reviews show that the material values of the book are appreciated, while the text itself is often seen as underwhelming. Hamnett does say that the price might pose a problem for some people, which can negatively affect the potential economic capital of Rocket 88.

One amateur review is by Dave Cooper for *echoesanddust.com*, who starts by stating that Rocket 88 is getting known amongst music fans for their luxurious books on certain artists. This shows that Rocket 88 has grown their symbolic capital. He goes on to summarise the contents of the book before admiring the design, production, and photos of the book, complimenting Rocket 88's work put into it. Another review is by Trey Spencer for *Sputnikmusic.com*, who calls the book, with all its illustrations and photos, a "labor of love." Jez Rowden for *theprogressiveaspect.net* calls the book "gorgeous" and compliments the photographs, artwork, and layout. *Addictedtomediamedia.com* features a review by Jodie Fairfax, who admires the artwork and aesthetics. Fairfax read a digital copy, but is willing to buy the physical book and cannot wait to hear the vinyl. This review is a prime example of the book's visuals and accompanying music being incentives for purchase. Morgan Ywain Evans for *metalriot.com* is enthusiastic about the book, naming various personal highlights such as some of the stories, the photographs and the aesthetics. Rich Dodgin for *allabouttherock.co.uk* found the book, as an Opeth fan, a "fascinating read" and a "beautiful work of art." The review by Keefy (Keith) for *ghostcultmag.com* is positive as well, applauding the stories and especially the photographs. Kit Brown of *heavyblogisheavy.com* comments on the lack of depth concerning album recordings and the small number of contributing former members. Brown still recommends the book and calls the photographs throughout the book the strongest point. Richard Maw of *thesludgelord.blogspot.com* states he only read a digital version of the book, and consequently only discusses the text itself and recommends it for that.

Two reviews can be found on *Amazon.com*. User Rob Schofield comments that the book is of high quality and recommends it to any Opeth fan, but does say that the high price is a drawback. Four *Goodreads* reviews are found on the pages for both the Classic and the Signature edition. User Scott says he initially doubted buying the book because of the price,

but says it is worth it due to the high quality. Scott further calls the exclusive vinyl single essential for any Opeth fan. User Belle says it is arranged well, looks beautiful, and that holding the book feels “quite holy, divinely special.” She does not care about the vinyl single, however. That invocation of a divine feeling by such a materialistically rich book happened with actual religious texts as well, and DeCook posits that the “material and visual presence” of the eight-century Lindisfarne Gospels brought the reader closer to the divine (47). A similar thing happens here: fans of artists often deify them, and *Book of Opeth* brings the reader, or in some cases the ‘devotee,’ closer to the band.

Two of these amateur reviews mention the price of the book as being either high or too high. *Amazon.com* user Rob Schofield found the price a drawback and *Goodreads* user Scott almost did not buy the book because of it. It is worth noting that the professional reviews do not mention any critiques on the price at all (Hamnett does say it might pose a problem to some people), which may be due to them receiving review copies. Both reviewers still recommend the book despite its price, although developing economic capital might pose problematic because of it. The vinyl single furthermore does not seem to have a great influence among these reviews. Fairfax and *Goodreads* user Scott are highly positive about it, while *Goodreads* user Belle could do without it. Hartmann’s Loudwire review above also praises the single, while the other reviews barely mention the single, if at all. This would indicate that the vinyl single does have an added value for some people, but is not a primary incentive for these reviewers. The main points of interest for them are the iconic paratexts, meaning the overall aesthetic, the quality of production, and the photographs. The vinyl single, which directs the book into a more intermedial direction, does not seem to have the desired effect for these reviewers.

The following reviews show more appreciation for the vinyl single, however, as well as for the design, production, and Rocket 88’s work and service. The Rocket 88 store webpage for the Classic edition features another ten consumer reviews. Stefan Ljungström was “amazed” by the quality of the book and calls it an essential Opeth item. Derik praises the photographs and stories, and calls the vinyl single a great addition. Derik had never heard of Rocket 88 before buying the book, but applauds their customer service. Pieter Kleij is positive about both the book and Rocket 88’s service, and says the vinyl is playing while he is going through the book. These two reviews are both positive about Rocket 88’s service and thus promote their symbolic capital. Francois admires the paper and binding quality, and lauds being able to listen to the vinyl single while reading the book. Chris says the highlight was the vinyl single, and that they were present at those live performances as well. Debbie calls the

book beautiful, as does Roland, who appreciates the vinyl single too. Jason Soper elaborates that the design, cover, and pictures are all of high quality, as does Ian Wickes. These reviewers seem to have been more receptive for the overall intermedial qualities of *Book of Opeth*, which would imply a potential additional acquisition of symbolic and economic capital.

One final review by Christopher Nosnibor for *Paraphiliamagazine.com* writes that he is impressed by how the books looks and by the amount of pictures it contains. Nosnibor offers an interesting viewpoint in the final paragraph of his review about the accompanying music. He says that what is often disregarded in music books is the music itself, which is a drawback of “individual media,” and that even an e-book with music would inadequately address this as it is not actually a physical book. This idea addresses the issue of Rocket 88’s books perhaps being more than just ‘books’ as discussed earlier. Nosnibor describes the product as essentially being an intermedial product, where the text and its paratextual elements, such as the music, are intrinsically connected and form a fused, new entity, for which Schröter coined the term “intermedium” (qtd. in Rippl 13).

Conclusion

The brand and symbolic capital of Porcupine Tree is used to full effect for *Time Flies*, as many reviews react positively to being able to read about the history of the band. Rocket 88's brand is not discussed at all in these reviews, however. The design and materiality of *Time Flies* seems to have had no apparent impact on its sales; none of the reviews properly discuss any of the cover designs, for example, neither from the Classic nor the Signature edition, while there were several variants. The material paratexts are only briefly mentioned in two reviews, which do not provide any substantial insights. Rocket 88's marketing techniques are not discussed either, so if the use of materiality, paratext, and intermediality had any profound effect on their acquisition of symbolic and economic capital is uncertain from these reviews.

The reviews for *Only Half There* do consider the design and added value by the paratext more, though still not in a sizeable way. Various reviews discuss the *Iceland* CD and the *Ancient* cassette, but the general consensus is that it does not add much value. It is seen more as a neat bonus rather than an integrated part of the intermedium. Other reviewers appreciate the photographs in the book and the aesthetics of the Signature edition, although it is only a minority. Nevertheless, it does show that Rocket 88 has delivered quality design and production, which amplifies their own brand and symbolic capital. The epitextual social media of Townsend have been utilized to further promote their books by using Townsend's symbolic capital on the established vertical communities. His brand as an artist plays a substantial role here, which increases Rocket 88's potential for more economic capital.

Of all three books, *Book of Opeth's* publishing strategy seems the most effective. The overall design and materiality of the book is praised throughout all the reviews, establishing Rocket 88's brand as a publisher of high-quality products and substantially adding to their symbolic capital. The vinyl single is discussed more often as well, though it is still not a focal point. The reviewers that do mention the single are generally positive about it, which is a step up from what was said about Townsend's *Iceland* CD. Just as with Townsend, Opeth's symbolic capital was exploited for the book's epitext, namely the promotion via social media and the book's website. This book shows the most promise of being effective, in a material and intermedial sense, in increasing Rocket 88's symbolic and economic capital. Its price, however, is a stumbling block.

The inclusion of exclusive music and the option of buying a deluxe edition can be seen as a new business model in the wake of digitisation. In the digital age, there seems to be a strong demand for material items. It is similar to how the music industry has adapted to the digital age. New albums are very often released as deluxe editions as well, containing

exclusive audio, video and artwork, some of which can be exclusive to pre-orders. It is interesting to see that Rocket 88 applies this same model to their books, which are about or by musicians. Digitisation also brings new utilities through the internet. Rocket 88 have a similar strategy to the publisher Unbound. They both have a 'Roll of Honour' option, and instead of crowdfunding, Rocket 88 uses mailing lists and pre-orders to gauge interest and potential sales. The internet furthermore allows them to utilise the symbolic capital of the relevant artists or authors, which in turn can increase their potential for economic capital.

I expected that this business model, with its exclusive material features of the books, such as the artwork, music, and Signature editions, would have played a significant role in the sales of the books and would perhaps have somewhat changed the notions of what music books of this kind could be. The corpus used here is limited, of course, so the conclusions drawn from it are as well. It is apparent in this corpus, however, that these features have not played as big a role as I anticipated. The material paratext of *Book of Opeth* as well as its exclusive vinyl single have been significant elements in the reviews, but for the other books, these elements and the option of a Signature edition have not had the same effect. These features for *Only Half There* were briefly discussed in the reviews, but their impact overall was insignificant. The books are still mostly reviewed solely as books, solely as texts, and not as a new sort of intermedial form. The exclusive features, design and production properties do not take on a prominent role overall. Still, Rocket 88's strategy must be somewhat effective in generating economic capital, as the Signature edition of *Only Half There* is sold out and the Signature edition of *Book of Opeth* is almost sold out as well.

All in all this is only a narrow look at these publishing strategies, as the corpus is limited. Further research can be done by reviewing a larger corpus, by examining other publishers, or looking into other categories than music books. Rocket 88 itself also has a respectable catalogue of publications worth looking into. All in all I could say that the research into this topic is only half there.

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